

MINNESOTA ARES®



EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

SOP 6-E-001

Standard Operating Procedure For ARES Mutual Assistance Teams

April 10, 2010

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I. General

In a disaster such as a flood or tornado, ARES® resources may become quickly overwhelmed, especially if the event and associated operations are going to be prolonged. In these situations, communications assistance may be needed from other Districts or even other Sections.

The State of Minnesota has embraced the ARESMAT concept, and has designed this program to provide up to seven teams, each containing up to 25 highly motivated, technically skilled, and well equipped radio operators to the respond directly to assist the DEC or County EC in the affected area, or to neighboring sections, upon mutual aid request. Each team shall be split into 5 crews, each containing 5 personnel. Each crew shall have one Crew Leader and four Radio Operators.

Management of the ARESMAT Teams shall be the responsibility of the ASEC - ARESMAT who is appointed by the SEC. The ASEC in charge of ARESMAT will manage up to seven individual teams on a day-to-day basis, and up to two teams that are deployed in the same area. This individual will also coordinate the use of out-state ARESMAT resources.

Any ARESMAT Team(s) responding to an emergency will be self-sufficient, including shelter, for 72 hours. Past that time, the requesting DEC or County EC should be planning to provide logistics support for the Team members (meals, shelter, water, etc.).

ARESMAT Team members fully understand that they will be under the operational control of the requesting DEC or County EC.

Responding ARESMAT Team Leaders will coordinate their team's departure days and times with the requesting DEC or County EC.

II. Section ARESMAT Team Structure

Each District Emergency Coordinator has the discretion, based on need and interest, to create District ARESMAT Teams. As well, there will be an overall Section "Viking" Team that will serve similar purposes on a statewide basis, as well as be available for any out-of-state deployments that are requested for neighboring sections. This Viking Team will train and equip specially to be able to deploy outside the state.

A. ARESMAT Coordinator

This position is a section-level management position appointed by the SEC. The person filling this position shall be known as the Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator - ARESMAT.

B. Team Leaders

These positions are operations/supervisor level positions. Personnel filling these positions must be highly qualified radio operators who possess above average management abilities and are able to handle high stress situations. As such, personnel filling this position shall be known as an ARESMAT Team EC.

C. Crew Leaders

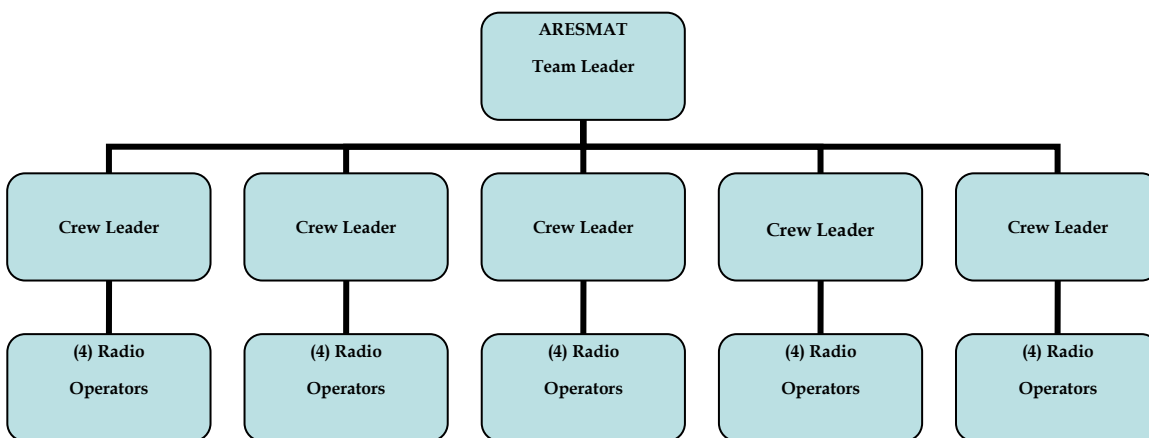
These positions are operations/supervisor level positions. If there are more than seven radio operators, the Team Leader (EC) may decide to divide the team into crews to maintain span of control. Each crew will be led by a Crew Leader, and each Crew Leader shall hold the position of ARESMAT Team AEC.

D. Radio Operators

These positions are operations/technician level positions. Personnel filling these positions must be able to handle high stress positions, and be able to solve complex problems with communications systems.

