

## **OVERVIEW**

This year's SET focuses on connectivity and outreach. There are SET activities for ARES teams to connect, for ARES leadership to describe their team's ability to connect with other teams and services and to reach out to other hams to join the ARES team. The SET is scheduled for the weekend of Oct 4 and 5.

The dates and time are flexible. NONE of the planned activities are time sensitive. If you will be running your Alert on a date other than the planned ones, please let me know so I wait for your ICS-213 for the exercise report. A of the other activities can be performed at your convenience. The TPRFN task may take participants additional time as they learn to navigate the network. I'll wait until 10/13 to review the related Bulletin / Check-in traffic.

- 1) Alert and Readiness
- 2) Interconnectivity
- 3) Outreach
- 4) TPRFN messaging

### Alert and Readiness

ARES teams are encouraged to perform an activation and hold an emergency net. During the net assess group capabilities and readiness. Report results to the exercise team.

### Interconnectivity

ARES relies on many other emcomm related services to perform our mission. ECs are asked to complete a brief form describing their team's ability to use these related services and how third parties can connect with the team. The results will be compiled into a directory and distributed throughout EPA as a resource for all ARES teams to communicate with one another.

### Outreach

ARRL provides a tools for interested hams to find local ARES groups. ECs are asked to register their group and if already registered, to inspect the registration for any changes.

### TPRFN Messaging

ARES teams are asked to send a readiness bulletin using the TPRFN packet network. Only one bulletin per group is required but others are welcome. Encourage as many of your team as possible to try out this resource.

TPRFN is included in this SET to increase awareness of this resource. If it's successful and there is interest, we can look into using more of its resources in the future including the ability to process ICS and ARC forms and Winlink messages.

## **ALERT AND READINESS**

ARES teams are encouraged to perform an activation and hold an emergency net. During the net assess group capabilities and readiness. Report results to the exercise team.

Schedule the Alert anytime during the weekend of Oct 4/5. Document Alert activity on an ICS-213 and email to [JayHKing@yahoo.com](mailto:JayHKing@yahoo.com). (email only – do not Winlink)

Here's a link to a fillable ICS-213.

[https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dc/mtmcc/DOCUMENTS/Logistics/ICS\\_213.pdf](https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dc/mtmcc/DOCUMENTS/Logistics/ICS_213.pdf)

### Alert Net Documentation (ICS-213)

- List the persons participating in the Alert
- Document the date, time, frequency
- Use the Alert as an opportunity to assess participant interconnectivity. Including if the participants are active in Skywarn, NTS, TPRFN, ARDEN, Winlink, RACES, ACS, ServePA, REACT, CERT or other functions. Include this information in your ICS-213.
- Some participants may be able to reach other ARES units. During the Alert, ask members if they have the demonstrated capability of reaching other ARES units by radio and if they have done so in the last month. This can be by repeater, HF, WINLINK (or other digital modes). On ICS-213, list all ARES units / Counties that Alert participants have been able to contact in the last 30 days.

Deployment and other activities.

You know best what is needed for development in your team. ARES units are encouraged to include a deployment or other activities as part of the SET. Document these additional activities in the ICS-213.

## **INTERCONNECTIVITY**

Assess how well prepared the individual ARES units are to be able to 1) Communicate with one another, 2) Access other related Emcomm resources.

The reported information will be compiled and made available to other EPA ECs/DECs etc as the first steps toward an EPA Operations Plan.

ECs report their ARES unit

Repeaters (Primary, Secondary, Tertiary)

Simplex channel(s) (147.54, 147.57, 146.55, 146.58 recommended)

Net schedule and frequency

Complete the INTERCONNECTIVITY REPORT (following three pages). It is a Word document. If you don't have Word, you can use Google Docs. Email completed pages to the EPA SEC at [JayHKing@yahoo.com](mailto:JayHKing@yahoo.com)

## INTERCONNECTIVITY REPORT – Group Contact Information

## Group Contact Information and Repeaters

Topic	Information	Explanation
Group Name		
Group Call		
County/Served Agency		
EC name, call, phone, email		EC identity
AEC name, call, phone, email		AEC identity (or other alternate, in case EC is not available)
Group Web Site		
Email address		Email address monitored by the ARES group.
Winlink		Winlink address monitored by the ARES group. May be one of the member's or a dedicated address.
EOC Location		Address of the EOC or other site where the group normally serves
Primary Repeater		Output Freq, offset, pl tone
Secondary Repeater		
Tertiary Repeater		
Simplex Freq		

INTERCONNECTIVITY REPORT – Group Contact Information - Continued

Nets

Date & Time	Repeater / Frequency	Net name and Purpose

List only the most common nets, the ones that people passing through your county might like to attend and the ones that are likely to be converted into tactical or resource nets during an emergency

INTERCONNECTIVITY REPORT – Linkages and Connections

Having connected members in an ARES group facilitates message passing, collaboration and situational awareness. These roles are ideal assignments for individual members.

