



# Emergency Measures Radio Group

## Ottawa ARES



Two Names - One Group - One Purpose

### GENERAL MEETING

Date: Saturday January 22, 2005  
Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
Location: Ottawa Fire Training Centre  
898 Industrial Avenue  
(Behind the fire station)

The main portion of the meeting will be a table top communications exercise. Everyone welcome to come and find out more about EMRG.

### Team Leader's Message

Two years ago the management team and I set a goal for EMRG, to show a slow and steady improvement, with greater stability for the group. The Management Team has worked with me to achieve this goal for the past 2 years and I look forward to their continued support as we keep working on improvements to EMRG.

This year we have equipment and we have money for parts, so many of the projects we talked about over the years, can now become reality. Making these projects happen will take a lot of work, but if the work is shared across EMRG members, we can accomplish a lot. There are opportunities for people of all skill levels to help, learn and enjoy. I hope you will get involved to make this happen.

Peter -VE3BQP  
Team Leader - EMRG

### EMRG – Ottawa Agreement

EMRG has a new signed agreement with the City of Ottawa for EMRG services in an emergency. The agreement was signed by Steve Kanellakos, Deputy City Manager for Community & Protective Services. Mr. Kanellakos is the manager for emergency services and community services, the people responsible for shelters.

The agreement includes funding grants from the City to support EMRG project activities. This year EMRG will receive \$5000, with \$1000 each year for the following 2 years.

### EMRG Money Management

For several years, EMRG Team Leader Peter Gamble has talked about projects EMRG can build to improve it's response capabilities. Equipment and ideas were collected and now the money is in place to move these projects forward.

One of the big tasks last year was determining how much money is enough. This required developing a detailed list of materials, finding costs and adding it all up. Based on the EMRG requirements, EMU developed a plan to provide money as a yearly lump sum, rather than trying to process each request individually.

With the new City of Ottawa agreement, EMRG will receive a cheque this year for \$5000, to be spent as required by EMRG. In preparation for this, the management team has been busy setting up a bank account and processes for managing EMRG money.

It is important to ensure that the money is properly tracked and that there are systems in place to ensure that no one can use funds inappropriately.

For more information about EMRG money, check out the following official EMRG documents on the EMRG web site, or contact Peter Gamble for a copy;

- EMRG-305 Inventory Management
- EMRG-312 Financial Management
- EMRG-510 Expense Voucher
- EMRG-511 Receipt Statement

## **EMRG THE ELMER**

The Elmer concept is an important part of Amateur radio, a concept that seems to struggle for survival in our modern world. There are fewer opportunities for new Amateurs to participate and learn new skills. The EMRG technical projects that start this year can be used to provide opportunities for Amateurs to learn new skills, while helping EMRG.

There appears to be a number of amateurs, new and old, who would like to work on technical projects and learn more technical skills. The issue for some is that they don't have any previous experience and feel they don't have any skills that would be useful to start with.

Some Amateurs have never soldered a wire or are not sure how to do it properly, while others struggle to install various connectors on cables. As much as possible, EMRG would like to provide learning opportunities for it's members and if there is interest, for other local amateurs who just want to help and learn.

**It's Winter Time In Ottawa  
ARE YOU PREPARED?**

## **DOCUMENTATION**

When Peter Gamble took over as Team Leader for EMRG nothing was written down, there was no paper work. Over the years he wrote and filed documents, presentations and correspondence. The problem with these documents was;

- Only he knew they existed
- No document or version numbers
- No consistent format or style
- No common storage and access

For the past year, the management team has worked to develop an official EMRG document system, including numbering, version control and a standard template. They have taken key documents and reviewed them, set them to the EMRG format and posted many on the EMRG web site.

All EMRG documents have a classification; Public, Restricted or Secure, which defines how the information in the document will be treated. For example, the EMRG membership list is a Restricted document, meaning it will be shared with EMRG members, but it will not be posted on the web site and copies of the document should be destroyed when no longer required.

New documents will be created this year to provide guidelines for key areas such as how we operate in an emergency. Many of the documents are posted on the Web site ([www.emrg.ca](http://www.emrg.ca)) under the Numbered Documents link.

Document distribution is one area to be worked on this year. EMRG needs to ensure that key documents, such as the membership list, are distributed to EMRG members in a timely manner.

## PROJECTS

There is lots of talk about “EMRG Projects”, but what are they? Projects are simply groups of tasks, that when complete, will improve EMRG’s capability to support it’s partner agencies.

Some projects involve hands on technical building, such as making a repeater, antenna or wiring up a radio. Other projects are still technical but improve infrastructure, such as wiring up the EMRG communications room LAN or setting up computers on the LAN.

Still other projects involve organization, such as preparing shelter kits, which brings together work done in other technical projects, so that the right components are ready for deployment when needed.

Projects are planned and prioritized on a yearly basis, and try to provide the best use of time and money for the year. Some projects, such as wiring a radio with a standard interface connector, are a lot of work (time), but require only a few low cost parts. Other projects, such as adding packet TNCs, or large batteries, will take little time, but require more expensive parts.