Position	Job Description	Qty	Reports To
Team Leader - EC	Supervisor/Operator	1	ASEC - ARESMAT
Crew Leader - AEC	Supervisor/Operator	5	Team Leader (EC)
Radio Operator	Operator/Technician	20	Team Leader

Full Deployment Team Composition (Figure 2 - 1)



Full Deployment Team (Figure 2 - 2)

III. Team Membership

A. General Information

Individuals desiring membership in the Minnesota ARESMAT Team must complete an ARESMAT application package and submit it to the ASEC - ARESMAT or an ARESMAT Team EC. In cases where an individual is also a current member of a County ARES group, the applicant must gain permission from the County EC, in writing, to serve on a Section level ARESMAT Team. Dual membership is allowed, with the understanding that County ARES responsibilities outweigh Section ARESMAT responsibilities. For application package, *see Attachment 1*.

B. Background Checks

1. Driver's License

This is not required at this time. If the member's local ARES or RACES Group already has this requirement in place, it is suggested to keep the ASEC - ARESMAT or ARESMAT EC updated with the results annually.

2. Criminal History

This is not required at this time. If the member's local ARES or RACES Group already has this requirement in place, it is suggested to keep the ASEC - ARESMAT or ARESMAT EC updated with the results annually.

C. Required Training

All Team Members must complete the following training requirements before being granted "ACTIVE" status with a Minnesota ARESMAT Team.

1. FEMA

ARESMAT members must successfully complete and pass the following FEMA Independent Study courses;

- IS-100() - Introduction to Incident Command System,
- IS-200() - ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents,
- IS-700() - National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction,
- IS-800() - National Response Framework, An Introduction.

2. ARRL ARECC

ARESMAT members must, as a minimum, successfully complete the ARRL ARECC-01 course.

3. Additional Training

ARESMAT members may be required to successfully complete additional training, as determined by their designated ARESMAT EC.

4. Medical Training

In order to provide basic lifesaving assistance to fellow Team members, ARESMAT members are encouraged to maintain current CPR certification through a nationally recognized provider such as the American Red Cross or American Heart Association.

D. Licensing

1. FCC Amateur Radio License

ARESMAT members shall maintain a current FCC General Class or higher Amateur Radio License. A copy of this license shall be carried at all times.

2. Driver's License

ARESMAT members must have a valid Driver's license. ARESMAT members are required to be able to transport themselves to and from the scene.

3. Concealed Weapons Permit

While deployed, ARESMAT Team members shall not carry concealed weapons.

E. Physical Fitness

ARESMAT personnel should maintain a high level of physical fitness. Team members will be expected to perform their duties in all weather conditions including everything from extreme cold to high heat and humidity. Radio operators may be needed onboard watercraft, so it is also highly advisable for team members to know how to swim. Extended periods of standing and walking should always be expected.

F. Communications Skills

ARESMAT personnel must exhibit a very high level of communications knowledge and ability. Team members should strive to attend as much continuing education and training as possible. Members must be able to fully comprehend, fluently speak, and clearly write the English language. Having the ability to also comprehend, speak, and write in a foreign language is an added bonus.

G. Personal Equipment

1. Duty Kits

ARESMAT personnel shall maintain their duty kits in a constant ready state. Duty kit content is flexible but, at a minimum, must contain all items listed in *Attachment 2*.

2. Admin Kit

ARESMAT personnel shall maintain their admin kit in a constant ready state. Admin kit content is flexible but, at a minimum, must contain all forms, maps, and supplies as listed in *Attachment 3*.

3. Radios

Each ARESMAT Team member shall, at a minimum, deploy with one VHF/UHF (dual band) mobile radio, one VHF hand-held radio, and one HF radio with tuner. All radios shall be capable of running on 12 volts DC. All necessary accessories shall be packed with each radio to include speaker, microphone, power cord, spare batteries, dedicated antenna w/cable, operating manual, and power supply (if needed).

4. Anderson Powerpole® Connectors

All radios, accessories, batteries and DC powered equipment that are being deployed with an ARESMAT Team shall be outfitted with Anderson Powerpole® type connectors to ensure interoperability with other agencies.

5. NBEMS

Although not required, each ARESMAT member should have the ability to run NBEMS on either their mobile or HF radio.

6. APRS

Although not required, each ARESMAT member should have the ability to run APRS on either their mobile or hand-held radio.

7. Packet

Although not required, each ARESMAT member should have the ability to run packet on their mobile radio.

