

Amateur Radio Emergency Service®
Simulated Emergency Test
2023 Player Handbook
Connecticut ARES®



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Section Emergency Coordinator

SET 2023 Player Handbook

Purpose

This *SET 2023 Player Handbook* provides all exercise players with information required to participate effectively in the Connecticut Section Simulated Emergency Test (SET). Players should feel free to ask questions and seek clarification concerning their roles and responsibilities and the rules of exercise play.

Anyone with questions about the exercise not answered in this *SET 2023 Player Handbook* should contact the District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) for their respective Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) Region using their *callsign@arrl.net* for email:

Region 1 – Contact Region 2 DEC or SEC

Region 2 – Douglas WA1SFH

Region 3 – Bill AB1LZ

Region 4 – Michael K1MLG, ADEC

Region 5 – Harlan W1QH, ADEC

Scope

The Connecticut Section 2023 SET will be a statewide emergency communications exercise. It is intended to test our ability to provide communications for our Served Agencies that include the Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS), the American Red Cross (ARC), and local municipalities (e.g., EOCs, shelters).

Exercise information will be communicated beginning on *Sunday, 25 September 2023*. Players should monitor the CT ARES Groups.io Announce and Alert groups as well as the CT ARES website.

Exercise operational periods will begin on *Thursday, 28 September 2023 at about 1900 EDT* and end at about *2200 EDT Saturday, 30 September 2015* as determined by the Section Emergency Coordinator. ARES, SKYWARN, and NTS play will occur over several operational periods.

Quoting from the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) website:

The ARRL Simulated Emergency Test is a nationwide exercise in emergency communications, administered by ARRL Field Organization Leaders including Emergency Coordinators, District Emergency Coordinators, Section Emergency Coordinators and Net Managers. Many other Section Leaders like the Section Manager and the Section Traffic Manager may have a hand in planning the exercises and/or reviewing the results. Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®), National Traffic System (NTS), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and other public-service oriented groups can be involved. The SET weekend gives communicators the opportunity to focus on the emergency-communications capability within your community while interacting with NTS nets.

Please note that we are seeking maximum participation from ALL radio amateurs, not just CT ARES® members!

Exercise Objectives

General guidelines for the SET are given at the following ARRL web link:

<http://www.arrl.org/public-service-field-services-forms#>

In addition to the SET purposes outlined on the ARRL website, the CT Section 2023 SET has the following specific Exercise Objectives:

- (1) Determine which local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) can be activated by amateur radio operators.
- (2) Exercise the amateur radio communications capabilities at those EOCs.
- (3) Test and exercise HF Communications capabilities on 80 and 40 meters.
- (4) Coordinate and integrate interplay between ARES, NTS and SKYWARN components.
- (5) Maximize the number amateur radio participants.

Concept of Play

At the start of the exercise the scenario will require notification of response personnel and activation of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for each the CT ARES Regions. Each Region will be prepared to standup Resource, Tactical, Weather/SKYWARN, and/or Traffic Nets as needed to execute the exercise plan.

Exercise Assumptions

- Coordination of Regional responses by the DEC (or his alternate) will be essential.
- Exercise players will respond in accordance with the existing plans, procedures, and policies. In the absence of applicable plans, procedures, or policies, players will be expected to apply individual and/or team initiative to satisfy response requirements.

Exercise Artificialities

It is recognized that certain artificialities and constraints detract from exercise realism. However, exercise players are to accept the following artificialities as a means of facilitating the accomplishment of the exercise objectives and performance criteria.

- We are purposely trying to conduct the test using a compressed timeline so that we can maximize participation by all radio amateurs in Connecticut.
- Alert, notification, and initial activation activities will be an important part of the overall exercise.

Exercise Simulation

Simulation during this exercise may be required to compensate for non-participating organizations, individuals, and field units that would actually be deployed in a real-world response. Although simulations may detract from exercise realism, the simulated incidents (including messages from and to simulated entities) provide the means to facilitate exercise play and provide for the testing of exercise objectives and specific performance criteria.

