

**North Texas Section  
ARES®  
District Emergency Coordinator Guidelines**

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# North Texas Section ARES® District Emergency Coordinator Guidelines

## I. District Emergency Coordinators (DECs)

The North Texas Section ARES® District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) Guidelines document coexists with and does not supersede the Section Emergency Plan or any current ARRL documentation.

It is important to remember, that each North Texas Section DEC must take their district's unique operations into consideration. This document is intended to be a uniform guide for overseeing your districts plan for ARES® operations.

This guide provides information for Section DEC operations:

- Guidelines on the recommendations and use of Assistant District Emergency Coordinators (ADECs)
- Guidelines on recommending Emergency Coordinators (EC) appointments, as well as the removal.
- Information for when to contact the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) to obtain assistance in the resolution of local and district problems.

Providing support and guidance to the local ECs is one the DEC's primary duties. You should not confuse this duty with running a county's ARES® program for the EC. Offer help when requested by the EC, or when you feel you can provide value-added assistance. Provide a strong role model at your level of responsibility.

The DEC should encourage and urge ECs to complete the monthly report (FSD-212) and send a copy to their respective DEC. These reports support ARRL in spectrum protection activities.

The DEC shall keep the SEC up to date on the status and operations within his or her district with at least twice yearly report. (End of June and December)

The DEC should appoint an Assistant District Emergency Coordinator (ADEC) to assist if and when the DEC is unavailable for duty.

**NOTE:** Any issue within a county, no matter how trivial it may be, is to be reported to the SEC, even if the issue is / has been reported to the SEC previously or via other means.

These guidelines are distributed to all Section DECs and Assistant District Emergency Coordinator should an event occur in which he or she needs to stand in for the District Emergency Coordinator.

### **The official DEC job description as outlined from the ARRL:**

The ARRL District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) is appointed by the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) to supervise the efforts of local Emergency Coordinators in the defined district. The DEC's duties involve the following:

- Coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of Emergency Coordinators in your district of jurisdiction.
- Make local decisions in the absence of the SEC or through coordination with the SEC, concerning the allotment of available amateurs and equipment during an emergency.
- Coordinate the interrelationship between local emergency plans and between communications networks within your area of jurisdiction.
- Act as backup for local areas without an Emergency Coordinator and assist in maintaining contact with governmental and other agencies within your area of jurisdiction.
- Provide direction in the routing and handling of emergency communications of either a formal or tactical nature, with specific emphasis being placed on Welfare traffic.
- Recommend EC appointments to the SEC.
- Coordinate the reporting and documenting of ARES activities in your district of jurisdiction.
- Act as a model emergency communicator as evidenced by dedication to purpose, reliability and understanding of emergency communications.
- Be fully conversant in National Traffic System routing and procedures as well as have a thorough understanding of the locale and role of all vital governmental and volunteer agencies that could be involved in an emergency.
- Encouraged to earn certification in Levels 1 and 2 of the ARRL Emergency Communications Course.  
(DECs must have Full ARRL membership)

## Mutual Assistance and Coordination between Counties within Your District

### Mutual Aid within Districts

It is the responsibility of the DEC and the ECs within the district to establish a process for providing mutual aid between elements of the ARES structure in that district. Such requests for mutual aid are usually triggered by two conditions. The first condition would be that the requirement for staffing, staging, number of shifts and required equipment cannot be met at a local level. The second condition is that the hazard to which the ARES organization is responding involves multiple counties within the district. In such instances, the DEC or their delegate assumes the role of the Incident Commander. It is important that pre planning be done to ensure that a request for mutual aid within a district has been addressed. The DEC should advise the SEC when cross county mutual aid is implemented.

- The local EC or DEC will give first priority to the area/district to which they have responsibility.
- The EC should immediately report the need for support to respond to the mutual aid request to the DEC. The DEC is responsible for providing such support if possible. If it is not possible then the DEC should report the request to the DEC of a neighboring district for assistance or to the SEC.

At any time a Mutual Aid request is received, the receiving coordinator shall notify the SEC. In turn the SEC will notify the SM. The SM has overall responsibility for the section in mutual aid response.

Many times a public service event, drill, or in worse case an actual emergency will consume the ARES resources (volunteer and equipment) within your district or county. Planning and coordinating with your neighboring DEC's and ECs will help ease these problems. Knowing who to contact and when can be confusing.

When you need assistance notify the SEC.

CONDITION:	NOTIFY:
Local ARES® group cannot meet needs to address event or incident.	Notify adjacent ARES® groups or ECs and the SEC.
Event or Incident is spread across multiple counties.	Notify ECs of affected counties and the SEC.
Event or incident spreading to adjacent district.	Notify the SEC and adjacent District DEC.

