

This report was submitted to ARRL HQ at 6:36 PM May 13, 2020
SM, SEC, ASEC, DEC and EC's are copied. Thank you for your input.

Monthly Section Emergency Coordinator Report to ARRL Headquarters
ARRL Section: South Texas Month: April Year: 2020
AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE

Total number of ARES members: 1661 Change since last month: 11
DECs/ECs reporting this month: 31
of ARES nets active: 167 # with NTS liaison:64

Calls of DECs/ECs reporting: **AE5VV K5BV K5DDM K5GOL K5LGV K5RIK K5WEL
K7MAL KB5DTS KD4HNX KD5BJ KD5JBT KE5FGA KE5MHJ KF4WSO KF5NIX
KG5JRA KG5RXG KI5FU KW5PA N5LVQ N5MTX N5SBN N5TQ N5TW N5TW/XYL
N5WKM W5IM WB5HJV WB5TAD WB5UZZ WD5H**

Number of drills, tests and training sessions this month	106	Person hours:	2952
Number of public service events this month	124	Person hours:	432
Number of emergency operations this month	13	Person hours:	402
Total number of ARES operations this month	410	Person hours:	3785

SEC

Work on STX webpage updates of ARES Content
STX SEC Report generation
Steve Fletcher N5BOY new EC for Hardin County Apr 2
HF Net Control duty Apr 20
4 weekly HF 3873 nets

ASEC Web

Created and downloaded backups of the arrlstx.org website. Due to the number of spammers joining the website I removed the signup link under the Home menu. The Groups.io membership for STXARES is at 555 members. The Groups.io membership for ARRLSTX is at 38.

ASEC Other

STX Depot web pages and database oversight. Monthly review & stats.
Weekly Depot bounce report for pages sent during each week.

ASEC Advisor

A very busy month here. Projects include working on testing a band simulator and using to evaluate various WINLINK digital modes. Testing of a brand new, not yet released version of VARA HF that supports a 500 Hz mode. Also testing changes in Winlink Express and Trimode

to support this new mode.

DISTRICT 01

EC Fort Bend County

Two severe weather nets for Fort Bend County. Simplex coverage testing, HF (80mtr) coverage testing. Standby support for NWS SKYWARN NET. Liaison with Brazoria County ARES SKYWARN established. Liaison with BYRAN SKYWARN process begun.

EC Galveston County

Number of hours for drills, tests and training include 12 hours by one ARES member in support of emergency communications operations for the city of League City, 4 hours of SkyWarn Activation by one ARES members. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all Public Service scheduled for April were cancelled and all club and group meetings were conducted virtually with greatly reduced hours per event.

EC Waller County

37 voice 20 digital

DISTRICT 02

EC Walker County

Digital/voice drill for 4-4-20 was successful. Gave many opportunities to renew and use digital mode. There were 62 operators that were shown to have made voice/digital contact during drill. Again, thanks to all that participated.

DISTRICT 03

DISTRICT 04

EC Live Oak County

Due to requirements in Live Oak County as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, activity was suspended, and we had no requests from any supported agencies.

DISTRICT 05

EC Brazos County

Our group started local SkyWarn nets as a service to the community. I appointed a new AEC for SkyWarn - Connor Farrell, WG1GEM. We had two SkyWarn nets this month. We continue to development Winlink equipment that was a Local Winlink Mailbox - N5SBN-5 not connected to the internet. April's monthly meeting was held on the air. We were able to troubleshoot the igate - N5BRZ-10 at the CEOC and got it operational. We will participate in the Red Cross Comm exercise May 30th.

DISTRICT 06

EC Bandera County
Two new members.

DISTRICT 07

EC Caldwell County
all hours and events are reported under the Hays Co. information.

EC Hays County
members checking in to nets has increased. Training meeting was a virtual meeting, with good attendance.

EC Lee County
LeeCARES had a busy month. We keep holding our weekly nets that average 13-17 participants. Participated to EmComm meetings with WC-ARES via zoom as usual, made contact with Jo Ann Keith KA5HZK of the 7290 Traffic Net to organize first time course on traffic handling via zoom with WC-ARES and LeeCARES members. LeeCARES EC passed and originated her first three messages via 7290 Traffic Net. LeeCARES conducted two SKYWARN nets in Lee County and participated in two SKYWARN nets with WC-ARES. LeeCARES planned its own monthly meeting and mock nets and training on simplex, boosting morale of its members.

On April 23 we conducted a 4-hour exercise with LeeCARES members and the support of 10 operators, three WC-ARES operators near Bartlett, Georgetown and Coupland and about 7 operators in Burleson, Bastrop, and Travis County. The focus was on mapping direct communications with go-kits and base stations without a repeater. We realized that our go-kits do not allow to raise antenna high enough to overcome the hilly terrain. Therefore, Lee County ARES member KI5ABB already prepared a prototype to be able to raise base of antenna to 20 feet and he is improving it so it can be done within 3 minutes like with our current setup.

We were able to also solve few issues with our go-kits successfully and increase our knowledge. All messages and traffic were passed successfully directly for the base stations and/ or via relay for the go kits, which deployed also in lower grounds. Simplex direct contacts were made from Lincoln and/or Lexington to Caldwell, Smithville, Georgetown, Coupland, and Bartlett. Simplex contact with South Austin. County Judge, ECM, and Sheriff have been notified and press releases sent out to the local papers to promote ARES.

