

The American Radio Relay League, Inc.

Local Memorandum of Understanding Between the
Puerto Rico Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES@)
and The American Red Cross Puerto Rico Region

Effective Date: February 11, 2025



American Red Cross
Puerto Rico Region



1. INTRODUCTION

The Puerto Rico Amateur Radio Emergency Service (referred to as "PR-ARES"), representing public service-oriented radio amateurs in Puerto Rico, and The American Red Cross Puerto Rico Region (hereinafter referred to as "The Red Cross") have agreed to enter into a cooperative agreement which forms the basis for this memorandum.

2. PURPOSE

This agreement between PR-ARES and the Red Cross establishes a framework of cooperation and a close working relationship with volunteer radio amateurs organized under the authority of the American Radio Relay League, Inc. (ARRL) Puerto Rico Section Emergency Coordinator and designated officials of The Red Cross. It is intended that, through cooperation of the local resources available to both signees, the public will best be served in disaster, emergency or other public-service-related situations.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This document is not intended to be legally binding but rather a statement of cooperation between the two parties.

3. ORGANIZATION

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service consists of federally licensed radio amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communication duty in the public service when disaster strikes pursuant to Federal Communications Commission Rule 97.1 (a) which states that a "fundamental purpose" of the Amateur Radio Service is: "Recognition and enhancement of the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications."

ARRL, comprising approximately 150,000 radio amateurs in the United States of America sponsors the ARRL Field Organization. This national field organization is divided into geographic Sections, one of which is the Puerto Rico Section. The ARES program is one segment of the ARRL's

commitment to Serving the public in time of need. Local ARES groups are established components within the ARES program.

The ARRL Puerto Rico Section leadership includes the elected Section Manager (SM) and, within ARES, his or her appointed Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC), District Emergency Coordinators (DECs) and local Emergency Coordinators (ECs). The EC is tasked with managing an ARES response in each location.

The American Red Cross, founded in 1881, is dedicated to helping people in need throughout the United States and, in association with other Red Cross networks, throughout the world. The Red Cross provides services to those in need regardless of citizenship, race, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status or political affiliation.

The American Red Cross is governed by fundamental principles that are:

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Humanity: The Red Cross, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors—in its international and national capacity—to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality: It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality: In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Red Cross may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence: The Red Cross is independent. The national societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may always be able to act in accordance with Red Cross principles.

Voluntary Service: The Red Cross is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity: There can be only one Red Cross society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality: The Red Cross is a worldwide institution in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other.

Red Cross Puerto Rico Region was founded in 1883, having in Puerto Rico more than 125 years of community service. Now it is directed by a Board of Directors and the Regional Executive who are the highest representatives of the Organization in Puerto Rico. Volunteers make up 90% of the American Red Cross workforce. Red Cross Puerto Rico Region also provides services to those in need regardless of citizenship, race, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status or political affiliation.

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4. RECOGNITION

The American Red Cross Puerto Rico Region recognizes that ARES is the ARRL-sponsored emergency/public service-oriented communications organization. ARES serves agencies and organizations through licensed radio amateurs nationwide and can be of value in providing critical communications during emergencies and disasters when normal lines of communication are disrupted. Also, it is important to recognize that the availability of amateur radio operators or other resources provided by ARES for in-place and on-location services may be limited by how an emergency or disaster may have impacted our citizen volunteers and on the conditions of the public roadways required to reach locations where service is needed.

The Puerto Rico Amateur Radio Emergency Service recognizes that The American Red Cross Puerto Rico Region is part of the American Red Cross network and is dedicated to helping others. The American Red Cross offers its services regardless of citizenship, race, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status or political affiliation. The American Red Cross, through its strong network of volunteers, donors and partners, is always there in times of need. We aspire to turn compassion into action so that all people affected by disaster across the country and around the world receive care, shelter and hope; our communities are ready and prepared for disasters; everyone in our country has access to safe, lifesaving blood and blood

products; all members of our armed services and their families find support and comfort whenever needed; and in an emergency, there are always trained individuals nearby, ready to use their Red Cross skills to save lives.

5. PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

To establish a partnership between ARRL and the Red Cross to provide assistance to communities impacted by disaster events in the United States, the following roles and responsibilities are agreed upon:

5.1. Communication between organizations

Representatives of the Puerto Rico ARRL Section and the Red Cross Puerto Rico Region will maintain open communication. Both parties will encourage their respective organizations and units to maintain open communication at the state and local levels. Each party will share current data regarding disasters (except for information which may be confidential or privileged), disaster situational and operational reports, changes in policy or personnel relating to this MOU, and any additional information pertinent to disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Please refer to ATTACHMENT A for contact information of key personnel of each organization.

5.2. Engagement

The ARRL Puerto Rico Section will encourage its units to engage in discussions with local Red Cross field units to develop plans for local response or disaster relief operations. Likewise, The American Red Cross, Puerto Rico Region will encourage its field units to engage in discussions with the ARRL Puerto Rico ARRL Section to develop plans for local response or disaster relief operations.

