



# **AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE (ARES)**



**Tom Green County, Texas**

## **ARES Responder and ID Policy**

### **ARES Emergency Responder Identification Cards**

#### **1. Purpose:**

- 1.1. This policy statement is concerning the issuance and use of the Tom Green County (TGC) Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) Emergency Responder Identification Cards by ARES/RACES/SKYWARN members throughout Tom Green County, and any of the surrounding counties, that are members of the TGC ARES group.
- 1.2. A request for and acceptance of the ID card indicates a renewed commitment by the requestor/bearer to volunteer "*personal time, skill and equipment to serve the public interest as part of a vital community resource*", a claim that must not be made lightly.

#### **2. Definition:**

- 2.1. The TGC ARES ID card is issued to all ARES members and appointees to the offices of Official Emergency Station (OES), Emergency Coordinator (EC), Assist Emergency Coordinator (AEC), and other appointed leadership roles as required.
- 2.2. ARES members and appointees must meet the ARRL membership requirement, and satisfy participation requirements as set by the TGC ARES membership and leadership.
- 2.3. Other informal arrangements may be made to provide an ARES ID card to any ARES members meeting criteria for assignment to Mutual Assistant Teams.
- 2.4. The TGC ARES ID card features a picture, expiration date, and is checked against the appointee's/team member's government picture ID, and FCC license for validity. No background check is conducted by the ARRL.
- 2.5. This card may be obtained in addition to the ARRL FSD 224 card, which under ARRL policy, may be given by an EC and above to any amateur radio operator (whether an ARRL member or not) interested in emergency communications.

#### **3. Background:**

- 3.1. In their efforts to prepare for the possibility of activations both on the scale of post-9/11 and smaller recurring natural disasters, all ARES members should be working to prepare themselves for possible use by public safety or service agencies.

- 3.2. One useful tool is the ARES ID card, which may allow quicker access to sites and reduce wait times. However, since ID card acceptance is a very sensitive issue with many of the organizations we assist, a comprehensive policy is required for the use of the TGC ARES ID card by ARES members.
- 3.2. In response to that need for an acceptance of an ID card and do to this being a very sensitive issue with many of the organizations that we would assist, a comprehensive policy, such as this one, is required for use of the TGC ARES ID card by ARES members.
- 3.3. The Official TGC ARES Identification ID Cards being supplied, at no cost to those members and officials, will be cards created to identify the bearer as "*an authorized ARES official, a Radio Operator qualified by the U.S. Federal Government, Federal Communications Commission (FCC), as a trained emergency communicator who volunteers personal time, skill and equipment to serve the public interest as part of a vital community resource*".
- 3.3. This card is NOT intended to replace or supersede any requirement for an ID card issued by local municipal or other emergency authorities. It simply identifies the bearer as a duly-appointed ARES member or official who possesses certain qualifications as a leader for public service communications in time of a disaster. This two-sided card should enhance the credibility of the bearer and of the ARES member as trained and efficient providers of emergency communications as a public service.
- 3.4. NOTICE:
- The TGC ARES Photo ID cards do NOT and/or will not replace any card that is issued within our own locality or West Texas Section. Those cards are necessary for providing proper identification and are required by the local OEM or similar agency.
  - In the same fashion, the card that is issued by the TGC ARES is necessary for providing proper identification for all ARES members, as being accredited and authorized members of the TGC ARES.
  - In both cases, it is only reasonable that every member of the TGC ARES to carry whatever identifying documentation is required by the respective organizing authority.
  - All ARES members shall obtain a Photo ID card for the sake of professional image, enhanced credibility and to prevent unauthorized persons from representing themselves as Tom Green County ARES members.
- 3.5. To satisfy the assertion that the ID card's bearer is a "*trained emergency communicator*", it is expected that every appointed ARES member or official receiving the card, from EC to AECs inclusive, will have had some sort of ARES-related training such as that provided, for example, during local ARES meetings, exercises, local public activities where communications were provided, ARRL courses, related government courses, related military courses, employment experience or by participating in Simulated Emergency Tests (SETs).
- 3.6. If that is not the case for any member or official requesting an ID card and he/she has received no training whatsoever, then completion of one of the main training courses, as listed in the Training SOGs attachment, will satisfy this expectation and can be accomplished at home with relative ease.

- 3.7. Other training is available and frequent local training exercises, lectures, public service communications activities and SETs are encouraged because they all present opportunities to gain knowledge. Obviously, it is the reasonability of the TGC ARES not to issue the ID card, certifying the bearer as a trained emergency operator, to anyone who has *never* received *any* training or who is making no effort to do so.
- 3.8. All ARES ID cards remain the property of TGC ARES and must be surrendered upon demand and/or if the member has requested to not be part of the group any longer and has terminated their position with the group.
- 3.9 They will not be issued to anyone who does not qualify because of failure to meet the terms or requirements of his/her ARES position. Also, please be certain you have had ARES-related communications training of some sort, as indicated above.
- 3.10. No more than one card will be issued per person at a time and, in cases where an official holds more than one appointed ARES position (a situation which is to be avoided wherever possible); only the higher position held may receive an ID card.

