

Winnipeg Amateur Radio Emergency Service
in conjunction with
Radio Amateurs of Manitoba



MANITOBA MARATHON
21 JUN 2026
AMATEUR RADIO NOTES
PSE-200

Jeff Dovyak VE4MBQ
29 JUN 2026

Past reports have detailed the documentation distributed to ARES volunteers at the pre-race briefing. That is not addressed in this report.

The notes from the 2026 operation are those of the Winnipeg ARES Emergency Coordinator (EC), and comments from those volunteers that submitted comments and/or participated in our in-person debrief to a certain extent. Planning/Preparation and Operations for 2026 were all based on previous years' experience. Recruiting began 11 JAN 2026. Several registered volunteers dropped out approximately three weeks before Race Day – plenty of time to re-assign another volunteer. One volunteer dropped out after the briefing (hospitalized), one dropped out Race Day morning (texted approx. 0520h after being injured previous day). The one back-up operator was deployed (notified three days before Race Day) and one Relay Station/alt back-up was redeployed Race Day. There were no other back-ups, a couple of Amateurs did double-duty on Race Day.

Recruiting for 2026 was slightly better than last year. Ultimately we had seventy (70) volunteers Race Day (including two Amateur Radio student operators). At least nine (9) new or newer Amateurs participated this year, three (3) Amateurs did new tasks in 2026, including two younger Amateurs. Unlike last year, no portable radios were requested or loaned out.

The plan on Race Day was to have eight (8) programmed hand-held radios (HTs) in Medical Supply 8, three (3) each in Therapy 5 & Therapy 6 – ultimately six HTs (6) stayed in Therapy 5 Race Day – no “loaner” HTs were deployed Race Day. Medical Supply 8 also carried six (6) “loaner” J-Pole antennas and antenna support posts – none were deployed.

Recruiting was done on-line via the Winnipeg ARES website, newsletters, targeted e-mails and voice nets.

Several operators notified the ARES EC in advance that they could not attend the volunteer briefing and indicated who would pick up their briefing package – that worked very well. When they registered, volunteers received a communication outlining briefing time, date and location. A reminder e-mail was sent to our volunteers a week before the scheduled briefing, obviating “no shows” (we had just one) and we also changed the briefing back to Tuesday evening.

The ARES component of Comm Centre set-up is traditionally done the Friday afternoon before Race Day and took approximately 60 minutes. That set-up process is now documented in a draft document. Last year's report mentioned that the area used by the Comm Centre has moved south in the building due to construction of several more

fan suites which necessitated utilizing two additional 100 foot runs of feedline. The additional feedline was not low-loss *LMR-400*, so now for two Marathons we have used RG-213 in addition to LMR-400 – seems OK.

The feedline routing currently used is sub-optimal, a potential solution has been proposed to Manitoba Marathon (MM) Executive Director.



Comm Centre Feedline thru doorway
Photo Credit J. Dovyak VE4MBQ

Traditionally, a Race Operations Net Controller supplies the Race Operations Net transceiver but the owner was having technical difficulties just before set-up day so Winnipeg ARES Mobile Kit 10 was deployed (it is built around a dual-band transceiver). Since Kit 10 was deployed, a Winnipeg ARES member loaned one of his personally-owned dual-band transceivers as a back-up. Medical Net was run with Winnipeg ARES Mobile Kit 2 (VHF only) and Mobile Kit 4 (UHF only) with Mobile Kit 1 (VHF only) as a back-up. One of the Medical Net Controllers suggested that if Winnipeg ARES had a second dual-band mobile kit it would obviate the need for two separate radios. This writer will encourage Winnipeg ARES to consider a suitable expenditure in the next year's budgeting process to acquire a second dual-band mobile kit and has already requested that the Winnipeg ARES Treasurer cost out duplicating Mobile Kit 10.

ARES "shadows" at the Care Centre this year **once again** operated on UHF with their communications fed into the VHF Medical Repeater via a portable repeater. Special thanks to Bob

VE4ZN, Richard VE4ESX and Sunday VE4SBS.