8. Personal Hygiene

ARESMT Team members are encouraged to always present a clean, well groomed, professional appearance. Prior to deploying, team members will be given enough time to properly prepare themselves for their duty. Always remember, you will be representing not only the State of Minnesota ARESMT Team, but the Amateur Radio community as a whole.

9. Uniforms

Minnesota ARESMT members are encouraged to meet the identification and appearance standards as listed in *Attachment 4*.

IV. ACTIVATION

As events unfold in the Minnesota Section or neighboring Sections, the SEC or designate(s) shall monitor the situation, as per the Minnesota Section Emergency Operations Plan (MNPLAN), and maintain situational awareness via the official Minnesota ARES website.

The SEC will not activate the ARESMT Team unless a request to do so is made by an EC, DEC, or a neighboring Section's SEC in the affected jurisdiction. Requests from other Sections must be in writing.

The SEC reserves the right to not activate the ARESMT Team, even if requested, if by doing so;

- It would deplete ARES members needed in other jurisdictions of the Section,
- If sufficient numbers of ARES members can be raised with a general call to all unaffected Districts, or
- If the SEC feels that a sufficient number of amateur emergency communications resources still exist in the affected jurisdiction.

Through monitoring situational awareness, and evaluating information received from the affected jurisdiction's EC, DEC, or other Section's SEC, the SEC may put the ARESMT Team on standby, if he/she feels activation is imminent. However, activation may come with no prior standby phase, if conditions warrant.

A. Level I - In State (Standby)

If the scale of a disaster within the Minnesota Section indicates that ARES® operations may be prolonged, the SEC should;

- Make immediate contact with the DEC or County EC of the impacted area to discuss the type of incident, current manpower level, equipment status, expected duration, and projected needs.
- If conditions warrant a possible activation of an ARESMT Team, the SEC shall notify the SM of the situation as soon as possible.
- Notify the ASEC - ARESMT of the current situation, and request that he/she place an ARESMT Team on Standby. At this time, the appropriate ARESMT Team EC(s) shall;
 - Declare an ARESMT "Level I" Standby Condition.
 - Initiate a recall of all ARESMT Team members, requesting they ready themselves for possible deployment.
 - Maintain regular contact with the ASEC - ARESMT to gather all information needed, should a deployment be mandated.

- Prepare for Team deployment by gathering additional information, such as weather forecasts, maps of affected areas, traffic conditions, road closures, current news releases, etc.
- The ASEC - ARESMAT should then notify nearby Section DEC's of the situation, and request that they keep in contact, should they be needed.

B. Level II - In State (Activation)

When a request for an ARESMAT Team is received, and after having decided to activate the ARESMAT Team, the SEC, or designated representative shall;

- Request an immediate situation briefing on the incident from the requesting DEC or County EC of the affected area. For a "Situation Briefing" outline see *Attachment 5*
- Advise the SM that an ARESMAT Team is being activated.
- Contact the ASEC - ARESMAT and order activation of an ARESMAT Team. Provide a hardcopy of Situation Briefing to the ASEC - ARESMAT.
- At this time, the ASEC - ARESMAT shall;
 - Declare an ARESMAT "Level II" Team Activation.
 - Direct the appropriate Team Leader (EC) to initiate an immediate recall of the team's ARESMAT members, requesting they prepare for immediate deployment. Advise Team members of location and time for Pre-Departure Briefing.
 - Just prior to Pre-Departure Briefing, contact the SEC to gather any final information needed for the briefing.
 - Provide a Pre-Departure Briefing for all deploying members. As a minimum, this should include all items listed in Section VI.
- Following the briefing, the Team Leaders (ECs) shall;
 - Verify their Team's go kits are complete, and all of their radios are pre-loaded with required frequencies.
 - Arrange for their Team's transportation to and from the deployed location if necessary.
 - Set a specific time and place for final departure from the local area.

C. Level I - Out-Of-State (Standby)

Only the "Viking" Team will be deployed out-of-state. If the scale of a disaster outside of the Minnesota Section indicates that ARES® operations may be prolonged, the SEC, or designated representative, should;

- Attempt contacting the SEC of the impacted area to discuss the possible need for assistance.
- If conditions warrant a possible activation of the Section ARESMAT Team, the SEC shall notify the SM of the situation as soon as possible.
- Notify the ASEC - ARESMAT of the current situation, and request that he/she place the "Viking" Team on Standby. At this time, the ASEC - ARESMAT shall;
 - Declare an ARESMAT "Level I" Standby Condition.
 - Initiate a recall of all "Viking" ARESMAT members, requesting they ready themselves for possible deployment.

