



Who is RACES ?

RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service) is an organization of volunteer Amateur Radio operators whose mission is to provide supplemental radio communications to state and local government during times of emergency. *Only for government, on request by and between government agencies.* Founded under the sponsorship of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) in the 1950s, RACES original mission was to provide emergency communications for civil defense purposes. Since then, the mission has broadened to include all local, regional or national civil (but not military) emergencies, not just those which are war related. It is strictly an Amateur Radio Service and, as such, the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) regulates it. In peacetime, it uses amateur frequencies, and RACES operators have the same privileges and restrictions that are afforded to any amateur of the same class of license. The administration and operation of RACES has been delegated by FEMA to the states. Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management handles RACES which is responsible for appointment of a volunteer State RACES Radio Officer... In summary, RACES is a governmentally sponsored organization, provided for in statutes at both the state and federal levels. Its members, however, are private volunteers, and all are FCC licensed Amateur Radio Operators.



Who is ARES ?

ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) is a field service organization of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), a private, non-profit organization for Amateur Radio operators. Started in the 1930s, the ARES mission is similar to that of RACES, but a notable difference is that ARES is designed to provide emergency communications support to any agency, public or private. ARES may provide such support to municipalities, government and non-profit private agencies. Like RACES, all of its members are private volunteers. ARES leadership must be members of the ARRL. However, in contrast to RACES, ARES is part of a nongovernmental, non-profit private organization. Clearly, it is important that the volunteer know of the rules, procedures and limitations that apply to operations under RACES and ARES.