For 2026, there were three (3) Wet Bulb Globe Thermometers (WBGT) deployed right on the course on tripods and used:

- adjacent to the Mile 25 Water Station
- beside the Mile 6 Water Station on Lyndale Drive
- Assiniboine Park (near the *Leaf*).

Wet Bulb operators transmitted their reading according to a pre-arranged schedule on the Medical Net and the Doctor's Shadow operator passed the WBGT temperatures to a Marathon Physician to decide on course condition or "color". Once decided, the Doctor's Shadow operator advised Net Control on course color and course showers "on/off" and that was transmitted across both nets. The Wet Bulb operators' primary communication was on Amateur Radio, secondary was trunked radio* as used by non-Amateurs at the Marathon and tertiary was personal cell phone. Had UHF Comms in Care Centre to Medical Repeater not worked out this year, one contingency might have had Wet Bulb operators providing Doctor's Shadow with their data directly on trunked radio. Trunked HTs and spare batteries **were** turned in to Course Closing vehicle this year (except for 1 turned in directly to the writer).

*Only one (1) of the trunked radio HTs was picked up prior to the Saturday Medical Briefing.

Despite the MM Physician-in-Charge being the authority for determining whether showers on course should be "on" or "off", Therapy 5 crew came across at least two instances of showers being "on" despite the course being at "Green" and showers "off" – at Km 31 the Station Captain said that there were no instructions on her "Whats App Zone" but she did have the shower turned off. At Km 38, the Station Captain apparently would not take direction on this and apparently decided that he was the authority for deciding showers "on" or "off" – this should be settled by MM staff and briefed to all Water Station Captains **before** 2027 Race Day.

Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) was utilized on even more course vehicles in 2026 for automatic vehicle location:

- Lead Vehicle Full Course
- Lead Vehicle Half-Marathon
- Sweep 1
- Course Closing Vehicle
- Therapy 5
- Therapy 6
- Supply 8

- Sweep 2 was not available for set-up.

TV in Comm Centre (to display APRS data) had different inputs than what APRS lead expected.

Two new forms were introduced into the Comm Centre this year, a red-color Medical Tracker form (similar to ARES Medical Request form previously utilized) and a blue-color “Issues” Tracker form that was used for non-medical requests. Introduction of both forms seemed to aid in tracking various events within the Comm Centre.

MM staff arranges for a number of rental vehicles. Ideally this would be a FRI pick-up but since COVID-19 van rental has been problematic and MM staff do the best they can. Pick-up 1 day before Race Day adds to stress in ensuring vehicle is ready to go. On-course vehicles operated by Amateurs include:

1. Course Closing Vehicle (usually used by MM week leading up to Race Day)
2. Sweep 1
3. Sweep 1
4. Therapy 5
5. Therapy 6
6. Medical Supply 8.

Since more and more rental vehicles do not have ferrous bodies, again this year MM issued “cling” type MM vehicle signs that were ‘peel & stick’ and fairly easy to remove cleanly. MM decided to try to re-use for future years – it was very difficult getting the “cling” vinyl piece back onto the backing paper flatly without creases.



2025 “Cling”

Photo Credit J. Dovyak VE4MBQ

2026 ARES Debrief

A 2026 Amateur Radio Marathon in-person debrief was held in lieu of the JUN Winnipeg ARES General Meeting. Eleven (11) participants were in attendance.

