Community and Disaster Services

Message from Community Services Officer

Ontario Corps & Radio Amateurs of Canada: Activities in Ontario

Jason Tremblay, VE3JXT
Community Services Officer
community@rac.ca

The RAC Field Organization was established 30 years ago to assist communities by supporting local clubs or organizations.

Radio Amateurs of Canada has always been interested in local activities across the country.

Through the reports in the Community and Disaster Services and the Club Corner and Coming Events columns in TCA magazine and on the website, we are pleased to assist community groups, clubs and disaster service groups in sharing information about what is taking place in their region.

Funding & Promotions

In July 2025, the Ontario government announced a substantial investment of $10 million in emergency preparedness grants aimed at enhancing response capabilities throughout the province. As previously announced, among the beneficiaries, Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) received $545,000 earmarked for critical initiatives including: recruiting and retaining volunteers; upgrading skills; and preparing teams for deployment within Ontario.

This funding has allowed RAC to acquire new communications equipment, building upon last year's resources. Enhancements include satellite connectivity for email and text communications, as well as satellite radios to ensure extended coverage in challenging areas. Additionally, the integration of Marine and Aviation communication capabilities has been achieved, along with the provision of ongoing training for volunteers across the province.

Financial support represents a key advancement toward establishing a sustainable volunteer workforce capable of emergency telecommunications, ultimately improving RAC's overall emergency readiness. While progress is being made, it is essential to note that the development of the RAC portal for volunteer

onboarding has been delayed by the complexities of the new approach being implemented.

As this database is being constructed, the organization is dedicated to learning and developing essential operational elements to ensure its initiatives are executed effectively. RAC appreciates the understanding and patience of its members during this process as it works diligently to support its volunteers and enhance the community's preparedness for emergencies. Together, RAC is committed to creating a resilient, responsive network that benefits all its members.

Partnership with the Province

The partnership between Radio Amateurs of Canada and the Ontario government focuses on developing the Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) in Ontario. This service is designed to provide reliable communication during emergencies, leveraging the expertise of skilled professionals and highly trained volunteers.

The ACS operates as part of a province-wide network that can be mobilized quickly to support communities affected by emergencies. While many struggle with the changes, RAC wants to reassure our members that local community-based teams have been outlined in our plan. Currently, these plans are not carved in stone and as we move forward with training and building relationships with Ontario partners, RAC has had to adapt and even, at times, slow down and reassess key elements to ensure the program will not only meet the current requirements, but have a strong enough foundation to grow into a national system to support communities across Canada.

There are over 440 communities in Ontario, each with its own jurisdictional elements that cannot be easily addressed with a single plan. RAC has known that this program would not be an easy venture; however, the ongoing support from communities, non-governmental organizations (NGO) groups and the provincial government has shown that the efforts this year have been recognized by many and supported in ways that have even surprised RAC.

RAC has expressed its commitment to working closely with the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response and other non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to enhance emergency readiness and response capacity across Ontario.

Thank you!

In the past year, for many reasons, RAC has seen growth in our membership. More recently, with the ACS AUX-C training currently being offered, we have seen many non-members and non-Amateur Radio operators on this program. Many have expressed interest in joining the Amateur Radio community after taking part in the training. Many of the comments are "I had no idea how" or "You actually can do that".

As the Community Services Officer, I have seen many groups develop admiration for Amateur Radio this year and have found that many of the issues stem from a lack of information about Radio Amateurs of Canada and Amateur Radio in general. While ACS is based in disaster communications, we are working with communities that often have no other backup or contingency when communications are lost so we have opened the opportunity to educate community leaders and members about the Amateur Radio Service and our long history.

Meetings & Organizational Activities

In August 2025, Jill Dunlop, the Ontario Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response, visited RAC headquarters, highlighting the strengthened relationship and collaboration between RAC and the province.

Minister Dunlop has attended many recent events and has always tried to engage with the RAC representative, thanking us for being there.

One key thing you should know is that the Minister understands that Radio Amateurs of Canada is a volunteer organization. She truly appreciates the efforts of our volunteers to take time to be present at these events, partnership-building meetings and media briefs, and that has really strengthened our relationship with the Ministry.

Summary of Impact

The collaboration between Ontario Corps, Radio Amateurs of Canada and the Government of Ontario has resulted in increased funding, improved emergency preparedness and enhanced volunteer recruitment and training.

The ACS initiative is central to these efforts, ensuring that Ontario communities are better prepared to respond to emergencies with reliable communications and skilled support.

Ongoing meetings, events and promotions have strengthened the partnership and raised awareness of the importance of Amateur Radio in emergency response.

Ontario ACS Chain of Command

Provincial Interoperability Coordinator

Jack Miroslav Beneš, VE3ZPW, has been an Advanced Amateur for 30+ years.

He worked as a frontline Emergency Room (ER) Registered nurse for 30 years and as the Coordinator for the Regional Municipality of Niagara's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Aux-Com division.

CERT Aux-Com provides volunteer communications for the CERT program and also offers redundant and alternative communications for the municipality in times of need, and overall leadership and strategic direction for ACS.

Jack will take on the leadership of the ACS Ontario team in January as the Provincial Interoperability Coordinator. He will help liaise with provincial emergency management and interoperability partners, approve significant operational changes when directed to by our partners and RAC, and set program priorities when required.

Nationally, RAC will oversee the administration and financial requirements agreed with our partnership. However, the operation will now be directed to the province and Jack and his team will help build that operational capability.

Section ACS Coordinators (Four Sections)

Each ACS Coordinator manages their operations within their assigned Section:

- Ontario North (to be appointed)
- Ontario East (Lance Peterson, VA3LP)
- Ontario South (Scott Maybe, VA3SFM)
- Golden Horseshoe (Robert Galambos, VA3BXG)

You will get to know these individuals over the next few months as they are a critical part of the next evolution of the Auxiliary Communications Service in Ontario. Their role will be to oversee the ACS program and work closely with Section Managers to build teams of dedicated volunteers who will support our communities in times of need.