- Maintain regular contact with the SEC to gather all information needed, should a deployment be mandated.
- Prepare for Team deployment by gathering additional information, such as weather forecasts, maps of affected areas, traffic conditions, road closures, current news releases, etc.
- The SEC should then notify nearby Section DEC's of the situation, and request that they keep in contact should they be needed.

D. Level II - Out-Of-State (Activation)

Only the "Viking" Team will be deployed out-of-state. When a request for the "Viking" ARESMAT Team is received, the SEC, or designated representative, after having decided to activate the ARESMAT Team, shall;

- Advise the requesting SEC that a written request for assistance must be received prior to activation. This needs to include details regarding the type of incident, location of deployment, key contact information, travel routes, frequencies in use, talk-in frequencies, food and lodging arrangements and expected time of deployment.
- Request an immediate situation briefing on the incident from the requesting SEC of the affected area. For a "Situation Briefing" outline see *Attachment 5*
- Advise the SM that the "Viking" ARESMAT Team is being activated for assistance to another Section.
- Contact the ASEC - ARESMAT and order activation of the "Viking" ARESMAT Team. Provide a hardcopy of Situation Briefing to the ASEC - ARESMAT.
- At this time, the ASEC - ARESMAT shall;
 - Declare an ARESMAT "Level II" Team Activation.
 - Direct the "Viking" Team Leader (EC) to initiate an immediate recall of all ARESMAT members, requesting they prepare for immediate deployment. Advise Team members of location and time for Pre-Departure Briefing.
 - Just prior to Pre-Departure Briefing, contact the SEC to gather any final information needed for the briefing.
 - Provide a Pre-Departure Briefing for all deploying members. As a minimum, this should include all items listed in Section VI.
- Following the briefing, the "Viking" Team Leader shall;
 - Verify their team's go kits are complete, and all of their radios are pre-loaded with required frequencies.
 - Arrange for their team's transportation to and from the deployed location if necessary.
 - Set a specific time and place for final departure from the local area.

V. Disaster Response Time

The parties to this SOP recognize that the Minnesota ARESMAT Team is a volunteer organization and that response times for providing communications services will vary. In a major disaster, a delay in response time of up to six hours should be expected, as the volunteers have been instructed to provide first for the welfare of their families, property and work responsibilities.

VI. Pre-Departure Briefing

Once an ARESMAT Team deployment is approved, the SEC or designated representative shall provide the following information in a pre-departure briefing;

- Technical briefing on incident information derived directly from requesting authority,
- Current reports from ARRL officials, commercial radio broadcasts, and any amateur radio reports received,
- Overview of equipment, communications needs, recommended clothing items, and safety gear required,
- ARESMAT leadership contacts,
- Current conditions at incident site, to include current weather conditions and safety concerns,
- The host SEC invitation, transportation, accommodation considerations, routes into incident area, staging area, frequencies being used, and expected length of deployment,

VII. ON-ARRIVAL ACTIONS

Upon arrival, the ARESMAT Team Leader should check with the local ARES officials and obtain the following;

- Listing of frequencies being used,
- Current actions being taken,
- Available personnel,
- Communications and computer equipment available,
- Support facilities in the area,
- A copy of the host's ARES Response Plan.

A priority on arrival should be the establishment of an intra-team communications network over either HF or VHF back to the home section for morale traffic.

Team Leaders should meet with served agencies, the local ARRL communications authority, or any others as needed to obtain information and coordinate the use of frequencies.

VIII. Demobilization Actions

An extraction procedure for ham communicators should be negotiated with served agencies and host ARES officials before it is needed.

The ARESMAT Team Leader shall coordinate with local host ARES officials and served agencies to determine when equipment and personnel are no longer needed. A demobilization plan should be in effect.

A Team critique, begun on the trip home, should be conducted, and individual performance evaluations on team members should be prepared. Copies of the critiques should be sent to both the home SEC and in-disaster SEC. Personality conflicts should be addressed and/or resolved outside of formal reports. Equipment should be accounted for.

A post evaluation meeting should always be held.

4/10/2010

Date

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Anderson" with "KD0ASX" written below it. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Dan Anderson, KD0ASX

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