When requesting assistance you will need to provide the following information:

1. Number of communicators required along with what kind of equipment will be needed? (Use CRFs if known)
2. How long assistance is needed (you can estimate this)
3. What kind of physical and weather conditions in which they will be operating?
4. Where to report? (Staging Area, Hospital, Open field, etc) Give location details.

## II. Assistant District Emergency Coordinators (ADECs)

### **Recommending ADEC appointments**

In the North Texas Section, the SM has granted the SEC the appointing authority for the ADEC position, with the recommendation of the DEC. It is recommended that the ADEC position be a promotable position. ADECs should be promoted from existing ECs or AECs within the District with the following exceptions:

- The ADEC position cannot be filled by the skills of existing ECs or AECs, or
- No ECs / AECs are interested in the ADEC position.

Only then will ADECs be appointed from outside the EC or AEC ranks. This provides more opportunities for ARES® members to enter into the leadership ranks, backfilling vacated EC / AEC spots.

It is recommended that the ADEC position not be a "dual-role" appointment. ADECs should not double as ECs or AECs within counties. The "one-person / one-job" role ensures that the ADEC is not pulled in different directions, with multiple commitments. Having to take the time to determine where and how the person is serving ARES® takes vital time away from being responsive to the emergency at hand. However, it is better to have ADECs appointed rather than not at all. It is up to the DEC to use their best judgment on the recommendation of these appointments.

To have an ADEC appointed, the:

- DEC will recommend the appointment to the SEC, and submit to the SEC application form FSD-156 (EC/DEC Application).
- The SEC will then appoint/reject the application, and if approved, will forward to the ARRL for submittal to the ARRL Database.
- After approval, the ADEC will be sent info from the league, and the SEC will provide a certificate for the new appointee.

Understanding that there can be exceptions to the above guidelines, any unique situations for appointment should be discussed with the SEC.

### **The official ADEC job description as outlined from the ARRL:**

1. The Assistant District Emergency Coordinator (ADEC) may serve as a general assistant to the District Emergency Coordinator or as a specialist. That is, the ADEC may assist the District Emergency Coordinator with general leadership matters as the District Emergency Coordinator's alternate, or the ADEC may be assigned to handle a specific important function that does not fall within the scope of the duties of the District Emergency Coordinator's other assistants. The ADEC will act as the DEC in his/her absence or in emergency response operations to maintain continuity of leadership when 24 hour activity requires multiple shifts.
2. At the Section Manager's discretion, the ADEC may be designated as the recommended successor to the incumbent District Emergency Coordinator in case the District Emergency Coordinator resigns or is otherwise unable to finish the term of office.
3. The ADEC should be familiar with the "Official Appointment Description for the ARRL District Emergency Coordinator," which contains the fundamental responsibilities of the DEC.
4. Assistant District Emergency Coordinators are encouraged to complete Levels 1 and 2 of the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course.

(ADECs must have Full ARRL membership)

### III. Emergency Coordinators (ECs)

In the North Texas Section ECs are recommended by the DEC and approved by the SEC. Consideration should be given to recommendations by the outgoing EC. After that AECs and qualified ARES<sup>®</sup> members should be considered.

#### **Recommending EC appointments**

If and when a county within your district lacks an EC appointment, your job as DEC is to be the acting EC for that county, until a local EC can be appointed. In those conditions, refer to the EC Guidelines for assistance.

At some time you will have an EC resign within your district. The following are guidelines for making EC appointment recommendations to the SEC:

- Notify the SEC of the resignation as soon as possible. Contact the outgoing EC to see if they have a recommendation for a person to take over the position, if they do,
  - a. Schedule a meeting with the new prospect. Find if they have any qualifications (experience, training, etc.).
  - b. See if they have a good relationship with other ARES volunteers, and served agencies.
- If there is no standing recommendation, then an "all call" for potential EC candidates should be conducted. Contact with all local Amateur Radio clubs and organizations is suggested.
- Once you have a recommended candidate, have the candidate submit ARRL application FSD-156 to you as well as the SEC. The SEC will review and finalize appointment through the ARRL.
- Ensure that all materials are transferred to the new EC in a timely manner once appointed.

When you make an EC recommendation, consider that support and respect from other ARES<sup>®</sup> members will carry a lot of weight. The EC position is mostly leadership and relationships. It is important to not drag out the EC appointee selection process. This can frustrate the current ARES<sup>®</sup> group, potential ARES<sup>®</sup> members, and reduce the effectiveness of ARES<sup>®</sup> to local served agencies should Amateur Radio operations come to a crawl within a county.

