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Editor: [Rick Palm, K1CE](#)

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## ARES® Briefs, Links

[World Amateur Radio Day is Tomorrow](#) -- Every April 18, radio amateurs worldwide take to the airwaves in celebration of World Amateur Radio Day. It was on this day in 1925 that the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) was formed in Paris.

Amateur radio experimenters were the first to discover that the shortwave spectrum -- far from being a wasteland -- could support worldwide propagation. In the rush to use these shorter wavelengths, amateur radio was "in grave danger of being pushed aside," the

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IARU's history has noted. Amateur radio pioneers met in Paris in 1925 and created the IARU to support amateur radio worldwide.

### **Colorado State University Issues Hurricane Season Forecast --**

Colorado State University hurricane researchers are predicting an extremely active Atlantic hurricane season in their initial 2024 forecast. The team cites record warm tropical and eastern subtropical Atlantic sea surface temperatures as a primary factor for their prediction of 11 hurricanes this year. When waters in the eastern and central tropical and subtropical Atlantic are much warmer than normal in the spring, it tends to force a weaker subtropical high and associated weaker winds blowing across the tropical Atlantic. These conditions will likely lead to a continuation of well above-average water temperatures in the tropical Atlantic for the peak of the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season. -- [Colorado State University Forecasting](#)

## **American Red Cross Nebraska-Iowa Region Winlink Exercise Develops Skills**

The American Red Cross Nebraska-Iowa Region is working to develop capabilities for Red Cross amateur radio operators and other interested amateur radio organizations to support disasters that may occur in the region. As all amateur operators know, an ability to communicate in the absence of internet and cell phone service could be critical in the early stages of a disaster response.

For a localized event, voice communications might be adequate, but for a larger event the ability to deliver formatted email using Winlink Global Radio Email would be extremely valuable.

Amateur radio operators can send and receive Winlink messages using HF or VHF radio depending on their location, license class, and equipment.

An exercise using Winlink messaging was conducted Saturday, March 23, 2024. The exercise was controlled from the W0EQU station located at the Omaha Red Cross headquarters. Participation was invited from Amateur Radio Emergency Service® organizations within the region as well as from amateurs with some Red Cross affiliation from across the country. Operators were invited to submit Winlink Check In forms via radio (if equipped) via the Winlink system to the W0EQU station. If the operator had the ability to use multiple radio paths (modes or frequency bands) to submit check-ins, that was invited.

### **Results:**

W0EQU received 81 successful check-ins with the following characteristics:

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- 62 distinct amateur radio operators checked in at least once.
- Check-ins came from 14 different states, the most distant being Alaska.
- 28 of the messages were originated over a VHF radio connection (relatively short range between the transmitting station and the Winlink Gateway station).
- 30 were originated over an HF radio connection (up to hundreds of miles from the transmitter to the Gateway).
- 20 were originated over the internet (not via radio).
- ALL messages were received at W0EQU and all outgoing traffic sent over a VHF link to a local Gateway.

A map detailing all messages is available at the [Exercise Participant Map](#).

### **Additional Activities**

W0EQU also activated no-notice VHF FM voice networks on three of the local FM repeaters to evaluate the ability of the Red Cross station to act as net controller using those repeaters. The repeaters activated include the K0USA repeater in North Omaha, the W0WYV repeater in Bellevue, and the N0WKF repeater in Glenwood, Iowa. Local operators checked in to all three of the nets.

A special test was conducted with Jerry Davis, KA4QVH, in Cleveland, Georgia, using VARA HF Peer-to-Peer. This mode allows passing Winlink traffic directly from one station to another over HF radio, with no internet anywhere in the picture. This would be used in the event of a widespread internet outage. The operators were successful passing messages directly to each other over a distance of 808 miles.

### **Next Steps**

The American Red Cross Nebraska Iowa Region hopes to conduct more exercises like this and to build up connections with amateur radio organizations and operators across the two states. For more information or to discuss involvement with the Red Cross contact the [NEIA Region Amateur Radio coordinator for the Red Cross, Marty Malley, WK0E](#).



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## Amateur Radio Hurricane Networks Featured at the National Hurricane Conference

The [National Hurricane Conference](#) was held March 25 - 28, 2024, in Orlando, Florida. A series of workshops were held that focused on amateur radio's involvement in hurricane tracking, coverage, and recovery.

Among the presenters was the Assistant Amateur Radio Coordinator of [WX4NHC at the National Hurricane Center](#) (NHC) Julio Ripoll, WD4R. Ripoll gave a history of amateur radio's involvement in NHC, including the use of tube radios in the 1980s and the Yaesu FTDX-1200 used today. WX4NHC is also equipped with VHF/UHF radios to access the Florida Statewide Amateur Radio Network (SARnet), as well as digital equipment to communicate with the [VoIP Hurricane Net](#), IRLP, and Winlink to receive emails via amateur radio.