[Some e-mails had been received by the EC that pertained to the conduct of the Marathon rather the Amateur Radio portion – with the commenters’ permission those were forwarded to MM leadership. (race number size/contrast, vehicle rental, water delivery time)]

The debrief was moderated by the Winnipeg ARES Emergency Coordinator and followed the following agenda:

- What We Already Identified
- Race Operations Net
- Medical Net

What we already identified:

Volunteer recruitment difficult and insufficient number of volunteers, the few back-ups ended up being deployed Race Day

- An experienced Race Operations Net Controller has suggested that there is not much history of significant communications from Relay Exchange Zones and that in the future consideration should be given to leaving Relay Exchange Zones and early Water Stations not staffed in favor of Water Stations being staffed
 - That voice of experience does not seem to be shared by Marathon staff, further discussions are still required.
- If use of APRS is expanded, we may free up some additional volunteer resources Race Day
 - Half-Marathon lead only had APRS, no Amateur operator – went OK.
- Might not require “Nurse’s Shadow” in Care Centre – follow-up already launched.

In 2026 there was “de-sense” so for 2027 the UHF antenna will be positioned higher up (2026 was likely the other way around).

At the Amateur briefing it was emphasized that the electronic frequency file could be requested from a knowledgeable, Marathon-experienced Amateur. It was stressed that if this file was obtained it was not to be disseminated – hours after the briefing a new Amateur volunteer who requested that electronic file posted it to Facebook a possible security breach that turned out not to be problematic Race Day.

Some Race Operations operators participated in THU evening Test Net (approximately 17 out of 42) – previously many of the participants found that they had to alter location slightly for good communications path, most of the participants were newer Amateurs. *Cubeits* at each Water Station site provided a metal structure that magnetic antennas “mag-mounts” could be utilized. “Rubber duck” antennas on hand-held radios are inadequate at some locations (which **is** mentioned during the pre-marathon briefing), a roll-up J-Pole seminar was run twice in 2024 but was not feasible in 2026. As previously noted, six “loaner” J-Poles (owned by Wpg ARES) were on the course in Supply 8 – none were deployed

- Support posts purchased by Manitoba Marathon in 2024 were finally located
- Radio Amateurs of Manitoba **did** run J-Pole building seminars, unknown how many Race Day Amateurs took advantage.

Course Conditions & Amateur Radio Tags

The Amateur Radio Marathon tags were not ready at supply pick-up date **again**, alternate tags were brought to the 16 JUN briefing – the lanyards did not have a safety-break.



2025 Amateur Radio Tag
Photo Credit J. Dovyak VE4MBQ

In-Person Debrief and Some e-mails

Recruiting/Briefing

- Get URL for volunteer registration into body of e-mails announcing newsletter edition (rather than just in a newsletter article) – 2026 not done yet
- Transmitting “numbers” from noisy locations is problematic – address at future briefing, was noted in 2025 report
- Post 2026 equipment list to Winnipeg ARES website so new volunteers will have the information well ahead of Amateur briefing.

Medical Net

- If NCS reports poor signal, field operators should be prepared to change location, communicate by simplex and consider transmitting from their mobile OR try other antenna options (eg: J-Pole, mag-mount on a pizza pan, etc)
- “Nurse’s Shadow” operator might not be required: Care Centre Lead Nurse, Marathon Physician and Medical Committee Chair/Incident Commander have been consulted, waiting to hear back and whether or not there is consensus
- Some maps in map booklet are outdated
 - Concrete examples (if identified) will be forwarded to MM staff**
- All course vehicles should have bottled water available to participants.**

Race Operations Net

- Consider adding 3rd Sweep vehicle**
- Configure Therapy 5 for ambulatory participant transport
- Operators at Water Station need to stay with Medics or Station Captain – not walk the length of the station
 - Consider simplex at station and using mobile radio to speak with Race Operations Net Control
- Keep Amateur operator in Full Marathon lead vehicle – does more than call in locations passed.

