

**Seaway/Capital-ARES District' DEC report February-2010**  
Counties of Renfrew, of Lanark, of Leeds-Grenville, of Prescott-Russell & of  
Stormont-Dundas & Glengarry, Cities of Ottawa & of Cornwall

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- **The Renfrew County West ARES group** (RCW-ARES) on Feb 6th provided one timing and one safety checkpoint for the annual Deep River Silver Spoon Ski Race. This year, the race was run on the Deep River Golf Course. About two weeks before the race, Lachran Cranswick, a scientist from AECL who lived in Deep River went missing. During the search, the OPP drove all over the ski trails with snowmobiles while the temperature was above freezing. During the search, the temperature dropped and the ski trails froze with the resulting ruts. The ski club did not dare to use their new groomer on the ice ruts, so the trails were not usable for the race. A trail was laid out on the golf course and the skiers would do multiple loops depending on the distance they were to do. We required only one checkpoint for timing where we timed the skiers on each pass. AEC George VE3GPD and EC Bob, VE3YX manned the checkpoint while Norm, VE3UE operated the base station. We also had a safety checkpoint at the furthest point on the track from the start/finish point. Chris, VA3CRL and Bernie, VA3SUR were at the safety checkpoint with Mike, VE3ODJ at the base. As in past years, one station at the base was on two meters and one on 440. Since the base station was adjacent to the golf course, we didn't need our high mast for the antennas which made setup quicker this year. We tried a third link this year with AEC Dale, VA3DNA at the start/finish line and Yvonne, VE3RYA at the base. They tried to independently time the finishes, but found it too frantic. The ski club uses about 7 people to time the finishes.

We hope to be back on the trails for next year's race.

- The RCW-ARES group on Wednesday February 10th provided safety communication for the Eastern Ontario Secondary School Athletics Association (EOSSAA) Cross-County Ski Championships for the fourth year. EC Bob (VE3YX) and Yvonne (VE3RYA) manned the base station set up in a trailer near the starting area, while AEC Dale (VA3DNA) took to the field to send back skier progress reports. The event saw approximately 125 skiers pass through the checkpoint as the skiers covered a 4, 6 or 8 kilometer course. The event ran smoothly but one skier was unaccounted for after a reasonable time had passed. This information was passed to event official and a quick search of the start/finish area revealed that the skier had collected the assigned bib but chose not to start the race. In a letter received from the EOSSAA Convener following the event, RCW-ARES was thanked for its continued support of the event and noted the important safety role we played for the athletes and the piece-of-mind provided to the coaches.

Number of Registered Stations: 23

Number of Net Sessions, Drills or Tests This Month: 4

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-**The Ottawa ARES group** [EMRG] held their general meeting on February 27th at the Ottawa Fire Service Training Centre. Please check out the slides of the meeting presentation soon to be posted on our web site soon at <http://emrg.ca>.

- Harold Hamilton (VA3UNK) presented a summary of the very successful Canadian Ski Marathon--February 2010 marked the 44th year for this event--and told us about some of the difficulties in trying to keep track of many hundreds of skiers in hilly, treed areas with little or no cell phone coverage. Many ARES [EMRG] members regularly volunteer as radio ops at this event. Much of the organization for radio comms at the Canadian Ski Marathon would not be possible without the efforts of: Harold Hamilton (VA3UNK), Clayton Jenkins (VE3CBJ), Rick Furniss (VE3IHI), Mike Kelly (VE3FFK), Richard Hagemeyer (VE3UNW), Dave Harris (VE3KMOV) and many, many others.

- Several new self-directed study modules were presented at the meeting. These modules are now available for download from the EMRG web site at <http://emrg.ca>. The modules available now are: The Four Cs of Communications, Crossband Repeaters, Logging, Message Handling, Introduction to CTCSS and Personal Preparedness. We encourage all Emcomm radio ops to

read these at their leisure and would love to hear from others who wish to write new modules or offer valuable improvements.

- Jim Montgomery from the City of Ottawa's Office of Emergency Management also gave a well received presentation and reminded us that the City knows who we are and that they want very much to work with us.

- ARES EC Peter Gamble (VE3BQP) is stepping down as team leader of EMRG after 15 years; Thanks, Peter, for your fabulous work. The replacing EC is Richard Hagemeyer (VE3UNW) and he will be taking over this role from Peter. As before, the team leader of EMRG may be reached at <teamleader@emrg.ca>. Peter will continue to be a valuable part of EMRG but will now focus more on the roles of liaison with the City of Ottawa and with technical solutions for EMRG's permanent radio installations at several key locations in City of Ottawa official buildings and at the City of Ottawa EOC.