Two LeeCARES go kit are still deployed with two members so they can train daily and improve their setup. The EC started also to learn JS8CALL, mounted an MNO antenna on truck to guarantee better mobile communications being able to reach the 64R repeater from her garage, and studied to add a NVIS antenna at her location, which will be installed in May with LeeARES members. Early plans to bring a portable antenna on the top of the Lee County EOC (which is also a jail) or any other Command Post are also in the making.

EC Travis County
Updated ECT computers, installed new patch panel and ensured ECT was ready for deployment. General meeting held via Zoom.

EC Williamson County

April saw us in Shelter in Place like the rest of the State. Our Emergency Operations Centers for served Agencies were locked down to only most critical & essential personnel by County Judge. Emergency Management side of building was off limits even to Emergency Communications (911 dispatch.)

I was issued our WCARES county Apex Radio for Comms to served agencies in times such as SKYWARN nets or activations, but to date has not been utilized. The ARES template is rather restricted. No LE channels allowed.

We have been active in a few areas while on Lockdown. One of those was three (3) Emergency Operations for SKYWARN activations in April. We have been actively involved with the National Weather Service, and Williamson County Sheriff's office patrol units during SKYWARN activations. We have a reputation of getting pertinent or potentially dangerous weather information to the Deputies quicker than Emergency Communications This last event on Wednesday early AM, Deputy Sheriff Lt. had deputies spread across the northern part of the county, and we were sharing reports to and from them. We had our first relay from a Deputy in a patrol unit to NWS Chat submission during the weather event. This Lt. monitors our Weather Nets on an issued amateur radio. Supposedly licensing to follow.

I have used this lockdown to expand WCARES operational capabilities through HF tests and video conferencing. Also keeps our members actively engaged. We have culminated a new parameters mission that I initiated 2 years ago. Seeing the need to provided Simplex communications to the whole county in case of long-term power and infrastructure failure, we began investigating local in county comms via HF voice NVIS communications. Voice Comms that will be easily deployed by any member with HF privileges, County & Personal Go Kits, and home stations. This is due to issues of using 2-meter simplex with this large and varied terrain county. In March 2018 we proved proof of concept with a deployed exercise and tested bands and Antennas. This gave us a starting point. We have been refining inexpensive, easy to deploy, HF Antennas on 40 meters and down for NVIS. During this lockdown period, we ran multiple HF nets for the final frequency allocations. We had admirable and effective results with MUF as high as 14.3Mhz down to 5.3Mhz another week. We have settled on 4 antenna choices for members that work, and three bands in order of effectiveness. 1) 60 meters 2) 75 meters 3) 40 meters (which can be strongest band, but only if MUF accommodates use.)

**We are now documenting and rolling this plan out as WCARES official plan for Intra County HF Communications.

All WCARES meetings have been through licensed copies of Zoom video conferencing. We have locked it down per tech specs for security and had admirable results with up to 50+ individuals. For our April WCARES monthly meeting we had as special guest speaker, Jo Ann Keith, KA5AZK, 7290 Traffic Net Manager & ARRL W Gulf Div Asst Dir NTS. Jo Ann presented her Traffic Training seminar she usually presents at Ham Fests and such. Very Well presented & received by our almost 40 members on the conference call. Hopefully garnered her some new recruits.

Our May monthly meeting will be via video conference as well. Looking forward to things

getting back to normal.

DISTRICT 08

DEC

Louisiana tornado disaster 308, Red Cross 180 hours

DISTRICT 09

EC Jasper County

No meetings. No training.

EC Jefferson County

Continued the monthly Simplex and Winlink nets this month. Like many others we utilized Zoom to conduct ARES & Club meetings in April. Kirk - N5WKM

EC Newton County

See Jasper County for full report. Counties are combined.

EC Orange County

nothing to report from Orange Co.

DISTRICT 10

DISTRICT 12

DISTRICT 13

DISTRICT 14

DEC

WebEOC Drill canceled due to COVID 19 related activities

TEXAS ARES Statewide HF Net (WB5HJV NCS) 4/6

Perform software upgrades RMS gateways (WB5HJV)

District 14 Peer to Peer Winlink PAN-1 drill - results

Total Peer to Peer connects: 65

(14 S 51 N - 2 nodes)

32 unique call signs (N or S)

57 messages with ICS213 attachment

1 message with Radiogram (Paul, K5PRS)

GETS/WPS card processing (K5TBN)

Houston Area Hospital Net 4/26 (K5OB) (51 participants)

Winlink for Beginners on the air Training 4/22 (W5LDK) (15 participants)

Red Cross Comm Drill (May 30th) planning (W5LDK, W5OFT, WB5HJV, WB5ANN)

Texas Children's Hospital Software Updates 4/28 (W5LDK)
KB5DTS STX Drill (Good job Joe and team!)
HF Traffic nets / VHF ARES nets (WB5HJV)

EC Harris-NE County

EC Harris-NW County

Sill under lockdown this month. Several digital tests run to keep all in practice. Record number of digital check-ins at our weekly training nets. Stay safe everyone and stay ready.

EC Harris-SE County

EC Harris-SW County

We had a very effective Winlink training session led by Linda, W5LDK. A number of new members participated and there seems to be a heightened interest in digital modes. We are also seeing strong net participation in both voice and digital modes. Dave Scott WD8RZA is experimenting with Masters Communications modems and he will be putting together a recommended configuration for our new packet and Vara FM users.

DISTRICT 15

Signature: Jeff Walter Callsign:KE5FGA

ARRL Form 4