

Whatcom Emergency Communications Group, Inc.

Constitution

Article I – Name

The name of the organization shall be the Whatcom Emergency Communications Group, Inc., hereinafter referred to as WECG.

Article II – Preamble

We the undersigned, wishing to secure for ourselves the pleasure and benefits of the association of persons commonly interested in amateur radio emergency and public service communications, have joined together as the WECG and enact this constitution as our governing law. It shall be our purpose to promote community, individual operating efficiency, training and technical advancement of our members, and to provide and support emergency and public service communications when needed.

Article III – Membership

Section 1 – Full Membership

Full membership is open to all FCC licensed amateur radio operators. Prospective members must be able to pass the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office background check in order to become a registered emergency worker and must abide by the WECG's Code of Conduct. Membership in the Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) is encouraged.

Section 2 – Associate Membership

Associate membership is granted to individuals who do not hold an amateur radio license but wish to support the WECG in other ways. Prospective members must be able to pass the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office background check in order to become a registered emergency worker and must abide by the WECG's Code of Conduct.

Article IV – Code of Conduct

WECG members are the personification of Amateur Radio to the public and to the governmental and non-governmental agencies we serve. Those who violate the standards of this code shall be removed from the membership.

1. WECG members shall conduct themselves with respect and courtesy to each other and those we serve. We shall be listeners and communicators.
2. WECG members shall not act as or be perceived as agents or employees of the agencies we serve. We are a serving agency and have no authority to act on behalf of the served agency.
3. WECG members shall not use profanity, vulgar language or language or expressions which may be considered derogatory when working around the public or while on duty.

4. WECG members shall not use the logos or identifying marks of the agencies we serve without prior approval in writing by those agencies.
5. Conflicts of interest are prohibited. A “conflict of interest” exists when a member’s interests interfere, or even appear to interfere, in any way, with the interests of the WECG.
6. Services provided by the WECG are provided free of charge and members shall not solicit, receive or accept personal remuneration for their services.
7. WECG shall not tolerate harassment of any kind for any reason. There will not be discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin or any other legally protected class.
8. WECG members shall obey the laws of the jurisdiction they operate in, both in letter and in spirit.
9. WECG members shall promote the highest level of ethical standards.
10. WECG members shall not violate FCC rules.

Article V – Board of Directors

Section 1 – A seven-member Board of Directors with equal vote shall be the governing body of the organization and shall meet regularly to determine such policies necessary for the continued growth and welfare of the organization. For all matters other than amending the Constitution, By-Laws and dissolution of WECG, a majority vote of the directors will be a deciding vote. Directors will be as follows:

Position 1 President – Interfaces with the Served Agencies, is responsible for Public Relations and strategic direction of the WECG.

Position 2 Secretary – Keeps minutes of all meetings and documents activities of the organization.

Position 3 Treasurer – Maintains records of accounts receivable and accounts payable. A bank account under the WECG name will be maintained by the treasurer under the direction of the Directors for the use of the organization. The account will require two signatures on each check written. Files annual reports to the Washington Secretary of State and to the IRS required by our non-profit and 501c(3) status.

Positions 4 There are four additional “At Large” directors.

Section 2 – Directors will serve a 2 year term or until removal by majority vote of the members present or resignation. Elections will occur every 2 years beginning November 2026.

Section 3 – Vacancies in the Board of Director positions occurring either by removal or resignation must be filled within 60 days by a majority vote of the members present.

Section 4 – The Board of Directors may form ad hoc committees for specific purposes.

Article VI – WECG Reserved Rights

The WECG repeaters are privately owned and the WECG Directors reserve the right, in addition to FCC rules and regulations, to control their usage.

Article VII – Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

This Constitution may be amended by a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors and, when presented at a regularly scheduled meeting, a majority vote of those members who submit a vote at the meeting, or within 14 days following the meeting. Instructions for how to submit a vote will be included in the notification of the upcoming vote. The By-Laws may be amended by a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors.

Article VIII – Dissolution

The WECG may be dissolved by a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors. Upon dissolution, all equipment and assets will be returned to Whatcom County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) or donated to other not-for-profit emergency communications group(s), or sold and the proceeds given to DEM or other not-for-profit emergency communications group(s) as appropriate.

