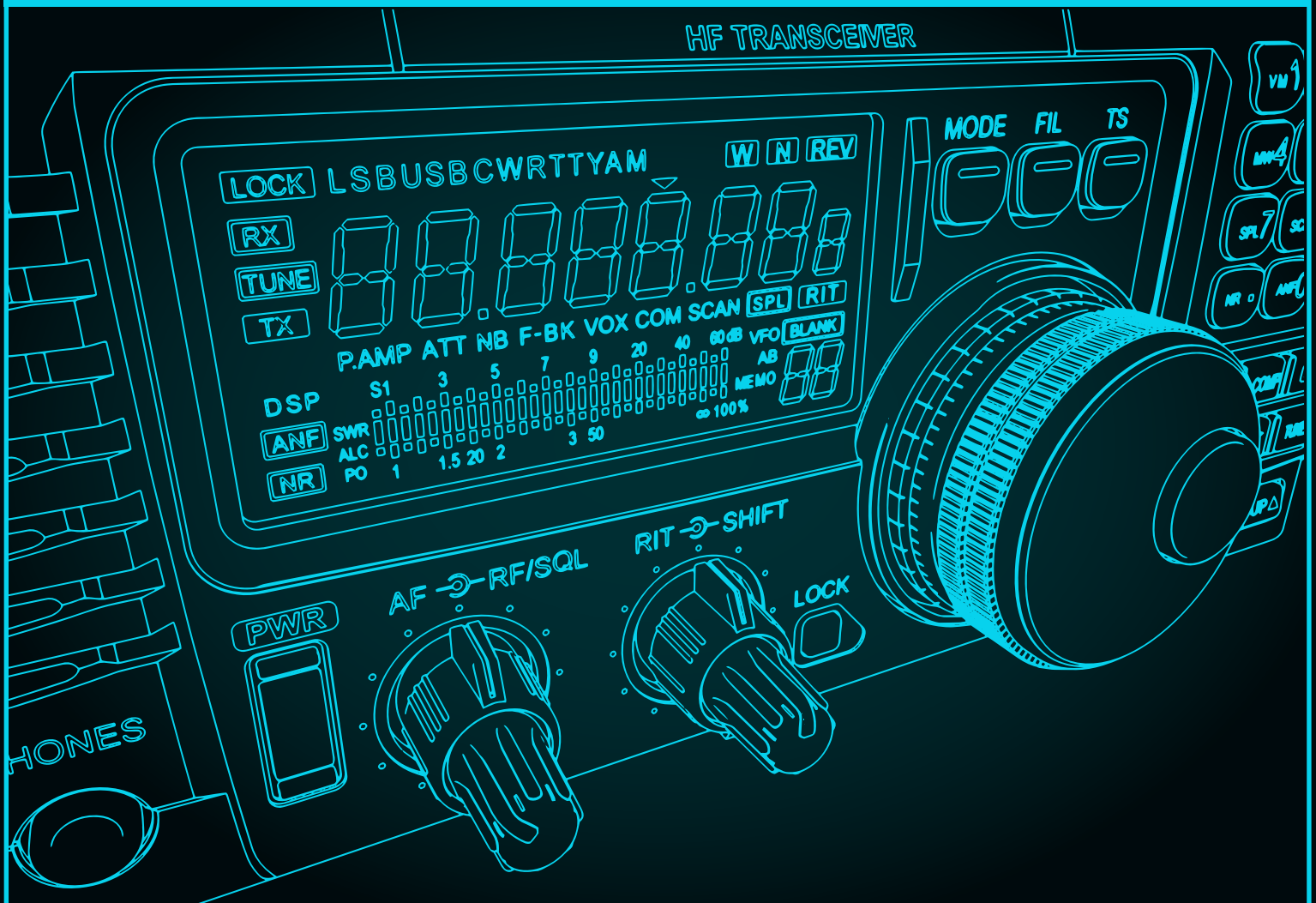


# ARRL CLUB PRIMER



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# CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT: A PRIMER FOR CLUB OFFICERS

In any organization, the atmosphere can significantly affect member engagement and retention. Clubs thrive when they possess an inviting and supportive environment, which can make all the difference for new members. Recognizing this vital aspect, this primer has been crafted to provide club officers with the necessary tools and insights to foster a welcoming atmosphere. This guide aims to empower those in leadership roles to not only train effectively but also to cultivate an inclusive culture within their clubs.



## Understanding the Role of Club Officers

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Club officers, as leaders, play a critical role in shaping the experiences of both existing and new members. Their responsibilities go beyond administrative tasks; they are the ambassadors of the club's values and culture. A well-informed and trained officer can transform a club, making it a haven for camaraderie, growth, and collaboration.

### The Importance of an Inviting Atmosphere

An inviting atmosphere has several key benefits:

1. **Retention of Members:** New members who feel welcomed are more likely to become active participants and stay committed. Conversely, an unwelcoming or indifferent environment can lead to high turnover rates.
2. **Enhanced Collaboration:** A welcoming atmosphere encourages open communication and collaboration. When members feel comfortable sharing their ideas and experiences, creativity flourishes.
3. **Positive Reputation:** A club known for its hospitable environment attracts new talent. Word of mouth can be one of the most effective marketing tools to bring in new faces.
4. **Personal Growth:** A supportive environment fosters individual growth. Members are more likely to take risks, try new things, and step out of their comfort zones when they feel safe and supported.

## Strategies for Creating a Welcoming Environment

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1. **Training and Development:** Officers should prioritize ongoing training initiatives that focus on interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and inclusivity. Hosting workshops that promote effective communication and understanding diverse perspectives can help foster a sense of belonging.
2. **Encourage Participation:** Facilitate opportunities for all members to engage actively. Consider creating committees or groups that align with members' interests. This level of involvement allows new members to feel more connected to, and invested in the club.
3. **Mentorship Programs:** Pairing new members with seasoned members can create bonds and provide guidance. This one-on-one support system can be instrumental in helping newcomers acclimate to the club's culture and expectations.
4. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Actively seeking feedback from members demonstrates that their voices are valued. Regular surveys or informal check-ins can help identify areas for improvement and reinforce that every member's opinion matters.
5. **Social Events:** Organize regular social get-togethers beyond formal meetings. Informal gatherings create a relaxed atmosphere, where members can connect on a personal level without the constraints of a structured agenda.



