

To: National Traffic System Leadership

15 April 2015

In July 2014 the ARRL Programs and Services Committee (PSC) directed staff to update the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) Manual. In August 2014 a working group consisting of ARRL staff, section managers, section emergency coordinators, and served agency representatives was formed to begin the update and revision process. The working group, as directed by the PSC, included several goals in the new ARES Manual:

- Adoption of the ICS-213 Message form (as found in the NIMS ICS Forms Booklet published by FEMA, September 2010) and related ICS official documentation for ARES use
- Clarification on the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service
- Improved guidance on training opportunities for ARES members
- A standalone ARES manual

The final draft was completed in January 2015 and sent to the PSC for review. The PSC approved the new manual in February 2015 and it was then sent to production for copy edit and layout.

The new ARES Manual, which is scheduled for release in mid-May 2015, presents a significant change to the former Public Service Communications Manual (PSCM). The PSCM will be discontinued with the publication of the new ARES Manual. The other half of the PSCM, the NTS Manual, will be made available as its own standalone publication.

This presents an opportunity for NTS and NTS Digital leadership to update and make revisions to the current NTS Manual. In revising the current NTS Manual specific goals, as set by the PSC, should be kept in mind:

- The addition of the ICS-213, in addition to the Radiogram, as an ARRL approved message format (see attached statement from PSC)
- A single manual that includes NTS documentation from PSCM and the NTS-MPG

The NTS Manual update and revision process should be conducted in the most expedient and efficient manner possible, keeping in mind the PSC's January 1, 2016 target date, and include input from all relevant stakeholders in the NTS program. ARRL HQ staff will be available as a resource throughout the process.

All involved in both programs, ARES and NTS, would agree on the importance of adapting to meet current communications needs of served agencies, the public, and the Amateur Radio community. This is a first step in making long overdue updates to both ARRL programs.

Attached:

Programs and Services Committee Statement on Addition of ICS-213

Relevant NTS documentation – NTS Manual and NTS-MPG

Amateur Radio Emergency Service Manual – 2015 Revision

Staff Points of Contact

ARES Program – Mike Corey, KI1U

ki1u@arrl.org

860-594-0222

NTS Program – Steve Ewald, WV1X

wv1x@arrl.org

860-594-0265

Respectfully,

Brian Mileschosky, N5ZGT

Chairman

ARRL Programs and Services Committee