

Statewide Auxiliary Communications Organizations

There are several volunteer radio organizations active in the state. The groups that are operating within the state are collectively referred to as Auxiliary Communications (AuxComm). These groups are governed by the Amateur Radio Public Service Corps (ARPSC) agreement. This agreement can be found at http://ares-mi.org/downloads/ARPSC_Mich_Guidelines.pdf. The groups operating within the state are:

- Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)
- National Traffic System (NTS)
- Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)
- Military Auxiliary Radio Service (MARS)
- Civil Air Patrol (CAP)
- Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN)
- Radio Emergency Associated Communication Teams (REACT)

These volunteers have set up radio networks to pass information locally, statewide, nationally and internationally. AuxComm organizations can transmit voice, video and secure data over their equipment. Many radio volunteers provide weather information and warnings to the National Weather Service

[ARES](#)

ARES members provide communications support services to civilian organizations, and state, county and local governments. ARES volunteers provide services such as managing radio communications for local first responders, assisting with communications during public events and providing field communications during search and rescue operations.

[National Traffic System](#)

The National Traffic System maintains a radio communications network that can pass a message anywhere in the Western hemisphere. The messages are passed from a local operator to a state, then national, then international operator and back down to a local operator where a volunteer delivers the message to the recipient.

[RACES](#)

RACES and MARS are the designated organizations for emergency communications during declared national emergencies. All other services go off the air. RACES members are typically members of ARES. RACES members provide communications support in emergency operations facilities, hospitals, 911 centers and on emergency scenes.

RACES members are allowed onto the sites of emergencies and into secure facilities to provide communications services. Because of this, RACES members must pass a security background check. Each RACES member is given an identification card. Michigan State Police (MSP) Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (EMHSD) issues RACES cards when a new governor is elected or a new commander of EMHSD is appointed. The cards are issued to local emergency managers through the MSP District Coordinators. The local emergency managers are responsible for knowing their RACES resources and distributing the cards.

[Army MARS](#)

[Navy/Marines MARS](#)

[Air Force MARS](#)

MARS volunteers serve their respective military branches. There are Army, Navy/Marines, and Air Force MARS organizations in Michigan. MARS members have passed hundreds of thousands of “MARSgrams” for deployed military personnel. MARS radios are allowed to communicate on special frequencies and can use military grade encryption. MARS members carry military identification cards.

MARS members first priority is to provide a distributed backup communication network for military resources. The Department of Defense is the primary command of the MARS organization. When not required by the military, local emergency management programs command MARS resources. MARS members also support local and state government facilities in the same manner as RACES.

[CAP](#)

Civil Air Patrol is an auxiliary service of the U. S Air Force. CAP provides search and rescue services. They maintain a network of radio communications for use by their volunteers on the amateur radio bands. CAP is considered a part of the Air Force Auxiliary Service and is under military command. CAP resources are activated via a request to the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs.

[SATERN](#)

SATERN volunteers use the amateur radio bands to support Salvation Army emergency relief efforts. SATERN focuses on providing information on the health and welfare of family members who are in areas affected by emergencies.

[REACT](#)

REACT monitors the citizen band (CB) emergency radio frequency channel 9, and also utilizes the same radio frequencies as other volunteer services. REACT members also provide services to the National Weather Service and Salvation Army. REACT teams may use CB radio, amateur radio and cell phones to provide services to emergency programs.