- 6. Celebrate Achievements:** Acknowledging both individual and collective achievements fosters a sense of belonging and pride within the club. Recognize contributions, no matter how small, to reinforce positive behavior and encourage further participation.

## Leading by Example

As officers, leading by example is crucial. Displaying a positive attitude, showing enthusiasm, and being approachable can set the tone for the entire club. Encourage officers and members alike to practice active listening, empathy, and respect for one another, cultivating a culture of kindness and inclusivity.

Creating an inviting atmosphere is not just a responsibility; it is an ongoing commitment that club officers must continually nurture. Through effective training, active engagement, and a genuine desire to cultivate connections, clubs can ensure that every member—new and old—feels valued and inspired to contribute. This primer serves as a foundation for officers to take actionable steps toward enhancing the experience within their clubs, paving the way for sustained growth and success. By fostering an environment that welcomes new members with open arms, clubs can thrive for years to come.

## Empowering Amateur Radio Through ARRL Affiliation

In an age where digital connection reigns supreme, there remains a profound thirst for community and collaboration among those who share a passion for amateur radio. ARRL (American Radio Relay League), The National Association for Amateur Radio®, has recognized the importance of fostering such communities by establishing a clear and structured affiliation process for amateur radio clubs.



As outlined by the ARRL Board of Directors, their policy aims to create a unified organization that promotes the welfare of amateur radio enthusiasts across the country. Today, with over 2,800 affiliated clubs, let's delve into the benefits and process of affiliation with ARRL.

### Blueprint for Success: Building a Thriving Amateur Radio Club

In the dynamic world of amateur radio, the success of a club is not merely a product of its activities or events, but rather the direct result of having the right core team in place. A vibrant and thriving club hinges on the dedication and enthusiasm of its members, particularly those in key leadership roles. This article explores the essential roles needed for success and the fundamental strategies that can be adopted to ensure your club sails smoothly.

## Effective Communication with ARRL Headquarters



The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) serves as a critical hub for communication and support within the amateur radio community. Whether you are a member looking for assistance, a club seeking resources, or an individual with inquiries, knowing how to efficiently communicate with ARRL Headquarters can significantly enhance your experience. Here are some simple yet effective guidelines to ensure you receive the fastest and most accurate service possible.

- 1. Prefer Email for Communication**

When reaching out to ARRL HQ, the most efficient method is to use email. Direct your inquiries to [clubs@arri.org](mailto:clubs@arri.org) for general club-related matters. Email not only saves time

but also acts as a reference point for both parties. However, if your situation is urgent and beyond your control, do not hesitate to call.

## 2. Call During Business Hours

If you must use the phone, it's crucial to remember the operational hours of ARRL HQ. The best time to call is between **8 AM and 5 PM Eastern Time, Monday through Friday** (except holidays). Calling during business hours allows you to resolve issues on the spot. Whether you need to clarify information, make changes to an order, or address a problem, speaking with someone in real time can expedite the process. You avoid the frustration of waiting for email responses or navigating complicated phone menus.

## 3. Be Clear and Direct

When you call, you'll be greeted by a receptionist. To improve your chances of being directed to the correct department, state your request clearly. For example, saying, "Hi, I'm from the Crow's Nest ARC" can lead you to Club Services, but if your concern is specifically about *QST* (membership journal of ARRL), a direct explanation of your issue will help eliminate unnecessary transfers and delays.

## 4. Plan Ahead

Timeliness is key when requesting services from ARRL. Always submit your requests well in advance to allow sufficient time for processing. While ARRL strives to accommodate all requests, late submissions may lead to unsatisfactory or delayed responses.

## 5. Keep It Concise

Efficiency is a priority. In your communications, strive to be concise. While detailed explanations can be beneficial in certain contexts—like arguing a specific point or providing feedback—getting straight to the point can expedite your request. For instance, if you need Field Day logs, simply state, "Please send me Field Day logs."

## 6. Utilizing SASE for Faster Service

Including a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope (SASE) or at the very least, a self-addressed business-sized envelope can speed up the process of receiving materials or responses. This small gesture makes it easier for ARRL HQ to respond to your request promptly.

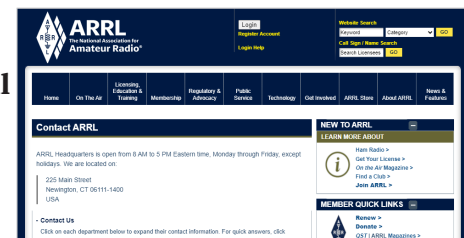


## 7. Ensure Correct Addressing

Make sure that the outer envelope has a **legible return address**. Additionally, it's a good practice to include your address after your signature in the correspondence. This helps ARRL ensure that your request reaches you without any confusion.

## 8. One Request at a Time

For the quickest response times, send only **one request per email or correspondence**. This minimizes confusion and ensures that each inquiry is addressed properly. For guidance on which department to contact, refer to the department listing found at the [ARRL Contact Page](#).



Communicating effectively with ARRL HQ is essential for a smooth experience as a member of the amateur radio community. By following these straightforward guidelines, you can facilitate quicker responses and better service. Remember, clear communication not only benefits you but also helps the team at ARRL serve you more efficiently.

## The Core Team: Building a Strong Foundation

The backbone of any successful club consists of its officers and directors, alongside essential roles such as the newsletter editor, public information officer, and ARRL Liaison. These positions are crucial for managing the day-to-day activities and long-term vision of the club. By filling these roles with individuals who exhibit a passion for both amateur radio and the club itself, you set the stage for a motivated and engaged membership.

## The President: The Captain of the Ship

At the helm of the club is the president, a position that carries immense responsibility. Traditionally, a club president presides over meetings, but their role extends far deeper. An effective president must be a motivator, planner, delegator, communicator, and a person of action—someone who can steer the club toward its goals while keeping membership engaged and excited.

