

# Attachment L

## Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) Support

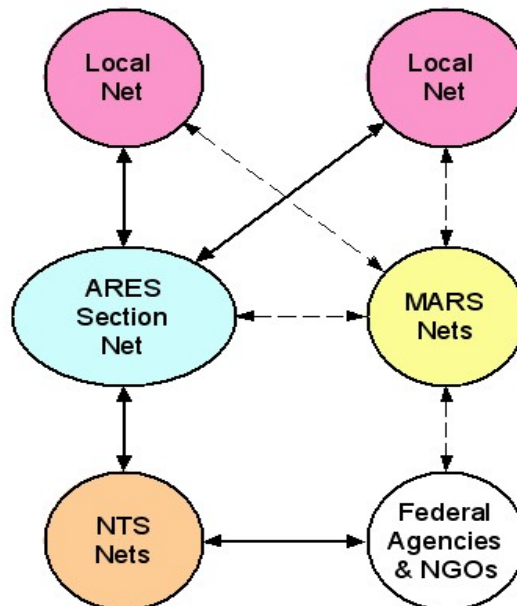
### The MARS Organization

MARS is made up of volunteers working alongside civil and military agencies to protect U.S. homeland security interests. It consists of three interoperability partners aligned with the Air Force, Army and Navy-Marine Corps.

It is important to note that although some procedures vary between MARS and ARES, MARS members are Amateur Radio operators. MARS is an active co-worker with ARES, RACES, and other emergency communication organizations.

### MARS Assistance to NH-ARES

The MARS operating network is available to assist NH-ARES in moving Priority and Emergency precedence messages in and out of New Hampshire to federal agencies and other state and national organizations, and between local NH-ARES nets as a backup to the NH-ARES Section nets.



MARS provides an alternate path between local nets and federal agencies and NGOs

### MARS Modes and Networks

MARS operates HF SSB and various digital networks. MARS utilizes PACTOR and MT-63 digital sub-modes that are capable of communicating under sub-audible conditions. This advantage allows for fast, emergency must communicate messages with such agencies such as DoD, FEMA, DHS, and the American National Red Cross. MARS employs the MARS Winlink messaging system provides for an effective backup to voice operations. Winlink is used for e-mail-over-HF messaging miles from the wired Internet. It is MARS policy not to utilize the Internet due to its vulnerability, and instead rely on voice and digital radio to alert its units and pass all types of traffic.

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### Message Formats & Content

Messages in any format (NTS, ICS- 213, plain text etc.) will be reformatted by a MARS communicator for transmission over the MARS network. Conversely, the MARS communicator will reformat messages being sent into the ARES network into whichever format is required.

ARES communicators should include the EEI information (below) when sending messages into the MARS network for delivery to outside agencies. This is the information most often needed by agencies such as DoD, FEMA, DHS, etc. If specific information is missing, leave it blank.

MARS messages use the **Essential Elements of Information (EEI)** format:

- A. Incident & Location
- B. Emergency Medical Facility Status
- C. Local Transportation Status
- D. General Damage Characteristics
- E. Area Utility Status
- F. Communications Status
- G. Information Source/Date Time
- H. Remarks and any additional message text

### ARES MARS Liaison Stations

Message handling liaisons will most often occur at the local (county) level. The ARES EC and state MARS leadership will each designate a member as the Point of Contact (POC) to function as liaison in the event messages need to be moved between the two services. To help establish the liaison function, each EC should identify one or more willing MARS members within their group. The local MARS member will then coordinate his or her liaison status with MARS leadership. Communications methods and alert notifications between NH-ARES and MARS will be established by the POC s of each local group.

### Moving Messages between ARES and MARS Networks

The initial link between ARES and MARS will normally be via VHF to a local MARS station on ARES net frequencies. The most efficient means to send any volume of messages between ARES and MARS stations may be packet or Winlink. ARES and MARS may also communicate over HF SSB on Amateur frequencies if necessary.

An example would be a need to get a message from a POD regarding a pandemic in NH to the Red Cross in Maine for more vaccine, when usual communication methods are unavailable. An ARES station would be operating at the POD site. The ARES station would check into their local net and request contact with the MARS liaison station to establish a VHF link, and pass the message. The MARS communicator would reformat the message to the Maine Red Cross and send it over the MARS network. A reply would from the Maine Red Cross would be sent through MARS nets and transferred back to the ARES nets via the same route.

*See MARS/ARES Liaison Functional Diagram –Next page*

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