The ACS Coordinators are responsible for local deployment, training and coordination and they will build out their teams within Ontario by creating Districts and District leadership. In support of future training, they will be a part of the onboarding of new instructors. While they work in partnership with the Section Managers, they report directly to the Provincial Interoperability Coordinator. This is critical to the interworking of the provincial emergency management system.

Communications Technical Team

Nicholas Field, VA3NPW, from the Durham Region in Ontario, spent 20 years proudly serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, an experience that shaped his discipline, resilience and commitment to community.

After retiring from military service, he discovered a new passion for Amateur Radio, beginning his journey in 2023. Whether connecting with others over the airwaves or continuing to serve my community in new ways, he remains dedicated to learning, exploring and staying engaged with the world around me.

Nick has proudly accepted the position of Provincial Comm T Lead. He is responsible for technical standards, equipment maintenance and interoperability solutions. He and his team will dedicate time in 2026 to updating and developing technical training programs and supporting all sections.

Comm T Assistant

Rick Baker, VE3RKY, has been a licensed Amateur Radio operator since 1979, holding Advanced, Basic and Morse Code qualifications. As an Accredited Examiner, Rick offers both local in-person and online testing, helping new operators join Amateur Radio with confidence.

Rick is passionate about education, teaching online Basic and Advanced Amateur Radio classes, running soldering workshops, and creating resources like Mastering Morse Code – A Fast Track Study Guide.

Beyond training, Rick emphasizes the critical role Amateur Radio plays in emergency response communication, encouraging operators to always "be prepared" for situations where traditional systems fail.

As the Assistant to the Provincial Comm T Lead, he uses his skills to help develop training materials and technical documentation. The team will not only provide training on new equipment but also support technical deployments and troubleshooting.

General Tasks Associated with Each Position

Provincial Interoperability Coordinator

The Provincial Interoperability Coordinator helps to develop and maintain provincial ACS policies through partner development, and coordinates with government agencies and external partners.

With four Sections in Ontario, RAC had to streamline point-of-contact procedures to avoid overwhelming agencies and emergency management staff with requests, and to simplify meetings and information sharing.

Jack will take on the role for operation in Ontario and questions should be directed to the Section ACS Coordinator, who will then discuss them with the Provincial Interoperability Coordinator. He will work closely with the Section ACS Coordinators to develop programs and oversee program training and resource allocation during general operations.

Section ACS Coordinators

Working together as a team, the Section ACS Coordinator will organize Section-level training and exercises and maintain Section readiness and volunteer engagement. The team will do their best to ensure compliance with provincial ACS standards. RAC is aware that this will take time and by no means suggests that it will be an easy task. However, we are confident our volunteers will be able to create and maintain a sustainable and adaptable environment for the future.

Communications Technical Team
(Provincial Comm T Lead & Assistant)

We're excited to introduce a new program for RAC! Our dedicated team will be working hard to design and deliver top-notch technical training for ACS members, ensuring we meet our goals effectively. Over the next two years, we'll thoughtfully evaluate and enhance our communications equipment, aligning it with provincial funding initiatives. This collaborative effort will give RAC the opportunity to assess our operations and deployment strategies. Our team will play a vital role in providing technical support during deployments and exercises, while also gathering valuable data and monitoring complex operational activities. Let's embrace this journey together!

Program Structure & Interaction

Stand-Alone Program: The Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) operates independently of the Sectional system set by the Radio Amateurs of Canada ensuring consistent communication standards across provinces. This independence facilitates clear and direct reporting lines to relevant agencies and emergency management organizations, which is crucial during crises. A key aspect of the ACS is the training provided to its personnel, who are integrated into the organizational structures of these emergency management agencies. This integration mirrors the foundational principles of the Incident Management System, which is designed to enhance service delivery during disasters.

Programs like the Ontario Corps and Nova Scotia Guard exemplify this commitment, as they dedicated onboard volunteers to fulfill jurisdiction-specific requirements. Once onboarded, these volunteers receive specialized training, preparing them to serve either in specialized roles or as general support during emergencies. Through this structured approach, the ACS plays a vital role in ensuring effective communication and coordination during disasters.

Inter-Sectional Interaction: While ACS is a standalone program for several legal and operational reasons, it maintains structured interactions with RAC Sections for resource sharing, joint exercises and mutual aid. All our programs rely on individual support and support from clubs across the country. Our Sectional system, under the direction of the Section Managers, works hard to identify and develop eager volunteers to support the ACS program.

Levels of Interaction: Coordination occurs at multiple levels: Provincial (strategic), Sectional (operational), and Technical (support/training). Over the past two years, many comments have been expressed regarding how the program will function at these different levels. The Radio Amateurs of Canada is the parent organization with signing authority for this program from the provincial government. For this reason, RAC will remain the primary point of contact.
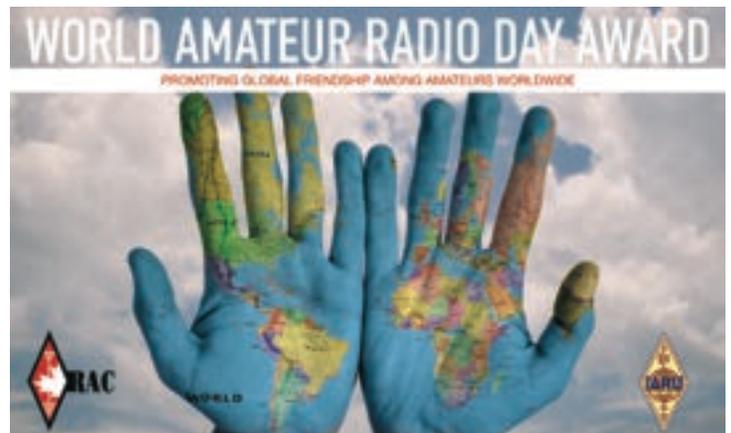
Disasters begin locally and we have had local groups, such as ARES, for many years. However, some of these groups have long-standing agreements with municipal or regional/county governments, while others do not. RAC owns the ARES logo and therefore holds the rights to its use in Canada, which comes with the responsibilities that accompany that name.