"We were the only means of communication between the National Hurricane Center and the National Weather Service Field Office in Slidell, Louisiana, during Hurricane Katrina," Ripoll said. He went on to highlight other instances of reports given by ham radio that provided mission-critical information that had a major impact on the way NHC handled a storm.

ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, gave a presentation to the crowd of hurricane experts, meteorologists, and emergency managers about the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®). He spoke of ARRL's role on the board of SAFECOM, a program managed by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) that sets the standards of interoperability procedures. Being a part of the group solidifies the Amateur Radio Service as a robust resource before and during times of crisis.

Johnston shared that in 2023, ARES volunteers contributed at least \$21.8 million in volunteer hours to their local communities. "Is amateur

radio still relevant? Absolutely! Are we still involved in the places that are doing things the right way? Amateur radio absolutely is," he said.

Johnston highlighted [the relationship between ARRL and the Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#), as well as ARRL's position as a net control station within the [SHARED RESOURCES High Frequency Radio Program \(SHARES\)](#) managed by CISA.

Among other presenters was ARRL's [The ARES Letter](#) Editor Rick Palm, K1CE, who shared a harrowing tale of his family experiencing a direct hit from Hurricane Idalia in August 2023. The damage and impact he felt gave him a new perspective on emergency communications, as he went from a volunteer communicator to a storm victim. Read more about his experience in the "Public Service" column in the January 2024 issue of QST.

Watch a [video of the amateur radio workshops](#) at the 2024 National Hurricane Conference on YouTube, courtesy of Jim Palmer, KB1KQW. See photos and discussion in the [ARRL Letter for March 29, 2024](#). See also Hurricane Watch Net manager Bobby Graves', KB5HAV, [recordings of the proceedings](#).

## Spring Severe Weather Preparations Begin

The severe weather season (March through May) is here, and the National Weather Service (NWS) offices across the country are prepared. Warning Coordination Meteorologist Brandon Peloquin at the Wilmington, Ohio, NWS office said many of the NWS offices across the country meet with partner organizations in the spring to make plans for the weather ahead. "Amateur radio operators and weather spotters are extremely important, and we could not do what we do without them," he said. "In fact, many of the watches and warnings issued are made because weather spotters provided critical information."

Peloquin said that Doppler radar is a great tool for tracking storms, but weather spotters have a different vantage point and can see things that radar can't.

Severe Weather Awareness Weeks are scheduled by each state and usually occur during March to remind and educate communities about severe weather seasonal threats and how to avoid them. The NWS SKYWARN Storm Spotter Program is a volunteer program with almost 400,000 trained severe weather spotters. Spotter training is available at the state level and is offered several times each year. Every December, NWS and ARRL hold SKYWARN Recognition Day to honor all SKYWARN storm spotters and amateur radio operators for their contributions during severe weather. -- [February 29, 2024 issue of The ARRL Letter](#).



## NWS Melbourne, Florida 2023 SKYWARN Recognition Day

After a 4-year hiatus, onsite operations returned to the National Weather Service Office in Melbourne, Florida, to support SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD). The Platinum Coast Amateur Radio Society (PCARS) contributed the equipment needed to run an HF station at the office and also staffed this station, making contacts and exchanging weather information during much of the event. SRD is held during the first Saturday in December, and for 2023 ran from 7 AM (EST) Friday, December 1 through 7 PM Saturday, December 2. This event is co-sponsored by the National Weather Service and ARRL. Local amateur radio operators and their family members also attended a SKYWARN Open House from 10 AM to 4 PM on Saturday, December 2, for tours of event operations and of the National Weather Service office.

SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) celebrates the contributions that SKYWARN volunteers, including those in the amateur radio community, provide to assist in the National Weather Service's mission to protect life and property. During major weather events, amateur radio operators provide vital communication between the NWS and emergency management, in the event standard services fail or become overloaded. Additionally, all SKYWARN weather spotters, provide valuable information during hazardous weather situations. Often, these spotter reports allow NWS meteorologists to issue severe weather warnings with greater advance notice and confidence than would otherwise be possible.

During the 24-hour event, amateur radio operators throughout the country visited their local NWS office, set up portable radio stations to simulate emergency conditions, and worked in teams to exchange weather reports with other amateur radio operators across the nation and the globe. All spotters were also encouraged to check in on the SKYWARN Spotter Check-In Map on the [official SRD website](#).

## Winter Field Day in Florida

The Alachua County, Florida (Gainesville area) ARES organization's (NF4AC) Winter Field Day effort in January was a big learning event for all of us. **We especially noted difficulties making simplex connections to ARES operators and other hams in the area.** As a result, an Improvement Plan item was to ask the ARES Net Manager to schedule eight simplex net sessions throughout the remainder of the year in order to better train for disaster situations where repeaters have (for whatever reason) become unavailable. This was approved by the ARES group, and the Net Manager scheduled the first such simplex net for April 11, separate from other commendable efforts to work on simplex communications.