2027 Manitoba Marathon Things to Tweak

- Continue E-mailing a briefing reminder about a week before the briefing seems to have eliminated most of the “no-shows” previously
- Consider “expectations” memo for volunteers who miss the Amateur Radio briefing, for 2026 an annotated agenda and briefing notes were sent to those who missed the briefing

- Stress that operational information such as the electronic frequency file is not to be disseminated including posting on Facebook.
- Insufficient number of Amateur Radio volunteers
 - Insufficient number of back-up or reserve operators, goal is to have at least two back-up operators per course sector (two sectors now) and two back-up operators for Care Centre/Comm Centre
 - Still have to consider asking a prominent Amateur Radio organization to list Marathon Volunteer Registration URL in the body of e-mail announcing a newsletter edition (rather than just being mentioned in a newsletter report)
 - Post 2026 Equipment list to Winnipeg ARES website well in advance of 2027 Amateur briefing.
- Consider a spare LoRa unit in case a course vehicle can't be set up for APRS previous day
- APRS lead to attend Comm Centre meeting
- APRS lead (or delegate) to attend Comm Centre set-up
- APRS group to work on their own list of possible APRS tweaks (incl filtering and one location for vehicle set-up and equipment recovery)
- Consider providing two (2) cling signs for each course vehicle (i.e. front & back)**
- Consider providing Amateur Radio volunteers with Amateur Radio tag **and** a Course Conditions tag (could be printed duplex)** and make this part of kit pick-up
 - Recycling tags from past year took an awful lot of work to try to keep track of, it would really be best to issue all Amateurs a new tag in 2027 and start over with re-use in future years.
- Continue to encourage Test Net participation for operators assigned to Race Operations Net from operating location.
 - Remind participants at briefing each year that “rubber duck” antenna might be inadequate and in-person testing **before** Race Day is encouraged
 - Post 2026 Equipment list to Winnipeg ARES website well in

advance of 2027 Amateur briefing

- Investigate
 - University Cr Wet Bulb transmitting location
- Mini-education at 2027 briefing with regard to people sending numeric values – saying “thirty” may be difficult for Net Control to grasp in a noisy Comm Centre, saying “three zero” is preferred – an experienced Amateur has been asked to lead this at 2027 briefing
- Remind Water Station Captains that MM Physician-in-Charge is the ‘deciding’ authority for course showers “on” or “off”**
- Bottled water for all course vehicles.**

**For attention by MM staff.

**ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING
MANITOBA MARATHON AMATEUR RADIO OPERATIONS**

loaned equipment or facilities, assisted with volunteer
recruitment

Winnipeg ARES Inc.
Radio Amateurs of Manitoba
Pathfinders Amateur Radio Club Inc.
South-Central ARES

Special Thanks

Special thanks to Mark VE4MWH for maintaining our volunteer database and sending out short-notice messages and those who helped out at the 16 JUN briefing with materials distribution:

Richard Sheridan VE4ESX
Susan Collings VE4SYM
Mark Havens VE4MWH
Steven Harrison VE4FTS
Larry Konowalchuk VA4LMK
Wayne Pettapiece VE4NQ
Jeff Dovyak VE4MBQ.

Special thanks to those who assisted with Comm centre set-up FRI 19 JUN:

Derek Hay VE4HAY

Harm Hazeu VE4HAZ

Don Gerrard VE4DWG

Robert Stegmaier VE4RST

Jeff Dovyak VE4MBQ.

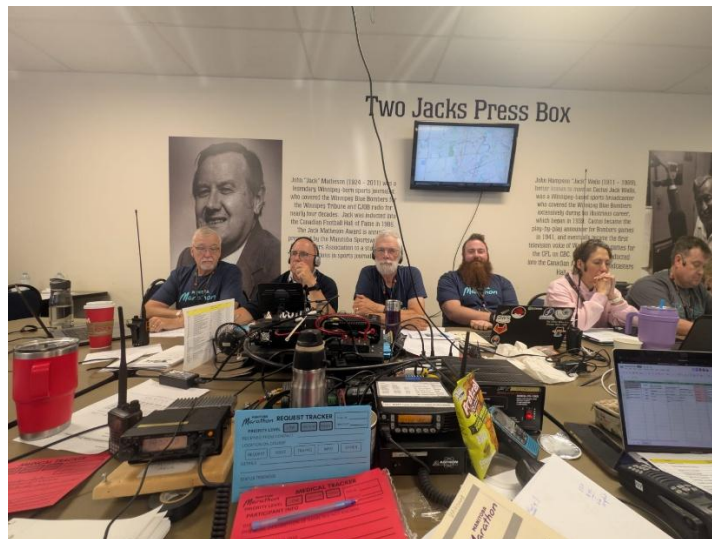
Very Special Thanks

Garth VE4GWB loaned a dual-band transceiver for Race Operations Net Control back-up, almost at the last minute.