#### **The official EC job description as outlined from the ARRL:**

- Promote and enhance the activities of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) for the benefit of the public as a voluntary, non-commercial communications service.
- Manage and coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of interested amateurs working in support of the communities, agencies or functions designated by the Section Emergency Coordinator/Section Manager.
- Establish viable working relationships with federal, state, county, city governmental and private agencies in the ARES jurisdictional area which need the services of ARES in emergencies. Determine what agencies are active in your area, evaluate each of their needs, and which ones you are capable of meeting, and then prioritize these agencies and needs. Discuss your planning with your Section Emergency Coordinator and then with your counterparts in each of the agencies. Ensure they are all aware of your ARES group's capabilities, and perhaps more importantly, your limitations.
- Develop detailed local operational plans with "served" agency officials in your jurisdiction that set forth precisely what each of your expectations are during a disaster operation. Work jointly to establish protocols for mutual trust and respect. All matters involving recruitment and utilization of ARES volunteers are directed by you, in response to the needs assessed by the agency officials. Technical issues involving message format, security of message transmission, Disaster Welfare Inquiry policies, and others, should be reviewed and expounded upon in your detailed local operations plans.
- Establish local communications networks run on a regular basis and periodically test those networks by conducting realistic drills.
- Establish an emergency traffic plan, with Welfare traffic inclusive, utilizing the National Traffic System as one active component for traffic handling. Establish an operational liaison with local and section nets, particularly for handling Welfare traffic in an emergency situation.

- In times of disaster, evaluate the communications needs of the jurisdiction and respond quickly to those needs. The EC will assume authority and responsibility for emergency response and performance by ARES personnel under his jurisdiction.
- Work with other non-ARES amateur provider-groups to establish mutual respect and understanding, and a coordination mechanism for the good of the public and Amateur Radio. The goal is to foster an efficient and effective Amateur Radio response overall.
- Work for growth in your ARES program, making it a stronger, more valuable resource and hence able to meet more of the agencies' local needs. There are thousands of new Technicians coming into the amateur service that would make ideal additions to your ARES roster. A stronger ARES means a better ability to serve your communities in times of need and a greater sense of pride for Amateur Radio by both amateurs and the public.
- Report regularly to the SEC, as required.
- Encouraged to earn certification in Level 1 of the ARRL Emergency Communications Course.

(ECs must have Full ARRL membership)

### Removal of an EC Appointment

Should the situation occur, you, the DEC will have to deal with recommending the removal of an EC from their position. There is no “feel good” way to handle this. The thing to keep in mind is that only the SEC can authorize the actual removal of an EC. You, as the DEC, need to follow the guidelines listed below in making the recommendation to the SEC:

- **Document ... document ... document!** Just saying to the SEC that the EC needs to go is not adequate. The DEC shall provide solid documented reasons (i.e., Recommendations from served agencies, examples of poor performance, lack of communications, etc.) for the SEC to review in the decision process. The SEC will then confer with the SM on the outcome of the review.
- Once you provide the recommendation to the SEC, and the SEC finds that the situation warrants the removal of the EC, your job is completed. The SEC will contact the EC in question and start the removal process. The SEC may contact the DEC of the district for additional information, feedback, etc.
- Only under restrictive conditions will the SEC give the DEC authority to remove an EC from their appointment. Prior to the approval being given, sufficient documentation shall be provided to the SEC by the DEC. At no other time is a DEC authorized to remove an EC without prior approval of the SEC.

The written communication, letter or email, should thank the EC for their past service and advise the EC their service is no longer required. The written communication should not, under any circumstance, state a reason for the decision to terminate the EC's service.



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### **ACCEPTANCE OR TERMINATION OF FIELD SERVICE VOLUNTEERS**

1. The ARRL is not obligated to accept volunteer service from anyone.
2. The ARRL is not obligated to continue to accept volunteer service from anyone, even if it has accepted such service in the past.
3. The ARRL does not discriminate in accepting volunteer service based on suspect classifications, including race, skin color, nationality, sex, age, sexual orientation, or religion.
4. The ARRL does not require criminal background or credit checks as a precondition to volunteer service.
5. Local Field Service units may conduct searches of public databases when considering whether to accept volunteer services.
6. If local Field Service units wish to terminate the volunteer service of any existing member, the ARRL has determined the primary responsibility for notifying the volunteer of the decision to terminate the volunteer's service should lie with the Section Manager, or his designee. This procedure permits a uniform response to be maintained across all Sections. The written communication from the Section Manager, or his designee, should substantially conform to the form provided by the ARRL. The written communication, letter or email, should thank the volunteer for the volunteer's past service and advise the person their service is no longer required. The written communication should not, under any circumstance, state a reason for the decision to terminate the volunteer's service.
7. Local Filed Service units may decline to accept volunteer service based on the results of public database searches, provided the decision to decline volunteer service is not based on suspect classifications. However, no reason should be stated, orally or in writing, for the unit's decision not to accept the volunteer's service.