Teams may have great intentions, but the world has changed and so must RAC. Responding to assist during a disaster requires a coordinated effort by skilled specialists who meet critical standards, which is why the ACS program has been developed. There are instabilities that many clubs cannot address alone, making it essential to integrate into a community response as we have observed in the Niagara Region of Ontario.

RAC must be accountable for our training, ensuring it meets our partners' needs. This accountability is a significant task. While we support local programs and offer core training, RAC cannot be present everywhere. Therefore, with the help of our Sectional teams, RAC will continue to support local groups with new guidance and direction, focusing on the response areas most frequently impacted.

In 2026, our Sectional teams will seek leaders and support to build our new preparedness and response programs. As RAC works to enhance our presence on social media and improve our website, please stay tuned for more information to be posted in 2026. I would like to express my gratitude to all the volunteers who came together to create, build and make 2025 a success. It was a learning experience and very rewarding. I look forward to what 2026 will bring.

– 73, Jason Tremblay, VE3JXT

Radio Amateurs of Canada is once again holding a "Get on the Air on World Amateur Radio Day" special event on April 18 in which we encourage as many Amateurs as possible to get on the air and contact as many RAC stations as possible.
https://www.rac.ca/operating/world-amateur-radio-day-april-18-2026/

Community and Disaster Services Reports

BRITISH COLUMBIA:

Acting SM: Bill Gipps, VE7XS
A/SM: David Musselwhite, VY1XY
A/SM: Neil King, VA7DX
STM: Al Ross, VE7WJ
SEC: Ac ting Al Munnik, VA7MP
OOC: Dennis Wight, VE7IJJ
ACC: Karla Wakefield, VA7KJW
CEC: Gursimran Gill, VA7GUR
SBM: Fred Orsetti, VE7IO

September-October SM Report:

With the temperatures cooling, preparations are beginning for Winter Field Day and the RAC Winter Contest. Several groups have staked their claims to local park areas. VE7RAC will be active for both events.

On October 17 at 10:17, after the simulated emergency broadcast went out, many local clubs held an impromptu net, practising their emergency procedures.

The Delta Amateur Radio Society held their annual ComFest on October 5. The local RAC Board representative gave Brad Wilson, VA7BWX, a letter of appreciation for all the work he does for the local Amateur community. Suggestions were taken for others who deserve a pat on the back for their work to promote Amateur Radio. Several more letters have been prepared and will be given out at upcoming events.

Abbotsford had their swap meet at the Firehall, attracting Amateurs from many parts of the lower mainland.

The Surrey and Richmond clubs offered their fall course with many enthusiastic students. Several clubs in the Okanagan worked on their fall training.

If you have an item of interest to include in this Section Report, please send it to Acting Section Manager Bill Gipps, VE7XS, at british.columbia@ fieldorg.rac.ca and to the TCA Editor at tcamag@yahoo.ca.

Public Service Honour Roll

September: VA7MPG 133; VE7GN 110; VE7WJ 83; VE7XLH 82

October: VA7MPG 150; VE7GN 110; VE7WJ 85

YUKON:

SM: Scott Sheppard, VY1CO

September-October SM Report:

The Yukon Section began the autumn as usual by managing communications for the annual Klondike Road Relay (KRR – https:// www.klondikeroadrelay.com). Running from Skagway Alaska to Whitehorse Yukon, this road race always poses a number of logistical and communication challenges. While it is an annual, planned event, it provides an excellent opportunity to ensure the communication abilities of Yukon's Amateur are functioning as they should.

This year, members assisted with communications between 12 checkpoints for the 40th Running of the KRR. The race started at 7 pm September 5 and concluded September 6 at 5 pm. A rotating net control was conducted by VY1PJB, VY1WJS, VY1MGS and VY1FC. While the majority of the comms were the routine, that is, the first runners into a checkpoint or last runners leaving a checkpoint, an overnight medical emergency occurred with one of the runners and it was necessary to reach out to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) via the network.

Additionally, Wildland Fire reached out through the traffic net to advise a structure fire near Haynes had initiated a wildfire impacting the race route. Thankfully, the fire was contained without further interruption to the event.

Hats off to the regular contributors of this event: VY1FC, VY1DW, VY1MAP, VY1AE, VY1IRM, VY1MGS, VY1GS, VY1ELF, VY1RSS, VY1GP, VY1PG, VY1PJB and KL5WX.

All communications were conducted on the Yukon Amateur Radio Association's (YARA) wide area network of linked repeaters.

Later in October, Yukon members also participated in a drill following an Earthquake that had struck close to Vancouver. The 90-minute exercise was initiated by the Canadian Forces Affiliate Radio System (CFARS) group, but was leveraged in Yukon as a true, no notice exercise for the section. In response, an emergency net and notification were conducted by Pam, VY1PJB, and members were deployed across various key points in the region as they became available. The primary concern was to address communications in and out of the impacted area, prepare for local communication problems locally due to strained infrastructure, and health and welfare traffic.

A brief log/synopsis of the event was prepared by net control and submitted at the end of the exercise.