A strong president serves as the captain of the ship, ensuring that everyone is working cohesively towards objectives that have been charted. Every decision made, every initiative undertaken, and all the reports shared back to the members rely on the president's ability to coordinate and lead.

## Crucial Supporting Roles: Enhancing Communication and Connectivity

Beyond the president, other essential roles contribute significantly to a club's overall success:

- **Public Information Officer (PIO):** This person manages external communications, promoting the club's events and activities to the broader community. A PIO's role is critical for building a favorable public image, which can attract new members and foster interest in amateur radio as a whole.
- **Newsletter Editor:** The newsletter is often the heart of communication within the club. An effective newsletter editor informs members of upcoming events, important club news, and changes in policies. By sharing compelling stories and achievements, the editor can inspire members and strengthen community bonds.
- **ARRL Liaison:** Appointing a dedicated Liaison to the American Radio Relay League can greatly enhance your club's operational efficiency. This individual acts as the central point of contact with ARRL and is your in-house expert on resources. Whether seeking materials for a public demonstration, organizing licensing classes, or arranging for guest speakers, having a Liaison simplifies the flow of information and access to assistance from the national organization.



## Maximizing Our Potential: Strategies for Success

To truly maximize the effectiveness of your club, consider implementing the following strategies:



1. **Encourage Engagement:** Foster an environment where all members feel valued and encouraged to participate. Regularly solicit feedback and ideas, which can lead to a stronger sense of community.
2. **Delegate Responsibilities:** Avoid overwhelming any single member, especially the president, by clearly defining roles and delegating tasks. This not only empowers your officers but also nurtures leadership skills throughout the membership.

3. **Promote Collaboration:** Create opportunities for different roles to collaborate. For instance, your PIO and Newsletter Editor can work together to ensure that promotional materials effectively communicate the club's initiatives.
4. **Provide Training and Resources:** Ensure that all officers, especially the ARRL Liaison, have access to training and resources. Familiarizing them with ARRL services and materials equips them to best serve the club's needs.
5. **Celebrate Successes:** Recognize and celebrate the achievements of your club and its members. Celebrating milestones—whether large or small—fosters camaraderie and encourages ongoing participation.

## Charting a Course Toward Growth

The success of an amateur radio club lies in its core team committed to collaboration, communication, and community engagement. By empowering leaders, establishing clear roles, and enabling effective communication channels, your club can navigate the challenges ahead and flourish in its mission. With a solid blueprint for success in place, your club will not only chart its course but also inspire generations of amateur radio enthusiasts for years to come.

### Understanding ARRL Affiliation

Affiliation with ARRL is more than just a badge of honor—it opens the door to a plethora of resources and support tailored for amateur radio clubs. ARRL distinguishes four categories of clubs eligible for affiliation:

1. **Local Amateur Radio Clubs** (Category One)
2. **Regionally or Nationally Organized Amateur Radio Groups** (Category Two)
3. **Local School or Youth Groups, or Clubs for the Elderly or Disabled** (Category Three)
4. **Club Councils (Clubs of Clubs)** (Category Four)

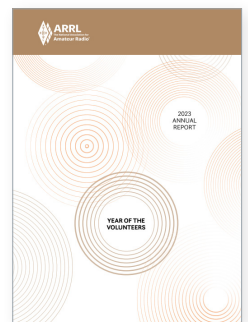
This classification system allows ARRL to cater to various types of clubs, each with its unique goals but unified by a shared passion for amateur radio.

### Key Benefits of Affiliation

Being an affiliated club comes with a treasure chest of benefits:

- **Access to the ARRL Annual Report:** Stay informed about developments within the amateur radio community.
- **Liability Insurance:** Coverage sponsored by ARRL provides peace of mind during club activities.
- **Member Referrals:** ARRL directs prospective radio amateurs to your club, helping to bolster membership.
- **Membership Recruitment Program:** Earn commissions through the Club Commission Membership Recruitment Program, enhancing your club's sustainability.
- **Mailing Lists:** Gain access to valuable lists of licensees and clubs for outreach and collaboration.

These benefits not only enhance the club's operations but also bolster its reputation within the community.





## The Affiliation Process

Affiliating with ARRL is straightforward, provided your group meets certain criteria:

- **Membership Requirements:** At least 51% of your voting members must be full or associate ARRL members, and at least 51% must be licensed amateurs.
- **Club Constitution:** Your club must have a documented constitution outlining its structure and governance.
- **Aligned Goals:** Your club's objectives must be in harmony with ARRL's mission.

Specific criteria vary by category. For instance, Category One clubs need a minimum of four members, while Category Three clubs require just one ARRL member to hold a leadership position.

Applications are submitted through the Club Kit, available online. Completing the application electronically is encouraged as it speeds up processing times. Interested groups can find the application form at [ARRL Application for Affiliation](#) or obtain a hard copy by contacting [clubs@arrl.org](mailto:clubs@arrl.org).

Upon submission, the application is reviewed by ARRL Headquarters and then forwarded to your Division Director, in consultation with your Section Manager, who will approve (or disapprove) your club's affiliation application.

Upon approval, you will be presented with a Charter of Affiliation and begin to receive Affiliated Club benefits.

## Maintaining Active Status

Once affiliated, clubs must stay engaged to maintain their status. Annual updates are required to keep the club records at ARRL Headquarters current. Clubs that fail to submit their annual report for two consecutive years will be marked as inactive. However, reactivating the affiliation is a straightforward process. Simply confirm that 51% of the voting members are ARRL members and submit the necessary updates.

Affiliating with ARRL is an excellent opportunity for amateur radio clubs to enhance their visibility, access valuable resources, and connect with like-minded individuals across the nation.

By working in unity, affiliated clubs can champion amateur radio's interests, foster community spirit, and ensure the longevity and vitality of this exciting hobby. So, if you're part of a club that shares a passion for amateur radio, consider the benefits of joining this vast, supportive network. Your next adventure in amateur radio awaits!