5.3. Preparedness Activities

Both organizations will:

5.3.1. Make training and educational opportunities available to each other.

5.3.2. Collaborate on pre-disaster planning by determining up front how each organization can assist each other during a response to ensure effective and timely action.

5.3.3. Develop a knowledge base of expertise, experience, and capabilities of each organization. Commit to regular engagement, planning and joint exercises to strengthen capabilities.

5.3.4. Encourage each other to participate in community preparedness activities that support this partnership agreement, one example of a community activity is the Red Cross Home Fire Campaign.

5.3.5. The Red Cross will encourage participation in the ARRL Field Day, the Simulated Emergency Test (SET) and other emergency exercises. Participation may take many forms, including Red Cross officials visiting and touring sites to better understand the capabilities of local ARRL volunteers and ARES@ units, or the joint use of Red Cross equipment such as vehicles or trailers.

5.4. Response Activities

5.4.1. National headquarters coordination: Operational coordination between Red Cross national headquarters and ARRL headquarters will occur through the primary points of contact as shown in Attachment A, Organization Contact Information or other officially designated staff.

5.4.2. Communications: Whenever there is a disaster requiring the use of amateur radio communications resources and/or facilities, the local Red Cross region or chapter may request the assistance of the local ARES organization responsible for the jurisdiction of the scene of the disaster. This assistance may include:

5.4.2.1. alert and mobilization of ARRL ARES@ personnel in accordance with a prearranged plan;

5.4.2.2. establishment and maintenance of fixed, mobile, and portable station emergency communication facilities for local radio coverage.

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5.4.2.3. point-to-point contact between Red Cross personnel and locations.

5.4.2.4. the maintenance of the continuity of communications for the duration of the emergency period until normal communications channels are substantially restored, or until radio communications are no longer necessary in support of the response to the disaster.

5.4.3. On-scene cooperation: Both ARRL volunteers and American Red Cross workers will work cooperatively at the scene of a disaster and in the disaster recovery, within the scope of their respective roles and duties as recommended in ATTACHMENT B, ARRL Roles on Red Cross Disaster Relief Operations.

5.4.4. Concept of Operations: the Red Cross uses an adapted version of the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) in its concept of operations for disaster response management. ARES teams supporting Red Cross may be asked to supply or use Incident Command Systems forms for planning and tracking operations.

5.4.5. ARRL volunteers supporting Red Cross disaster operations:

5.4.5.1. Local Red Cross regions and ARRL units will develop protocols and processes for information sharing, disaster notification, joint response activities for disaster relief efforts.

5.4.5.2. When the Red Cross requests assistance from ARRL volunteers, the Red Cross will inform ARRL volunteers where to report and their point of contact. Their point of contact at that location or locations will provide to those ARRL volunteers access to the location(s) where their assistance is required by the Red Cross.

5.4.6. Equipment sharing: Each organization may request equipment for temporary use to support operations. The specifics of responsibility and liability of the loaned

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equipment will be developed as part of plans and procedures, in writing, and are separate from this agreement.

5.5. ARRL Radio Operators

5.5.1. Radio station operations: It is understood and agreed that amateur radio operators, being licensed and regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), shall always exercise sole and exclusive control over the operation of their radio stations. Such control cannot be surrendered or delegated, in accordance with Federal law.

5.5.2. Radio operators: It is understood and agreed that radio operators have skills that extend beyond amateur radio frequencies and equipment. These skills may be applied to operate on Red Cross frequencies and equipment.

5.5.3. FCC Licenses: The Red Cross is responsible for any licensing arrangements necessary for Red Cross operations that occur outside amateur radio licenses, or any amateur radio licenses established by American Red Cross Amateur Radio Club Stations. Individual amateur radio operators are responsible for the maintenance and renewal of their personal licenses.

5.6. Mutual Support

5.6.1. Shared members: Each organization will welcome interested volunteers to become members and participate in the activities of the other organization. Such volunteers shall meet the standards, have the responsibilities and be entitled to the privileges of each organization. ARRL volunteers interested in becoming Red Cross volunteers should understand that a background check is a requirement to be a volunteer.

5.6.2. ARRL volunteers supporting The Red Cross: ARRL may provide volunteers to assist the American Red Cross with communications in support of disaster relief activities as may be mutually agreed upon at the local and national levels. The ARRL does not require the completion of a criminal background check to

participate in ARRL volunteer programs. However, radio amateurs acting as ARRL volunteers under the terms of this agreement shall not be requested or required to consent to nor undergo a background check in order to provide a communication function on behalf of the Red Cross.

- 5.6.3. Red Cross volunteers supporting the ARRL: Red Cross volunteers affiliated with a local region or chapter that holds a valid Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Amateur Radio License are encouraged to participate in the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES@) program to develop emergency communications skills, cross-train in local disaster drills and exercises, and integrate region or chapter communications resources into the local emergency management structure.

