

National-Level ARESMAP

Major Disaster Coordination & Response Program

Overview

This program enables a supportive national-level ARRL response to major disasters that overwhelm existing local resources, or that span more than one ARRL Section. Two types of support can be requested:

- Wide area ARRL response coordination.
- Physical support in the form of ARES Mutual Assistance Program (ARESMAP) field teams and/or field kits from the ARRL national equipment cache.

The program is not intended to replace or displace the local ARRL leadership or members, but to be a supplement. However, in cases where no functional ARES or NTS program, leadership or response exists, a nationally organized physical response can be a stand-alone replacement.

Requests for national level support and coordination can be made to the ARRL Emergency Preparedness Manager's office at ARRL HQ by the Section Manager or Section Emergency Coordinator, or directly by a national-level served agency such as the American Red Cross, or any government entity.

Responses will be organized and coordinated by one or more Major Disaster Emergency Coordinators (MDEC), activated as necessary by the Disaster Response Manager (DRM).

Definitions

ARES Mutual Assistance Program (ARESMAP): A group of ARES volunteers from outside an affected area usually deployed in support of, and under the control of, a local ARES organization. *ARESMAP is a new program name. ARES Disaster Field Team (ADFT) now replaces the term ARESMAT (ARES Mutual Assistance Team).*

ARES Disaster Field Team (ADFT): An ad hoc ARESMAP support team created and deployed to meet one or more specific communication needs in a disaster area.

Disaster Response Manager (DRM): A volunteer or staff person at ARRL HQ temporarily assigned to manage a national support response this person could change several times a day in shifts. This position is nominally held by the EPM.

Emergency Preparedness Manager (EPM): A full-time paid ARRL employee with overall day-to-day responsibility for managing and coordinating the ARRL emergency programs at the national level. This person will also interface with national level served agencies.

Major Disaster Emergency Coordinator (MDEC): A volunteer field appointment, who, when activated, is responsible for coordinating national level response and support activity for a specific disaster.

MDEC Job Description

The MDEC coordinates ARRL's national level response to a specific disaster in concert with local and Section ARRL leadership in the affected area, ARRL HQ staff, and any requesting served agencies.

For national ARESMAP support requests, he or she is responsible for putting together appropriate Disaster Field Teams, supervising their deployment and return, coordinating outside logistical support to deployed teams when possible, and keeping all parties informed as to status and progress.

For network coordination support requests, the MDEC will work with national-level served agencies and Section and local ARRL staff to establish appropriate nets, improve traffic flow, and coordinate solutions to inter-jurisdictional issues that might arise.

For logistical support requests, the MDEC will work with Section and local ARRL staff and ARRL HQ to arrange for deployment of ARRL national equipment cache elements.

MDEC Appointments

Up to four MDECs may be appointed from each ARRL Division so that at least one will always be available. Candidates are proposed by Section Managers, and selected by the EPM. A lead MDEC will be assigned for each Division to help coordinate activities during and between activations. MDEC responsibilities and authority during an activation may not be limited to one Division, since disasters don't respect political boundaries.

MDEC Qualifications

ARRL members selected for MDEC appointments will have broad and deep emergency communications experience and training relevant to their region. They should be familiar with human and physical ARES assets in their region, and have good working relationships with other ARES leaders. MDECs will be familiar with served agency practices, procedures and methods. ARRL EC-01, EC-016, and FEMA COML or SPCL-AUXCOMM training is required. (Prior completion of EC-02 and EC-03, plus FEMA IS-100, IS-200, IS-700 and IS-800 may substitute for EC-016). If a proposed MDEC candidate has not completed either the AUXCOMM or COML courses, he/she may acquire them within 18 months of appointment. Completion of the COML Task book is not required.

MDEC Authority

Each MDEC carries out the duties of the position in accordance with ARRL policies established by the Board of Directors. MDECs report to the ARRL EPM, and when activated, to the DRM.

The MDEC must coordinate with relevant ARRL field staff and appointees when performing intra-Section duties. In no case will an MDEC or responding ADFT leader take direct leadership of an area without the express permission or request of any functioning local ARRL leadership or the ARRL Disaster Response Manager.