Some Photos



Comm Centre Set-Up Crew
 Derek VE4HAY, Harm VE4HAZ
 Don VE4DWG, Jeff VE4MBQ
 Not shown Robert VE4RST
 Photo Credit R. Stegmaier VE4RST



At Comm Centre Race Day
 Scott VE4TQ, Derek VE4HAY, Harm VE4HAZ, Wyatt VE4WDZ, unknown, Chris Walton
 Photo Credit V. Sinha VA4OHM



At Comm Centre Race Day
Foreground Vikash VA4OHM, Don VE4DWG
Photo Credit V. Sinha VA4OHM

**2026
Manitoba Marathon ARES Volunteers**

Net	Assignment	Secondary Assignment			
Race Operations	Mile 2/ Km 4		VE4ANF	Bing	Fernandez
Race Operations	Mile 2/ Km 4		VE4EJY	Ejay	Espinosa
Race Operations	Mile 4/ Km 8		VE4ZWR	Proggy	Moulik
Race Operations	Mile 4/ Km 8		VE4DAE	Ernelyn	Hingada
Race Operations	Mile 6/ Km 11		VE4SNI	James	Snidal
Race Operations	Mile 6/ Km 11		VE4KMF	Wayne	Sherk
Race Operations	Mile 8/ Km 13		VA4CAT	Catherine	Suarez
Race Operations	Mile 8/ Km 13		VA4DON	Don	Suarez
Race Operations	Mile 10/ Km 15		VE4DBV	Drago	Lambete
Race Operations	Mile 10/ Km 15		VE4SNB	Stephanein	Boulet
Race Operations	Mile 12/ Km 19		VE4JDH	Hamish	Donaldson
Race Operations	Mile12/ Km 19		VE4VLP	Connor	Genyk
Race Operations	Mile 14/ Km 21		VE4NOL	Nolan	Harriott
Race Operations	Mile 14/ Km 21		VE4MIA	Brigitte	Hamilton
Race Operations	Mile 16/ Km 24		VE4MHZ	Paula	Ehn
Race Operations	Mile 16/ Km 24		VE4GLS	Gord	Snarr
Race Operations	Mile 18/ Km 28		VE4JDH	Hamish	Donaldson
Race Operations	Mile 18/ Km 28		VE4VLP	Connor	Genyk
Race Operations	Mile 19/ Km 31		VE4DBZ	David	Ziegler
Race Operations	Mile 19/ Km 31		VE4RUN	Pejay	Policarpio
Race Operations	Mile 20/ Km 32		VE4JUB	Jean	Jubinville
Race Operations	Mile 20/ Km 32		VE4DML	Dave	Lee
Race Operations	Mile 21/ Km 34		VE4BK	Andre	Ravary
Race Operations	Mile 21/ Km 34		VE4CLK	Ian	Clarke
Race Operations	Mile 22/ Km 37		VE4FTS	Steven	Harrison
Race Operations	Mile 22/ Km 37		VA3KCP	Ian	Clarke
Race Operations	Mile 24/ Km 38		VE4HK	Dick	Maguire
Race Operations	Mile 24/ Km 38		VE4MMG	Mariska	Maguire
Race Operations	Mile 24.5/ Km 40		VE4NQ	Wayne	Pettapiece
Race Operations	Mile 24.5/ Km 40		VE4AYM	Andrew	Mogk
Race Operations	Mile 25/ Km 41		VA4CQD	Marc	Collette
Race Operations	Mile 25/ Km 41		VE4DWR	Zarun	Tan
Race Operations	Half Marathon		VE4GWN	Glen	Napady