Number of Registered Stations: 50

Number of Formal Traffic Messages Received: 0

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- **The Cornwall ARES group** will have three ARES representatives (Earle VE3IMP), AEC Joe (VE3ADB) and AEC Jim (VE3AFV) will take the Basic Emergency Management (BEM) course planned for March 29-31, 2010. During the regular meeting of the Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club (SVARC) Inc. and on the club's Monday evening nets, this course offering was made to other HAMS in the area.

- Close association with the Seaway Valley Amateur Radio Club (SVARC) Inc. continues. EC Earle (also is club Pres.) provided a short ARES update to the club members at their meeting of March 3, 2010 which replaced the meeting of February 24, 2010.

- Canadian Emergency Management College course in Ottawa - March 11 & 12, 2010  
Jim (VE3AFV), AEC has agreed to take this course with possibly others.

- Regarding the upcoming Seaway/Capital-ARES District meeting - April 17, 2010 our ARES representatives are planning to attend.

- The Official ARES Bulletins continue to be read by the EC and AECs on Mondays at 7:00 PM local on the club's local 2-Metre net on VE3SVC (147.180+).

- Regarding the City of Cornwall EOC, there has been no further action by the City on the tenders to have the defective cables replaced. ARES representatives have gone as far as they can to have these cables repaired.

- New Emergency Management Building - A new building on Campbell Street in Cornwall is planned. To attempt to ensure an adequate place for ARES, EC Earle met with Bradley Nuttley, Emergency Management & Community Safety Coordinator for Cornwall, Stormont Dundas & Glengarry in early February to review the building plans and formwork that provide a set of requirements.

- Radio Comm tests from the Cornwall Civic Complex, the 2nd Street Firehall, the Red-Cross and the City Hall are being planned for April 10, 2010. In preparation EC Earle is planning an ARES training for current and new ARES volunteers to start in late March 2010.

- DEC / EC / AEC Meeting After weeks of e-mailing EC Earle (VE3IMP), AEC Joe (VE3ADB) and AEC Jim (VE3AFV) held a 1-hour productive meeting with DEC - Mike Hickey (VE3IPC) in St. Isidore on February 13, 2010.

- The 'Tim Smith' Memorial Award meeting of March 3, 2010 (delayed from Feb. 24, 2010) the SVARC presented this award for the HAM of the Year to Tim's widow, Wilma - VA3WMS. During an emotional speech Wilma accepted the award on behalf of deceased EC & club Pres. Tim Smith.

- The Cornwall Community Hospital (CCH) - after weeks of planning the phone line to the VE3SVC RPT was reinstated on March 3, 2010. Thanks to Doug for making the reestablishment of the repeater's 'autopatch' a reality again after several years.

- Emergency Management & Community Safety in a presentation to SVARC, Bradley Nuttley provided an informative session to the members of SVARC during their meeting of March 3, 2010. Bradley's focus was on earthquakes and how individual families can better prepare for an emergency.

Number of Registered Stations: 10  
Number of Net Sessions, Drills or Tests This Month: 4

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### **The 44th Canadian Ski Marathon - Winter Field Day - Emcomm Boot Camp**

Amateur radio operators from Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec have provided communications for the Canadian Ski Marathon (CSM) since 1974. That's 36 years of support.

**-The 44th Canadian Ski Marathon** (see [www.csm-mcs.com](http://www.csm-mcs.com)) on Feb 13&14-2010 was a big challenge, call it a Winter field Day, or Emcomm Boot camp, it was a two 16 hour day operation well met, and took place in the mountain areas north of Montebello Quebec. The course was very different from previous years, so people had to find their way, in the dark, to places they hadn't been to before, on poorly marked roads. The hams acted as the pathfinders for the other checkpoint volunteers, since they can be directed (or re-directed) from "headquarters". Once they get to their assigned locations, they have to set up in places where there is not much choice of specific location. They then have to establish reliable contact on a number of repeaters (primary and backup x 2). Then they have to establish completely separate high quality simplex stations to be able to hear the sweep and patrol skiers. The patrol and sweep skiers need three qualifications, skiing ability, good first aid skills and an amateur radio licence. If you think that finding volunteer hams for a generic public service event is difficult, try finding a dozen with that combination. They typically use a few watts into a quarter wave antenna on their back, so maintaining contact through the hills and valleys is always difficult. Even those with the "soft" jobs in plush seats and warm operations centres have the challenge of getting the station on the air by 04:00. This is especially difficult after the previous day of pulling weak signals out of the noise while dealing with questions that come in the front door and maintaining liaison with the co-located military communications station. -One example of Emcomm boot camp style public service was that at least one ham, Tyler - VA3DGN, who had to install a 30ft mast with an arrow type dual band J-pole antenna, and could not get into the primary RPT, and neither of the two secondary RPTs. He had to get a 4 element 2m beam antenna atop the mast in order to communicate with the net control station.