## Understanding the Special Service Club Program

The world of amateur radio is incredibly diverse and vibrant, built on the shared passion of individuals who explore the airwaves for communication, community service, and personal growth. To amplify local engagement and enhance the effectiveness of amateur radio clubs, the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Board of Directors has instituted the Special Service Club (SSC) Program. This initiative recognizes that local problems are best tackled with local solutions and empowers local clubs to serve as the frontline advocates for the interests of amateur radio enthusiasts.

The Special Service Club Program is an acknowledgment by the ARRL that local Amateur Radio clubs play a pivotal role in fostering community connections and promoting the values of the



hobby. To qualify as a Special Service Club, a local club must dedicate itself to creating a vibrant presence for amateur radio over a twelve-month period. This involves establishing meaningful programs across various specified areas that reflect the club's commitment to the community and the broader goals of Amateur Radio. For more information about the Special Service Club Program <http://www.arrl.org/ssc-application>

## Maintaining Communication and Relationships

Regular communication between clubs and their Affiliated Club Coordinators (ACC) is crucial. Clubs are encouraged to send annual progress reports that update their officers, mailing addresses, and other essential information. This practice not only helps ARRL maintain up-to-date records but also fosters stronger relationships between clubs and their ACCs. These coordinators are valuable volunteers who provide support, guidance, and advocacy for the clubs within their sections.

To enhance this relationship, clubs can take proactive steps to simplify their ACC's roles. This includes submitting the SSC Renewal Form promptly, notifying ACCs of any internal challenges, sharing club newsletters to keep them in the loop, and reporting any changes in club leadership. Such gestures of communication reflect respect and facilitate a better collaboration, ultimately benefiting the club and the amateur radio community.

The SSC Program is more than just a set of guidelines; it's a movement aimed at revitalizing and empowering amateur radio operators across the country. By supporting local clubs in becoming more engaged, organized, and recognized, the SSC Program fosters an environment where amateur radio can flourish both as a hobby and as a crucial public service resource.

For clubs ready to take this step, applications for the SSC designation can be submitted online, fostering a new era of engagement and proactive service. The call to action is clear: get involved, get active, and contribute to a growing network that benefits your club, your community, and the entire Amateur Radio Service.

Your commitment today will lay the groundwork for a resilient and robust amateur radio framework for tomorrow.

## Enhancing Your Club

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As club president, it's easy to get caught up in the minutiae of coordination and administration. There's a multitude of details demanding your attention, from meeting agendas to member communications. However, maintaining focus on the overarching vision and goals of your club is essential for steering your group toward success. This section highlights key strategies for shaping effective programs and activities, ensuring that your club remains aligned with its core objectives.

### Understanding the "Big Picture"

The "big picture" refers to the overarching objectives that guide your club's mission and purpose. While the specifics may vary across different Amateur Radio clubs, several fundamental goals can unify and enhance the club experience. As a club leader, it's your role to ensure that every decision you make reflects these broader ambitions. Here are some foundational objectives to consider:

**Broadening Members' Experiences:** A primary goal should be to enrich the amateur radio experience for all members. This not only enhances individual skills and knowledge but also fosters a strong sense of fraternity and camaraderie within your club.

**Community Resource Development:** Your club should strive to be a valuable resource for the community. As representatives of the Amateur Radio Service, it is essential to demonstrate the positive impact and utility of radio communications in local contexts.

**Support for Local Hams:** Your club can serve as a hub for local amateur radio operators, offering support, resources, and a sense of belonging. By creating an environment where local hams can share knowledge and experiences, you strengthen the community.

**Integration with Field Organization:** Establishing strong ties with the Section's Field Organization enhances your club's effectiveness. Participating in official roles can elevate your club's profile and ensure active involvement in broader amateur radio initiatives. Motivate your members to pursue positions in the ARRL Field Organization. Roles such as Official Emergency Station, Public Information Officer, and Technical Specialist can provide members with leadership opportunities while benefiting the club and the larger community.

## Implementing Ideas for Club Programs and Activities

With these objectives in mind, it's time to consider how your club can engage members and enrich the amateur radio community. Here are some innovative program and activity ideas:

**Public Relations Initiatives:** Organize events like ARRL Field Day, mall displays, or special-event stations to showcase the benefits of amateur radio to the public. These activities improve visibility and allow community members to learn about radio communications.

**Emergency Planning Participation:** Get involved in local emergency planning efforts. Demonstrating the crucial role of amateur radio during emergencies will underline your club's value to the community.

**Conduct Licensing Classes:** Offering classes for obtaining licenses not only empowers newcomers but also helps foster a culture of learning and growth within the club.

**Continuing Education Programs:** Organize "Elmering" sessions where experienced operators mentor novices. Promote technical advancement through workshops on various operating modes such as packet radio, satellites, contests, and DXing.

**Promote Technical Understanding:** Encourage members to enhance their technical skills through proficiency seminars and guest speaker sessions. This can lead to a culture of expertise and higher operating standards.



Field Day



Licensing Classes

## Customizing a Club Program Calendar

The Club Program Calendar should be a reflection of your club's unique vision and objectives. While many standard suggestions exist, it's crucial to adapt and expand upon these ideas to align with your specific goals. Encourage input from club members to cultivate a diverse range of activities that resonate with everyone's interests and expertise.

As a club president, your ability to keep sight of the big picture while managing day-to-day operations is vital for fostering a thriving amateur radio club. By focusing on broadening experiences, community engagement, and technical advancement, you can create an enriching environment for all members. Remember, the journey of strengthening your club is collaborative — involve your members in envisioning the future, setting priorities, and crafting meaningful programs that reflect your collective aspirations. Together, you can steer your club toward success while celebrating the rich world of amateur radio.

## The Heart of the Club: Mastering Regular Meetings for Engagement and Growth

In the fabric of any club, the regular meeting serves as a cornerstone, intricately woven into the essence of camaraderie, business, and fun. These gatherings are not just mere formalities; they are the meat and potatoes that sustain and energize the club's mission and vision. However, the challenge lies in maintaining interest and ensuring high attendance. The task of developing engaging programs and cultivating a growing membership can be one of the most rewarding aspects of club leadership. Here are some key considerations to keep in mind when planning successful meetings.