Race Operations	Half Marathon		VE4YYL	Roswitha	Napady
Race Operations	Half Mara		n/a	Cindy	Sorokowski
Race Operations	Relay 1		VA4DUG	Doug	Cross
Race Operations	Relay 1		VE4JJX	Juan Carlos	Cada
Race Operations	Relay 2		VE4HF	JoJo	Lagman
Race Operations	Relay 2		VA4TEQ	Paul	Reyes
Race Operations	Relay 3		VA4MAJ	Mark	Jenkins
Race Operations	Relay 3		VE4RNR	Paul	Dabu
Race Operations	Relay 4		VE4MMB	Janice	Behrens
Race Operations	Relay 4		vacant	moved to	Km 8
Race Operations	NCS		VE4HAZ	Harm	Hazeu
Race Operations	NCS		VE4HAY	Derek	Hay
Race Operations	Lead Vehicle Full		VE4GZ	Jim	Griffiths
Race Operations	Lead Vehicle Half		vacant		using LoRa APRS
Race Operations	Closing Vehicle Driver		n/a	Kristin	Lepage
Race Operations Closing Vehicle	Closing Vehicle Radio Op		VE4JFK	Jeff	Kazuk
Race Operations	Sweep 1 Radio Operator		VE4RBB	Robert	Kozakewich
Race Operations	Sweep 1 DRIVER		VE4QV	John	Pura
Race Operations	Sweep 2 Radio Op		VA4LMK	Larry	Konowalchuk
Race Operations	Sweep 2 Driver		VE4GWB	Garth	Blumm
Race Operations	Start Line		vacant		
Race Operations	APRS	Start Line	VE4WDZ	Wyatt	Zacharias
Race Operations	APRS		VE4TQ	Scott	Mayo
Medical	Medical NCS		VA4OHM	Vikash	Sinha
Medical	Medical NCS		VE4DWG	Don	Gerrard
Medical	Wet Bulb - University Cr		VE4ZN	Bob	Myatt
Medical	Wet Bulb - University Cr		KD0ZXI	Steven	Buchy
Medical	Wet Bulb -Lyndale Drive		VE4ABT	Bruce	Taylor
Medical	Wet Bulb-Lyndale Drive		VE4RDO	Andy	Fenstad
Medical	Wet Bulb - Assiniboine		VE4GS	Glenn	Siefert

Medical	Wet Bulb- Assiniboine		VE4MWH	Mark	Havens
Medical	Intake/Triage 2		VE4LYN	Linda	Satiada
Medical	Intake/Triage Area		VE4SBS	Sunday	Satiada
Medical	Meghan's Shadow		VE4RST	Robert	Stegmaier
Medical	Dr's Shadow		VE4ESX	Richard	Sheridan
Medical	Therapy 5 - driver		VE4MBQ	Jeff	Dovyak
Medical	Therapy 5 - radio		VE4EVN	Evan	Harriott
Medical	Therapy 5 Therapist		n/a	Matt	Short
	Therapy 6 - driver		VE4MAB	Mark	Blumm
Medical	Therapy 6 - radio		VE4VT	Ed	Richardson
Medical	Therapy 6 Therapist		n/a	Tom	Pachal
Medical	Supply 8 - radio		VE4SYM	Susan	Collings
Medical	Supply 8 - Driver		VE4TRO	Fred	Collings
Medical	Supply 8 EMR		n/a	Tisianne	Murorunkwere
Spare3					
Spare 111	East of the Red				
Spare 22	South of the Assiniboine				
Spare1	South of the Assiniboine		re-assigned	moved to	Km 8
Spare 33					
Spare 333					
Spare 2	2nd East of Red				
Database			VE4MWH	Mark	Havens
Post Event			n/a	Rhonda	Dovyak