There will be a lot of work to go around and a lot of different skills required. Everyone should find something that they can help with. Once the final list of projects for this year is complete, it will be sent to the EMRG membership, along with some timelines on when the projects will start. Beginners are welcome!

Did you check your radio equipment?

- Do you know if everything works?
- Do you know where everything is?

**Take time to be prepared!**

## REPEATERS

The plan to install several voice repeaters within the City of Ottawa is still moving forward. There have been some delays in getting equipment released and access to sites. The commitment from Ottawa Fire Service is still there, but it takes time to co-ordinate removal of old equipment.

The initial plan for adding an East and West community repeater will continue and the EMRG repeater plan will be reviewed to set up some longer term goals. Part of that process is analysis of coverage areas using topographic maps and testing, to determine where there are holes in the coverage and how to best fill the gaps. One option is to build a repeater with remote receivers and a voter to select the best signal.

## ARES MEETING

EMRG is hosting a meeting this February of ARES leaders and assistants from across Eastern Ontario. This meeting will bring together the other ARES groups that are part of the Ottawa District, the District that includes Ottawa ARES, as well as visitors from the neighbouring Saint Lawrence District (Leeds Grenville & Lanark).

The relationship between neighbouring ARES groups in Eastern Ontario is very good and this meeting will help us improve, so we can be more effective in the event that we need to support each other in an emergency.

## USER INTERFACE

The theory for operating a station in an emergency, is one person as an operator, one as a logger and everyone should wear headphones. In reality, radios only have one jack and this is for a speaker not headphones. This raises the question; How many amateurs have adapters to plug two sets of headphones into one radio speaker jack?

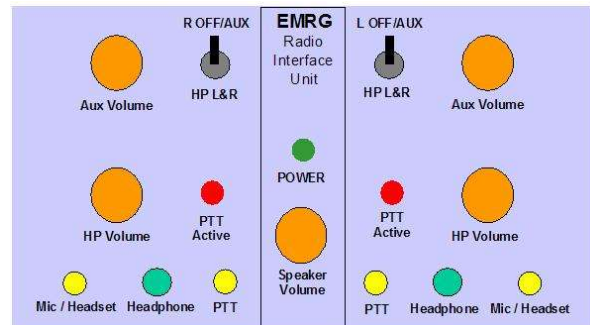
There is a group of Amateurs in the UK who addresses this issue and a whole lot more with a solution called CAIRO, which they developed starting back in 1983. Their web site contains a lot of information about the issues they worked on, why they are issues and what they did to solve them. There is a link on the EMRG web page, from the Standards Index page. It is well worth reading.

EMRG has several situations where more than one operator will need to listen and maybe talk on the same radio. In some cases the people will be side by side, while in others they will not. There are other issues such as having a local speaker if required. Unplugging the headphones to hear the speaker is a pain and is very difficult if the radio is not in front of the operator.

These issues are being addressed under the User Interface project. So far some initial suggestion drawings have been done to help people understand the objectives. The next step is to get a small group of people together who are interested in developing a documented solution for EMRG. This will include building some prototypes for testing by users, to get the best solution possible.

There is more information on the EMRG web site. Click on the link for Standard Interfaces.

Here is a drawing of a possible 2 user interface box.

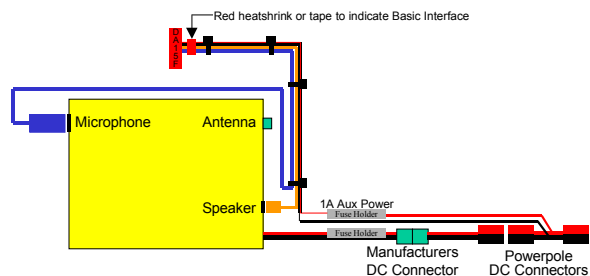


This is not something that an EMRG member would typically own. EMRG would build and own them for deployment as required. The parts for the box shown above will cost around \$200.

## STANDARD INTERFACE

The User Interface will be designed to plug in using the Standard Radio Interface that EMRG is developing. A draft specification for the Standard Radio Interface is now posted on the EMRG web site, under the Official Documents (EMRG-210), which is also linked to the Standards Page.

The Standard Interface provides a common connector that will be wired to all EMRG owned radios. The standard allows for any Amateur radio to be wired using an adapter cable made with the EMRG standard connector and the matching radio connectors.



Take a look at the web site for more information. Please read the standard and provide your comments!

### **WATCH WHAT YOU SAY**

When you are using an EMRG repeater, remember that they are provided through our partnership with the City of Ottawa, so you never know who might be listening.

During the George Bush visit, someone jokingly mentioned the name George Bush and the word bomb. Coincidentally, moments later two Police officers walked by the scanner that had picked up the conversation. Everyone understood it was just a joke, but it brings home the idea that we need to be aware of what we are saying and how it might sound to someone else listening in.