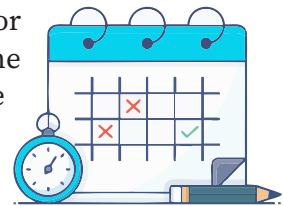
### Choosing the Right Meeting Place

The importance of a well-chosen meeting place cannot be overstated. A centrally located venue that is convenient for the majority of members significantly boosts attendance. Permanence and familiarity are also vital; members who may not have attended in a while should have no trouble finding their way back. Local schools, libraries, churches, or public service organizations like the Red Cross serve as excellent options due to their accessibility.

### Scheduling for Success

When it comes to meeting dates, consistency plays a crucial role. Most clubs opt for semi-monthly or monthly gatherings, while smaller community clubs may convene more frequently due to their intimate nature. For larger clubs, a monthly schedule supplemented by executive committee meetings can suffice.

Select meeting dates based on member availability, aiming for a regular schedule—like the third Thursday of each month—so that it becomes a fixture in their calendars. This predictability fosters a habit of attendance and engagement among members.



### Conducting Effective Meetings

A well-run meeting is essential for maintaining order and ensuring productivity. Although strict adherence to Robert's Rules of Order may not be necessary, a structured approach is needed to keep discussions focused. The chairperson should ensure that the meeting remains on track, preventing it from descending into chaos. Interruption during discussions should be managed carefully; if a member is straying too far off-topic, the chair can step in tactfully to guide the conversation back.

The meeting agenda typically begins with the reading and approval of the minutes from the last meeting, followed by reports from officers and communications from the secretary. Next, the committee chairpersons present their updates, leading into discussions of old and new business.

Truly skilled chairpersons can expedite these processes to focus on the evening's program, which might feature a guest speaker. Respecting the limited time of a speaker by minimizing business discussions allows for a more enriching experience.

## Creating a Welcoming Atmosphere

Finally, meetings should not just be about business; they should foster a sense of community and belonging. After formal proceedings, set aside time for light refreshments and informal conversations, allowing members to engage and reconnect on a personal level. These interactions can spark new ideas, strengthen relationships, and create a sense of unity within the club.

Regular club meetings are crucial for maintaining a vibrant, engaging, and productive club atmosphere. By thoughtfully planning meeting logistics, ensuring consistent scheduling, conducting orderly and efficient meetings, and fostering an inviting environment, club leaders can enhance participation and grow their membership, making the effort well worth it. So, embrace the challenge with enthusiasm and creativity, and your club will thrive.

## Keeping Engagement Alive

### The Importance of Programs in Club Meetings

In the bustling world of club meetings, particularly within amateur radio circles, the primary goal remains steadfast: fostering camaraderie and shared knowledge amongst members. While it may seem that long discussions about business can generate productive evenings, relying solely on these meetings can unintentionally lead to dwindling attendance over time. To keep members interested and engaged, it's crucial to maintain a structured program that resonates with the diverse interests of club members. Here are several viable options that clubs may consider keeping their gatherings lively and informative.



### Inviting External Speakers

One of the most effective ways to captivate your audience is through external speakers who bring expertise from varied fields. Think of hams in prominent positions such as the Affiliated Club Coordinator, Section Manager, or Section Emergency Coordinator. Other potential speakers could include public service organizers, QSL bureau representatives, radio engineers, and executives from radio stations.

These external voices often introduce fresh perspectives and provide insights into subjects that directly relate to club members' interests. To facilitate this process, clubs can coordinate with their local Public Information Coordinator, who can assist in identifying and inviting speakers from an active speaker's bureau.

### Member-Led Presentations

What better way to highlight the talents within your own club than to organize presentations by club members? Many members hold a wealth of knowledge and experience in various radio-related subjects and inviting them to speak fosters a sense of shared learning. Presentations can cover technical aspects of radio theory, home-built gear demonstrations, or even practical tips for net operating and message-handling procedures. Incorporating a friendly competition, where prizes or convention expenses are awarded for the best presentations can motivate members to prepare thoroughly and deliver their best work.



## Open Discussions

Another engaging format is the open discussion forum. This involves a member posing a question, which the group then explores collectively. Rotating speaking turns encourages participation from everyone, promoting a safe space for sharing thoughts and ideas. This dynamic not only enhances camaraderie but also ensures that everyone's voice is heard and valued, making the club more accessible to newcomers and veterans alike.

## Engaging Club Activities: Boosting Attendance and Interest in Amateur Radio

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In the world of amateur radio, club participation and member engagement are critical to fostering enthusiasm and growth in the community. To keep members coming back for more and to attract new participants, clubs can organize a variety of contests and programs that cater to different interests. Here are some innovative ideas to elevate your club's activities:

### Make Connection with ARRL Night

Host an ARRL Night featuring a visitor from the American Radio Relay League's official family. This event offers an excellent opportunity for club members to learn about the many benefits of ARRL affiliation, ensuring that any misinformation is addressed. Focusing on ARRL's principles can lead to an engaging discussion about how these align with the club's mission, strengthening the bond between the two entities.

### Foster New Relationships with Visitors Night

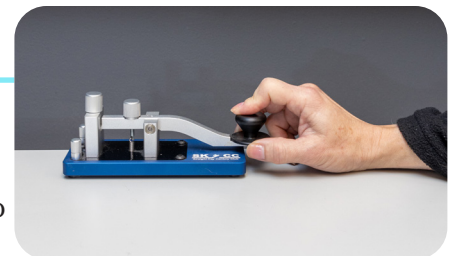
Schedule a Visitors Night once or twice a year to encourage special invitations to prospective members. This initiative promotes networking among club members, local hams, and non-hams, creating an inviting atmosphere that may convert visitors into dedicated members.