-One situation resulted in a 911 call for an ambulance. It was handled promptly, and according to procedures established as part of the communications protocol. Other skier evacuations and "situations" were handled as well practiced routine occurrences. The plans mostly worked. When they didn't, the 'back up' plans were there to take up the load.

-Newcomers are paired with long time operators to lessen the steepness of the learning curve.

About 40 amateurs volunteer for this event every year (but there is always room for more). Most have already marked February 12/13 2011 on the calendar for the next one. -How about you?

#### **- Organizers for all radio operations are:**

Harold Hamilton (VA3UNK) as Chief of radio operations, Clayton Jenkins (VE3CBJ), Rick Furniss (VE3IHI), Mike Kelly (VE3FFK), Richard Hagemeyer (VE3UNW), Dave Harris (VE3KMV) and possibly others.

#### **- Amateur radio groups involved:**

Emergency Measures Radio Group / Ottawa ARES (provides equipment)  
Ottawa Amateur Radio Club (provides various hardware and logistical support)  
Prescott-Russell ARES  
West Island Amateur Radio Club  
Montreal Amateur Radio Club  
Individual amateurs not part of any group

#### **- Fixed Stations :**

Headquarters and net control at Montebello  
Lodging and backup net control at Papineauville  
Fixed location "out" stations:  
6 Checkpoints on each of two days (2 operators each)  
1 campsite (1 operator)

#### **- Mobile stations:**

4 Area Safety vans on each of two days, each with one or two operators.  
4 operations vans on each of two days, each with one operator.  
Four CSM logistics vehicles use receivers only, and have to listen to net for updates.  
About a half dozen radio ops are needed Friday afternoon/ evening to set up.

Repeaters used were VE2CRA, VE2RBH, VE2CRA/2, with VE2RM as a backup repeater, available but not used this year.

**- Components of the operation:**

1 Chief of radio operations, two days, about 5-6 safety/patrol skiers with their licence. A patrol skier is a skier who skis the course during the event. They have first aid skills and a radio. Their job is similar to that of a sweep skier, except that the sweep skier stays behind the last of the entrants, to ensure that no one is left out on the trail at the end of the day. The 763 Communications Regiment runs some stations in hard to reach spots as part of their training. They have a representative at net control so we can keep each other informed of situations on the course. NCS is on air about 04:00-20:00. The course is approx 150km in a big North-South loop starting and ending in Montebello QC.

**- Typical problems reported:**

Checkpoints low on food / water / sand / propane.

Skiers injured, requiring extraction from trail.

Signs missing, road crossing problems.

Busses missing, luggage missing, skiers separated from partner, dog lost down the trail.

Safety snowmobile inoperative due to major gas tank leak, other equipment failures.

Skiers taking wrong turn, ending up in the wrong place.

One medical problem requiring ambulance transport.

**- Operators/ assignments**

VA3UNK radio1@admin2.ca (hamihar@gmail.com) chief of radio operations

VA3DGN cp radio, VA3VXN cp radio, VE3HYS cp radio, VA3PAX cp radio, VA3BIT cp radio, VA3JME cp radio, lodging radio, NCS, VE3XRA cp radio, VE3CUZ lodging radio, NCS, VE3XGP NCS, VE3PUE NCS, VA3DRV NCS, VE3IHI Logistics, VE3ZTU Multi tasks, VE3FFK Admin radio, VE2STQ Admin radio, VA3PGY Admin radio, VE3BDC Safety radio, VA3KRT Campsite radio, VE3JMT Patrol/ Sweep radio, VE3TSD Patrol/ sweep radio, VE2HMA cp radio, VE3SZR cp radio, VE3KMV Admin radio, VE3CBJ Safety radio, VE3UNW Safety radio, VE3IET cp radio, VE2AAY cp radio, VE3GJM Safety radio, VE3UMC Safety radio, VA2SLB Safety radio, VA3PJS Safety radio, VE3KIH Safety radio, VE2FFS Patrol/ sweep radio, VE3DW Safety radio, VA3JO Safety radio, VE3JKG Patrol/ sweep radio, VE2KHC Patrol/ sweep radio, VE3LGY Patrol / sweep radio, VA3NHK cp radio. Hopefully everyone is listed.

- So as you can see, this is a major yearly radio public service operation. The organizers like to call this 'Winter Field Day', but this is a heck of an Emcomm exercise and could be said to be an ARES or Emcomm Boot Camp, though it is not an ARES operation as such. ~For more info, see TCA article – Mar 2008. Hats off to every radio ops that participated – well done – tres bien fait!!

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