Although this was an unplanned exercise with respect to the section, over 12 members were mobilized within the hour and capable of assisting when and if required. This exercise proved helpful to not only confirm the availability and capability of the members involved, but it also provided some key points to review, and lessons learned. Great care was taken during all interactions to ensure everyone involved, despite not having any notice, was fully aware it was an exercise.

ALBERTA:

SM: Ron Pettigrew, VE6RWP
SEC: Brian vies, VE6CKC
STM: Don Moman, VE6JY
OO: Don Moman, VE6JY
albertasm@winlink.org

September-October SM Report:

Edmonton – James Edwards, VE6AJE

On October 14, VA6CLR, VE6TCK, VE6KDA, VE6JC, VA6XAD, VA6ZG and VE6AJE spent the afternoon working on the roof of the Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC) building installing three antennas on their tower. An 18-foot VHF/UHF Collinear, a 10, 20, 40, 80m Fan Dipole and a Discone in preparation to get Amateurs into the Radio Room and run the November ARES Net from the AEMA Radio room in Edmonton.

On October 18, VE6LPS, VA6AVC, VE6AWC, VE6RWP, VE6AJE, VA6CLR and VE6WGN participated in the Scouts Canada Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) in Devon Lions Campground and the VE6HM site. We had 200 Scouts at the Campground and 18 Girl Guides along with a Cub Scout troop at the VE6HM Site.

On October 19, the following members participated in our monthly meeting: VE6RWP, VE6AWC, VA6ACV, VA6TDM, VE6KTX and VE6AJE.

On October 26 some of the ARES members and local Amateurs (VE6KTX,

VE6CLR, VE6FVD, VE6AWC and VE6PG) helped out with communications along the route of the 40th Fall Classic 10 Mile Run in Edmonton. We set up a mobile repeater VE6NC to facilitate HT communications over a wide area.

– SM Ron Pettigrew, VE6RWP

MANITOBA:

SM: Jan Schippers, VE4JS
SEC: Vacant
DECs: Jeff Dovyak, VE4MBQ (Capital Region and CanWarn); Gord Snarr, VE4GLS (South-East Central Region / South-West Region); Wayne Warren, VE4WR (North Region and Special Projects); Vacant (North-Eastern Region); Vacant (North-West Region). EC Ron WIlliscroft, VE4QE (Selkirk and District) Bill Boskwick VE4BOZ for RM of Grey, RM of Dufferin & Town of Carman. EC Jason Coombe VE4JYC, for Brokenhead ARES.
EC Grant Delaney VA4GD for LGD of Pinawa and surrounding municipalities. Vacant (Portage la Prairie area)

September-October SM Report:

**Winnipeg ARES –
Jeff Dovyak, VE4MBQ**

Winter Weather/Road Reports

There are particular elements of interest to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and different elements of interest to Manitoba Transportation & infrastructure (MTI).

Winter weather reports should focus on:

- Low Visibility (< 1 km Snow, < ½ km Fog)
- Freezing Rain or Freezing Drizzle or Ice Pellets
- Snowfall accumulations > 5 cm
- Rain that changes to Snow or Freezing Rain

Please pass on reports of power outages or dangerous road conditions.

ECCC public reporting number provided during Spotter Training: 1-800-239-0484.

The sharing of information as it relates to dangerous road conditions, such as road hazards, would be helpful to MTI. To clarify, weather reports, such as weather affecting highway conditions, is not something that MTI would require. MTI maintenance staff already perform this duty as part of their road reporting, so reports of low visibility (poor or zero),

freezing rain, freezing drizzle, heavy snowfall, or a precipitation change, would be information that MTI would not require.

MTI's area of concern would be road hazards such as:

- Downed power line on road
- Debris on road
- Road heave (in summer)
- Missing stop sign
- Malfunctioning traffic light

These immediate road hazards could be reported to the MTI 511 Operations Centre (if they had a public number, which they don't) who can then forward that information to the appropriate area of MTI (maintenance, traffic engineering, etc.) for their awareness. Road concerns can be sent to: roadinfo@gov.mb.ca

I verified the above with ECCC Warning Preparedness Meteorologist Natalie Hasell and Derek Trainer Manager MTI Operations Centre on October 22, 2025.

Our in-person General Meeting on Tuesday, October 21 at Sir William Stephenson Library featured Natalie Hasell from ECCC who presented on Risk-Tiered Alerting. Members in attendance were eligible for some prizes that Natalie supplied – two Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) Weather Radios and several Cloud Charts.

We will once again be supporting the Salvation Army Toy Mountain campaign. For more information visit: https://www.winnipegares.ca/

ONTARIO – GOLDEN HORSESHOE:

**SM: Ian Clarke, VA3KCP
ontario.golden.horseshoe@fieldorg.rac.ca**

September-October SM Report:

I am very pleased to report that the GH Section has been and continues to be a very busy place. Antenna days, Field Day, Fall SET planning and so much more – it really is an exciting time.Our spring online sessions averaged almost 60 people from the GH Section and much further afield too. The fall ACS Advanced training planning is well underway and I'm sure you will be hearing directly from myself shortly about how to become involved.

Led by RAC Community Service Officer Jason Tremblay, VE3JXT and others, the

ACS program includes recruiting, joint training, equipment, field exercises, and is unlike any other program in the country, and Ontario is ground zero for it.

Section management was invited to attend the grand opening of York University's Advanced Disaster, Emergency and Rapid Response Simulation (ADERSIM) program. The new Minister also was in attendance and took the tour. The goal of the ADERSIM Lab is to evaluate and enhance disaster and emergency management and rapid emergency response strategies by governmental, non-governmental and private sector organizations in Ontario, Canada and the world. ADERSIM conducts cutting edge disaster research and training and provides rapid-response support resources to its governmental, non-governmental and private sector partners by activating its state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) during major emergencies.