6. GENERAL

- 6.1. Both parties agree not to use or display any trademarks of the other without first receiving the express written permission to do so.
- 6.2. Both parties Will keep the public informed of their cooperative efforts. Both parties will widely distribute this MOU within the respective departments and administrative offices of each organization and urge full cooperation.
- 6.3. Both parties will allocate responsibility for any shared expenses in writing in advance of any commitment.
- 6.4. ARRL agrees to adhere to the Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross Crescent Movement and Non-Government Organizations listed in ATTACHMENT C.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

- 7.1. Applicability: This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect on the date when signed by authorized representatives of the ARRL Puerto Rico Section (Section Emergency Coordinator and Section Manager), and representatives of the American Red Cross Puerto Rico Region.

- 7.2. Term of Applicability: This Memorandum of Understanding will be in effect for a term no greater than three (3) years from the date when it was signed by the authorized representatives from both parties.
- 7.3. Review and Extension of Applicability: Six (6) months prior to the expiration date, both parties must review the progress and success of this Memorandum of Understanding and determine if it must be amended or extend it for an additional two (2) year period.
- 7.4. Amendments: This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of both parties. This Memorandum of Understanding shall be amended to update contact information and signatures of the primary contacts or authorized officials, whenever these roles change in either organization.
- 7.5. Cancelation: It is understood by both parties that at any time this Memorandum of Understanding may be terminated by written notification from either party to the other.
- 7.6. Disclaimer: This Memorandum of Understanding does not create a partnership or a joint venture, and neither party has the authority to bind the other.

Date: Feb 11, 2025



Lee Vanessa Feliciano
Regional Executive
American Red Cross of Puerto Rido

Date: 2/11/25



Nory E. Bonilla, Logistic Specialist
American Red Cross of Puerto Rido

Date: 11 febrero 2025



Carmen N. Greene Rodriguez
PR-ARRL Section Manager

Date: 11 febrero 2025



Emmanuel Cruz
PR-ARES Section Coordinator

ATTACHMENT A

Organization Contact Information Primary Points of Contact

American Red Cross of Puerto Rico

Contact Name: Nory Bonilla, Mass Care (Logistic) Manager
nory.bonilla@redcross.org
Office Phone: 787-758-8150
Mobile Phone: 787-308-5398

Contact Name: Carlos Carrasquillo, Communication Regional Lead
Email: carlos.carrasquillo@redcross.org
Mobile Phone: (508)834-0070

ARRL Puerto Rico Section

Contact Name: Carmen N. Greene Rodriguez, Section Manager
Email: apolonia912@gmail.com
Mobile Phone: (787)246-6534

Contact Name: Emmanuel Cruz, Emergency Coordinator
Email: np4d.pr@gmail.com
Mobile Phone: 787-717-3511

ATTACHMENT B

ARRL Roles on a Red Cross Disaster Relief Operation

During a Red Cross Disaster Relief Operation (DRO), ARRL volunteers may perform in any of the following roles. These are examples of actual roles; they may or may not actually be included in all operations depending on the needs of the operation. It is possible that one person can support multiple roles or one role may require support from several people. This is not an exhaustive list and ARRL volunteers who have taken Red Cross Disaster Services training can participate in other roles. ARRL volunteers who are assigned roles by the Red Cross during a DRO will be provided with Red Cross credentials as required by the role, consistent with Red Cross policy.

Amateur Radio Liaison: This role is for a person who is familiar with both Red Cross and local amateur radio operations. This role would establish contact with the local ARES unit, amateur radio club and repeater owners to provide a single technical-level point of contact for the DRO. If local agreements already exist, this role could be pre-designated. It would be expected that this role would be linked to a similar role in the partner organization.

Communication Equipment Operator: This is a standard radio operator role for someone who would operate a two-way radio or other communication device at a fixed facility or mobile/portable location to support the DRO. They would pass messages from point to point either directly or through a message relay. Operators may use DRO-issued equipment or personally-owned equipment, and they may be on amateur radio frequencies or frequencies coordinated or licensed by the Red Cross.

Communication Equipment Installation/Repair: This is a more technically hands-on role than the Operator. In this role, the person would be asked to temporarily install two-way radio equipment into a facility or vehicle that is under Red Cross authority through ownership, lease or rental. The equipment could include base-station radios, mobile radios and appropriate antennas. Equipment may also require field repairs, such as the radios installed into Red Cross emergency response vehicles (ERVs). **Disaster Assessment:** Individuals who have taken the necessary training with the Red Cross can assess the damage caused by a disaster, and use their radio skills to relay that information

ATTACHMENT C

Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Government Organizations in Disaster Response Programs

Principle Commitments:

1. The Humanitarian imperative comes first.
2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.
3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.
4. We shall endeavor not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.
5. We shall respect culture and custom.
6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.
7. Ways shall be found to involve program beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.
8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.
9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.
10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified human beings, not hopeless objects.

END OF DOCUMENT

