The ECAR Dispatch
A monthly thing

Erie County ARES/RACES The AUXCOMM group

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Where's Everyone???



OK - We're ***STILL*** looking for all you 'paper' hams!! There's been a lot of requests for participation from this group; we need ***EVERYONE'S*** participation in ***ALL*** activities. Let's GO!!!

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The ECAR machines:

* Buffalo VHF 146.865(+) 151.4
* Buffalo UHF 443.525(+) 151.4
* Orchard Park UHF 443.975(+)141.3
* P25 system NAC 167
* Hamshack Hotline 6103148
- Hamshack Hotline Conference bridge 1385

1. Incident Name:
2.To (Name / Position):
From (Name / Position):
4. Subject:
5. Date: 6. Time:
7. Message:
8. Approved By:
9. Reply:
10. Replied By:
Date / Time:

GENERAL MESSAGE (ICS 213)

1. Incident Name (Optional):		
2. To (Name and Position):		
3. From (Name and Position):		
4. Subject:	**5. Date:**	**6. Time**
7. Message:		
8. Approved by: Name: _____ Signature: _____ Position/Title: _____		
9. Reply:		
10. Replied by: Name: _____ Position/Title: _____ Signature: _____		
ICS 213	Date/Time: _____	

From the RO's desk..

NOTHING AT PRESS TIME

From the EC's desk..

During the "Basic Voice Communications Procedures" class conducted by Radio Relay International, we ask students to engage in a simple exercise. While traveling out of town, check into an ARES® or similar local EmComm net. Transmit your call sign slowly and carefully, using the standard ITU phonetic alphabet. Then wait to see if the NCS gets it right!

During 25 years of business travel, I conducted this experiment many times. In 95 percent or more cases, the typical NCS couldn't transcribe my call sign correctly despite two or three attempts. In many cases, the net sounded like a well-oiled machine, with stations checking in and being acknowledged without error - until a strange call sign appeared.

Now imagine that same NCS during an ARES® net operating under the stress of emergency conditions in which important messages are being conveyed on behalf of a served agency. Perhaps a request for medical supplies is being transmitted or someone is reporting the release of a hazardous chemical. If an ARES operator can't copy an unfamiliar call sign, will he or she be able to accurately transcribe and deliver a message containing a term such as "acute subdural hematoma" or "ethylene oxide?"

The example of the volunteer fire company applies well here. When you dial 9-1-1 to report a fire, you have a reasonable expectation that the firefighters arriving on scene have been trained. They should know how to ventilate the structure, attack the fire, operate the apparatus, or extricate victims, even if they are unpaid volunteers. Likewise, when radio amateurs offer their "emergency communications" services to an agency, the agency has a similar expectation that those assisting have been trained in basic communications procedures and protocols.

Learning to convey tactical or record message traffic is an essential skill. It is NOT enough to simply establish connectivity. One must be able to communicate accurately and efficiently, keep a concise radio log, transcribe information without error, and perform the basic administrative functions required of a message center or EOC.

This is why participation in traffic nets is so important. Traffic nets are the only place where one can check into a net any day of the week at your convenience and practice sending and receiving messages using standard prowords, proper ITU phonetic alphabet, and concise procedures. Some dismiss traffic handling because they see the content of routine messages as "unimportant," but they are missing the point. The real value proposition is in the practice of transmitting variable message content. Every address is different. Network management data varies from message to message. One must transmit the message at a pace that allows transcription by the receiving operator. Likewise, the receiving operator must be able to understand exactly what is being transmitted. These same skills are also essential to an efficient emergency communications process, whether the content being conveyed is tactical in nature or served agency messages intended for delivery to an emergency services official.

Let's be honest! Many EMCOMM volunteers are not prepared to handle important agency traffic. They have little training in the mechanics of message handling and too few participate in traffic nets. For the first time in many years, we are beginning to see real cooperation between NTS and ARES. This cooperation isn't just "nice," it's essential. Every EMCOMM volunteer should practice handling traffic because establishing connectivity is only a small piece of the overall communications process. The time has come to bridge the gap between traffic operations and local EMCOMM. Let's work together to the benefit of the Amateur Radio Service and our communities.

James Wades, WB8SIW, Board Chairman and Emergency Management Director of RRI. This piece is reprinted from the January 2026 issue of The NTS Letter, published by ARRL

Vince Harzewski N2JRS

ARES Emergency Coordinator | Erie County Amateur Radio Emergency Service

RACES Assistant Radio Officer | Erie County Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

Battery Power

Lithium Iron Phosphate (LiFePO4) batteries are considered the best for amateur radio emergency communications (EMCOMM) due to their lightweight, high power density, stable 12V voltage output, and long cycle life. For most portable EMCOMM, a 10Ah to 15Ah LiFePO4 battery is ideal, providing several hours of power for 50W-100W radios.

This video explains how to choose the right LiFePO4 battery for your portable ham radio station:**https://encrypted-vtbn3.gstatic.com/video?q=tbn:ANd9GcQ-Imm2n--9vlCD1rsxIg1Ty_98LfWt_jJEJHIeYueyy9mKQMPn**

Top Battery Recommendations for EMCOMM:

Best Overall: Bioenno Power (e.g., 15Ah-20Ah) is widely trusted for reliability and compact size.

Best for High Power/Duration: 50Ah-100Ah+ LiFePO4 batteries)

You can watch this video to see why LiFePO4 batteries are preferred for ham radio over other types:https://encrypted-vtbn1.gstatic.com/video?q=tbn:ANd9GcRphTjsQVY-JTzSrLtHsGAGq8wjeTHkCxMfz_F3U_skHYlF-K6r

Voltage Stability: LiFePO4 maintains a near-constant 13.2V-12.8V output, reducing power output drop-off.

Weight: Significantly lighter than Sealed Lead Acid (SLA) batteries.

Capacity Needs: 3Ah-6Ah is suitable for QRP (low power), while 10Ah-20Ah fits most mobile/field day needs.

Accessories: Always pair with a dedicated LiFePO4 charger to ensure safety and longevity.

THE ECAR DISPATCH

Monthly meeting location
3359 Broadway
Cheektowaga N.Y. 14227

E-mail: ECARham@gmail.com

We are the voices in the ether.

Have you been to ECARham.org yet??

Erie County ARES/RACES AUXCOMM is a volunteer communications group of FCC Licensed Amateur radio operators who are highly trained, motivated and are organized to provide communications in support to the County of Erie Emergency Services and other NGO's during times of disasters or when a need for enhanced communications and experience arises.

Join us on our net on Sunday's at 19:00 on the ECAR radio network OR come out to our meeting and say hi, we meet the second Monday of every month except for August at Erie County's Cheektowaga EOC. 73...

The Western New York Emergency net is held Every Sunday at 19:00EST on 146.865/443.525Mhz Except for the 3rd Sunday which is on the 443.975Mhz Orchard Park repeater.

We're always looking for something for the newsletter!!!!

Do you have a story, news, project or review that you would like to share with the group?

We are still looking for stories and information related to amateur radio and emergency communications to provide in the monthly newsletter that is put out to the membership to keep them informed.

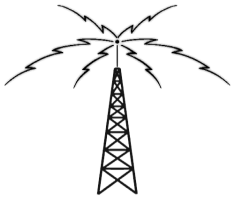
Please keep it to under 500 words and please include any links to resources pictures or other information you want to include with the story.

ECAR email reflector:

Are you on the ECAR email reflector????

Contact Ed W2GUT for an invite.

ed.w2gut@gmail.com



Email your stories to: ed.w2gut@gmail.com

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