

2025 Mid-Year Report

Emergency Communications and Field Services Committee (EC & FSC)

As the EC FSC progresses, our committee remains committed to improving Emergency Communications and Field Services for our members. Our objective is to develop a more responsive, efficient, and collaborative setting that fortifies our Field Organization while involving the wider amateur radio community.

The new ARES training modules have been refined and promoted. The goal is to ensure volunteers are well-trained, proficient, and ready to serve when necessary. This includes emphasizing standard operating procedures, interoperability with served agencies, and proficiency in various digital and voice modes. Additionally, the aim is to equip local ARES groups with the tools and knowledge needed to succeed, particularly in challenging conditions.

Another portion of our work thus far has focused on our NTS and message handling systems. We have engaged in constructive discussions with Radio Relay International (RRI). While RRI operates independently, it shares a common goal with NTS in providing reliable message relay capabilities. Our discussions have focused on how RRI's methods and networks can complement NTS, especially for long-haul or specialized traffic. The goal is to create an ecosystem where amateur radio operators have diverse options for message handling, ensuring redundancy and adaptability. By coordinating with reliable traffic systems, we aim to enhance national readiness.

Our efforts to improve the field organization have also included attention to our Affiliated Clubs. Local clubs play a significant role in the amateur radio community by providing training, facilitating social connections, and participating in public service activities. We are actively seeking innovative ways to enhance our support for Affiliated Clubs, which includes the development of new resources tailored to their needs. This commitment reflects our understanding of the important role these clubs play in promoting amateur radio at the grassroots level.

By strengthening our support for local clubs, we aim to empower them to thrive and better serve their communities. Our ongoing efforts will ensure that these organizations continue to be vibrant and effective contributors to the amateur radio landscape.

Projects thus far for 2025:

ARES

- A complete rewrite of the ARES Training program has been undertaken with the Basic, Intermediate courses already implemented along with their respective Task Books. The Advanced and Leadership Courses are still a work in progress.
- A new ARES Banner has been introduced along with several new ARES brochures.
- An update to the ARES Plan has been completed.

- The July issue of QST marked the 90th anniversary of ARES. There is ongoing advertising support for ARES in nearly all editions of QST.
- Forms 2 and 4 have been fully implemented, enabling our ECs, DEC's, and SECs to complete their monthly reporting duties efficiently. Consistent improvement in reporting is now anticipated from all 71 sections.
- Quarterly meetings with the SECs by our Emergency Management Director has been underway and on a regular routine.
- The Net Directory is now operational. You can search for a net as well as modify one. There are plans for updates that will make the directory even more robust and easier for the member to use.
- ARES Group Registration is a work in progress. There are plans for a mapping program to be added so the user can quickly and easily find where an ARES group meets.

NTS:

- A motion to re-institute Area Staffs is one of several motions currently before this Board for action.
- An open collaboration with Radio Relay International (RRI) was begun in March of this year and has produced a good working relationship with them as well as a proposed MOU.
- Continued refinement and improvements are being made to NTS 2.0's Radiogram Portal project (nts2.arrl.org/radiogram) as it continues to evolve with enhancements and added functionality on the website.
- Continued growth in the NTS Newsletter is a reflection of how much interest there still is in handling traffic. It now has over 3,200 people viewing it every month.
- A new NTS Recognition Certificate that can be utilized by most of the Net Managers or Section Managers for special recognition within the NTS has been implemented.
- A new training project is available. This project is being conducted on Zoom for those who cannot use HF. Since it is not being conducted on R.F., it can include participants who are unlicensed, hold a Technician Class license, or are only licensed for GMRS to assist with their training.
- A new virtual traffic network has been initiated. This initiative aims to encourage Technician Class operators to engage in traffic handling, taking into account their limitations on HF frequency operations.
- To keep things interesting for our Traffic Handlers a "Treasure Hunt" was created and has been a huge success among the Traffic Handlers.

Clubs

- Club Primer has been rewritten and published to the website
- Official Rules and Regulations Concerning ARRL Hamfests, Conventions and Trunkfests has been rewritten and published to the website
- The ARRL Convention and Hamfest Primer was created and published to the website
- Rules and Regulations Concerning Affiliated Groups was updated and published to the website
- Creation of “Club Spotlight” for On The Air Magazine. It will feature a club and new club member who will write a short story about their experience coming into the club.
- A motion to establish the “Year of Clubs” is currently before this Board for action.

The EC FSC has been exceptionally active during this first half of 2025. I am very proud of the collaborative efforts and dedication demonstrated by all participants, including our committee members, HQ staff, and numerous field volunteers.

For the Committee: Chairman

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Director, Great Lakes Division

Members:

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