#### **4. Procedure**

- 4.1. ARES Emergency Responder ID cards will be issued to its members and officers with adequate procedures in place.
- 4.2. Each ID card will have a number assigned to it and tracked. The tracking numbers will allow for any new members within the group.
- 4.3. Additional ID cards are available upon request from the EC only if one has been lost or damaged.
- 4.4. The TGC ARES EC or one of the assign AEC's will have issuing signature authority for the ID cards. Any delegations of signature authority from the EC to any other officers shall be documented in writing.
- 4.5. Prior to issuance, the issuing officers can confirm the member's registration to whom cards will be issued to by the TGC ARES/RACES/SKYWARN Personnel roster.
- 4.6. All Emergency Responder ID cards issued to ARES/RACES Personnel must have at least the following information recorded on them:
  - 4.6.1 The ARES card holders name
  - 4.6.2 Title: (i.e., County Coordinator, Radio Operator, Asst. EC, or "Messenger" if not licensed)
  - 4.6.3 The ARES card holder FCC call sign (None if a "Temp Card")
  - 4.6.4 Expiration Date
  - 4.6.5 Signature of Bearer on back: The ARES card holder signature
  - 4.6.6 Signature of Issuing Authority on back: The local or area ARRL Emergency Coordinator authorized signature

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**Note: All ID cards issued will be marked "Tom Green County ARES"**

**Or Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)**

**Tom Green County, Texas.**

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- 4.6.7 All Emergency Responder ID cards issued to ARES/RACES Personnel will have expiration date assigned to the card, along with a number assigned to that member. New cards will be issued to prior to the expiration date of the card.
- 4.6.8 New ID Cards will be looked at if there is a change of leadership or membership within the group.
- 4.6.9 It should not be a necessity to issue new ARES membership cards until there is a change or the date for renewal is coming up for all group members.
- 4.6.10 It maybe a necessary for all group members to complete an updated application in addition to getting a new ID card, if there are any changes in status, call signs, names or other types of requested changes for the new card.
- 4.6.11 All cards issued will be valid for two years (24 month) period from the date of issue.
- 4.6.12 All cards must be signed on the back by the recipient member upon receipt.
- 4.6.13 All cards must include a photo to be valid.
  - 4.6.13.1 All Members will be photographed for a current photo to be affixed onto the new ID card.
- 4.6.14 The card will be printed to include the new photo and any updated member's information and the new expiration date for the card.
- 4.6.15 The member and the EC will both sign the card and then the card will be laminated and presented to the Tom Green County ARES member.
- 4.6.16 **THOSE ID CARDS ARE FOR TOM GREEN COUNTY ARES MEMBERS USE ONLY.**
- 4.6.17 **NO OTHER OUTSIDER from any other organizations will have access to the ARES CARDS FOR USE. [ONLY FOR TGC-ARES MEMBERS USE ONLY]**

**5. Use of ARES ID Cards:**

- 5.1 ARES appointees/team members may only use this ARES ID card to carry out a specific assignment as given to you by the EC leadership or by the city/county Office of Emergency Management (OEM).
- 5.2 Do not use the ARES ID cards to attempt entry to sites where ARES assistance has not been officially requested. We are not first responders.
- 5.3 Please be aware that Public Safety and/or Agencies with which the ARRL has a Memorandum of Understanding may require additional identification to be issued to you, including the completion of background checks. This ID card cannot waive any of those additional requirements.

- 5.4 You must always be prepared to present any other government picture identification, as well as your FCC operating license. Please be aware that failure to do so may result in you being turned away from the site.
- 5.5 If security personnel at a mobilization deny you entry, you must comply immediately and withdraw.
- 5.6 Your TGC ARES ID card does not confer any rights or privileges to you.
- 5.7 The TGC ARES ID card remains the property of the ARRL Tom Green County ARES group, part of the West Texas Section, and must be surrendered upon request by the SM, SEC, or applicable DEC of your district.
- 5.8 The ARES ID card has an expiration date on it. Please contact you're EC/DEC/SEC for renewal before the expiration date, and do not use it after it expires.

**6. Emergency Management (EM) ID Cards Issuance:**

- 6.1. Additional ID cards could be issued to any or all TGC-ARES members from any of the following Emergency Management Agencies:
  1. The City of San Angelo/Tom Green County Office of Emergency management (OEM)
  2. The State of Texas - Governor's Division of Emergency Management Texas, Department of Public Safety
  3. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- 6.2. If requested by any of the above agencies for information and proper identification of any TGC-ARES members for the required issuance of one of the above agencies photo ID Cards, you must present the proper identification, such as a valid government issued picture ID (i.e. driver's license, Passport or some other type of photo ID) and a copy of your FCC Amateur Radio operating license.
- 6.3. There are NO exceptions to this requirement. All members will strive for a consistent "professional" look; to allow easy recognition by site security personnel.
- 6.4. Recognition by Security Personnel. Security personnel will only honor those ID's that have been approved by their on site leadership, so pre-approval is very important.
- 6.5. Pre-approval is accomplished by submission of our credentials in response to a formal request for assistance, although this process may be accomplished in very little time.
- 6.6. Never send ARES members to a site to attempt entry without prior authorization and or pre-approval from the on-site leadership.