

amateur radio emergency service[®]
of monroe county, new york

January 9, 2008

Jim DiTucci, N2IXD
President, Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

Dear Jim,

Thanks for meeting with me to begin talking about a memorandum of understanding between Monroe County ARES and RARA. I finally have a draft put together, and I would like for you and the RARA Board of Directors to review it and offer feedback. My hope is to have a signed agreement between our organizations by March.

In a post 9/11 era, training and skill development of ham radio operators responding in a disaster has become critically important. RACES members have training requirements that coincide with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and stronger requirements for ARES members are on the way. It is no longer sufficient for amateur radio operators to just "show up" during a disaster with an amateur radio license and a radio and expect to be fully utilized.

Some general purpose amateur radio clubs serve "dual purpose", especially when the ARES organization in a given area is small or not well organized. When ARES is not well organized, or otherwise unable to exist on its own, it makes sense for an amateur radio club to serve both the needs of its members and the needs of the public during a disaster. When ARES is a strong, viable organization on its own, amateur radio emergency communications should be coordinated and organized by the local ARES and RACES organizations.

ARES has been active for a long time in Monroe County, but it has grown and organized significantly since 2003. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (attached) is to identify areas of cooperation, and define where each organization should have primary responsibility within the amateur radio community in Monroe County.

I look forward to your thoughts and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Wigal, WY7Q
Emergency Coordinator
Monroe County Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Memorandum of Understanding
Between
Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc
and
Monroe County Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to affirm and restate the terms of an ongoing working relationship between the Rochester Amateur Radio Association (hereinafter referred to as RARA), and the Monroe County (New York) Amateur Radio Emergency Service (hereinafter known as Monroe County ARES), a program of the American Radio Relay League, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as ARRL). This agreement provides the broad framework for cooperation between the two organizations.

Concept of Operations

Each party to this MOU is a separate and independent organization. As such, each organization retains its own identity in providing service and for establishing its own policies and financing its own activities.

Definition of Disaster

A disaster is an occurrence such as a hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water, wind-driven water, tsunami, earthquake, drought, blizzard, pestilence, famine, fire, explosion, building collapse, commercial transportation incident, or other situation that causes human suffering or creates human needs that the victims cannot alleviate without assistance.

Organization of the Rochester Amateur Radio Association

The Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc. (RARA) is a widely diversified, highly active amateur radio club centered in the Rochester, NY area. RARA is a Special Service Club, affiliated with the ARRL.

Organization of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service of Monroe County, New York

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service of Monroe County, NY (ARES) is an amateur radio organization consisting of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in service to the public when disaster strikes. ARES is a program of the ARRL, is a part of the ARRL Field Organization, and is accountable to the WNY Section Emergency Coordinator, Western District Emergency Coordinator, and the WNY Section Manager.

Areas of Cooperation

Some of the ways RARA and ARES may cooperate are:

1. **Coordination of EmComm activities.** All amateur radio emergency communication (EmComm) activities, as well as public service events sponsored by government agencies or organizations active in disaster, should be coordinated by ARES or RACES as appropriate. When outside agencies contact RARA to provide EmComm services during an emergency or disaster, RARA should defer the agency to ARES or RACES. When outside agencies contact RARA to recognize the efforts of EmComm activities after an emergency or disaster, RARA should coordinate the request with ARES, or defer the agency to ARES or RACES as appropriate.

2. **RARA member involvement in disasters.** If the EmComm requirements during a disaster exceed the capacity of Monroe County ARES, ARES may request assistance from RARA members who are not currently on the ARES active roster. RARA members participating in this capacity may be required to go through a “crash course” intake process, to ensure that the operator has appropriate equipment, credentials, and a basic familiarity with EmComm operator expectations.
3. **Public Service Events.** Public Service Events provide excellent opportunities to keep operating skills sharp and equipment ready in the event of a disaster or emergency. ARES recognizes the value of these events, and tracks ARES member involvement in these events. ARES will encourage member involvement in public service events. ARES will post public service event dates on the ARES website, and publicize event dates at monthly meetings. ARES will also endeavor to coordinate at least one public service event per year. For events coordinated by RARA, RARA will share the names and call signs of operators working each event.
4. **Autonomous Organizations.** RARA is an ARRL-affiliated amateur radio club serving the needs of its members and the public. Monroe County ARES is an organization within the ARRL Field Organization, serving the needs of public service agencies and the community during emergencies and disasters. RARA recognizes that the ARES and RACES organizations in Monroe County are the providers of EmComm services during emergencies and disasters in the Monroe County area. Each organization maintains close liaison with the other, but operates independently of each other.
5. **Recruitment.** RARA will encourage member involvement in ARES and RACES.
6. **RARA Newsletter.** ARES will be allowed to submit articles and calendar events for the RARA newsletter.
7. **RARA Meetings.** ARES will be allowed to give a brief update of activities at monthly RARA meetings. ARES will be allowed to give a presentation to the RARA membership on a yearly basis.
8. **RARA Member Involvement in EmComm.** As the largest amateur radio club in the greater Monroe County area, it is logical for people outside of the ham radio community to assume that RARA is responsible for providing emergency communication during a disaster or emergency. When describing organizational involvement in EmComm, RARA will endeavor to refer to ARES where appropriate. For example, instead of stating “RARA provides communication services during a disaster”, it is better to state “Many of our members provide communications services during a disaster by involving themselves in the Amateur Radio Emergency Service.”

Periodic Review

Representatives of the Rochester Amateur Radio Association and Monroe County ARES will, on a bi-annual basis, on or around the anniversary date of this agreement, jointly evaluate progress in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and revise and develop new plans or goals as appropriate.

Term of MOU

This Memorandum of Understanding is in force as of the date indicated below and shall remain in effect for five years or until terminated by written notification from either party to the other.

January 9, 2008

Signatures:

James DiTucci
President
Rochester Amateur Radio Association

Date

Jeffrey A. Wigal
Emergency Coordinator
Amateur Radio Emergency Service
Monroe County, New York

Date