NH-ARES
Sullivan County
Emergency Communication Plan

Contents:

Attachments

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.01 The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for emergency communication operations by Sullivan County Area ARES. It describes the networks, and the organization and functions responsible for supporting those networks, and sets standards for message handling and network operations. This document is intended for use by NH-ARES members and as a reference tool for served agency staff.

1.02 The purpose of ARES is to provide communication and related services for selected public and private agencies during communications emergencies, and in support of non-emergency public service activities. This may include passing formal written or informal “tactical” messages, gathering and reporting disaster intelligence and storm conditions, and other such duties as are requested and agreed upon.

1.03 The operational information contained in this plan is to be used as a guide. It is not the purpose of this document to limit local tactical plans or unnecessarily constrain emergency operations.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 This is the communications plan for Sullivan County ARES . This material supplements the NH state ARES communication plan and is to be used as a guideline only. It covers activation and deactivation, call-out procedures, Networks to be used and how they are managed, scope of response, and training. The Sullivan County Amateur Radio Emergency Services will henceforth be referred to as SCARES.

2.2 SCARES is a volunteer service that is to be used by served agencies for communications when “all else fails”. SCARES response is not designed to replace normal communications for a served agency (police/fire/EMS) nor is it to be used during an emergency if there are other methods of conventional communications (phone/cell phone etc) available for use by said served agencies.

3.0 Served Agencies

3.1 As of this time SCARES has relationships with

A. New London Hospital

B. Valley Regional Hospital

C. Skywarn

3.2 No formal Memorandums Of Understanding (M.O.U.'s) are in place at this time.

3.3 SKYWARN.

3.3.1 SKYWARN is a program for volunteer weather observers assisting the National Weather Service (NWS) by observing local weather conditions and reporting those observations to the NWS and/or served agencies if appropriate. Amateur radio operators affiliated with SCARES are encouraged to receive this training and become SKYWARN volunteers.

3.3.2 SKYWARN will have our ongoing attention as a primary focus with regards to serving the greater Sullivan County coverage area. No call tree needs to be activated for said activity and members can act independently, reporting directly to the National Weather Service, Gray, ME. However, individual members are strongly encouraged to activate the call tree and/or to utilize the designated frequencies to start a SCARES Net, in order to develop a comprehensive SITREP (Situation Report) which would provide a more complete weather picture of our area. This consolidated SITREP will be passed by Net Control, or a designated representative, to the National

Weather Service (NWS), and, if deemed to be critical, to our served agencies for their use in determining what actions, if any, they will take to mitigate problems that might result from the conditions reported by SKYWARN.

4.0 Radio Net Plan

4.1 Repeaters will be used initially for all net communication except when they are not functioning. In that event, initial net call up will occur on the SCARES two- and six- meter simplex frequencies.

2 Meter Repeater Network

147.285 MHz, PL 103.5 Positive offset Claremont NH

145.250 MHz PL 88.5 Negative offset Springfield NH

2 Meter Simplex: 147.555 MHz FM

6 Meter Simplex: 50.200 MHz USB

4.2 If repeaters are not functioning, the affected area can be covered by simplex operation, or if the net control station requests traffic be passed off of the main repeater net, the designated SCARES simplex frequency will be used .

4.3 Liaison stations to the Statewide HF and linked UHF nets will be appointed by the SCARES Net Control Station or the SCARES Net

Manager. Liaisons to the local nets of neighboring ARES groups and others will be appointed as needed.

HF Net frequency: 3945kHz +/- LSB

UHF Repeater System: 447.675 MHz PL 88.5 Offset - 5.0MHz

5.0 Activation and Deactivation

5.1 SCARES will establish and maintain an "Activation Tree" to include the following information of each SCARES member:

Name Call sign tele numbers address (cell/pager#)
Residence and Work

This information will allow members of the SCARES as well as the leadership of the served agencies to contact SCARES with regard to activation. If a member is contacted by a served agency with a request for assistance, he/she (the 'contacted team member') should gather as much information as possible regarding the circumstances of the call out (type of disaster/number of people needed/location of staging area or response location) and then call the EC or either of the AEC's of SCARES and relay all information that was received from the served agency to the member contacted. The contacted Emergency Coordinator (EC) or Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) will take responsibility to evaluate the request and determine whether to initiate a call-up, and if so, of how many members. If the EC and all AECs are unreachable, the contacted member

should drop to the next level of the call tree and reach whomever he can. The response may be full or partial based on what the served agency is requesting. If only a partial response the entire call tree will be activated, however when the number of initial operators have been contacted the remaining members will be briefed on the situation and requested to 'stand by' for a delayed response if needed (rotation/expansion of request etc). The EC/AEC who initiated the activation will notify the State of New Hampshire EOC.

The activating EC/AEC will have the option of determining to what level SCARES will be activated.

When the served agency has determined that the need has been diminished, it can request a partial or complete deactivation. The Local Area Coordinator (LAC) will determine the order of shutdown. The LAC is normally the Emergency Coordinator or his/her representative. The title is passed from duty shift to duty shift, so that the LAC is always available, in accordance with the Incident Command System.

5.2 When weather conditions are threatening or other events indicate that a communications emergency may be imminent or has occured, all SCARES members should monitor the SCARES repeaters and local media, and frequently check their e-mail. This will facilitate a speedy activation if necessary with reduced use of the telephonic call tree. **Any** SCARES

member can initiate a net should conditions warrant- e.g. extreme weather conditions, indication of widespread telephone outage, etc.

5.3 Within two weeks of the termination of an activation those involved in the action as well as those who were not will be strongly encouraged to attend an After Action Debriefing. During this Debriefing the participating members will actively discuss the positives and negatives that occurred during the activation. Non-participating members will be encouraged to ask questions at the end of the debriefing.

6.0 Drills and Training

6.1 Training is an ongoing process. Weekly Nets are called on Wednesday evenings at 1900hrs (7pm) on standard repeater frequencies.

6.2 SCARES will attempt to use classroom events as well as field exercises to enhance the realistic training experience. Such training will be planned out in advance in order for all to prepare for participation.

6.3 Periodic joint exercises will be conducted in order for SCARES to become familiar with other responding agencies and ARES groups, served agencies, and each other in realistic training scenarios.

7.0 Rapid Response Team

7.1 SCARES does not have a formal, established Rapid Response Team at this time. Based on membership numbers as well as flexibility of SCARES, each emergency will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

8.0 Digital Operations Plan

8.1 Whenever possible, formal traffic will be handled via digital modes unless the message in question is very brief. Within SCARES the use of the shareware “fldigi” is encouraged, due to its flexibility, capabilities and the fact that it is available for Linux, Apple OS X, and Microsoft Windows operating systems. Other programs and hardware solutions may be used, but it must be kept in mind that they are only partially compatible, reducing the ability of stations to take full advantage of all the capabilities offered by fldigi.

8.2 SCARES digital operations will normally be conducted on the same frequencies as voice communications. Nets will be conducted on voice, with stations switching to an appropriate digital mode only to pass their traffic. As these communications will be conducted via FM repeaters or simplex, highly robust modes will not generally be required. PSK250 will be most commonly used with other options available. All of the above is at the discretion of the Net Manager.

8.3 All formal traffic will be recorded in ICS213 format and delivered to the final recipient on that form or a facsimile thereof.