

STX ARES teams — Districts 6, 7, and 12 — have been actively deployed for as long as a week and have been providing support to both the Kerr and Kendall County flooding areas. While their duties have been varied, many of the ARES Team Members have been assigned to search teams to assist the teams to maintain communications in the challenging terrain. The search areas have extended for in excess of twenty-miles.

While some of the deployed Team members were local, quite a few volunteers had traveled some distance from outside the disaster area to assist the local Districts. This meant the non-local volunteers had to find lodging in the cities and towns around the search areas. The DECs also imposed a safety rule due to the long hours and grueling conditions under which the Teams were working — no one who was not local was permitted to travel home overnight after a day's deployment, thus necessitating an overnight stay in a hotel.

Although a smart Team Member was able to negotiate with most of the hotels and motels to apply a discounted government rate for all the Team Members, the cost of the lodging has been significant.

It is unclear how many Teams will be requested in the coming weeks, if any. The situation remains fluid as there is still danger of more flooding, the debris fields are extensive, and sadly there remain a lot of good people who are missing and must be returned to their families.

The League does not have a fund dedicated to supporting deployed ARES Members during disasters. There will be a discussion at the upcoming Board of Directors' meeting to consider establishing such a fund — either internally funded or funded by future donations.

As a result of the extended deployments and possible future deployments in connection with this disaster and since the League has no allocated funds, Lee Cooper, W5LHC, West Gulf Vice Director, Stuart Wolfe, KF5NIX, South Texas Section Manager, and I have established a GoFundMe campaign to raise money to assist the ARES Team Members that have and are being deployed. This effort is not a fundraising effort of the ARRL, although it has agreed to support this effort to obtain donations to assist the League's deployed ARES Members.

This request for donations is being shared with other ARRL Divisions and Sections.

Any money exceeding what is actually needed will be donated to the ARRL for use in future disaster deployments.

To donate, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/yt9pzw4t>

Thanks to all.

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