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What is ARES Connect?

ARES Connect is a volunteer management system that will allow each ARES group to manage their roster, create and staff events, and track nets and training. Each ARES group and ARRL Section will have a unique page on the platform with appropriate admin control given to the ARES Emergency Coordinator.

ARES members will be able to create a user profile that connects them to their local ARES group. Through their profile they can register for ARES (pending EC approval), sign up for events, log volunteer hours, and log training.

Reporting will be different through ARES Connect. As users log activity, data is created that allows ECs, DECs and SECs to run custom reports. The current ARES report forms will continue to be used through 2018 as the system is being built, but our current plan is to shift all reporting over to ARES Connect in January 2019.

Who applies for the ARES Group ID Number?

Most ARES groups are responsible for a local coverage area and are coordinated by an Emergency Coordinator. For this reason, the Emergency Coordinator will need to apply for the ID number. If your ARES group is operational at a district level the DEC may need to apply. All ARRL Sections will be provided a unique page on ARES Connect identified by their section abbreviation, so SECs will not need to apply for an ID.

How long will it take to get my group's ID?

We anticipate a high volume of requests initially, so there may be initial delays. Once demand levels off we expect a turnaround time of 7 business days.

Why does my group need the ID?

ARES groups now lack a *unique* identifier, like a call sign, and the similarity of names within a region or even across the country can cause confusion. For example, does the designated name "Montgomery County ARES" refer to Texas, Pennsylvania, or Ohio. All three states have a Montgomery County ARES group? A unique identifier will resolve this ambiguity.

The ID will be used for the ARES Connect system. Your group will not be able to participate without it; which will impact your ability to report and receive ARES group benefits.

Do not use this ID for your ARES members. When we open ARES Connect for users to create their profiles, they will use their call sign as their user ID.

How long do I have to apply for the ID?

The application process opened on January 2, 2018 and will remain open. You will need to have your ID to start your group's ARES Connect page. This will begin in mid-2018. By January 2, 2019 you will need to be signed in to ARES Connect to do all reporting.

How do I register my county for ARES Connect?

To register your ARES group, use the online form found at:

http://www.arrl.org/ares-group-id-request-form.

Instructions on how to complete this form can be found at:

http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Public%20Service/ARES/Form_ARES_006_instructions.pdf.

Registration must be completed by the Emergency Coordinator, District Emergency Coordinator or their designee.

I am a DEC but do not see all of the counties in my jurisdiction.

The SEC of each section must match the DEC with the counties in their district. There are several possibilities.
- The county has not successfully registered with the ARRL
- In the absence of a local EC, it is the responsibility of the DEC to register the county.
- The SEC has not matched the counties to your district

How do my members sign up for ARES Connect?
Send a link to your members to sign up: http://stx.arrl.volunteerhub.com/

My members are starting to sign up, what now?
Currently, the SEC will, from time to time, need to check for new volunteers and ensure that they have signed up for the correct county.

I need to add a few AEC's as admin. How do I do this?

Currently, Only the STX admins can update a volunteer to admin.

How and why do I create an event?

An event should be created if it would help the reporting process of multiple people. If you are taking a FEMA IS (individual study) or participating in an ICS (classroom study) you should not create an event.

You must be an admin to create an event.

Click on admin
Click on Events
Click on add event
Enter in the event information

Note: If you create the event, you may be responsible for adding all the missing attendees. I advise that you do not add an event if you cannot take responsibility.

Note: Attendees points will need to be checked by the admin and saved. The attendee's points will automatically appear on their account once approved. No need to duplicate the effort if it is already in the system.

Click on save

How do I join an event?

Click on Events
Click on the event that you are interested in
Click on Registered User
Scroll to the bottom
Click on Add User
Type your call sign
Click on your name when it appears in the box
Click on Add User

How do I handle event participants in our event that not registered in ARES Connect?

You can create what is called a place-holder for someone that is not yet registered or may never register in ARES Connect.

Sign in

Click on Admin
Click on People
Click on Add New User
Fill in the call sign
Fill in the first and last name boxes
Fill in the county they live in
Click on save

How do I add my personal hours for non-event items?
Click on admin
Click on people
Click on your name
Click on points
Change the comment date to the last day of the reporting month
Add the comment (Monthly reports or something similar)
Add the point value of 1 point per estimated hour of doing admin work
Click on add
If you need to make an adjustment just delete the comment entry and start over

How do I add member reported personal hours for non-event items?
Click on admin
Click on people
Click on their name
Click on points
Change the comment date to the corresponding date of the reporting month
Add the comment (Monthly reports or something similar)
Add the point value of 1 point per estimated hour of doing the work
Click on add
If you need to make an adjustment just delete the comment entry and start over

How to save my Hours History in case it is accidentally deleted

Log in
Click on your name
View Hours History
Change date to 08/04/2018 (The date STX started the system)
Click Update
Select all with your mouse
Open Word or similar processor
Right click – Paste – Keep Test Only
Save the file using the current date just in case you need to compare an earlier version

What are the points that I see to the right of my name and how did they get there?

Concerning points and hours: These terms seem to be interchangeable in this system.

There is not a guideline set down by the league. They list 7 types of events. Use whole numbers only when reporting. Let us start with the following schedule to see how it goes. The creator of the event must be an admin and will assign the point value at the beginning creation or by editing each participant.

Nets (Non-Emergency)

1 point for voice per net
1 point for digital check in (2 maximum per net)
2 points extra for net control, back up net control or coordinated training presentation

Community Event (including hamfests)

1 point per hour of attendance
2 points total for driving to attend local events
6 points total for driving to attend non-local events

Meetings (including hamfest forums)

1 point per hour of attendance
2 points total for driving to attend local events
6 points total for driving to attend non-local meeting events

Training (Including online FEMA courses)

1 point per hour of attendance
1 point for WebEOC check-in (maximum 1 point per month)
2 points total for driving to attend local events
6 points total for driving to attend non-local training events

Exercise

1 point per hour of attendance
2 points total for driving to attend local exercises
6 points total for driving to attend non-local exercises

Skywarn

1 point per hour of attendance
2 points total for driving to attend local Skywarn events
6 points total for driving to attend non-local Skywarn events

Communications Emergency

2 point for voice per net
2 point for digital check in (4 maximum per net)
4 points extra for net control, back up net control

5 points per hour of attendance at served agency
10 points total for driving to/from served agency per day

Can a category be created for VE sessions?

We have 6 choices now. Adding another would only pinpoint an activity. Eventually the list would be too long. To me, nets fall into all the other 5 categories. I would say VE sessions best fall into the meeting category. Is it a?

Communications Emergency - No
Community Event - Maybe
Exercise - No
Meeting - Yes
Net - No
SKYWARN - No
Training - No

I am still having some issues. Who do I contact?

For STX you contact your leadership. Members should contact their EC. EC's should contact the DEC, The DEC and ASEC's should contact the SEC. As new as the system is, everyone in STX can contact the SEC Jeff Walter ke5fga@arrl.net

As radio operators we don't want to contact the manufacturer every time we can't hit the repeater because of operator error. There are very simple reasons why you cannot accomplish an administrative task in ARES Connect. Let's figure it out together.