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March 4, 2024

Re: Open Letter to All Amateur Radio Operators, Clubs, Groups and Associations in the Rhode Island Section

Greetings,

As the Section Emergency Coordinator I have two very important duties that I need your assistance with. The first is to promote and encourage the development of local ARES groups. Contrary to popular belief, RI ARES is not a club, nor would I like to see it promoted as one. ARES should provide training, organize and coordinate activities. We are happy to assist people who are interested in learning and improving their operating abilities, but I am by no means an expert. There are many Amateurs who have vast amounts of experience and knowledge they can share with less experienced amateurs. I know there exist many clubs, groups and associations of amateurs in RI (hereafter referred to as clubs), and most have a subset of members who are interested in Public Service. What I propose is that these clubs form a local ARES group as part of their club. This would create an opportunity for people to work together to become better operators and expand their capabilities, making us better prepared to assist during Public Service activities, events, emergencies and disasters. Many of the activities that clubs are already doing together are great ways to improve operating skills that are useful for public service. The ARRL is adding a listing for ARES groups on their website, similar to the ARRL Affiliated Clubs list. Should your club opt to form an ARES Group we can facilitate adding it to the list. Local ARES group members are not required to sign up for RI ARES, but it is encouraged.

Another responsibility I have as SEC is to collect reports of public service related activities in our section and assemble them into a report to the League each month. I understand that some people might not support the League for various reasons, but one thing I think we all can agree on is that the ARRL is advocating for Amateur Radio. The public service activity report that each SEC submits each month is used to calculate the value of the time the Amateur Radio community dedicates in service to the public. Our public service function is the very first principle listed in Part 97.1 Basis and purpose of the Amateur Radio Service. Our ability to assist the public is a very important part of how we justify the spectrum allocated to Amateur Radio, which we all know would sell for billions of dollars on the FCC auction block. There are many schools of thought around these reports, but the ARRL's Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnson KE5MHV and I are of the opinion that these reports should be liberal in their application and include not just activities that are official "ARES" activities, but all activities in the Amateur Radio Community that are applicable.

I am requesting that each club nominate at least one liaison to ARES (even if you don't opt to form an ARES group) that can report the information and club's activities each month that fall under the following categories:

### **Participants**

- The total number of ARES participants in your group (it's ok if this is only the liaisons, activities still count, though we welcome everyone with an interest)

### **Nets (total number of each)**

- ARES group or other club Training, Practice or Emergency Preparedness Nets held
  - Includes repeater or simplex nets on any band or mode
  - Formal, Directed, or Informal nets
  - Nets that test equipment, coverage, exchange info, handle messages, or practice skills
- Of those nets, how many included a NTS liaison
- Total number of participants of those nets for the month

### **Activities (number and total person hours in each)**

- Exercises (can report local exercises or participation in other exercises)
- Training Events (including the training and practice nets reported above, and club activities)
- Public Service Events
- Community Service Events
- Emergency Events (any activation in service to an emergency)
- SKYWARN Events (any activation in service to SKYWARN)
- ARES group meetings (or the portion of your club meetings spent discussing related activities)
- Unclassified Events

### **Narrative**

- A brief summary of any activities and any administrative or other comments

We will provide training on what and how to report, but I have devised two methods of reporting. Liaisons can either complete a brief online form to report each activity and I will compile the totals, or they can compile an online summary report form for the month. Liaisons that do a thorough job, report on time each month, regularly participate in statewide practice nets, training, and/or and exercises, and are working towards completing their ARES task books would be eligible for appointment as an Assistant Emergency Coordinator or even Emergency Coordinator. Also, ARRL Affiliated Club stations that regularly participate in ARES practice nets, exercises and activations would be eligible to apply for designation as an Official Emergency Station.

I really appreciate your willingness to help in this matter. One of my goals is to ensure that Rhode Island is accurately reporting data that can be used to advocate for our rich and diverse hobby.

Best Regards,



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