

Amateur Radio Emergency Service®
Simulated Emergency Test
2024 Player Handbook
Connecticut ARES®



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Section Emergency Coordinator

SET 2024 Player Handbook

Purpose

This *SET 2024 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 2024 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 SEC
- Region 2 – Douglas WA1SFH
- Region 3 – Bill AB1LZ
- Region 4 – Michael K1MLG, ADEC, or SEC
- Region 5 – Harlan W1QH

Scope

The Connecticut Section 2024 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) and local municipalities (EOCs).

Exercise information will be communicated beginning on *Saturday, 26 October 2024*. Players should monitor the CT ARES Groups.io Announce and Alert groups as well as the CT ARES website.

The Exercise operational periods will begin on *Saturday, 26 October 2024 at about 0700 EDT* and end at about *2200 EDT Saturday, 26 October 2024* as determined by the Section Emergency Coordinator. ARES and NTS play will occur over this operational period.

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 2024 SET has the following specific Exercise Objectives:

- (1) Evaluate capabilities to respond to an instantaneous (no warning or preparation) event.
- (2) Conduct regional resource nets on local repeaters gathering information on participant's ability to deploy. Aggregate information for each region and report to the SEC.
- (3) Determine which local EOCs can be staffed with amateur radio operators and exercise their communications capabilities.
- (4) Evaluate VHF/UHF communications on numerous local repeaters. Evaluate HF communications statewide using 80 meters.

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 and/or Traffic Nets as needed to execute the exercise plan.

Exercise Assumptions

- Coordination of Regional responses by the DEC (or 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, 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 auxiliary 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 and NTS as well as actual (or simulated) activities at CT DEMHS Regional Offices and local municipal Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs).

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 auxiliary 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 designee, as well as Assistant DECs (ADECs), and local 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), or designee, should ensure that contingencies are in place to ensure that Net Control Stations (NCS) are designated and prepared to conduct their respective Resource and 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
- Local repeaters within each Region

Reporting

Immediately after the conclusion of the exercise, responsible officials (Emergency Coordinators at all levels and Net Managers) should submit reports and logs to ARES Leadership as discussed in related communications. These should be completed while the information is fresh, and they are still engaged in the exercise process!!

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 2024 SET should contact their District Emergency (DEC) using their *callsign@arrl.net* for email:

Douglas WA1SFH, SM, acting DEC Region 2

Bill AB1LZ, DEC Region 3

Michael K1MLG, ADEC Region 4

Harlan W1QH, DEC Region 5

Phil, K1XFC SEC