## Enhance Club Meetings with Continuing Programs

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In addition to regular meetings, clubs can host ongoing programs that benefit members:

- **Code Practice and Technical Training:** Encourage members to arrive early for technical training sessions led by knowledgeable members. These can focus on enhancing skills like Morse code transmission, fostering a culture of learning and growth.
- **W1AW Bulletins:** Appoint a dedicated member to present special bulletins during meetings. This initiative keeps club members updated on the latest amateur radio news and developments.
- **Welcome Visitors:** Inviting visitors to share a few words after their introduction helps to build community and allows members to engage with new faces.
- **After-Meeting Socializing:** Allow time for informal conversations after meetings. Providing refreshments, like coffee and doughnuts, can create a "hamfest" atmosphere, encouraging members to mingle and share experiences.
- **Station Visits:** Facilitate station visits after meetings, allowing members to showcase their equipment and setups. This not only builds interest but also fosters connections among members through shared experiences.



## Ensuring a Smooth Changeover

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The transition of club officers is a critical process that can significantly impact the continued success and operational stability of an ARRL-affiliated club. When leadership changes hands, it's essential to maintain clarity, transparency, and proper documentation to avoid disruptions. To facilitate a smooth transition, here's a handy check-off list for outgoing and incoming club officers to ensure all necessary notifications are filed and club records are transferred appropriately.

### 1. Notify ARRL HQ

The first step in the transition is to notify the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Headquarters of all new club officers. This is vital for ensuring that important news, updates, and materials from HQ are directed to the correct individuals. Clubs should utilize the Club Update form to implement these changes promptly.

### 2. Inform Key Stakeholders

In addition to ARRL HQ, it's crucial to notify the Division Director, Section Manager, and Affiliated Club Coordinator about the new appointments. Keeping these key stakeholders informed contributes to cohesive communication and operational continuity.

### 3. Verify Club Update on File

Ensure that the club's current update is on file with ARRL HQ. Regular updates help maintain an accurate record of your club's leadership and activities, which can be beneficial for relationship-building and support from the league.

### 4. Check SSC Status

For clubs that have Special Service Club (SSC) status, confirm that it is current. Check the SSC application guidelines on the ARRL website to understand any necessary documentation or submissions.

### 5. Secure Official Club Papers

Review and secure all crucial legal documents pertaining to the club, including but not limited to:

- Certificate and Articles of Incorporation
- Articles of Association and By-Laws
- Corporate seal
- Non-profit status documentation
- State and Federal tax ID numbers
- IRS filing documents
- Insurance policies (liability, equipment) – ensure they are current
- Post office bulk mailing permit



Maintaining these documents in a secure and accessible location helps protect the club's integrity and operations.

## **6. Club Station License**

Verify that the club station license is secure and current. This is essential for maintaining legality in club activities and operations. Refer to ARRL's licensing resources for any updates needed.

## **7. Inventory Accountability**

Conduct a thorough accounting of the club's property inventory. Ensure the inventory list is current and that it clearly indicates location and custody responsibilities.

## **8. Club Safe Deposit Box**

Make sure the inventory of materials stored in the club's safe deposit box is updated. This includes key documents and assets necessary for club operations.

## **9. Financial Records**

Compile a list of all club bank accounts and holdings, ensuring that this list is updated quarterly. Transparency in financial management is crucial for building trust among members.

## **10. Club Archives**

Confirm that the club archives—including historical records, minutes, newsletters, photos, ledgers, and awards—are safely stored and secure. These documents are important for the club's legacy and continuity.

## **11. Contracts and Agreements**

Review all contracts and agreements currently in force for the club. Ensure that all associated documents are present and that the contracts remain current.

## **12. Utilities Information**

Update and confirm that all current information regarding utilities billed to the club—power, water, telephone, etc.—is accurate, including billing addresses.

## **13. Frequency Coordination**

Check that frequency coordination correspondence is up to date, ensuring that repeater pair assignments are current for club operations.

## **14. Postal Box Information**

Verify that the club's Postal Box information is current to prevent miscommunication and missed correspondence.

## **15. Club Email List**

Lastly, ensure that the club email list is updated. This is vital for effective communication among club members and for disseminating information about meetings, events, and other activities.

Transitioning club officers is not just a formality; it is a critical process that can shape the future of a club. The above checklist encompasses the key items necessary for an active club's operation. However, clubs should also consider specific factors unique to their circumstances. By being proactive and thorough, outgoing officers can ensure that successors enjoy a seamless transition, free from unexpected surprises, and equipped to lead the club effectively into the future.



## Engaging with Local Events

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Throughout the year, countless local events require reliable communication support to ensure safety and coordination. As a new ham, you can participate in various activities such as parades, walk-a-thons, and bike races. These events often draw large crowds, necessitating an organized communication structure to manage logistics and participant safety.

When volunteering for such events, you'll work alongside seasoned hams to set up communication stations, relay critical information, and assist event organizers in addressing any unexpected challenges. This opportunity not only sharpens your operational skills but also fosters a sense of camaraderie among participants.

### Collaboration with the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®)

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a ham is the chance to collaborate with the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). ARES is a nationwide network of amateur radio operators ready to provide crucial communication support during emergencies and disasters.



By working with local emergency management agencies, ARES members have the opportunity to enhance their skills in crisis communication and disaster preparedness.

As a new ham, joining ARES allows you to receive training on emergency protocols, work on real-world communications exercises, and establish relationships with local first responders. Your contribution could be vital during events such as natural disasters or other emergencies when traditional communication methods are often compromised.

### The Role of Emergency Communications

For tips on fortifying your club's emergency communications capabilities, visit [ARRL Public Service](#). These resources can provide guidance on best practices, training, and community engagement related to emergency response.

## Reaching Out to New Hams

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New amateur radio operators often find themselves tuning into local repeaters as they look to establish connections in the community. The potential for clubs to reach these newly licensed hams is enormous, especially when they leverage this communication tool effectively.

Developing a bulletin program can serve as an excellent way to engage new members. By having a club member announce the upcoming club calendar during "prime time" on local repeaters, such as during morning or evening commutes, clubs can capture the attention of emerging hams.

Moreover, make it a point for club members to discuss club activities during their on-air QSO (conversations) and to actively invite newcomers to attend meetings and events. A dedicated "New Ham Night," where experienced members mentor and guide novices, can create a welcoming atmosphere that fosters confidence and enthusiasm.

