

# **Amateur Radio Emergency Communications in the Tri-Valley**

Livermore Amateur  
Radio Klub  
August, 2001



# Are the following true or false?

- You have to be in the ARRL to be in ARES.
- In a national emergency, RACES comes under FEMA.
- You must have an amateur radio license to be in RACES.
- The recent Mt. Hamilton bike race was a RACES event.
- (All are FALSE!)

# A specific focus today – ARES and RACES

- Many organizations provide emergency communications, some incorporating amateur radio.
- NOT included today:
  - SKYWARN
  - MARS
  - REACT
  - ....

# **ARES – RACES**

## **They're the same – right?**

- **Within LARK – and much of the amateur radio community – we talk about them as being the same.**
  - *They are not!*
- **Part of this talk is to highlight similarities and differences, and why we care.**

# Amateur Radio Operations in Emergency Service

- **All amateur radio emergency service comes from the Federal Communications Commission Rules, Part 97**
  - **Amateur Radio Service is a “...voluntary non-commercial communications service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.”**
- **Service may be coordinated by government or private, non-profit organizations.**

# Amateur Radio Emergency Service - ARES

- ARES is coordinated and administered as part of the ARRL Field Organization.
- Membership in ARRL is not required to participate in ARES as an amateur radio operator.
- Membership in ARRL is required to participate in ARES/ARRL management.
- An ARRL training program in emergency communications is now available (Parts 1 & 2 available now, Part 3 this fall).

# **ARES**

## **- an organized group of volunteers**

- **Participation in ARES does not – of itself – bring special standing or protection (e.g., insurance).**
  - **ARES is a group of volunteers organized by a non-profit, national organization (ARRL).**
  - **Participation is as a private-citizen volunteer using a special federal license.**

# **ARES**

## **- Special agreements are allowed**

- **Local agreements may exist**
  - **ARRL has agreements with other non-profit organizations (American Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.).**
  - **Local agreements are allowed and can provide special standing, access, or protection.**

# The ARES/ARRL Organization for the Tri-Valley

- **Pacific Division Director: Jim Maxwell, W6CF**
- **East Bay Section Manager: Andy Oppel, N6AJO**
- **Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC):  
Paul Carlin, KE6NVU**
- **District Emergency Coordinator (DEC):**
  - **Alameda County – Jim Latham, KE6QJV**
- **Emergency Coordinators (EC):**
  - **Livermore – Roman Rusinek, KE6YCW**
  - **Pleasanton – Alan Mode, KK6ZL**
  - **Dublin – Ed Diemer, AE6D**

# **ARES Operations at the County level**

- **Major cities represented**
- **A weekly net – Tuesday, 2000 local, linked repeaters (147.12, 147.24, ....)**
- **Coordinating meetings held quarterly**
- **Some cities have elaborate programs, some provide limited coordination, some programs are in need of work.**

# **ARES in the Tri-Valley – Today**

- **ARES currently exists at the County level, but not at the city level; there are no local ARES plans.**
- **There are no local ARES agreements with organizations to provide amateur radio emergency service.**
- **Current activities (bike races, parades, etc.) are done as amateur radio operator volunteers, acting within the terms of ARES, but without ARES written agreements or approvals.**

# **ARES in the Tri-Valley – the Future**

- **Are our current activities wrong?**
  - **No! , ... but work is needed to clarify**
  - **who is doing what, for whom.**
  - **what is expected and what is going to be delivered.**
- **Can our activities all be handled under RACES?**
  - **No, ... and we would not want to do so. Important differences exist that we need to understand.**

# Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service - RACES

- Formally established in FCC Rules, Part 97, and operations in 97.407.
  - Must have a license to be a control operator.
- RACES “... is certified by a civil defense organization ....”
- RACES is not part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency – ever!
  - Reimbursement by FEMA requires an approved RACES plan. FEMA looks to each state to establish this approval process.

# RACES in California



- California OES includes RACES in its ACS organization.
- ACS follows CA emergency hierarchy: State – Region – County – City.
- Alameda County and several cities have RACES programs.

