

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE AND THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE, INC.

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to state the terms of a mutual agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) between National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) and the American Radio Relay League, Inc. (ARRL), that will serve as a framework within which volunteers of the ARRL may coordinate their services, facilities, and equipment with NWS in support of nationwide, state, and local early weather warning and emergency communications functions. It is intended, through joint coordination and exercise of the resources of ARRL, NWS, and Federal, State and local governments, to enhance the nationwide posture of early weather warning and readiness for any conceivable weather emergency.

## II. RECOGNITION

The National Weather Service recognizes that the ARRL is the principal organization representing the interests of more than 690,000 U.S. radio amateurs. Because of its field organization of trained and experienced communications experts, Amateur Radio Service volunteers can be of valuable assistance in early severe weather warning and tornado spotting.

ARRL recognizes the National Weather Service's statutory responsibility to provide the following meteorological services for the people of the United States:

1. NOAA's National Weather Service provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy; and,
2. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public, and the global community.

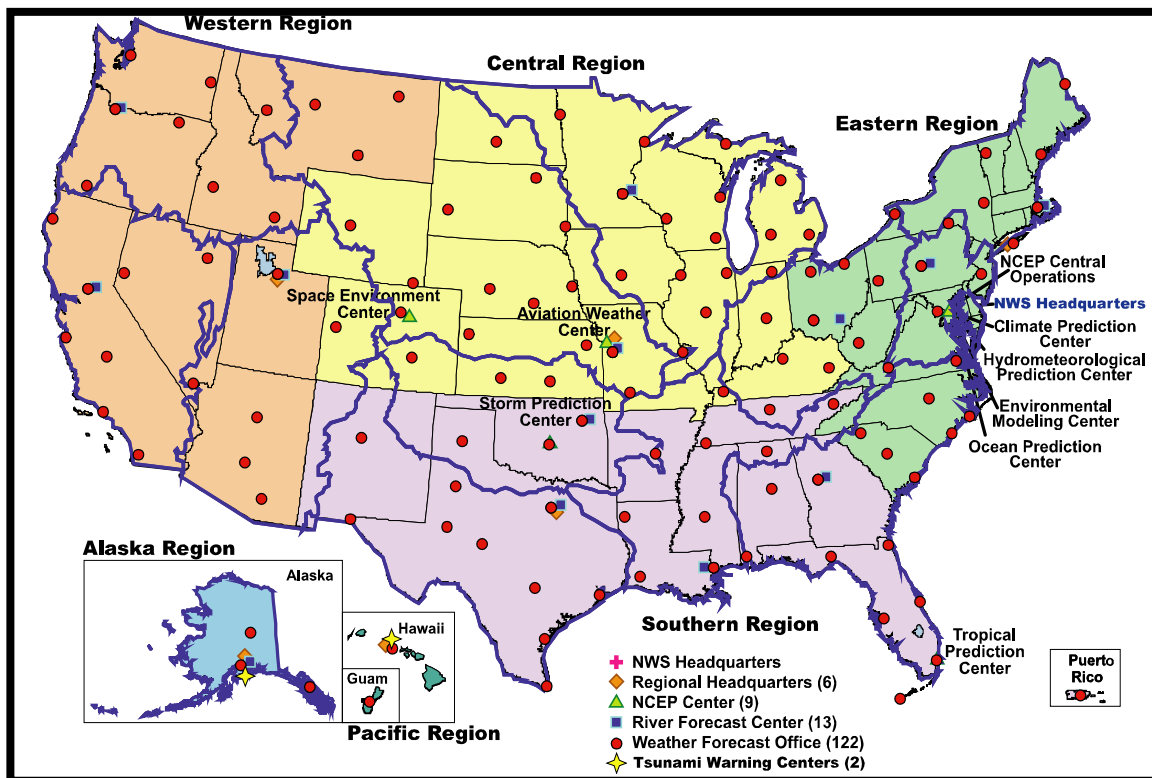
## III. ORGANIZATION OF THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE

ARRL is a noncommercial membership organization of radio amateurs, organized for the promotion of interest in Amateur Radio communication and experimentation, for the establishment of networks to provide communications in the event of disasters or other emergencies, for the advancement of the radio art and of the public welfare, for the representation of the radio amateur in legislative matters, and the maintenance of fraternalism and a high standard of conduct. A primary responsibility of the Amateur Radio Service, as established by the Federal Communications Commission, is the rendering of public service communications for the general

public, particularly in times of emergency. Using Amateur Radio operators in the amateur frequency bands, the ARRL has been serving the public, both directly and through government and relief agencies, for more than ninety years. To that end, the League created the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES)® and the National Traffic System (NTS). The League's Field Organization consists of seventy-one administrative sections managed by elected Section Managers. A Section is a League-created political boundary roughly equivalent to states (or portions thereof). The Section Manager appoints expert assistants to administer the various emergency communications and public service programs in the section. Each section has a vast cadre of volunteer appointees to perform the work of Amateur Radio at the local level, under the supervision of the Section Manager and his/her assistants.

#### IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service consists of 122 weather forecast offices, 13 river forecast centers, 9 national centers, and other support offices. NWS scientists provide weather, water, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States for the protection of life and property, and the enhancement of the national economy. The NWS' national headquarters is located in Washington, D.C., and there are six regional headquarters: Eastern, Southern, Central, Western, Alaska, and Pacific.



SKYWARN® is the National Weather Service's severe weather spotting program. Radio amateurs have assisted as communicators and spotters since the program's inception in the late 1960s. In areas where tornadoes and other severe weather have been known to threaten, NWS recruits volunteers, and trains them in proper weather spotting procedures. These dedicated citizens help

keep their local community safe by conveying severe weather reports to their local NWS Forecast Office. SKYWARN spotters are integral to the success of our Nation's severe weather warning system.

Warning Coordination Meteorologists (WCMs) serve as the NWS' principal liaison with its customers and partners in the evaluation and improvement of its products and services. WCMs are responsible for maintaining the working partnership with the local ARRL SKYWARN organizations. There are 132 NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologists (WCMs) located throughout the country: 122 Weather Forecast Offices, 6 Regional Headquarters, National Headquarters, the Storm Prediction Center, the National Hurricane Center, and the National Aviation Weather Center.

## **V. PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION**

A. ARRL agrees to encourage its volunteer Field Organization appointees, especially the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, to contact and cooperate with National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologists for the purpose of establishing organized SKYWARN networks with radio amateurs serving as communicators and spotters, consistent with rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.

B. ARRL further agrees to encourage its Section management teams to provide specialized communications and observation support on an as-needed basis for NWS offices in other weather emergencies such as hurricanes, snow and heavy rain storms, and other severe weather situations.

C. The National Weather Service agrees to work with ARRL Section Amateur Radio Emergency Service volunteers to establish SKYWARN networks, and/or other weather emergency alert and relief systems. The principal point of contact between the ARRL Section and local NWS offices are the Warning Coordination Meteorologists. Local Warning Coordination Meteorologist contact information is available at: [www.stormready.noaa.gov/contact.htm](http://www.stormready.noaa.gov/contact.htm). Contact information for ARRL Section volunteer leaders is available at [www.arrl.org/sections](http://www.arrl.org/sections). The national contact for ARRL is the Emergency Preparedness Manager at [ARRL](http://ARRL) Headquarters, Newington, CT 06111. The national contact for NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologists is the Analyze, Forecast and Support Office, WCM Program, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Kay Craigie, N3KN  
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President, American Radio Relay League, inc.

Date May 12, 2011

David B. Caldwell

Date 6/9/2011

Printed Name, David B. Caldwell

Title CCWS Director

NOAA National Weather Service