

## **What is RACES<sup>1</sup>?**

RACES, administered by local, county and state emergency management agencies, and supported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the United States government, is a part of the Amateur Radio Service that provides radio communications for civil-preparedness purposes only, during periods of local, regional or national civil emergencies. These emergencies are not limited to war-related activities, but can include natural disasters such as fires, floods and earthquakes.

As defined in the rules, RACES is a radiocommunication service, conducted by volunteer licensed amateurs, designed to provide emergency communications to local or state civil-preparedness agencies. It is important to note that RACES operation is authorized by emergency management officials only, and this operation is strictly limited to official civil-preparedness activity in the event of an emergency-communications situation.

### **Dedicated RACES Operating Frequencies**

1800-1825 kHz

1975-2000 kHz

3.50-3.55 MHz

3.93-3.98 MHz

3.984-4.000 MHz

7.079-7.125 MHz

7.245-7.255 MHz

10.10-10.15 MHz

14.047-14.053 MHz

14.22-14.23 MHz

14.331-14.350 MHz

21.047-21.053 MHz

21.228-21.267 MHz

28.55-28.75 MHz

29.237-29.273 MHz

29.45-29.65 MHz

50.35-50.75 MHz

52-54 MHz

144.50-145.71 MHz

146-148 MHz

222-225 MHz

420-450 MHz

1240-1300 MHz

2390-2450 MHz

While RACES was originally based on potential use for wartime, it has evolved over the years, as has the meaning of civil defense (which is also called civil preparedness), to encompass all types of emergencies. While operating in a RACES capacity, RACES stations and amateurs registered in the local RACES organization may not communicate with amateurs not operating in a RACES capacity

### **ARES and RACES**

Although RACES and ARES are separate entities, the ARRL advocates dual membership and cooperative efforts between both groups whenever possible for an ARES group whose members are all enrolled in and certified by RACES to operate in an emergency with great flexibility. Using the same operators and the same frequencies, an ARES group also enrolled as RACES can "switch hats" from ARES to RACES and RACES to ARES to meet the requirements of the situation as it develops. For example, during a "nondeclared emergency," ARES can operate under ARES, but when an emergency or disaster is officially declared by a state or federal authority, the operation can become RACES with no change in personnel or frequencies.

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1 Information taken from the ARRL web