# Special rules and regulations for ACS

- **There must be an Auxiliary Communication Services Plan approved by the city and the county (the State no longer approves plans).**
- **Participants are Disaster Service Workers and must meet state DSW requirements.**
- **There must be a Disaster Council (Livermore and Pleasanton have Councils, Dublin not listed [4/2001] but has re-submitted paperwork to State).**

# **RACES in the Tri-Valley**

## **- History**

- **Livermore**

- Plan written, approved
- Plan never approved by County
- Volunteers enrolled, IDs issued
- Records in disarray
- Does not currently recognize RACES as part of emergency response

- **Pleasanton, Dublin**

- Plan written, approved
- Plan never approved by County
- Program never implemented

# **RACES in the Tri-Valley**

## **- A new RACES Plan**

- **Livermore and Pleasanton Fire Departments unified; disaster preparedness for both Cities under Fire Chief.**
- **Disaster Preparedness Manager wants RACES as part of emergency preparedness and response.**
- **Draft RACES Plan written and approved by Fire Chief, to be part of each City's Disaster Plan; final disaster plan currently being prepared.**

# **RACES in the Tri-Valley - an expanded role?**

- **Core plan to provide support to Livermore and Pleasanton EOCs, fire stations, and general support as requested by the Incident Commander(s).**
- **Additional requests are coming in:**
  - **Valley Care and Valley Memorial Hospitals**
  - **Livermore and Pleasanton school districts**
  - **Las Positas College**
  - **....**

# **RACES in the Tri-Valley**

## **- Where we are right now**

- **There is no RACES program in any of the tri-valley cities!**
  - **Current RACES IDs will not be recognized.**
- **RACES can not be implemented in Livermore-Pleasanton until a Plan is approved by the Cities.**
- **Once the Plans are approved, a new sign-up for RACES as DSW within State guidelines is required.**
- **Coordination of programs between Livermore-Pleasanton and Dublin is part of our planning.**

# **RACES in the Tri-Valley**

## **- Disaster Service Worker**

- **Application as a volunteer (we will use the State form )**
- **Loyalty oath**
- **New photo ID cards will be issued**
  - **Turn in old ID card at this time**
- **Training is required, but how much and in what form can be established locally.**

# **RACES in Livermore - Pleasanton**

## **- Two RACES Positions**

- **Radio operator**
  - **FCC license**
  - **DSW application completed**
  - **State loyalty oath administered**
  - **Photo ID issued**
  - **Training**
- **EOC Responder**
  - **Radio Operator**
  - **Fingerprints**
  - **Drug test (urine)**
  - **Background check (criminal record check and references)**
  - **EOC Responder ID issued**
  - **Specialized training**

# **RACES in the Tri-Valley**

## **- Dublin**

- **Dublin is not part of the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department and has a separate Plan.**
- **If not already allowed, the Plans should be easily coordinated.**
- **Recognition of RACES Radio Operator should be independent of the city of issue.**
- **Dublin hams can become EOC Responders for Livermore-Pleasanton; Dublin may want a similar program.**

# **ARES – RACES**

## **- Similar goal; different process**

### **● ARES**

- Private citizen volunteers**
- Organized by national non-profit organization**
- Activated by members**
- Participants generally have no special standing or protection (insurance)**

### **● RACES**

- Private citizen volunteers**
- Organized by local emergency jurisdiction**
- Activated by local government official**
- Participants are Disaster Service Workers with associated standing and protection (insurance)**

# So what are our activities? ARES? .... RACES?

- Right now our volunteer activities are just that: volunteer amateur radio operators going out to perform public service.
- If RACES is delayed, we may need to formalize local ARES plans before RACES.
- We still need an ARES Plan when RACES is not appropriate, or not yet requested.

# What's next?

- **Get a RACES Plan approved by Livermore and Pleasanton.**
- **Get DSW paperwork completed and IDs issued for all three cities.**
- **Get special approvals completed for EOC responders.**
- **Decide on required training and get it completed.**

# **The next steps will involve all of you.**

- **We must build and implement programs to assist and protect people when they volunteer.**
- **We need to meet the needs of an expanding community requesting help.**
- **Local hams have done an excellent job in the past – and we can do even more in the future!**