

Attachment M

SKYWARN SUPPORT PLAN

Purpose: To provide operational support and a functional structure to the National Weather Service (NWS) Skywarn program within the ARRL New Hampshire Section.

Support provided: Skywarn-trained ARES members (spotters) will provide ground-truth weather and storm damage observations to NWS Taunton and NWS Gray. Untrained members will provide reports under the guidance of spotters in order to get as many data points as possible. Nets may be used to collect and feed data to NWS, or single observers may contact NWS directly when no net is operating.

NWS Activation: Skywarn operations support by NH-ARES may be initiated in several ways:

- 1) NWS may contact the ASEC-Skywarn, SEC, or other Section leadership
- 2) NWS may contact an EC for a localized activation
- 3) NWS may request activation through the NH Bureau of Emergency Management

NWS will use NH-ARES Comm Plan Attachment A for contact information. The NH-ARES member contacted will initiate Section or local alerting plans, as appropriate.

Self-Activation: In the event of a sudden severe weather event, Skywarn spotters may self activate and begin making immediate reports directly to NWS until a net is formed.

Full-Scale ARES Activation: For wide-area events when telephone, Echolink, and email reporting is not possible, reports may be passed through the NH-ARES network systems to a liaison station within VHF range of NWS Gray. When NH-ARES is already in full-scale operation in support of NH-BEM or other agencies, Skywarn reports should be routed through the system to a direct Skywarn Liaison station participating in the Section nets.

Network Operations: ARES-Skywarn nets may be formal or informal as dictated by traffic volume and number of stations participating.

Net Liaisons: A single NWS liaison should be appointed for each ARES net to collect and pass reports to NWS to reduce radio or telephone traffic to the NWS office. The liaison should be an NWS trained spotter.

Method of NWS Contact: Use the fastest available communications method to deliver observations to NWS. When possible, radio, email, or Echolink contact with NWS Amateur Radio stations WX1GYX (Gray) and WX1BOX (Taunton) will be most efficient because the reports are collected by a volunteer ham at the forecast office. If they are not present on any nets, telephone reports should be made. The Echolink New England Conference Node may be used to pass observations to Taunton as an alternate route. Taunton can usually forward reports to Gray on government circuits.

Reporting Guidelines: All reports should be first hand observations, not hearsay or scanner reports unless requested, which should then be identified as such. Skywarn-trained spotters should quickly evaluate reports from untrained observers and ask appropriate questions in order to improve accuracy.

In general, reports should include only the data requested by NWS. During thunderstorms, for example, they may only want wind speed and direction, hail size, significant storm damage, flooding, and closed roads. Temperature and humidity may not be relevant to that event.

Tornados: Immediately report funnel clouds and tornados already on the ground by the fastest means possible. Try to note the exact location and direction of travel. If you are not in direct communication

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with NWS or the State EOC, use the next fastest means still working. If this means calling the local or state police, dialing 9-1-1, direct dialing the NWS office for your area, or calling the State EOC, do whichever is fastest. If phones are out in your area, ask someone else on the net to make the call. Time is of the essence. Tornado reports are true Emergency traffic and have first priority.

NWS Public Reporting Number: Gray: **1-877-633-6772**. Taunton does not have a public number, but Gray will forward reports to them. Registered weather spotters should call the numbers on their cards.

Webmail Interfaces

NWS Gray: gyx.skywarn@noaa.gov

NWS Gray webmail: <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/box/spotterreportform.html>

NWS Taunton webmail: <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/gyx/stormreport.htm>