

GREEN VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
601 NORTH LA CANADA DRIVE GREEN VALLEY, ARIZONA 85614-3440
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Over a half million people in the U.S., who call themselves Amateur Radio operators, or hams, are part of a global fraternity. Radio amateurs serve the public as a voluntary, noncommercial, communication service. Throughout its history, amateurs have established a reputation for public service communications helping on the local and national levels. In as much as Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), a part of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), a division of the Civil Defense organization, are both missions of the Green Valley Amateur Radio Club (GVARC), only ARES is outlined in depth here. Procedures for RACES are similar with ARES, but with authority from a much higher state and federal level, and for civil defense purposes only. Only civil-preparedness communications can be transmitted during RACES operation, and only to another RACES station. Restrictions do not apply when stations operation in a non-RACES amateur capacity such as ARES.

1.2 GVARC ARES is composed of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators who voluntarily register their capabilities and equipment for public service communication duty.

1.3 Under Federal regulations, Amateur Radio public service communications are furnished without compensation of any kind.

1.4 The Green Valley ARES functions are under the direction of the GVARC's Emergency Coordinator who may appoint assistant coordinators as needed by the ARES to function efficiently. Selection of the Emergency Coordinator is the responsibility of the GVARC president and with a majority membership vote approval.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this plan is to provide a written guide containing minimum information that would be needed in an emergency. Each emergency is different and flexibility to provide an adequate

response to each is a necessity.

2.2 The primary responsibility of the *GVARC ARES* is to furnish communication when regular communications fail or are inadequate.

2.3 The following agencies could be served during a communication emergency: sheriff, fire district, sheriff auxiliary volunteers, neighborhood watch and other groups.

3. ACTIVATING THE PLAN

3.1 Any member of the *GVARC* who for any reason suspects a communications emergency will begin the function of Net Control while alerting the *GVARC* Emergency Coordinator and monitoring amateur radio operators.

3.2 If local telephone service is available, *GVARC's* Emergency Coordinator and *GVARC's* officers are notified by telephone.

3.3 In an emergency in which Amateur Radio might serve the community, operators may be alerted by any city, county, state, federal, civil preparedness or similar official through the *GVARC'S* Emergency Coordinator.

4. CONFIGURATION

4.1 This plan presents two communication nets to cover the geographical areas of the *ARES*. It assumes the *GVARC* 2-meter and 70-centimeter repeaters will provide the main communication links. It further establishes individual nets to serve specific geographical areas using Simplex Mode when other communication is unavailable.

4.2 The area of *Green Valley ARES* are generally configured to be *Green Valley* and *Sahuarita* (Net 1), and *Elephant Head*, *Continental*, *Amado*, *Tubac*, *Rio Rico* and *Arivaca* (Net 2). For map locations within *Green Valley*, refer to the centerfold in the *Green Valley Area Community Directory*.

5. ARES MOBILIZATION PROCEDURE

5.1 If telephone service is available, the *GVARC* telephone "tree" is

activated. The "tree" consists of GVARC operators who volunteer to become part of the emergency system. Volunteers are selected in a limited number by the Emergency Coordinator to represent as many neighborhood communities as possible. At times when outside emergency sources may request names of Amateur Radio operators, the Emergency Coordinator is guided by the fact that only volunteer names may be given out and only by the Emergency Coordinator. The volunteer list is not for general dissemination. (See Attachment A)

5.2 Upon awareness or notification that a communications emergency exists, any GVARC operator can assume initial Net Control until relieved by the Emergency Coordinator or assistant. If away from normal telephone service, an on-site Amateur Radio operator can call attention to the emergency by announcement over GVARC's repeater on 145.290 VHF and/or 449.375 UHF. If the repeater is down, GVARC operators will use Simplex Mode, 145.630 VHF and/or 445.550 UHF or another frequency assigned by the Emergency Coordinator.

5.3 Mobile units are activated and dispatched.

5.4 The Emergency Coordinator assumes Net Control or delegates the on-site GVARC operator or another station. When possible, Amateur Radio control will be from the Green Valley Sheriff Auxiliary Volunteer headquarters. The chosen Emergency Coordinator must be familiar with the radio room and its equipment.