All persons, agencies, response units, citizens, and higher levels of government not actually participating in the exercise will be represented as needed by simulation or through exercise control.

When players determine the need to deploy, recall, or otherwise task any resources, they must follow existing procedures and coordinate with the appropriate ARES, NTS, SKYWARN, or other leadership officials as they would in an actual response.

As the exercise is being played in a real-time environment, players will be provided with any information that they need that would have come from other sources.

Scenario Narrative

The exercise scenario will be a plausible incident (or series of incidents) that creates an urgent need for establishing emergency communications statewide.

Players should be prepared to participate in an exercise that tests their ability to meet the Exercise Objectives stated previously. You should anticipate the involvement of ARES, NTS, and SKYWARN, as well as actual (or simulated) activities at CT DEMHS Regional Offices, the Red Cross, and local municipal Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) and shelters.

Details of the scenario will be disclosed as the exercise progresses.

Player Procedures and Responsibilities

Primary players in this exercise will be licensed amateur radio operators providing emergency communications support in accordance with the protocols, procedures, frequency plans, and other guidance as detailed in the ARES Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in effect for their respective CT ARES Region.

Coordination and execution of the exercise plan within each of the five CT ARES Regions will be the responsibility of the District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) or his designee, as well as Assistant DECs (ADECs), and local or zone Emergency Coordinators (ECs).

Safety and Security

All voice exchanges should begin and end with the phrase "This is a drill." Written messages should contain the word "Test" as part of the precedence, e.g., Test Priority, in the message preamble. Written messages should also include the phrase "This is a drill" as the first words in the text (or body) of the message.

Should an ACTUAL emergency occur at any time during the exercise that dictates that play should stop, the phrase "REAL WORLD" (preferably repeated three times) shall be used to indicate that exercise play is suspended until further notice or until the emergency is resolved. ARES officials with knowledge of the actual emergency situation should inform the Regional DEC and the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) of any pertinent details of the situation as soon as practicable.

Communications

Communications during the SET will be in accordance with the respective Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) as promulgated for each of the five CT ARES Regions.

The District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) should ensure that contingencies are in place to ensure that Net Control Stations (NCS) are designated and prepared to conduct their respective Resource, Tactical, and/or Traffic Nets.

Statewide coordination and message handling between CT ARES Regions will be accomplished through multiple redundant channels to include but not limited to:

- CT-ARES DMR Network (used by ARES Leadership for Command & Control)
- Linked VHF/UHF repeater systems
- HF SSB on 3.965 MHz LSB and/or 7.280 MHz LSB
- VHF and HF Winlink
- Landline (voice/fax) and cellular (voice/text) telephones (if available)

Reporting

Immediately after the conclusion of the exercise, responsible officials (Emergency Coordinators at all levels and Net Managers) should complete the appropriate SET Report form (included in this handbook) – while the information is fresh, and they are still engaged in the exercise process!!

These reports should be submitted to the District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) for the Region involved without delay! It is ***absolutely critical*** to the SET reporting process that this be done in a timely manner.

The DEC's will gather their Region's reports and then forward them electronically to Phil K1XFC (email: crombiejr@snet.net), the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) within two weeks of the exercise. The SEC will then make the final submission to the ARRL on behalf of the Connecticut Section.

Electronic versions of the ARRL SET Report Form A (EC's) & SET Report Form B (NM's) can be downloaded by following this ARRL web link:

<http://www.arrl.org/public-service-field-services-forms>

Any logs or other records produced as part of this exercise should be retained by the responsible person or organization.

To the maximum extent possible, DEC's are encouraged to conduct after-action critiques to solicit comments and lessons learned. Collection and submission of input to the respective DEC from exercise players and observers is highly desirable.

Administrative Details

Anyone with questions or comments about the 2015 SET should contact their District Emergency (DEC) using their *callsign@arrl.net* for email:

Douglas WA1SFH, DEC Region 2

Bill AB1LZ, DEC Region 3

Michael K1MLG, ADEC Region 4

Harlan W1QH, ADEC Region 5

Steve K1SJW, DEC SKYWARN