

REQUIREMENTS

This evening I will do my best to answer a couple of questions the DD, wd5hxb, ask this past Monday evening during the comment session of the Arkansas Ares/Races Training Net.

QUESTION #1 and 2 combined: Define a qualified RACES operator and NIMS requirements:

First let's look into the background of RACES. RACES is administered by local, county and state emergency management agencies, and supported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the United States government. It is a part of the Amateur Radio Service that provides radio communications for civil-preparedness purposes only, and during periods of local, regional or national emergencies.

As defined in the rules, RACES is a radio communications service, conducted by volunteer licensed amateurs and designed to provide emergency communications. It is important to note that RACES operation is authorized by emergency management officials only. Amateurs operating in a local RACES organization must be officially enrolled in the local emergency management agency, and they may be required to under go a background check.

Going a step further, as qualified RACES operators we need training such as that that Dale and I do on the Arkansas Ares/Races Training Net on Sunday mornings and Monday evenings. There needs to be a firm commitment and sincere desire to serve! This unfortunately though is where the waters get muddy. Served Agencies are now realizing that a trained individual in many forms or disciplines is a much better asset, rather than a liability, to them than an untrained or ill-trained one. It is incumbent upon you as an individual to assess where you are and what you can do to better yourself for the good of your service to your Served Agency, the United States and Amateur Radio. The Federal Government has begun making the requirement of NIMS (National Incident Management System) and ICS (Incident Command System) mandatory for all Emergency Responders. Technically that means that you have a responsibility to at minimum take a look at what is going on and be aware of the concepts expressed in these systems. Some States, Counties and Cities are now making certain types of training mandatory for any individual who is registered with them. This is a Government Issue not an ARRL or Amateur Radio issue. Remember, we serve at the discretion of our Served Agency. So, if we are to continue our service to the public, our served agencies and our country, we need to follow in the steps of training required by our

government, and this includes the NIMS IS-100, IS-200, IS-700 and IS-800 that the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management has required that we take. Many Sections of the ARRL all across the United States has already come out and made the Statement “Take the courses or your out”, to date the Arkansas section leadership has not made this statement, but when ADEM and our Served agencies do say this, we need to be ready.

Now, let me read to read to you an excerpt from the “ Arkansas Ares/Races PLAN”, part 12 titled TRAINING, EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION.

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The best plan will fail unless all involved know their part in it. This is where a training program comes in. Training never stops-it is a continuous cycle that ensures that all team members are able to do their best when called upon. District Emergency Coordinators and Emergency Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that all ARES/RACES members in their jurisdiction are properly trained. Some training program elements might include:

1. All three of the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications courses, (ARECC), for all members, over time.
2. General understanding of the PLANS and how they work.
3. Specific skills, such as message formatting, equipment operation, and emergency field repairs.
4. Net operations, both tactical and formal traffic handling.
5. Implementing or testing operational elements, such as message routing and forms.
6. Full scale drills and simulations, including the annual SET.
7. Communications support for public service events such as walk-a-thons and parades.
8. Backup plans and work-arounds.
- 9. Various Emergency Management Institute classes; IS-100, IS-200, IS700 and IS-800 should be considered a minimum. Other classes of interest are available and all**

members are encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity.

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NIMS

Integration

Center

's most frequently asked question is:

“Who has to take NIMS and ICS training?”

All federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and non-governmental personnel with a direct role in emergency management and response must be NIMS and ICS trained. This includes all emergency services related disciplines such as

EMS

, hospitals, public health, fire service, law enforcement, public works/utilities, skilled support personnel, and other emergency management response, support and volunteer personnel.

The following is the answer that I got from my question this morning:

Thank you for contacting the NIMS Integration Center .

The NIMS Integration Center strongly recommends that volunteers with a direct role in emergency and incident management and response take NIMS and ICS training. Amateur radio operators are especially encouraged to take these courses so they have a baseline understanding of the inherent NIMS terminology and role responsibilities of ICS.

Regards,
Paul F. Ganem
NIMS Integration Center

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Lesson Summary, from the new IS-703 course;



Certifying and Credentialing Personnel

NIMS require national standards for the certification and credentialing of emergency response personnel.

- **Certification** entails authoritatively attesting that individuals meet professional standards for the training, experience, and performance required for key incident management functions.
- **Credentialing** involves providing documentation that can authenticate and verify the certification and identity of designated incident management staff and emergency responders.

Standards developed by the NIMS Integration Center will help ensure that participating agencies' and organizations' field personnel possess the minimum knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to execute incident management and emergency response activities safely and effectively. Standards typically include minimum levels for:

- Training.

- Experience.
- Credentialing.
- Currency.
- Physical and medical fitness.

Personnel that are certified for assignment to incidents which require support beyond the scope of the State's EMAC agreements will be required to meet national qualification and certification standards. Federal, State, local, and Tribal certifying agencies, professional organizations and private organizations should credential personnel for their respective jurisdictions.