5.5 The GVARC radio room is designated as usual Net Control and will be extensively utilized during the Communication or evacuation emergency. Net Control will have full emergency power capability with relief operators assigned from the "tree" to ensure continuous operation. At the discretion of the Emergency Coordinator, additional help may be obtained from GVARC membership.

6. OPERATION

6.1 Operators do not transmit after check-in unless invited to do so by Net Control. The only exception to this is for a station having EMERGENCY traffic. Operators are guided by the message precedence of EMERGENCY, PRIORITY, WELFARE and ROUTINE during

transmissions.

6.2 When possible, message traffic must be logged with the official or operator who originates it, along with his title ~ he or she taking responsibility for its content.

7. DEFINITIONS

7.1 Public Service: Any non-commercial activity for which communications are needed to enable its safe conduct.

7.2 Competent Official: Any executive authorized to request assistance in the public interest and to assume responsibility for those who respond to a request.

7.3 Emergency: Any situation posing a threat to the safety of life or property. Examples include, but are not limited to: tornado, severe thunderstorm, flood, widespread fire, discharge of toxic gas or chemical from nearby rail or highway, civil disorder, mass movement of illegal and any other event declared an emergency by competent authority.

8. ORGANIZATION

8.1 Amateur Radio networks may be organized to accommodate any of the following:

a. Amateur Coordination Net: A communication circuit among various officials, agencies or services not normally in contact with each other.

b. Amateur Point-to-Point Communications: Direct communications between any two or more points, without the use of a repeater.

c. Amateur Observation Net: Spotters may be positioned in strategic locations to report observations of local conditions back to Net Control or other officials.

d. Amateur Back-Up and Supplementary Communications: Where a public safety radio system may be lost or overloaded,

amateurs are capable of providing necessary communications, supplementing or replacing the primary system.

9. LIABILITY

9.1 Under Arizona law, amateurs may be called to render public service when a competent official recognizes that an emergency condition exists and requests that such service be rendered. In the event of a wide area emergency, when assistance is requested by civil preparedness officials, liability is assumed by the State of Arizona. When such assistance is requested by a local official, liability is assumed by the jurisdiction of the requesting official.

10. MOBILIZATION

10.1 Amateurs will immediately establish communications with the GVARC Emergency Coordinator or assistant on 145.290 VHF or some alternate communication to determine first caller precedent, whenever:

- a. Direct observation indicates that an emergency condition might exist.
- b. An ALERT or WARNING is issued on NOAA Weather Radio or the Arizona Emergency Broadcast System.
- c. Called by the Emergency Coordinator or fellow amateur operator in accordance with the telephone alerting "tree" or other amateur radio system.

11. INFORMATION FOR OPERATORS

11.1 Amateur radio operators are trained communicators. When acting in that capacity, they are not interpreters, evaluators or field commanders. Their purpose is to transmit messages given to them by responsible officials.

11.2 Messages must be written and signed by name and title of the responsible official.

11.3 By this plan, amateurs are prohibited from transmitting personal

observations or opinions, unless specifically requested by a responsible official. This avoids misinterpretation by citizens who may be listening on scanners.

12. STORM SPOTTER NET

12.1 Not to be confused with ARES, the Storm Spotter Net provides pinpoint and timely warning of immediate tornado, flood and severe atmospheric happenings to the Tucson National Weather Service.

12.2 Qualified storm spotters are certified GVARC operators who have official Weather Bureau Identification Numbers and work under the direction of the Tucson National Weather Service. Of importance to the general GVARC membership, any Amateur Radio operator may access true Storm Spotter Net with an emergency sighting. The Spotter Net and GVARC's Emergency Coordinator share the GVARC repeater on 145.290 VHF frequency. When necessary, the Spotter Net also uses the Tucson repeater at 146.880 VHF frequency.

ATTACHMENT: Volunteer list

Drafter: KC7OEE (RJohChat@aol.com)