



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Amateur Radio Operators help Santa Parade

ARES 2014-03

Twenty nine members and affiliates of the Winnipeg Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) will be helping provide communications for this year's Santa Claus parade on Saturday evening. The organizers were interested in using the group's years of experience in other public service events like marathons and emergencies like floods. The "hams" will be providing voice communications for the "Block Captain" on each block. Joining the ARES volunteers will be four individuals from Shaftesbury High School including 3 students who just recently became Ham Radio operators themselves.

A briefing was held Monday night for the Hams at a secret location deep below Santa's workshop. Jeff Dovyak the ARES Emergency Coordinator told the Hams *"this is a great exercise for us as we'll be operating out of doors for up to seven hours in the weather and the last couple of hours will be dark"*

The Hams are all volunteers who train to be able to supply emergency communications when needed. They use public service events like this and the Manitoba Marathon to prepare for emergencies like floods and tornados. This is the second time ARES has supported the Santa Claus parade. *"Winnipeg ARES does not get many opportunities to provide Public Service Communications in colder weather. The parade is an excellent opportunity to help create a successful public event while simultaneously gaining experience operating outdoors in an urban setting in the winter or getting a winter operations refresher."* Mr. Dovyak continued.
