

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
TRI COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
AND
ARAPAHOE COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO
EMERGENCY SERVICE**



I. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for the authorization and activation of Amateur Radio Operators when needed in an emergency and to define the procedures to be followed.

II. Introduction to Amateur Radio and ARES

The Amateur Radio Service - The Amateur Radio Service consists of radio operators who are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission. Amateur Radio Operators are required to take examinations and to maintain these licenses in order to operate their equipment. These examinations test the operator's technical skills and knowledge of telecommunications, including FCC rules and regulations. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the national association for Amateur Radio, represents Amateur Radio Operators to federal agencies and international organizations with regards to emergency and other forms of communications.

Amateur Radio Emergency Service - Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), a non-commercial membership organization, to provide supplemental or emergency communications. Founded in 1935 as the Amateur Emergency Corps, ARES provides critical and essential communications during emergencies and disasters when normal communications have been disrupted. ARES members have volunteered their equipment and capabilities in the event of an emergency. Agencies currently served by Arapahoe County ARES include the City of Englewood Safety Services, City of Littleton, the American Red Cross, and the National Weather Service through the SKYWARN and Colorado All-Season Team (C.A.S.T.) programs.

Although the primary responsibility of ARES is to provide communications, Amateur Radio Operators may also be called upon as observers. Because most Amateur Radio Operators have mobile radios in their vehicles, ARES members may be called upon to perform duties such as windshield damage surveys, weather spotting during severe weather, or search functions.

III. Amateur Radio Operating Authority

The Communications Act of 1934, Section 606 as amended

Executive Order 12472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions

Amateur Radio Operators operate under Title 47 Code of Federal Regulations, US Code 151, 154(i) and (o); Chapter 1, Part, Subpart A, Sections 97.1, 97.105, 97.115, 97.301, and

Subpart E, Federal Communications Commission Rules and Regulations, Amateur Radio Service.

IV. Definitions

Activating Official is defined as a member of the Tri County Health Department authorized to activate Arapahoe County ARES in the public interest and to take responsibility for those who respond to this request.

ARES Officials is defined as a member of Arapahoe County ARES who can be contacted to request a response by its members. This includes the Emergency Coordinator, Officers and Team Leaders. These persons will take responsibility for calling as many Arapahoe County ARES members as possible to facilitate an adequate response for the emergency or event.

V. ARES Organization

Emergency Coordinator - Appointment to this position is by the ARRL Colorado Section Manager or the ARRL Colorado Section Emergency Coordinator. The Emergency Coordinator represents the ARRL at the local level and is responsible for all ARES activities. The Emergency Coordinator directs emergency operations of Amateur Radio Operators.

Assistant Emergency Coordinators (or Officers) - Appointed by the Emergency Coordinator, these officers help the Emergency Coordinator effectively manage ARES. These areas include Operations, Logistics, Training and Planning, and Administration and Finance.

VI. Training

Members of Arapahoe County ARES spend many hours each year training. In addition to weekly on-the-air training sessions, exercises are held six times a year with at least one major national exercise per year. Training sessions are also held six times per year at face-to-face meetings. Field Day, held in June each year, is used as a multi-day deployment exercise to test ARES ability to operate under unusual conditions for several days.

In order to make training exercises most effective, joint training and exercises between the Tri County Health Department and Arapahoe County ARES is encouraged as often as practical.

VII. Liability

Known as the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, US Public Law 105-19 protects volunteers from liability as long as they are acting within the scope of their training and responsibility. Colorado Revised Statutes also provides certain protection under the Volunteer Service Act (CRS 13-21-115.5). This statute, similar to the Federal law stated above, further protects

volunteers. Each member of ARES must evaluate the risk for responding to the request from the Tri County Health Department and may refuse should the risk be deemed too great.

Members of Arapahoe County ARES operate as outlined in the Arapahoe County ARES Emergency Response Plan and Operating Guide. This guide is distributed to all members.

VIII. Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (R.A.C.E.S.)

Arapahoe County Office of Emergency Management has designated Arapahoe County ARES as the official R.A.C.E.S organization in Arapahoe County and as such, is a registered Civil Defense organization. In the event of a national emergency where the President of the United States would invoke his War Emergency Powers, Amateurs Radio Operators enrolled in the local civil preparedness group would be limited to certain frequencies, while other amateur operations would be silenced. These include but are not limited to

- Natural Disasters
- Technological Disasters
- Nuclear Accidents
- Nuclear Attack
- Terrorist Incidents
- Bomb Threats; and
- Weapons of Mass Destruction

IX. Mobilization and Activation

Arapahoe County ARES will provide a current list of individuals authorized to activate ARES members. This list also provides the specific information needed for an appropriate response. The Tri County Health Department will make this list available to all personnel authorized to activate ARES, including dispatch personnel.

Arapahoe County ARES will coordinate other recognized auxiliary and emergency communications groups when ARES resources are inadequate to meet the needs of the Tri County Health Department during an emergency or event.

X. Worker Compensation

Arapahoe County ARES members, acting in response to activation by the Tri County Health Department will be covered under the Agency's Workers Compensation plan. Those members who are members of R.A.C.E.S. may also be eligible for Workers Compensation as determined by the Colorado Revised Statutes.

XI. Identification

The Tri County Health Department will provide or assist in obtaining proper identification for access to the Tri County Health Department's Emergency Operation Center and other

areas as required. These ID cards will identify ARES to officials during joint drills and emergency deployment. Although ARES members have submitted to background checks performed by the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office, additional checks may be performed as required for admission to sensitive areas such as the Tri County Health Department's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

XII. Tri County Health Department Operations Center

Space will be provided in the Tri County Health Department's Emergency Operations Center for radio equipment and operators. A minimum of two operators will man this station with more being deployed as other modes of operation are requested. The Tri County Health Department will also assist in obtaining necessary communications equipment and antennas as well as storage for this equipment. Equipment in place at the Emergency Operations Center and other areas will speed the response of Arapahoe County ARES personnel. In addition, members of the Tri County Health Department will assist Arapahoe County ARES with obtaining access to Amateur Radio related equipment for the purpose of testing and maintenance.

XIII. Other Operating Stations

Arapahoe County ARES will further assist the Tri County Health Department in coordinating Amateur Radio responses from counties other than Arapahoe County. This will result in seamless communications with other Tri County Health Offices.

Amateur Radio operators may also be asked to provide supplemental communications, including but not limited to Voice, Amateur Radio Television (ATV) and digital communications (packet) and Slow Scan Television (SSTV).

XIV. Summary

This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect upon signature by authorized officials of the Arapahoe County Amateur Radio Emergency Service and Tri County Health Department. This memorandum may be amended by mutual agreement of both parties, and shall remain in effect until terminated. Arapahoe County Amateur Radio Emergency Service and the Tri County Health Department will periodically review and coordinate such revisions as may be necessary. Upon ninety (90) days written notice, either party may terminate this memorandum.

On File

Tri County Health Department

12/22/2005

Date

On File

Emergency Coordinator,
Arapahoe County
Amateur Radio Emergency Service

12/29/2005

Date