

April 11, 2016

FROM: Steve Szabo WB4OMM, NFL Section Manager

TO: All ARES and Field Organization Leadership

Good Morning! *And thanks for being part of the greatest hobby/service in the world!*

This e-mail is being furnished to the entire ARES and Field Organization Leadership and copied to ARRL officials. It's a bit long and **it is important that you read it all.**

Attached is the revised **2016 Northern Florida Section Communications Plan**. It has been reduced in size, new modes added, and updated. As a counterpart had duly noted, it is historic and unprecedented as this plan now is in agreement and coordinated with the State EOC and the South Florida and West Central Florida Sections. It is in essence, it is an integrated state plan with all three sections and the State working as one team for the benefit of the community and Amateur Radio Service.

The revised Comm Plan "pushes" the operational level back to the local County Emergency Coordinators, and allows for the appropriate choice of technology or mode of communication based on the need at the time of the activity. As I have espoused since my election (and well before), I fully support the FEMA statement of, "all emergencies are local". Hence, the Plan allows for the local EC to work with the local served agency and collaborate, coordinate, partner as needed to fulfill the needs of the community, while still remaining within the guidelines of their appointment in the ARRL ARES organization.

Effective with the date of this e-mail, the position of District Emergency Coordinator will no longer be filled with the exception of the Crown District. As the Crown District has fully adapted the district role and established a district web page, reporting system and the like, it will remain as previously established with John Reynolds W4IJJ as the DEC. I have spoken to 3 of the 4 of the other effected DECs (yes, 6 districts are, and have been vacant for some time) and they understand my reasoning for this change. The Districts will remain as they have, we will just not have DECs.

This is in no way a reflection on any of the DECs now or formally in the position – it is my choice to avoid the challenge of filling more positions and trying to eliminate another layer of bureaucracy. In many cases these former DECs were already serving "double duty" as the DEC and EC (and more!). I appreciate the efforts the DECs have provided in the past and thank them for their time and dedication. An important reason for this change is the State, Federal, and EM agencies are all structured by county, and the individual county EOC is the only recognized point of local communication/coordination in the Florida EM document. There is no provision for our "district" level in their response plans. West Central Florida does not have districts – South Florida does but does not have active DECs to my knowledge. Our revised plan and organizational structure change now syncs with the State and other organizational partners we serve.

All ECs should have a local county Comm Plan, and if not, get one! Revise, update or originate your plan, coordinate it with your served agency, and get a copy to Strait Hollis KT4YA by May 31, 2016.

I have attached a current ARES leadership listing – however, **I am asking each EC to nominate ONLY ONE Assistant EC as an alternate for the list purpose** (the others can still be in the Yahoo!Group and your local listing). I will be validating this list (phone contact numbers and e-mails) in the immediate near future and will get an update out ASAP.

Our webmaster Bert Garcia has established a dedicated ARES page on the NFL Web site. In it, you will now find an automated, “fill-in the blank” Monthly EC Reporting Form. **Effective with the May EC report, all ECs will use this portal to report local data.** (It takes some 42 seconds to fill in the necessary information and send it – and it automatically is routed to the SEC Strait Hollis KT4YA). No more unwieldy FSD-212 report forms! Bert has and will continue the process of including other necessary information for ARES groups on this same page. **EC Monthly reports are not optional; they are required.** Failing to report as obligated is cause for removal. Sorry I have to say this, but some folks seem like they just can’t/won’t get the message. **Those of you who send in detailed reports with various activity descriptions, photos and the like.....please keep sending them!** Just use the web page entry for the numbers, and continue to send me and Strait the detailed reports with the activities and photos, etc. We will forward those to the Newsletter editor, Webmaster, and various ARRL staff as we have in the past. Here is the Monthly EC Portal link: http://arri-nfl.org/?page_id=4787

This past week, I have filled the State Government Liaison, Section Youth Coordinator, Section Public Information Officer Coordinator, Section Club Coordinator, and Technical Specialist Coordinator Positions. Additionally, I have appointed 4 new Assistant Section Managers, and 4 new EC positions that were vacant - more to come. Most are already listed on the NFL Web Page at: http://arri-nfl.org/?page_id=2781.

Check your ARRL Membership status – this weekend I discovered several ARES leadership folks that had expired ARRL membership. While you do not need membership to participate in ARES, you are required to have it to be in a leadership position.

I will be forwarding the 2016 Florida Statewide Hurricane Exercise materials shortly, I am waiting for the State EOC to finalize our participation and the documents to go out to you. The Wednesday, May 18th exercise participation date for all three Florida ARES sections is still valid. NFL Section Emergency Coordinator Strait Hollis KT4YA is ultimately to be the “point man” for this exercise activity.

Thanks for taking the time out of your busy day to read this e-mail, and review the materials attached. If you have any questions or need clarification, please send me an e-mail so I can respond – and please send them to me DIRECTLY, not as a “reply all” to this message.

RECAP:

- Review the Revised Section Comm Plan
- Review and revise your local county Comm Plan (If you don’t have one, now is a good time to do one! – Get a copy to Strait KT4YA as soon as you can, but no later than May 31, 2016).
- Review the updated EC List and nominate ONE AEC alternate (with valid phone/e-mail address)
- Check your ARRL membership status (get it re-activated if necessary!)
- Use the NFL Web Page Portal starting with the May 2016 EC Monthly Report.
- Accept my appreciation for all of your hard work and efforts!!!!

My heartfelt thanks for all you do! **REMEMBER THAT MONDAY, APRIL 18th IS INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR RADIO DAY!**

EVERYBODY COUNTS!

73!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Szabo".

Steve Szabo WB40MM

NFL Section Manager

ARRL, The National Association for Amateur Radio™

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