

SECTION 8: ACTIVATIONS AND MOBILIZATIONS

This section provides information related to ARES activations, mobilizations, and deployments (the activities that occur at the beginning of an exercise or disaster).

Once you complete this section, you will be able to:

- Describe how callouts are triggered
- Understand how activations and mobilizations occur
- Understand how frequencies are selected for ARES operations.

CALLOUTS

At the beginning of an exercise, or when a need for ARES support is identified during an emergency, a callout is performed to activate the local ARES group. The EC and AECs call their assigned operators to warn of a possible mobilization, to ask operators to monitor a net frequency, or to actually deploy operators to locations.

In situations where telecommunications has failed, or where a community emergency has been declared but ARES has not been specifically activated, available ECs or AECs may decide to perform a limited (warm-up) or full activation in the expectation that a request may be received.

Types of activation are described below. If you receive an activation call, see [“When you get an activation call” on page 8.4.](#)

ACTIVATION AND MOBILIZATION

This section describes the types of activation, and the activation processes. It also provides information about what to do during exercises and emergency activations.

There are two general types of activations:

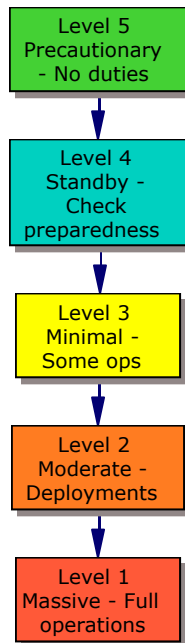
- EMO activations, triggered by the provincial EMO
- ARES activations, triggered by served agencies or events that have occurred within a region or community

In some situations, these activations may both occur, perhaps even at the same time.

ARES activations

Types of ARES activation

ARES has several levels of activation, providing flexibility in situations that may not require a full mobilisation of personnel.



Activation Level 5 - Precautionary . Under a Level 5 activation, ARES is triggered spontaneously by a community situation (for example, a power or telecommunications outage, or an event such as an industrial explosion). A Level 5 activation is usually a response to an unexpected event that has occurred without warning. The EC begins monitoring the group's primary frequency (often referred to as TAC1), and ARES operators may decide to check for ARES activity on that frequency. There is no formal callout or net initiation, and the EC acts as a coordinator, providing any information that is available and asking other ARES stations coming on frequency to stand by.

Level 5 will be rescinded when the EC decides that ARES support is not likely to be needed. The EC broadcasts a message to all operators on TAC1, standing down ARES operations.

If ARES support may be needed, the EC escalates to Level 4, Level 3, Level 2 or Level 1 as appropriate.

Activation Level 4 - Standby . Under a Level 4 activation, ARES volunteers are asked to prepare for a possible deployment. Depending on the situation, volunteers may be notified by phone, email, or radio.

ARES operators are asked to monitor TAC1. No net is initiated.

ARES volunteers are asked to check their level of preparedness. Checking preparedness means:

- Checking family members to ensure that they are secure
- Checking schedules and availability
- Checking batteries
- Testing primary and backup equipment
- Checking Ready Packs
- Checking vehicle readiness
- Filling gas tanks.

Activation Level 3 - Minimal Deployment. Under a Level 3 activation, the EC assesses the need for volunteers. The EC contacts key ARES volunteers in order to gather scheduling information.

Operators are asked to continue monitoring TAC1. A net is initiated on TAC1 only if required. An ARES net controller begins making periodic announcements on TAC1, and prepares to initiate an ARES net.

If needed, the EC will dispatch ARES operators to key sites (such as an EOC).

A second callout is performed to contact any operators who did not respond to the initial callout.

Activation Level 2 - Moderate Deployment. Under a Level 2 activation, at least one EC is on duty at the primary EOC. ECs start the callout to ARES volunteers for a 72-hour schedule.

An ARES net is initiated on TAC1. The EC dispatches operators to sites as required. Initial deployments may be up to 12 hours in duration.

However, be prepared for longer deployments in a larger emergency, as relief may not be available.

Activation Level 1 - Massive Deployment. Under a Level 1 activation, the EC schedules operators to meet site and net control requirements for up to two weeks. All ARES resources are made available to client agencies.

All available ARES operators are asked to check in to the ARES net on TAC1, and are dispatched to specific locations and assigned duties.

Additional ARES nets are initiated on additional frequencies as required. All nets and sub-nets observe strict net protocols until Level 1 is rescinded.

When you get an activation call

When you get a call for an emergency callout, you will be told the emergency channel that is being used. In some situations, you may also be immediately dispatched to a location. On activation:

- Begin monitoring the emergency channel and stand by for instructions.
- Call the personnel on your own ARES callout page, if you have been assigned callout duties.
- Check into the emergency net during the next general call for check-ins.
- Prepare your emergency pack (add charged batteries, cellphone, etc.) and stand by for deployment.

When you hear about a community emergency or telecommunications outage

When you hear about a community emergency or telecommunications outage, begin scanning the ARES frequencies and stand by to join an emergency net.

If the community emergency is not serious enough to warrant ARES or EMO activation, the net may not convene.

If the emergency is serious, or if the telecommunications outage is likely to affect critical services, an EC or district communications officer (DCO) will initiate the emergency net and call for check-ins.

If you discover a widespread telecommunications outage and believe that your EC may not be aware of it, take steps to notify your EC using whatever means are available.

When you are deployed to a location

When you are deployed to a location, take your Ready Pack and enough food, water and medication to operate comfortably for at least 24 hours.

If you require transportation, advise the EC/AEC or DCO when they call to activate you, or inform the net controller when the controller requests information about your status and availability.

When you arrive at the location

At a location that does not yet have an ARES communication station

- 1 Seek out the location site manager and tell them that you have arrived. (The location of the senior officer is often indicated by a flashing green light.)
- 2 Ask them where you are to set up the station (or if operating handheld, where you should place yourself).

- 3 Check into the emergency net and notify the net controller that you are on station and in contact with appropriate parties.
- 4 Wear a namebadge that clearly says Communications Operator.
- 5 If practical, put up a sign identifying your post or station as a communications station.
- 6 If you are equipped with an FRS handheld and are at a location where FRS is being used by officials, turn it on to channel 9, with privacy codes (CTCSS) turned off.

At a location that has an ARES communication station

- 1 Seek out the station manager (or location site manager, if you are the first ARES operator to arrive).
- 2 Find the communications station.
- 3 Refer to the Communications Station Operating Procedures in the ARES binder at the station and follow procedures to activate the station.
- 4 Check into the emergency net and notify the net controller that the station is activated and ready for service.
- 5 Wear a name badge with your first name, clearly indicating ARES.

FREQUENCIES FOR ARES OPERATIONS

Frequencies used during ARES operations will depend almost entirely on the repeater systems and communications plans in place within your region. In addition, the frequencies used during ARES operations may vary depending on the available surviving repeaters, on the area where communications support is needed, and on the number of channels needed to meet end-user requirements.

ARES ‘channels’ are divided into four types:

- 1 VHF/UHF FM frequencies
- 2 ‘Exotic’ frequencies on bands or modes that will not normally be used, but may be required for special applications
- 3 HF SSB frequencies for NVIS applications
- 4 HF/VHF/UHF frequencies for digital communications