ACS-GH: ACS-GH will be continuing our informative virtual sessions this fall, presentations commence in October. We anticipate another insightful line up, for more information contact reupva3rie@gmail.com

Approximately 32 members of the ACS-GH Section and Regional Clubs participated in a Golden Horseshoe SET on September 20. Encompassing Burlington, Durham, Halton, Hamilton, Peel, Toronto and York, the SET was a regional simulated test, and the exercise emergency was extreme weather related. Acting Region Leaders, EOCs and PEOCs were assigned, asked to coordinate and prepare their clubs with the use of Voice and Winlink telecommunications. Each club expanded on their scenarios, operated additional modes of radio communications, using their Standard Operation Procedures currently in place, and were able to work interoperably with other clubs and regions.

Mike Crabtree, VA3MCT, created an AI generated presentation for promotion of the SET. We invite you to share it with your club members with the hopes of generating interest in volunteering with ACS and Emergency Response groups in your area. You can check it out at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ym9MvaV1gsQ. We thank everyone for their efforts and participation in making this event a

success. Our weekly Nets continue on Wednesday Evenings at 20:00 hrs; Thursday at 08:00 hrs, and CW Sunday at 10:00 hrs.

PARC report from Richard Upfield, VA3RMU, EC/CEC Brampton-Caledon:

PARC participated at the annual Brampton Fall Fair on September 12-14 with a staffed information table booth, the PARC ARES radio trailer, live demonstrations including UHF/VHF/HF Voice and Winlink and lots of chatter about anything Amateur Radio.

SHARES report from George Davis, VE3OGP Halton:

Members of the South Halton ARES Group supported several community events in the spring/summer season including running events and the Paris to Ancaster Bike Race. For Field Day this year we set up a 4A site at the Halton Region main facility in Oakville. Modes of operation included Phone, CW and FT8 digital, which also was part of the education bonus where several members were introduced, trained and then operated this digital mode. For the fall, the group participated in the GH Section SET, and at the request of the Milton Santa Claus Parade Committee communication plans for the November event were once again formulated. Our meetings and Net continued through the summer months, and the September meeting featured a "What's in your Go-Kit?" competition.

Toronto–Skywide Radio Club report from Phil Parker, VE3GFX:

The Skywide Radio Club chose to have the year-end meeting as a mini Hamfest. We had at least 7 big tables of treasures produced, lots of new toys purchased and plenty of camaraderie. I do hope that next year we do it again. We did partake in Field Day, looking forward to our favourite park completing its renovations.

The Skywide ARC has an entertaining Nostalgia Net on Tuesdays 19:00 EDT, frequency 146.985 tone 103.50, and a Science Net on Saturdays at 21:00 EDT on 146.985 both hosted by our VP Ken, VA3KEX. If you cannot connect via RF, try EchoLink VE3VWX. The Science Net is popular across Canada, US and beyond. I hope you join us!

York Region Amateur Radio Club report from Rob Schuetze, VE3XBI:

The York Region Amateur Radio Club (YRARC) continues to strengthen its commitment to emergency communications readiness. On September 20 our club participated in the ACS GH SET. YRARC focused on a scenario of heavy winds and intermittent power outages, where reliable communication is essential. We tested across three platforms: voice communication, APRS, and Winlink.

In preparation, the club conducted dry runs supporting nightly check-ins through our Health and Wellness Net, which has now logged over 2,000 check-ins. Members have also been experimenting with APRS messaging to ensure robust coverage and reliability. Although there are existing APRS applications, such as APRS.fi and Pinpoint, members of the club have written applications to help manage messaging specifically related to EmComm.

The club is proud that Club President Chris Sullivan, VE3NRT and Director of Emergency Communications Rob Schuetze, VE3XBI, will be representing YRARC at the 2025 Emergency Management Conference being held at the York Regional Police Association, further strengthening ties with the broader emergency management community.

Beyond emergency training, our members are also engaging in innovative experimentation. The club will soon be launching balloons equipped with WSPR technology to perform long-distance propagation and tracking experiments – an exciting project that blends technical learning with practical communications testing.

The public service side of YRARC has remained equally active. Recognition to Eric Brown, VE3EB, who has been managing the public service arm of the club for over 20 years. Members have recently supported local car shows and events at the historic Sharon Temple, and in the weeks ahead, we will once again be providing communications support for the Run for the Cure. These activities not only give our members hands-on experience in real-world scenarios but also demonstrate the value that Amateur Radio brings to our community.

Through ongoing training, leadership participation, experimentation and public service, the York Region Amateur Radio Club continues to build a resilient network of communicators, ready to serve when needed. Attendees managed to get APRS running on their radios, find out how to send and receive messages and also how we can use Bulletins (BLN) as well as using MIC-E messaging during emergency callouts. Some attendees were using handheld radios with built-in APRS, some had APRS in their mobiles in the vehicle and some used a laptop, an audio TNC and a non-APRS radio like a Baofeng (one connection between radio and laptop).

In terms of ease of messaging and visibility into maps, the laptop idea definitely worked best. Typing messages on a handheld radio screen is painful. Missing from our event were all the people heading to the Milton Hamfest. Overall, there were lots of lessons learned by all.

ONTARIO NORTH:

SM: Allan (Al) Boyd, VE3AJB
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STM: Patrick (Pat) Dopson, VE3HZQ
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SEC: Stiig Larsen, VE3LBX
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OBM: Paul Caccamo, VA3PC
va3pc@ciinet.org
Web: http://ontario.racares.ca

September-October SM Report:

Now that winter is upon us less club and ARES/ACS items are taking place. I want to take the opportunity to thank Bob Young, VE3ETE for his years of service as EC for Elliot Lake. Bob has asked to step down due to personal issues, and we will miss him in the Northern Section. I wish him all the best.

