Operations Order

To: Western Massachusetts ARES Members

From: WS1L, Western Massachusetts Section Emergency Coordinator

CC: AA1SE, Western Massachusetts Section Manager

Date: 26 September 2023

Re: WMA Simulated Emergency Test

**Introduction**

The following is the Simulated Emergency Test for the Western Massachusetts Section for the calendar year 2023. The test period will run from 1000 local (1400 Zulu) Saturday, 21 October 2023 through 1000 local (1400 Zulu) Sunday, 22 October 2023.

**SITUATION**

Repeated patterns of wet weather have been experienced throughout the Western Massachusetts section, leaving soils saturated and incapable of absorbing additional rainfall. Several instances of flooding have already led to road washouts impacting the transportation sector.

The first arctic cold front of the season approaches with a large pressure differential producing a sudden onset of high winds. With root systems already weakened in soft soil, large numbers of trees are felled throughout the section. Multiple roads become impassible. Wire and cable damage has lead to degradation of the Public Switched Telephone and cellular networks. Calls placed without GETS/WPS are taking up to one hour to complete.

Resource requests for high priority items are ready to transport via air to local airports but with no ability to receive local weather conditions at those airports ARES has been tasked with reporting local airport weather information.

**MISSION**

WMA ARES members will attempt to receive local airport weather information broadcast on the VHF-AM Aviation Band of 119-136 MHz. Any weather reports received will be transcribed for later reporting. WMA ARES members will report the information received during ARES nets to be held within the 24-hour exercise period. US Army MARS stations will attempt to check in to these nets and receive these reports. Reports may also be sent via WinLink.

**EXECUTION**

WMA ARES members will attempt to receive local airport weather broadcasts in the VHF-AM Aviation Band from 119-136 MHz. A list of local airport weather frequencies will be provided. Members may elect to establish a temporary station at an advantageous position in order to improve their chances of receiving one or more airports.

Members who are able to receive these reports will transcribe the weather reports so that they may be reported to US Army MARS.

Members who are unable to receive airport weather reports are requested to report that fact, along with their location, in order to alert authorities to any airports that may not be operational or that may have degraded weather reporting capabilities.

ARES members will check in to local ARES nets to pass the weather reports to US Army MARS stations on that net. Members may also send these reports via WinLink at any time during the exercise period.

**ADMINISTRATIVE & LOGISTICS**

This SET will require the following ICS forms:

* ICS-202 Incident Objectives (summarizing this operations plan)
* ICS-204 Assignment List (for DEC’s to assign members to particular airports or remote locations and to report member activity)
* ICS-205 Incident Communications Plan (showing ARES nets for reporting to US Army MARS)
* ICS-217 Communications Availability Worksheet (listing WMA airport weather channels)

District Emergency Coordinators will notify ARES members of this exercise at least one week in advance and solicit their participation. Non-members will not be solicited to participate in order to test the readiness of ARES members, however any non-ARES members who express an interest may be allowed to take part.

District Emergency Coordinators may add components to this exercise if they see fit and as needed by local considerations.

An after-action review will be conducted via Zoom within two weeks of the conclusion of the SET. Lessons learned will be reduced to writing and published to the WMA ARES Leadership Team.

**COMMAND & SIGNAL**

The Section Emergency Coordinator will submit the SET Operations Order to the Section Manager for their approval. Once approved, each District Emergency Coordinator will publish the Operations Order to their members and solicit their participation using the membership database email tool.

DEC’s may, at their discretion, assign ARES members to receive weather information from particular airports or to staff particular remote locations as needed.

The SET is anticipated to run for a 24-hour period from 1000 local on Saturday 21 October 2023 until 1000 local on Sunday 22 October 2023. This will allow members to have sufficient time to monitor airport weather broadcasts and to report them on regular Sunday ARES nets. ARES members with WinLink capabilities may also send their weather report reception information via WinLink at any time during the 24-hour exercise period.