HF nets, even those involving non-hams, routinely handle simplex nets on HF by volunteers who "relay" when they detect that Net Control has not heard from a station that they do hear. David Huckstep, W4JIR, who will be net control, expects to read the "preliminaries" on the main 146.820 MHz repeater, and then switch to 146.550 simplex for the roll call, giving a little extra time for each call sign for potential volunteer relays. He then plans to go back to the 146.820 repeater to pick up anyone who couldn't get in via simplex. - *Gordon Gibby, KX4Z, Alachua county ARES, Florida, NF4AC*



## World Amateur Radio Day 2024 -- "A Century of Connections: Celebrating 100 years of Amateur Radio Innovation, Community, and Advocacy"

*By Joel Harrison, W5ZN, IARU Secretary*

Every April 18, radio amateurs worldwide take to the airwaves in celebration of World Amateur Radio Day. Amateur radio pioneers met in Paris on this day in 1925 and created the IARU to support amateur radio worldwide. Just two years later, at the International

Radiotelegraph Conference, amateur radio gained the allocations still recognized today -- 160, 80, 40, 20, and 10 meters.

Since its founding, the IARU has worked tirelessly to defend and expand the frequency allocations for amateur radio. Thanks to the support of enlightened administrations in every part of the globe, radio amateurs are now able to experiment and communicate in frequency bands strategically located throughout the radio spectrum. From the 25 countries that formed the IARU in 1925, the IARU has grown to include 160 member societies in three regions. IARU Region 1 includes Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Northern Asia. Region 2 covers the Americas, and Region 3 is comprised of Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific island nations, and most of Asia. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has recognized the IARU as representing the interests of amateur radio.

Today, amateur radio is more popular than ever, with more than 3,000,000 licensed operators!

World Amateur Radio Day is the day when IARU Member Societies can show our capabilities to the public and enjoy global friendship with other amateurs worldwide.

The IARU celebrates its centenary in 2025. Since its founding in Paris, France, IARU has worked tirelessly to promote innovation in amateur radio and to encourage the growth of the service in communities throughout the world. IARU has represented the Amateur Services at international and regional regulatory bodies by relying on our volunteers who come from many countries and communities. IARU has been a sector member of the ITU since 1932 and the work of our volunteers has continued since that date with unmatched success, as was highlighted with the accomplishments at the 1923 World Radio Conference (WRC23).

Leading up to our centenary year, we should take time to reflect on the remarkable achievements of radio amateurs over the last 100 years. While the Amateur Services have been in operation for over a century, 1924 was the first year that intercontinental amateur communication became more or less commonplace. Since that time radio amateurs have made unparalleled advances in technology related to the Amateur Services that play a critical role today in sustaining worldwide communications and allow us to respond to global emergencies.

World Amateur Radio Day is an opportunity to reflect on our achievements since 1924. We should celebrate our diverse community and the advances and innovations we have made as we look forward to celebrating the IARU centenary next year.

**K1CE for a Final: IARU and ITU**



It's been a busy year so far. I attended the AUXCOMM forum at Orlando HamCation® in February, which was standing room only. Then, I was a presenter at the amateur radio workshop at the National Hurricane Conference discussed above. You can see my [presentation on my personal experience with Hurricane Idalia](#) on the Hurricane Watch Net's website.

This month, I travel with an IARU team including ARRL International Affairs Vice President Rod Stafford, W6ROD, to Geneva, Switzerland, for meetings of the International Telecommunication Union ITU Development Sector's Study Group 1, which studies, among other things, "Use of telecommunications/ICTs for disaster risk reduction and management, particularly in developing countries." This will be in my role as IARU Special Advisor on Emergency Communications. ITU is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs). The organization is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland and has a membership of 193 Member States and more than 1,000 companies, universities, and international and regional organizations.

## ARES® Resources

- [Download the ARES Manual \[PDF\]](#)
- [ARES Field Resources Manual \[PDF\]](#)
- [ARES Standardized Training Plan Task Book \[Fillable PDF\]](#)
- [ARES Standardized Training Plan Task Book \[Word\]](#)
- [ARES Plan](#)
- [ARES Group Registration](#)
- [Emergency Communications Training](#)

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes. Every licensed amateur, regardless of membership in ARRL or any other local or national organization is eligible to apply for membership in ARES. Training may be required or desired to participate fully in ARES. Please inquire at the local level for specific information. Because ARES is an amateur radio program, only licensed radio amateurs are eligible for membership. The possession of emergency-powered equipment is desirable, but is not a requirement for membership.

How to Get Involved in ARES: Fill out the [ARES Registration form](#) and submit it to your local Emergency Coordinator.

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