The ACS program is growing and the training across the province has started and the portal for RAC will be operational soon for recruitment. Please keep checking the RAC website for further details. ACS will be conducting a major exercise for the new year involving all sections across the province.

Albany District

Elliot Lake – EC Bob Young , VE3ETE

As mentioned above, on October 17 EC Bob Young, VE3ETE, resigned his position as ACC for the Elliot Lake ACS group. We say thank you to Bob for his seven years of service in the ACS program including his practised use of Winlink. We wish him good luck with future endeavours.

Amethyst District

Thunder Bay –
EC Woody Linton, VE3JJA

Good news in September! The Regional Health Sciences Centre, Thunder Bay has received funding to purchase new Amateur Radio equipment for their facility. We are looking forward to participating in the installation and setup, and coordinating it with the Thunder Bay Emergency Operations Centre.

The Introduction to the Incident Management System (IMS) course (IMS-100) course is being encouraged for those that have not completed same and when done it will be on to the IMS-200. Thunder Bay usually participates in the Wednesday night ARES check-in and we were happy this month to use our iPhone network as part of exercise.

Atikokan – EC Warren Paulson, VE3FYN

September was a beautiful month in the Atikokan area. Despite several weather cells that came through no new fires were reported. All our equipment is functioning well. We are happy that summer could be enjoyed without interruption. Atikokan remains ready. Our local RMS VA3EOA has been down for maintenance for several weeks but we expect it to be back on in November. No local callouts were responded to. We expect as the winter approach as usual some power interruption.

Fort Frances – EC Rod Davis, VE3RYD

It was a quiet fall for us here in Fort Frances. We are waiting for the opportune time to install the new YA-30 antenna for the EOC and are working with the new Fire Chief for the municipality and bringing him up to speed in our capabilities. We held our usual Zoom meeting with all our other EOCs in Northwestern Ontario.

The month of October was standard. Everything else went good for the month. A new iPhone has been ordered for the EOC. It has not come in yet but when it does it will be set it up and activated. We are continuing with all our Amethyst District.

Dryden – EC Bob Ernewein, VE3YDN

Dryden ARES participated the sixth annual Laura Howe Marsh event with our Mobile Command Unit (Trailer) and members assisted on the trail network. As in past years VE3YDN will provide lighting and surveillance for the access off Van Horne Avenue in the community.

Kenora – EC Chris Bigelow, VA3ECO

During the month of September we practised Vara Chat communications on 80 metres during our Wednesday ARES net. We also set up our ARES trailer at the local Terry Fox Run and had four monitoring stations along the route. We received a request from the Officer commanding the Air Cadets in Kenora for a presentation of our radio abilities. VE3ECO was on site with a respectable number of young Air Cadets, and VE3JJA from Sioux Narrows relayed information via VHF to the Armoury where the demo took place.

October was a quiet month in the Kenora area. All the usual checks were shared with the rest of the Amethyst District members. There was more rain than we have had for some time, but the ground is so dry it disappeared below the surface without any flooding. Our ability to remotely visually monitor our EOC Station has been an asset in monitoring the stations properties.

Sioux-Narrows – Nestor Falls –
EC Woody Linton, VE3JJA

September is usually a windup month in Sioux Narrows / Nestor Falls. Amateurs participate in several activities including bass tournaments and set ups for music concerts. Regular maintenance took place at the main EOC VA3EMC in Sioux Narrows and VA3EMN Nestor Falls. Our iPhone system had to be converted over at both EOCs to the new Carrier Hams Over IP (HOIP). All the usual connections were maintained with the other NWO units during the month.

All systems are working well including our new iPhones at both EOCs. I guess the most interesting item this month is to point to an incident that occurred in October and how we underestimate what we can achieve with Amateur Radio.

We often take our radio system for granted – until the moment it becomes a true lifeline. In Northwestern Ontario, where the main highways can have long stretches of spotty or even non-existent cell service, Amateur Radio can make the difference between life and death.

A perfect example came one late afternoon when Cathy, VE3JJS, was driving from Kenora to Sioux Narrows, about 80 kilometres. Along the way, she came upon a vehicle that had left the roadway and struck a rock cut on the west side of the road. Investigating further, she found the female driver inside, injured and showing signs of broken bones. With no cellphone service available in the area, Cathy quickly administered preliminary first aid and carefully moved the injured woman into her own vehicle to keep her safe and warm. She then turned to her Amateur Radio – her only means of communication.

Calling out on our wide-area Fusion network, she was immediately heard by several stations in Manitoba and one in Thunder Bay, 480 kilometres to the east. That station, VE3RYD, was visiting Thunder Bay from Fort Frances and quickly took charge of relaying the emergency. Using the details provided by Cathy, VE3RYD, they contacted 911 and passed along the precise location and nature of the incident to Police, Fire and Ambulance services. Emergency responders were dispatched promptly to the scene.

This may not seem like a remarkable event – but it serves as a powerful reminder. Never take our radio service for granted. When all else fails, Amateur Radio works!

Killarney District

Manitoulin Island and North Shore –
EC Allan Boyd, VE3AJB

The Manitoulin Amateur Radio Club is now gearing up for the winter as annual maintenance takes place a review and tune-up of all repeater systems are operational and in good working order.

I had the opportunity to present to the EMO Killarney sector Meeting on the RAC ACS Program and how it will be implemented through the Ontario Corps program. It was very well received by all.

In 2026, I will have completed 20 years as Section Manager for Ontario and for Northern Ontario. Now that I sit as RAC President, I cannot dedicate the time needed for Section management and will be stepping down in this role as of January 1, 2026. I will be looking for one of my excellent team members to step up and take on the role.

Having said that, I will not be going away and as RAC President the ACS/ARES is especially prominent and RAC will give full support. I wish you all a great winter and look forward to hearing you on the airways.

