

To all Virginia ARRL Members
Subject: September 2026 Section Newsletter

You may hear, on the air this month, two different national Emergency Communication exercises. Unless specifically engaged in the exercise, please just listen along. That said, if you are interested in participating as an active member of the exercises, reach out to the point of contacts listed below.

Obsidian Wave: The National Traffic System 2.0 Digital Committee is preparing to hold the first a series of national exercise on Saturday, September 19 between noon – 2 pm ET. The testing will exercise the following components:

- country-wide HF transmission of a command message
- submittal of status messages by participating stations, and
- transmission of health and welfare messages following the “I Am Safe” protocols

The exercise is based on the real-world impact of the April 2025 loss of *both* communications and electrical power systems across large segments of Spain and Portugal. Contact George Stone, WA1JQC STM, wajqc@arrl.org for more information.

Simulated Emergency Test (SET): While the annual ARES SET is planned for early October, many ARES Groups and state and local Emergency Coordinators will test their operational capability this month. Each organization can establish their own scenarios, and partner with local Emergency organizations such as:

- SKYWARN,
- American Red Cross, and
- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT).

Contact Terry Buzzard, KA8TNF, SEC at ka8tnf@verizon.net for more information.

The CERT program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may occur where they live. Sponsored nationally by FEMA, and locally by public safety or emergency management agencies, the goal is to train and organize volunteers so professional responders can rely on a cadre of volunteers during disaster situations. CERT volunteers allow the professional responders to focus on more complex tasks.

Amateur Radio Operators are key members of many CERT Programs across the country in every state and territory. A CERT- trained amateur radio operators provide added value because they understand emergency response at the local level and have the communications skills and resources to respond safely and effectively during disasters.

For more information about CERT see: <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/preparedness-activities-webinars/community-emergency-response-team>

Looking for volunteers to operate their home station as W1AW/4 during our week working the American250 event in early November. Sign up at the following site: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MBHu7SIYThoNJVngq7AmnXs2OJ9-OfeRF4Kvc-AG3rw/edit?usp=sharing>

Finally, please take the time to review the Section’s 2026-2028 Strategic Plan. How can you help implement elements of the plan? See: <https://www.arrlva.com/strategicplan.php>

Mike Aimone, WA8AHZ
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