Members and Regulars explained – We are interested in knowing who is available to serve actively in these roles. This list will serve to direct others to be able to reach contacts that can communicate with your ARES unit. List ACTIVE members and list non-members who show up regularly at your functions and who could be counted on in an emcomm emergency.

(List all members or regulars that participate)

Topic	Call Signs of Participants	Explanation
ACS		List ALL active in PA Auxiliary Communication Service (ACS)
ServePA		List ALL registered with ServePA
RACES		List ALL active in RACES
SKYWARN		List ALL active in SKYWARN
NTS/RRI		List ALL active in NTS/RRI
Red Cross Emcomm		List ALL active in Red Cross Emcomm

(List calls of at least one member or regulars that participates)

Red Cross DST		List any one Red Cross Disaster Services Technology (GPA or SEPA)
ARDEN		List any one active with ARDEN
TPRFN		List any one active with The Packet Radio RF Forwarding Network
NetTastic		List any one active with NetTastic

## OUTREACH

ECs or their designee inspects, revises or registers their ARES team at the ARRL website.

If you've already registered your group, this is an opportunity to review that registration. Contact information, web pages and repeater assignments change sufficiently often to make an annual review a good idea.

Register your group at

<https://www.arrl.org/register-an-ares-group>

See local registered ARES groups at

<https://www.arrl.org/find-an-ares-group>

To edit an existing entry, first search for your geographic area and wait for the map to populate. It can be slow. Once populated, scroll down below the map to the ARES group list. Clicking on your group's entry takes you to the editing screen. In order to edit the entry, you must be either the Primary or Secondary contact person in the listing.

## **TPRFN MESSAGING (The Packet Radio Forwarding Network)**

Packet Radio continues to serve the Emcomm community. In Eastern PA we have access to The Packet Radio RF Forwarding Network (TPRFN). It covers the entire east coast with VHF and HF nodes and BBSs that are linked by RF. It is a reliable Emcomm resource for internet and phone system outages.

If you are currently using FLDIGI, FT8 or WINLINK then you have all the tools you need to access and use TPRFN.

The system has many capabilities; we'll concentrate on using the system to post system wide bulletins. See <https://www.tprfn.net/> for more information on the network.

### FEATURES

Posted messages are “one to many”, asynchronous and persistent.

Like FLDIGI messages are “one to many”. A single message is received by all participants.

Like WINLINK the system is asynchronous. The receiving station does not need to be manned at the time of transmission. Messages can be picked up by recipients at any time after being sent.

Unlike both FLDIGI and WINLINK, TPRFN messages are persistent. Messages continue to be available for download after being sent and received.

### MESSAGES AND BULLETINS

For the Fall 2025 SET we will be using BBS bulletins. Each bulletin has a Message Number, a Category, Subject and Content.

- Message Number – A unique number, system assigned, associated with each posted message. ####
- Category is not more than 6 characters. Typical Categories include: INFO, SALE, WANTED, EMCOMM, SET. Category can also include an area, we'll use @EPA.

For the SET the desired category is SET@EPA

- Subject is limited to 30 characters. For SET we'll use the subject as the check-in information.

EPA FALL SET *yourCounty* CHECKIN *yourCall*

- Content is multiple lines of not more than 80 characters. For SET actual message content is optional.

You'll need a terminal and modem program. See RESOURCES below

## FINDING A TPRFN NODE OR BBS

There are many VHF connections to the TPRFN in EPA. Most are on 145.010, 145.030 or 145.070. To find a vhf node or BBS, monitor these channels with your packet station then use the MHEARD command to list recently detected stations. Stations with -1, -2, -7 or -11 are possible nodes or BBSs. [-10 is usually, but not always, Winlink]. Try connecting to suspect nodes. If there is a BBS then its probably connected to TPRFN and you can leave your bulletin there. You can also use the packet Node command to try connecting to a known TPRFN BBS like N3MEL-2 and leave your bulletin there.

TPRFN EPA ACCESS NODES below lists seven EPA VHF node/BBS and two on HF. Any of these can be used for the exercise.

## EXAMPLE SESSION

Put your radio on freq. Connect with the node or BBS using the Connect command. If it's a Node you may need to connect an additional time to a BBS. For this example we'll show both.