Sudbury – EC Marc Savignac, VE3SNA

At the invitation of Fort Wayne Amateur Radio Club, the Sudbury Amateur Radio Club participated in their effort to showcase Amateur Radio for World Space Week which was held from October 4 to 10. We were asked to highlight Amateur Radio on October 4 along with the Fort Wayne Amateur Radio Club. Club members Frank, VE3AC and Mike, VA3MYK, were on the air at Science North and by the end of day had 20 visitors contact the Fort Wayne club station. The latter station made seven contacts by way of the Sudbury station and Science North visitors. Behind the scenes Andy, VE3IN, operated a cross-band repeater station to get into the VE3SRG repeater to compensate for its RX sensitivity issues.

Bruce, the STEM Specialist from Science North who set us up, was impressed and suggested for future endeavours. For more information on the event visit: https://www.worldspaceweek.org

Special event call sign VB3JOTA was successfully activated on October 18, with the help of the Copper Cliff Scouts. Mike VE3FPX, Luc, VA3LCG, Mike, VA3MYK and I, Frank, VE3AC/VA3FMM, setup antennas and guided the Scouts in making contacts with other Amateurs. The scout troop of about 30 were excited to get on the air, and some were even able to have QSOs with other Scouts. The weather was not on our side, but it did not dampen the Scouts' enthusiasm, and the bands were busy with all kinds of activity. The smile from the youngsters makes events like this well worth it.

DECs Reporting:
VA3s: PC
VE3s: JJA

ECs reporting:
VA3s: ECO
VE3s: AJB, ETE, JJA, MXJ, RYD, SNA, TGI, YDN and ZDR

ONTARIO EAST:
SM: Michael Hickey, VE3IPC
Email: ontario.east@fieldorg.rac.ca
SEC: Michael Hickey, VE3IPC
STM: Vacant
OBM: Paul Caccamo, VA3PC, va3pc@ciinet.org
Web: http://wp.rac.ca/ares/

September-October SM Report:

Now that winter is here it does not seem to stop outside Radio Amateur activities. Some enjoy the challenges of Winter Field Day and yes – even Parks on The Air – POTA in the snow. Such activities can make for great articles with a few good photos for the TCA Magazine so please send them to the TCA Editor at tcamag@yahoo.ca.

There seems to be an increasing number of HF mobiles. This is something I have done for some 15 years now. I use a Yaesu FT-891 HF mobile unit with good grounding and the use of Hustler resonators. I mounted this antenna on a large 4-inch stainless steel coil that is secured on my "homemade" one-quarter inch thick aluminum plating with four 4-inch magnets for a wide area support on the top of my van.

I have the 80m, 40m and the 20m coil. I tend to use mostly the 40m band – day or evening. Many of our VHF repeaters are rather quiet in the Ottawa region and to the east into Prescott-Russell county along Highway 17 towards Mont Rigaud Quebec. So, that is when I enjoy HF mobile – either to listen to short-wave broadcast stations and or listen to interesting QSOs on 40M. I do enjoy QSOs with both Canadian stations, covering most of Ontario and Quebec, and often with stations on the east coast, but it is often easy to speak with American stations, particularly in the evenings. On occasion, if my timing is right, I can do DX into Europe and the like. It is a lot of fun!

ARES EmComm Group Leadership Reports:

Submitted by the Prescott-Russell ARES Group Coordinator Lance Peterson, VA3LP

The Prescott-Russell (PR) ARES Group Coordinator Lance Peterson, VA3LP reports that September was a slow month. The group set up a demonstration Winlink VHF station at the Carp Hamfest in early September. This was in conjunction with the ACS folks setting up their complete deployable station in the arena as well.

Stuart, VE3SMF, set up outside the arena in his Venango. He was able to make contact with a couple of gateways. Our station was able to connect with Stuart in spite of the arena structure making it difficult to connect. In a real scenario, we would have placed our antenna and mast outside through an open door.

As the next big project for the Eastern Ontario SVARC & PRARC joint Hamfest at the end of September, we were concentrating mostly on that to ensure a successful event. The efforts paid off as it was a big success for a second year in a row. We are looking forward to next year's joint club event.

GC Lance Peterson, VA3LP, attended the EMO Capital Sector meeting on October 2 in Ottawa. There was a very interesting presentation by the Renfrew EMS group who talked about their support to Haliburton when they lost power and the EMS in Haliburton were unable to properly cover the emergency. Renfrew sent their EMS command vehicle with complete communication set up with satellite connectivity. It was very interesting how they took control and were able to provide, not only EMS capability, but much needed communications as well.

The following week GC Lance, VA3LP and Stuart, VE3SMF, attended EMO driven ICS-200 training in Arnprior. This was a very valuable course that provides excellent insight into EOC operations and how to handle emergencies.

Submitted by Peterborough ARES/ACS GC – Harmen Minnema, VA3OU/VE3EMA

The Peterborough ARES/ACS Group Coordinator Harmen, VE3OU, reported that on September 20, 14 members of the Peterborough ARES Group participated in a County-wide Field Exercise/SET. We had stations operating VHF, HF and Winlink from each municipal EOC within Peterborough County. Net Control station operated from Armour Hill in the City of Peterborough. We were all able to contact each other through VE3RB repeater as well as HF simplex.

The exercise/SET met all eight of our objectives:

- Check Go Kit readiness
- Practise using ARES Forms
- Practise message handling
- Test repeater capabilities
- Test VHF Simplex capabilities
- Test HF capabilities
- Test Winlink Gateway capabilities
- Operating Winlink PTP

GC Harmen, VE3EMA, reports that the PARC provided communications support for the Head-of-the-Trent Regatta which was held on October 5 and 6.

