

Georgia S.E.C. Report - July August 2016

It's been a busy year and there's more to come before the cool months get here. A number of nets and activities are on the schedule.

::

MARS COMEX DRILL IN AUGUST::

::

MARS is conducting another COMEX (Communications Exercise) drill in August [on or about August 15th]. We are a little more prepared with information for this drill. One of the things to know and understand is that the 60 meter Amateur band is an excellent area to interoperate with other potential government agencies for emergency communication purposes - in this case interoperation with MARS. For the August COMEX drill, MARS will use the 5 MHz Amateur channels (60 meters) for communications with the Amateur community. MARS stations are also licensed Amateur operators and so communications is possible with MARS liaison stations using their Amateur call sign. This exercise will focus on request for information for county status reports, weather observations, proximity to population centers, military installations, power plants, etc. Do you have the capability to use 60 meters? If the answer is yes, then go to the Georgia ARES web site (<https://gaares.org>) and click on the MARS link and look over the available documents. There is an explanation on the operational procedures for Amateur communications on 60 meters. There are also documents that give information about the kind of information that MARS stations might be looking for during a COMEX. If you have the capability to communicate on 60 meters but you've never ventured into the 60 meter channels, this is the time to become familiar with doing so. Remember, getting the experience now pays off when you really have to do something serious. While 60 meters has some unique and specific operating requirements, it offers an excellent location to potentially operate with and assist other communication entities during an emergency. Look for a more detailed announcement about the August COMEX drill with MARS in the near future.

::

ECs/AECs NEED TO UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION::

::

Emergency Communicators and Assistant Emergency Communicators, please review your E-mail address on the Georgia ARES web site leadership roster (<https://gaares.org/php/dec-ec-summary.php>) and update your E-mail address if necessary. E-mail sent to a number of these addresses from the Section with important information has bounced. If you need to update or replace the E-mail address, send an E-mail to Lynn Bianco (DSEC KN4YZ, kn4yz@arrl.net) with your call sign and the new E-mail address.

::

NEW GEORGIA ARES HOME PAGE::

::

If you haven't already visited the Georgia ARES web site recently, it has a new look. We have also re-organized the digital and document information links and uploaded some new items. Some of these new items include new documents, new digital net information, and the addition of YouTube digital training videos. The digital information is broken out into the Georgia ARES standard digital communication applications (click on the "Digital" drop-down link on the left side of the home page). Lee McDaniel (WB4QOJ Paulding ARES), Ron West (WB3ILX Paulding ARES), and Frank Dean (K4SJR DEC Digital) suggested several Youtube videos that now

appear on the web site. You can expect that we will add to the Youtube training video linking in the future. There are also a variety of documents covering a number of areas including digital, ICS forms, links to Winlink and FLDigi forms, among others (click on the "Documents" drop-down on the left side of the home page). The Georgia ARES web site can be found at <http://gaares.org>

::

THE 2016 SET::

::

We are updating the 2016 SET plan with refinements. In the DEC monthly meeting held in July we reviewed the current SET plan (https://gaares.org/documents/2016_SET.pdf) and made some minor updates to part one. These include how we will delineate RF check-ins from non-RF check-ins and tabulate those that transmit 213 forms for digital communications. We'll also keep a count of check-ins operating with emergency power. In addition to voice check-ins on 80 and 40 meters a net will be held on 60 meters assuming the chosen channel/frequency is not occupied. We also discussed how we would compile the results and make them available to the Section. Look for the revised document to appear in the near future on the web site and E-mailings.

::

BE THINKING ABOUT IT::

::

As you know we have a Ham of the Year award (HOTY) that we present at the annual State ARES Meeting. We will be asking for nominations later this year (approximately November) so each ARES group should be considering potential nominations for HOTY. Bear in mind that judgment is made based on a number of factors such as specific involvement in endeavors that contribute to education of others, participation in support of or life affecting emergency events, effective and impacting leadership, etc., but it also includes personal independent and sometimes selfless acts that benefit others unrelated to ARES or Amateur radio. These are general in description so more specific guidelines will be suggested when we formally ask for nominations. Please also note that nominations should be something more than a simple one or two paragraph E-mail or hastily written recommendation in a Word or Notepad document. When assessing nominations, those that are more formally written that outline specific reasons and points for why a candidate should be chosen for HOTY tend to quickly eliminate nominations that have little information to go on. Also, please try to keep nomination to no more than 3 pages.

::

STATE ARES MEETING JANUARY 21st::

::

The Georgia ARES State Meeting is scheduled for Saturday January 21st 2017 at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC) in Forsyth Georgia. Lynn Bianco (KN4YZ ASEC) is lining up an interesting group of presentations. Once again digital demonstrations will take place during the 2 hour lunch period. These include, at this point, D-STAR and D-RATS, Winlink, FLDigi, DMR Radio, and Mesh Networking. Jim Millsap will be conducting his EC-101 course for new ECs and those ECs looking for advice. Charles Pennington (K4GK Net Manager) has agreed to do a presentation on the NTS. The agenda for the State ARES Meeting is still in the draft stages but expect to see a completed agenda in the future on the Georgia ARES web site.

::

MORE DIGITAL TRAINING::

::

We just completed the second Digital University training in Central District over the weekend of July 30th. This was the same training we conducted a couple of months ago in Albany Georgia. The ARES Digital University training is meant to show Amateur Radio operators the basic essentials of installing and configuring the standard digital communications applications (FLDigi, Winlink, and D-RATS) used by Georgia ARES. We bring the software while attendees bring their personal computers and go through a step-by-step installation and configuration process. Assistance is offered to those needing help. Future Digital University training is planned for the Savannah area and the Butts County (South Metro).

::

Okay, that's it for now. Thanks for your interest and your involvement.

David, AG4ZR