Connect with Node (in this case N3MEL-7 but could be any active node)

C N3MEL-7

Connect with a BBS (in this case N3MEL-2 but could be any of the TPRFN BBSs)

C N3MEL-2

Set bulletin category and area

SB SET@EPA

From prompt - Enter bulletin title

EPA FALL SET *yourCounty* CHECKIN *yourCall*

Enter as many <80 character lines of text ending each with CR/LF

When done entering lines, end the message by entering /ex followed by /ex

/ex

This transmits the bulletin (Emcomm message) into the TPRFN. Very soon it will appear on all connected BBS

System will tell you your message number #####

You can read your bulletin

R #####

You can list all EPA bulletins with L> EPA

TPRFN RESOURCES

You'll need a terminal program and either a software or hardware TNC.

<p>TPRFN web page</p>	<p><a href="https://www.tprfn.net/">https://www.tprfn.net/</a></p> <p>Go here for background and technical information on the network</p>
<p>Easyterm Packet Radio Terminal</p>	<p><a href="http://uz7.ho.ua/apps/easyterm49.zip">http://uz7.ho.ua/apps/easyterm49.zip</a></p>
<p>Soundmodem 1200 bd or 300 bd hf</p>	<p><a href="http://uz7.ho.ua/modem_beta/soundmodem114.zip">http://uz7.ho.ua/modem_beta/soundmodem114.zip</a></p>
<p>QTtermTCP for AX.25 VARA FM or HF</p>	<p><a href="https://www.tprfn.net/pktnet-instructions/install-using-qttermtcp">https://www.tprfn.net/pktnet-instructions/install-using-qttermtcp</a></p>
<p>For Linux Users All the above are available in this Package</p>	<p><a href="https://github.com/km4ack/73Linux">https://github.com/km4ack/73Linux</a></p>

## TPRFN EPA ACCESS NODES

This list is for select nodes and BBS in Southeastern PA. There are MANY more nodes. See FINDING A TPRFN NODE (above) for basic instructions on identifying local VHF nodes.

### **Downingtown PA**

N3MEL-7 Node, N3MEL-2 BBS

1200bd VHF, 145.070 (digi via “RELAY or W3DRA-10”) if needed

VARA FM VHF, 145.670 (VARA FM digi via W3EOC-3 Roxborough, W3EOC-4 West Chester, W3EOC-6 Charlestown) if needed

HF VARA500, Daytime dial 7.1032, Nighttime dial 3.596

HF 300bd AX.25, Daytime dial 7.1032, Nighttime dial 3.596, offset 1000 USB

### **Doylestown PA**

KC3SMW-7 Node, KC3SMW-1 BBS

1200bd VHF, 145.610 (digi AA3E)

### **East Greenville PA**

WA3WLH-7 Node, WA3WLH-1 BBS

1200bd VHF, 145.010

1200bd UHF, 441.050

HF VARA HF, dial 71013 VARA500

HF ARDOP, dial 71013 ARDOP500

### **Aston PA**

N3IP-7 Node, N3IP-1 BBS

1200bd VHF, 145.070 (digi via “RELAY or W3DRA-10”) if needed

### **New Castle DE**

KA3VSP-7 Node, KA3VSP-1 BBS

1200bd VHF, 145.070 (digi via “RELAY or W3DRA-10”) if needed

HF VARA500, Daytime dial 7.1032, Nighttime dial 3.596

### **New Cumberland PA**

N3FUD-7 Node, N3FUD-11 BBS

VHF 1200 bd AX.25 145.010, Digi through W3ND-7 or KA3TKW.

(Other nodes / stations in the RF pathway are W3HZU and AA3RG-7.)

VHF 1200 bd AX.25 145.030, Digi through W3ND-7, W3MUM-7, PHILLS, or TUSC.

VHF VARA FM 145.670,

### **Middletown PA**

W3ND-7 Node, W3ND-1 BBS,

VHF 1200 bd AX.25 145.010, Digi through N3FUD-7 or KA3TKW.

(Other nodes / stations in the RF pathway are W3HZU, AA3RG-7, K3CHB-7, N3OGS-7, and N3DWB-7).

VHF 1200 bd AX.25 145.030, Digi through N3FUD-7, W3MUM-7, PHILLS, or TUSC. (Other node / station in the RF pathway is K3IR-7.)

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EAST COAST VARA HF NODES  
(Can be used for EPA Bulletin traffic)

**Central New York**

KP3FT-4 BBS

HF VARA500, Daytime dial 7.1032, Nighttime dial 3.596

HF 300bd AX.25, Daytime dial 7.1032, Nighttime dial 3.596, offset 1000 USB

**Richmond VA**

KN4LQN-4 BBS

HF VARA500, Daytime dial 7.1032, Nighttime dial 3.596

Virginia Beach VA

N4SD-11 BBS

HF VARA500, Daytime dial 7.1032, Nighttime dial 3.596