

“An Effective Amateur Radio Response Overall”

“HAMS WORKING WITH HAMS”

There are thousands of new Technicians coming into the amateur service now that would make ideal additions to your ARES roster. These new Technicians have hand-holds and a strong interest in emergency communications and public service. Many of them are willing to take the training and practice the skills needed to offer effective public service. They're ripe for the picking for your ARES program! A stronger ARES means a better ability to serve your communities in times of need and a greater sense of pride for Amateur Radio by both amateurs and the public. That's good for all of us.

What about the competition!

With a strong ARES program, and a capability of substantially meeting most of the local served agencies' needs, you might avoid a situation that is cropping up in some parts of the country, that of what some call “competition” with emerging amateur groups providing similar communications services outside of ARES. Some of these groups may feel that their local ARES doesn't do the job, or personality conflicts and egos get in the way, so they set up shop for themselves, working directly with agency officials, and usurping ARES' traditional role.

Some agencies have been receptive to their assistance.

There continues to be “RACES versus ARES” polarization in some areas. And some agencies, including at least one with statewide jurisdiction, are forming their own auxiliary communications groups, and recruiting their own hams, some away from ARES. There's not much we can do about this, except to work with fellow Hams to find your ARES program's niche and provide the best services you can. Strive for growth and enhancement of ARES members' abilities, and make sure you present a “professional” face to potential served agencies and your opportunities will grow. Make sure you behave in a professional manner, and agencies will be attracted to you and your group.

If possible, setting egos and personalities aside, seek out these other groups and take the initiative to try to establish a rapport, and the fact that “we're all in this together,” for the good of the public and Amateur Radio. With good communication, mutual respect and understanding between you and the other groups, at the least, you should be able to coordinate your program's missions with theirs (i.e., divide up the pie, or who will do what for which agency, and what ways could we offer assistance to each other.) We should work together with all Hams to foster an efficient and effective Amateur Radio response overall.