Article IX – WECG Directors’ Approval of this Constitution

Enacted this *13* th day of *August*, 2020

President: Jim McCabe

Secretary: John Hatten

Treasurer: Tom Oliver

At Large: Don Boyer

At Large: Andy Sayler

Article V, Section 1. Amended February 2, 2023 increasing the size of the board from 5 to 7.

Article VII. Amended February 2, 2023 making it easier to amend the constitution.

Article IV, Section 2 Amended September 10th to set term limit for current board members.

Whatcom Emergency Communications Group, Inc.

By-Laws

Article 1 – Meetings

Regularly scheduled general membership meetings shall be held at least once a month, at a time and place specified by the Board of Directors. Meetings will be open to all WECG members and guests. Special or emergency meetings may be called by the Board of Directors.

Article 2 – Training and Participation

WECG training requirements include the following:

- FEMA courses IS 100, 200, 700 and 800 - Required
- FEMA course IS 300 – Recommended
- First Aid/Blood Pathogens – Required if planning on participation in Search and Rescue callouts, recommended otherwise.

Members should complete these courses within a year of joining WECG.

To remain in good standing, WECG members should participate in the following:

- Weekly nets – 1 per month
- Meetings – 2 per year
- Exercises and event support – 1 per year

Members who do not meet the training and annual participation requirements may be moved to an inactive roster.

Article 3 – Dues

The WECG may levy upon the membership such dues or assessments as deemed necessary for the business of the WECG, within the objectives as set forth in the preamble.

Article 4 – Memoranda of Understanding and Affiliations

Should a served agency request it, the WECG shall negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with them. An MOU shall include as a minimum: (1) training requirements; (2) credentialing requirements; (3) liability coverage and limitations; (4) scope of communications assistance needed; and

(5) Agency Point(s) of Contact (POC) and lines of authority; (6) Duration of the MOU and conditions of termination.

Article 5 – Merging other groups into WECG

A merger of another group with WECG must be approved by the Board of Directors.

Article 6 – WECG Equipment and Assets

WECG operates with assets and equipment owned by the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office and WECG. WECG also shares Field Day equipment with the Mount Baker Amateur Radio Club.

Article 7 – Repeater Trustee

The Board of Directors will appoint a Repeater Trustee. The trustee shall be responsible for the proper operational compliance of the repeater system according to the rules set forth by the FCC. The Repeater Trustee shall appoint control operators, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, as needed to monitor the repeater system's operation for compliance. The Repeater Trustee is also responsible for frequency coordination through the Western Washington Amateur Relay Association.

Article 8 – WECG Call Sign(s) Trustee

The Board of Directors will appoint a trustee for WECG's call sign(s).

Article 9 – Coordinator Positions

Direction: Any WECG member may hold one or more of the coordinator positions below. The Board of Directors shall appoint coordinators.

The **ARES Emergency Coordinator** shall be responsible for operations of the group and will be designated as the Emergency Coordinator (EC) for ARES\ARRL.

The **Call Out Coordinator** shall be responsible for organizing and managing the list of members who shall send callouts to membership.

The **Training Coordinator** shall be responsible for developing and presenting training to the WECG members. This will include any field events used for training.

The **License Exams Coordinator** shall be responsible for scheduling and administering ham license exams.

The **Membership Coordinator** shall be responsible for maintaining the membership roster and training records.

The **Events Coordinator** shall be responsible for all events that WECG provides communications for and Field Day events including area selection and appointing assistants to handle logistics.

The **Hospital Coordinator** shall be responsible for maintaining our relationship with the PeaceHealth St Joseph Hospital and leading the volunteers who serve there.

The **Web Site Coordinator** shall be responsible for the WECG website, domain name and website changes and maintenance.

The **Digital/DMR Coordinator(s)** shall schedule, administer and keep records of the digital/DMR nets.

The **Search and Rescue Council Coordinator** shall attend SAR Council meetings as the WECG representative and report to WECG members on council concerns.

The **American Red Cross** coordinator shall maintain our relationship with the ARC and lead the volunteers who serve there.

Approved: *January 28, 2021*

Amended in January 2023 and February 9, 2023: Changes to the number of board members from 5 to 7 and changing how the constitution may be changed from majority of total members to majority of members voting.

Amended September 2026: Changes to the ARES Emergency Coordinator, and addition of a call out coordinator.