For a more direct approach, clubs can contact the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Headquarters, using the link below, to obtain lists of new hams in their areas. Sending personalized invitations and copies of appealing club newsletters can intrigue beginners and motivate them to experience what your club has to offer.

[http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/ARRL\\_Mailing%20List%20Request%20Form.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/ARRL_Mailing%20List%20Request%20Form.pdf)

## ARRL Awards

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ARRL offers a wide-ranging slate of achievement awards that may be of interest to your club members.

For additional information on any of the awards, please contact ARRL HQ. Club Competition Rules: <http://arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/Club%20Gavel%20Competition.pdf>

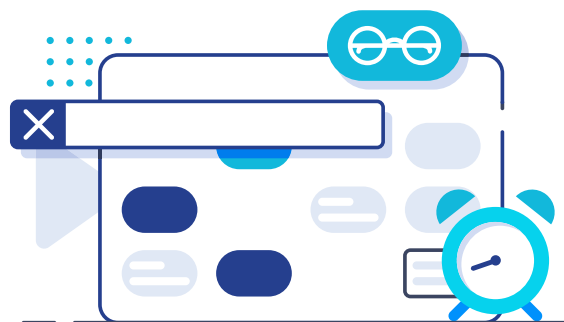
## Planning Guide

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### Best Practices for Successful Clubs: A Comprehensive Guide

Creating a thriving club requires more than just good intentions; it necessitates a clear plan, active involvement, and a welcoming environment. Many successful clubs across the country have adopted a set of “best practices” that not only prepare them for growth but also encourage member engagement and retention. The list below is just a few of the more effective strategies widely utilized by prosperous clubs for maximum benefit.

1. **Appoint Greeters**
2. **Encourage Name Tags**
3. **Start Meetings with Introductions**
4. **Document Events**
5. **List Club Elmers**
6. **Offer Basic Skills Classes**
7. **Reach Out to New Members**
8. **Grant Free Membership to New Hams**
9. **Newsletter Inclusion for Visitors**
10. **Maintain Equipment Inventory**
11. **Update Club Listings**
12. **Encourage Photos on ARRL Accounts**
13. **Become an ARRL Special Services Club**
14. **Ensure Checks Have Dual Signatures**
15. **Conduct Annual Audits**
16. **Document Activities with a Historian**
17. **Prepare a Club Manual:** Create a comprehensive manual containing essential information, including:
  - Description of Duties:** Clear outlines for officers, board members, and committees.
  - Bank Account Information:** Essential financial details for transparency.
  - Club Licenses:** Important documents and licenses related to operations.
  - Constitution and Bylaws:** A reference for club governance.
  - ARRL Affiliation Applications:** Past copies regarding ARRL affiliation and special service club applications.
  - Club Calendar:** An essential schedule that includes meeting dates and important events.



## Meeting Planner's Notes

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Refer to the following links for more ARRL Club ideas, speakers and resources.

<https://www.arrl.org/clubs>

<https://www.arrl.org/affiliated-club-resources>

<https://www.arrl.org/speakers-bureau>

<https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/Mentor%20checklist.pdf>

<https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/Tips%20and%20Tonics%20for%20Healthier%20Radio%20Clubs.pdf>

### Meeting Program:

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### Other:

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### January Notes:

- New Year's Day Parade communications support.
- Straight Key Night, January 1.
- Kids Day.
- Plan February meeting. (Suggestion: Contact local Explorer Post. Invite scouts to February meeting. Prepare to put on demonstration of Amateur Radio.)
- Club gavel competition, January VHF Sweepstakes.
- Announce, plan club gavel competition for next month's International DX Contest, CW.
- RTTY Roundup.
- Plan participation in School Club Roundup.
- Note of the Month: Now is the time to send in your club's Annual Report.



Kids Day

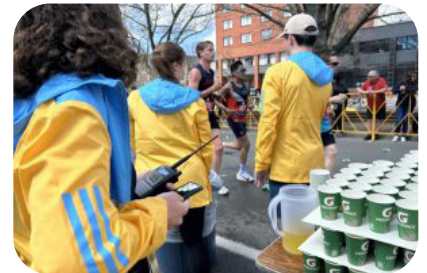
## February Notes:

- Club gavel competition, International DX Contest, CW.
- Announce, plan club gavel competition for next month's International DX Contest, phone.
- Appoint Field Day planning committee. Start plans at February meeting. Arrange site.
- Plan March meeting. (Suggestion: hold seminar on good operating practice, PSK31, OSCAR, packet or other specialty operating mode.)
- Explorer Scout demonstration meeting.
- Valentine's Day Message Center.
- School Club Roundup.
- Note of the Month: Have you submitted your club's Update to ARRL HQ yet?



## March Notes:

- Plan April meeting. (Suggestion: "ARRL Night." Invite Division Director, Section Manager and other League officials. Tell club members to be ready with their questions and comments on League affairs.)
- Follow-up with Explorer Post contacts in encouraging scouts to pursue their interests in Amateur Radio. Invite them to your licensing class.
- Field Day planning: Task club PIO with arranging publicity for club activity.
- Club gavel competition, International DX Contest, phone.
- Contact town officials and offer communications assistance for spring marathons, races, parades and other special events.
- Note of the Month: Have you submitted your club's Update to ARRL HQ yet?



## April Notes:

- Plan May meeting. (Suggestion: Contact Public Information Coordinator for list of potential speakers for May meeting. Recruit speaker.)
- Arrange special field trip to local point of interest: observatory, electric utility, broadcast station transmitter, airport communications center for examples.)
- Hold an ARRL Night meeting. Also, review Field Day planning status.
- Note of the Month: Have you submitted your club's Update to ARRL HQ yet?



## May Notes:

- Field Day status report/discussion at monthly meeting.
- Plan for Amateur Radio Week which starts on the Sunday preceding Field Day weekend.
- Plan June meeting. (Suggestion: Visit outstanding shack of club member. Make special efforts to invite new hams.)
- Plan for Kid's Day. Ask to hold it at a shopping mall or other public place.
- Note of the Month: Club members invite mothers to the meeting in honor of Mother's Day!



