

EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN

*for the*

Auxiliary  
Communications  
Service

OF SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA

AUGUST 2009

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**EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN  
AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE  
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1. Introduction

1.A The Sarasota County Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) is made up of FCC licensed amateur radio operators who have voluntarily registered their capabilities and/or equipment for emergency communications duty.

1.B The Sarasota County ACS operates as a non-profit volunteer organization under the direction of Sarasota County Emergency Management. ACS members are referred to as "communications specialists" and should conduct themselves in a responsible and professional manner.

1.C In accordance with FCC regulations, the contents of messages handled by amateur radio are not divulged to any unauthorized persons. These communications are furnished without any form of compensation. Federal regulations also provide that licensed amateurs shall exert direct control over all transmissions on amateur frequencies.

1.D The Sarasota County ACS functions under the direction of the Sarasota County ACS Radio Officer, who is appointed by Sarasota County Emergency Management.

1.E The Sarasota County ACS Radio Officer may appoint Deputy ACS Radio Officer(s), and Assignment Officer(s).

2. Purpose

2.A The purpose of this plan is to provide broad written guidelines with a minimum of information needed in an emergency.

2.B The mission of the Sarasota County ACS is to provide radio communications during emergency or disaster situations when regular/normal communications are disrupted, fail or inadequate.

2.C Drills, training, and instructions will be carried out on a regular basis to ensure readiness to respond quickly in providing effective amateur radio emergency communications whenever an emergency may arise.

2.D The following agencies may be served during an emergency: Sarasota County Emergency Management, Sheriff's Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Division of Forestry, Hospitals, Red Cross, Salvation Army, or any other government agency or organization that requests assistance, with direct approval of the ACS Radio Officer or his designee. Such communications will be provided within the limitations of equipment and personnel and the ACS Radio Officer reserves the right to establish priorities as may be necessary.

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3. Activation Of The Plan

3.A Any member of the Sarasota County ACS, who, for any reason, suspects that a communications emergency may exist, should monitor the 147.390 MHz (100 Hz) repeater for instructions and assignments. If this repeater is not in service, the linked repeater system of 442.300 MHz (82.5 Hz), 444.600 MHz (82.5 Hz), 444.875 MHz (151.4 Hz), or 146.730 MHz (100 Hz), 145.130 MHz, 147.120 MHz (136.5 Hz), 443.550 MHz (100 Hz) repeaters or simplex frequencies 146.580 or 146.520 MHz will be utilized, in that order.

3.B The ACS Radio Officer or Deputy ACS Radio Officer will activate the Telephone Alert Plan to alert ACS members. Members should notify the ACS Radio Officer or Deputy ACS Radio Officer, as soon as possible, to establish their availability.

3.C In the event of an emergency, during which ACS may be of service to the community, any responsible official of any agency listed in 2.D, may alert the county ACS by notifying the ACS Radio Officer, Deputy ACS Radio Officer and in their absence, their designated replacement.

4. Emergency Operations

4.A Sarasota County ACS members, upon becoming aware that an emergency exists involving ACS, shall monitor the following frequencies:

- a. 147.390 MHz (100 Hz) repeater to receive instructions or assignments. This is the primary net frequency. The linked 442.300 MHz (82.5 Hz), 444.600 MHz (82.5 Hz), 444.875 MHz (151.4 Hz) repeaters will serve as a backup to the 147.390 MHz repeater.
- b. The 146.730 MHz (100 Hz), 145.130 MHz, 147.120 MHz (136.5 Hz), 443.550 MHz (100 Hz) repeaters may be assigned for additional emergency operations.
- c. 146.580 MHz simplex is the primary net frequency during an emergency and as a supplemental frequency when repeaters are out of service or assigned for additional traffic by the EC or AEC. 146.520 MHz will serve as backup to 146.580 MHz.
- d. 144.390 MHz, the National Automatic Packet Reporting System, APRS, frequency may be used in non-localized emergencies.
- e. 145.090 MHz may be used for Winlink via WC4EM-10
- f. Echolink \*SARACS\* conference or WC4EM at EOC.
- g. Other frequencies and modes may be activated as necessary.

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h. See Appendix 11.H

4.B Sarasota County ACS Net Control will operate from one of the following locations:

a. During minor, localized emergencies, the home station of the ACS Radio Officer or Deputy ACS Radio Officer acting as net control or a mobile communications unit, when activated and assigned.

b. During County-wide or regional disasters when the Sarasota County Office of Emergency Management is in command, or is the primary agency being assisted, the Emergency Operations Center at the Administration building in Sarasota, will be the base of operations. (Emergency power is available at this location).

4.C The ACS Radio Officer will be the net control station (NCS) unless another station is designated by him.

4.D Information concerning the nature of an emergency and the extent of ACS involvement, will be transmitted to all active members as it becomes available and updated, when possible.

4.E Mobile and portable units will be dispatched, within the limits of personnel and equipment, as needed, to locations throughout the county. These locations may be Tactical First In Teams, Special Needs shelters, hurricane shelters, hospitals, fire stations, or other locations necessary to support the emergency communications.

4.F ACS members will report enroute to, and upon arrival at, the assigned locations. They will continue to monitor, but notify the NCS, if it is necessary to leave or if relief is needed. Otherwise, transmissions will be made only at the request of the NCS, or for emergency or priority traffic, initiated by the official in charge at that location.

4.G All formal traffic shall be in the standard ARRL message format, unless the NCS directs otherwise. All formal traffic shall be signed by the official who originated the traffic, including the official's title, and by the person who takes responsibility for the traffic. Third parties must give their name and official title. Message procedures of EMERGENCY, PRIORITY, WELFARE, or ROUTINE, as defined by ARRL directives, shall be used for all formal traffic. In addition, the NCS may authorize informal handling of tactical traffic.