Three Peterborough Amateur Radio Club (PARC) radio stations were set up at the Start Line, Finish Line and Boathouse staging area along the 5-kilometre Trent Canal in Peterborough. Nearly 800 boat entries from 66 rowing clubs and universities from mostly Southern Ontario and Quebec.

Nine PARC Amateur Radio operators provided message handling, race monitoring and weather watch for the race organizers over the two, 12-hour day, event. The long days for the operators were greatly appreciated by the race organizers – "You guys are awesome! PARC participants were: Barry, VA3BB, Nina, VE3IRK, Barry, VE3BLM, John, VE3VL, John, VA3NW, Rick, VE3IQZ, Rick, VE3RKY, Clay, VE3YCL and Robin, VA3HEH.

On October 15, GC Harmen, VA3OU and Rick, VE3IQZ, with the help of Barry, VE3BLM, tested the radio and antenna at the Peterborough County EOC. Tests included simplex, local repeaters and repeaters out to adjacent counties. VHF Winlink was also included in the test.

On October 25 and 26, 15 members of Peterborough ARES Group participated in the AuxComm training that was held at the Otonabee-South Monaghan EOC in Keene. Many thanks to Fire Chief (CEMC) Chuck Parsons, VA3NY, for hosting the training site. Peterborough ARES participants included: GC Harmen, VA3OU, AGC Chuck, VA3NY, AGC John, VE3VL, Bob, VE3IEL, Jerry, VA3CN, Brian, VA3BZT, Clay, VE3YCL, Martin, VA3OMW, Scott, VE3TCG, Jon, VE3XOE, Rick, VE3RKY, Daren, VE3QYQ, Robin, VA3HEH, Mark, VA3MWH and Nick, VA3NPW, who participated in the training. Several members of the North Shore Amateur Radio Club also completed the training.

Jason Tremblay, VE3JXT, focused a lot on the ICS and EM training and was heavily based on the US model. AGC (CEMC) Chuck, VA3NY, informed GC Harmen that Ontario is now looking at migrating to ICS but that could take years so the group will still be sticking to using IMS forms. Based on what the group leadership has learned over the weekend, AGC John, AGC (CEMC) Chuck and the GC have met to discuss what changes the leadership will want to implement to the ARES group.

There was an average of 17 check-ins to the weekly ARES Nets in September and an average of 16 check-ins per week in October.

Submitted by Renfrew County West ARES Group Coordinator Bob Howard, VE3YX

Renfrew County West (RCW-ARES) GC Bob Howard, VE3YX, reports that he continues to send his weekly Winlink messages for Winlink Wednesday by KN4LQN and the Winlink Wednesday Canada. Julian VE3FZG has also sent WW messages to KN4LQN. He is also preparing for an

upcoming Winlink P2P training session very soon.

Districts Reporting:

Eastern Ontario and Severn

GCs (ECs) or Assistants Reporting:

VA3LP, VE3EMA, VE3YX

OBS Reporting: VE3IQZ

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

SM Bill McMaster, VY2WM – prince.edward.island@fieldorg.rac.ca

September-October SM Report:

The members of the Amateur Radio community in Prince Edward Island were busy with preparations for the fall and winter.

There are always several fleamarkets at this time of year and many PEI Amateurs attended the Moncton Area Amateur Radio Club fleamarket in September followed by the Greenwood Amateur Radio Club fleamarket later in October.

In support of the Cape Bear Lighthouse annual fundraiser event, "Night for the Light", Brent, VY2HF, delivered a very interesting presentation describing the history and significance of the Marconi Station, co-located with the Cape Bear Lighthouse. The information presented well received by those in attendance.

A dedicated number of PEI Amateurs have been very active in Parks On The Air and

several have earned a number of awards, including Worked All States.

Not to be outdone, those Amateurs who participate in contests have been very active. Amongst many others, VY2OM, VY2OL and VY2BG racked up 695,877 points in the CQ WW SSB Contest this October. This gained them 28th position in North America.

The Charlottetown Amateur Radio Club began delivering their Fall 2025 Basic Radio Course, hosted at the Charlottetown Atlantic Superstore. The course had five students and met twice a week for eight weeks until the first week of December, with exams to follow.

Of course, the community continues to participate in our various nets, which hold the community together. The weekday morning "Wake-up Net" takes place on a number of linked repeaters throughout the Maritimes.

The Wednesday evening 2m net and the 2m Virtual Breakfast nets are hosted on the VE1CRA repeater. There is also the 80m "rag-chew" net that happens every Thursday night on 3727 kHz. This net typically sees check-ins from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia as well as PEI.

The Summerside club continues to hold several 2m nets on local repeaters as well as a once a month 2m simplex net.

– 73, Bill McMaster, VY2WM

RAC FIELD ORGANIZATION REPORTS
National Traffic System (NTS) Net Reports

Net (Manager)	Sessions	QNI	QTC
September 2025			
Alberta ARES (VE6JY)	5	246	17
APSN (VE6JY)	30	2129	9
AAN (VE7GBO)	30	3275	0
BCEN (VE7OM)	29	140	9
BCYTN (VE7WJ)	30	471	44
CECA (VE7DTO)	5	109	19
MEPN (VE4JS)	30	739	0
MMWXN (VA4GD)	30	446	0
MSMN (VE4AJ)	22	521	0
RAM (VE4HK)	8	282	0
Saturday (VE4AJ)	4	90	0
October 2025:			
Alberta ARES (VE6JY)	4	263	21
APSN (VE6JY)	31	2103	12
AAN (VE7GBO)	31	3512	0
BCYTN (VE7WJ)	31	459	58
MEPN (VE4JS)	31	842	1
MMWXN (VA4GD)	31	456	8
MSMN (VE4AJ)	22	501	0
RAM (VE4HK)	9	298	0
Saturday (VE4AJ)	4	103	0

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