When not activated, the MDECs will develop relationships within the chain of command of the Amateur Radio emergency communications groups and served agencies within their Division. The MDECs are encouraged to periodically engage with appropriate SMs and SECs on HF nets, local repeater nets, internet-based VOIP nets, conference calls or webinar type meetings. SMs and SECs are encouraged to include their Division MDECs in their planning processes. MDECs are encouraged to communicate with each other regarding resources and planning. These duties are ongoing through the year.

National ARESMAP Database

ARRL HQ and the EPM maintain an online database of well-qualified ARES members who wish to make themselves available for national-level ARESMAP deployments. The database includes contact information, capabilities, and relevant training and skills. Members wishing to be listed must have the recommendation of, and training and other records reviewed by, their EC and DEC or SEC.

National Support Requests

Requests for national-level support will be made to the Emergency Preparedness Manager's office at ARRL HQ. Requests may come from Section Managers, Section Emergency Coordinators, or directly from served agencies with a national scope, or any national, state, county, or local government agency.

In the case of direct agency requests, the EPM will make every effort to contact and coordinate with any Section and local ARES staff. This program assumes that in some cases a local ARES or NTS program may not exist, or may be substantially incapacitated by the disaster. Responding ARESMAP teams will also make every effort to contact and coordinate with Section and local staff.

Types of Support

1) When a disaster involves two or more ARRL Sections, the DRM may activate an MDEC to assist Section leadership with coordinating frequencies and traffic flow, resource sharing, and coordination with national-level served agencies. The MDEC will work with local, Section, and national ARRL staffs to ensure that served-agency needs are being met. The MDEC will be responsible for a specific disaster, regardless of which ARRL Division(s) are involved.

2) When extra operators and/or equipment are requested, the DRM may activate an MDEC to coordinate the creation and deployment of ADFTs, and/or field kits from the ARRL national equipment cache.

MDEC Activation

An MDEC from within or nearby the affected Division, but well away from a current or projected danger area, will be activated by the DRM on an as-needed basis to coordinate a requested ARESMAP response. When a request is made, the DRM will select and activate both a Lead and one or more Assistant MDECs as needed, thus creating an ad hoc MDEC team.

ARES Disaster Field Team (ADFT)

Each Disaster Field Team will be created in response to a specific ARESMAP support request. The size and composition of the team will vary according to the requirements provided. Each team will have a Team Leader and Assistant Team Leader. The Team Leader will be initially appointed by the DRM, but the team may elect to choose a different leader at any time as the situation dictates. The Team Leader will choose the Assistant Team Leader.

ADFTs will be expected to be self-sufficient to the degree specified in the ARESMAP request, including communications gear, food, fuel, batteries, shelter, water, and personal needs.

Organization of a Physical ARESMAP Response

The MDEC recruits appropriately trained and equipped ARES members who have chosen to be registered in the national ARES database. Working with the EPM, the lead MDEC coordinates the response between the requesting party and responding ARES members, monitors their progress and activities, and helps provide any necessary logistical coordination while they are deployed or traveling.

The MDEC and their assistant(s) will put together Disaster Field Teams (ADFT), which will be under the direction of Team Leaders. An ADFT will be made up of resources appropriate to the need and/or request, and will operate under the direction of local ARRL leadership or the requesting entity, depending on the situation, and as directed by the MDEC.

Team size and capabilities should be appropriate to the envisioned assignment, allowing for adequate coverage and time for rest and personal needs.

Teams will be equipped for self-sufficiency when required by the requesting authority.

ADFTs will muster in their home area and travel to the disaster area as a group. ADFTs will maintain periodic communication with the MDEC or the DRM's office while en route and upon arrival, and will make periodic reports during the deployment.

For safety reasons it must be understood that each team will travel and function as a unit and not be sub-divided unless all parties agree. If subdivided, plans must be made to reconnect at the end of the deployment to permit the ADFT to travel home as a group. Team members must also attempt to maintain an awareness of each other's location and situation throughout the deployment.

National-Level ARESMAP Operational Structure