### June Notes:

- Hold Field Day planning meeting.
- Amateur Radio Week, Begins the Sunday preceding Field Day. Field Day, Fourth weekend in June. Invite your local newspaper, radio, and other media to observe Field Day activity.
- Plan July club meeting. (Suggestion: Picnic/outing. Invite family members to join in the fun.)
- Kids Day
- June VHF QSO Party. Note of the Month: Invite new hams to participate in your Field Day effort.

### July Notes:

- Conduct annual review session; evaluate club progress over the course of the past year.
- Submit new/renewal application for Special Service Club status.
- Conduct Field Day post-event evaluation. What can you do next year to make for a better event?
- Discuss adopting a school or organizing a youth auxiliary club.
- IARU HF World Championship.
- Note of the Month: Hold Annual Picnic/Outing with family members!

### August Notes:

- Schedule an executive committee meeting to plot a course for the upcoming club year.
- Identify major goals and activities, and schedule using this calendar workbook.
- Consider applying for new/renewed Special Service Club status.
- Appoint license class committee. Task Public Information Officer with obtaining local publicity for classes.
- Plan club activity for Amateur Radio Public Awareness Day, 3rd Saturday of September Plan September meeting. (Suggestion: Contact Public Information Coordinator for list of possible speakers. Recruit speaker possibly for ATV, National Weather Service or Civil Air Patrol.)
- UHF Contest.
- 10-GHz Cumulative Contest.
- Organize club effort for September VHF QSO Party.
- Note of the Month: Plan schedule of Fall club activities!

### September Notes:

- Plan club's participation in October Simulated Emergency Test, first weekend in October. Contact your local Emergency Coordinator for information.
- Appoint "Goblin Patrol" committee. Contact chief of police to make arrangements for club participation in patrolling town on Halloween.

- Plan publicity and program for October meeting. (Suggestion: Hold “New Ham Night” or an Open House with refreshments. Help new hams with their questions and problems. Contact ARRL HQ for lists of local new hams.)
- Encourage club gavel competition in November Sweepstakes: CW and phone, held on separate weekends.
- September VHF QSO Party.
- Amateur Radio Public Awareness Day, 3rd Saturday in September.
- Coordinate your Awareness Day efforts with your Public Information Officer and section Public Information Coordinator. Contact the public information office at ARRL HQ for materials for your club’s participation.
- 10-GHz Cumulative Contest.
- Contact local Girl Scout or Boy Scout troop to seek participation in Jamboree-On-The-Air (JOTA), 3rd weekend in October. See telephone white pages. Note of the Month: Participate in Amateur Radio Awareness Day
- Note of the Month: Get Set for SET, 1st Weekend in October!

### October Notes:

- Host local scout troop for Jamboree-On-The-Air (JOTA), 3rd weekend in October.
- Simulated Emergency Test, 1st weekend in October. Implement club SET participation.
- Contact municipal police and/or civil preparedness agency and offer club services for communications support in town Thanksgiving Day parade.
- Organize club gavel competition activity group for November Sweepstakes, CW and phone on separate weekends Plan November meeting. (Suggestion: Contact Public Information Coordinator for list of possible speakers. Recruit speaker possibly for RFI, RF Safety, Antenna Comparisons, and Homebrew Projects.)
- Contact local hospitals and children’s homes to make arrangements for Santa Claus Nets to be held in December.
- Goblin Patrol, Halloween, October 31.
- New Ham Night!



### November Notes:

- Appoint a committee to plan a December Holiday party.
- Make arrangements for the December Holiday message center at a local mall or school.
- Contact mall management and/or school administration; plan exhibit.
- Contact PIC, ACC for supplies, handouts. Inform Section Traffic Manager of traffic activity.
- Contact town or city officials and offer club communications support for New Year’s Day parades.
- Plan December meeting. (Suggestion: Christmas/Hanukkah Party, annual club dinner.)

- Club gavel competition, November Sweepstakes, CW.
- Club gavel competition, November Sweepstakes, phone.
- Organize club activity for 160-Meter Contest.
- Organize club activity for 10-Meter Contest. Make sure to encourage Novice and qualified Technician members' participation!
- Note of the Month: It's Sweepstakes Time! Good Luck!

### December Notes:

- Plan school exhibitions for spring session. Contact local school officials to arrange a schedule to exhibit at area schools. Task club PIO with arranging local publicity. Inform ACC and PIC. Encourage establishment of school clubs and League affiliation.
- 160-Meter Contest.
- 10-Meter Contest.
- Santa Claus Net at local children's hospital and/or school.
- Holiday message center and mall display.
- Holiday Party.
- Prepare club communications team for New Year's Day parade communications effort.
- Plan January meeting. (Suggestion: Club Construction Project Night. Contact the Technical Coordinator to arrange support by a local Technical Specialist.)
- Plan participation for Kids Day.
- Plan spring licensing class. Make a pitch to local police, EMTs, fire department, civil air patrol, REACT, search & rescue units, etc.
- Straight Key Night, December 31-January 1.



## Club Addresses

President: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Vice President: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Public Information Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL Liaison Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliated Club Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Section Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Division Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Local media: \_\_\_\_\_ Call sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_





## WE'RE GLAD YOU TOOK THE LEAP: A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT ON YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

Hopefully, this Primer we've put together has been a helpful resource, a kind of compass to guide you on your way. We aimed to pack it with useful insights and practical advice, the kind of things we wish we'd known when we were starting out.

Think of it as a friendly companion—something you can refer back to whenever you need a little boost or a different perspective.

It's not about having all the answers. It's about creating a supportive environment where everyone feels valued and empowered. It's about listening, learning and, yes, sometimes making mistakes along the way. Those mistakes are just lessons in disguise.

Being a leader isn't about being perfect; it's about striving to be better. It's about showing up for your club, being a good example, and fostering a collaborative spirit. It's about encouraging everyone to be involved in shaping the direction of your collective effort. You've embarked on something truly worthwhile, and we're excited to see what you accomplish.