4.H Liaison contact will be maintained on the following net frequencies as needed:

a. West Central Florida ARES 145.430 MHz (100.0 Hz), 442.950 MHz (100.0 Hz), 3.911 or 7.281 MHz (also active for SKYWARN and monitored by NWS in Ruskin)

b. South Florida ARES 3.940 MHz

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- c. North Florida ARES 3.950 MHz
- d. Florida Midday Net 7.242 MHz
- e. Hurricane Watch Net 14.325 MHz

5. Drills, Alerts, and Tests

5.A Sarasota County ACS will, upon request, participate in emergency or disaster drills conducted or sponsored by Emergency Management, or other local government or non-government agencies, as approved by the ACS Radio Officer or his designee.

5.B At the discretion of the ACS Radio Officer, ACS can be activated unannounced once per year, for an emergency preparedness test or emergency simulation test.

6. Emergency Alert System

6.A Sarasota County ACS members will be notified of an emergency and advised of the status with the following condition alerts:

6.B Activation Level One - FULL SCALE ACTIVATION - Hurricane is upon us or other serious emergency is in progress.

- a. All members assigned or on standby status, depending on the severity and duration of the emergency.
- b. Emergency traffic only; repeaters and simplex frequency are closed to all but necessary emergency traffic on the ACS nets.
- c. The simplex frequency will be assigned for tactical traffic as needed. Assignment of this frequency will be by the ACS Radio Officer, Deputy ACS Radio Officer, or an Assignment Officer.

6.C Activation Level Two - PARTIAL ACTIVATION - Limited activation.

- a. Limited or local emergency - tornado, explosion, fire, plane crash, chemical spill, etc.
  - 1. Designated members report to EOC.
  - 2. Designated members report to assigned locations as needed.
  - 3. Remainder of members standby for additional assignments or as relief.
- b. Emergency traffic only; repeaters and simplex frequency are closed to all but

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necessary emergency traffic on the ACS nets.

6.D Activation Level Three - MONITOR - a potential emergency may develop at any time.

- a. If potential for a disaster develops, monitor local radio and television stations for advisories. Monitor designated frequencies for information and assignments. Local TV channels will broadcast information issued them by the county EOC.
- b. Secure your home.
- c. Charge batteries, assemble radio and personal equipment that is to be taken with you. Have a full tank of gas in your vehicle.
- d. Be ready to respond on short notice.

## SECTION TWO

### 7. Initial Preparation

7.A What to do first in case of an emergency.

- a. Check that you and your family are safe and secure before you respond as an ACS volunteer.
- b. Check that your property is safe and secure before you respond as an ACS volunteer.
- c. Monitor the 147.390 MHz repeater, or if inoperative, other frequencies listed in 3.A.
- d. Follow the Instructions you receive from the ACS officials in charge on 147.390 MHz, or if inoperative, other frequencies listed in 3.A.
- e. Contact the ACS Radio Officer or his/her designee, for further instructions.

7.B Initial action checklist

The net control station and/or ACS officials on the designated emergency net will provide additional instructions, including information on frequencies used or other resource and tactical nets.

- a. Be prepared to operate. Check all equipment and connections.
- b. Check-in with your assigned contact. Deploy to assignment with "Ready" kit.

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- c. Obtain tactical call sign for your location/assignment.
- d. Initiate personal event log (ICS Form 214). This is a log of dates and times of various events you performed while activated. Log any traffic sent or received, and other significant events.
- e. Enter assigned frequency(s) on log sheet and on emergency/frequency plan (ICS Form 205).
- f. Use a formal message form when a precise record is required.
- g. Use tactical call sign for your location, while observing FCC's ten minute ID rule.
- h. Monitor your assigned frequency AT ALL TIMES. Notify NCS if you have to leave.

8. Equipment And Personal Checklists

8.A basic deployment equipment checklist

When responding to an emergency event, or even a training exercise, there is a minimum set of equipment and personal gear you should bring with you to get the job done. Basic items include:

- 2-Meter HT or mobile with power supply.
- 2-Meter magmount, or other portable emergency antenna and coax
- Ear-phone
- Paper and pencil
- ACS ID badge
- Extra batteries
- Appropriate clothing
- Food and water

The majority of these items should be kept in a "Ready Kit". Just pick it up on your way out the door for deployment. You might also consider the items on the following list for inclusion in this ready kit, designed to allow you to stay in the field for up to 72 hours.

8.B Extended (72-hour) deployment equipment checklist

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Snacks          | Liquid refreshments |
| Throat lozenges | Aspirin             |
| Prescriptions   | Toilet articles     |
| First aid kit   | Message forms       |

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Log books	Shelter (tent and sleeping bag)
3 day change of clothes	Foul weather gear
3 day supply of water and food	Portable stove, Mess and cleaning kit
Flashlight	Batteries
Candles	Water proof matches
Alarm clock	Toolbox
Electrical and Duct tape	Soldering iron and solder
Safety glasses	VOM
Additional radios, packet gear	Microphones
Headphones	Power supplies, chargers
RF Connectors	Antennas with mounts
Patch cords	SWR bridge (VHF and HF)
Extra coax	ARRL Standardized Connectors

#### 8.C About your “ready” kit

a. Power - Your radio 72-hour kit should have several sources of power in it, with extra battery packs and an alkaline battery pack for your HT. For mobile VHF and UHF radios, larger batteries are needed. Gel-cell or deep-cycle marine batteries would be good sources of battery power, and you must keep them charged and ready to go. It is also wise to have alternate means available to charge your batteries during the emergency. You can charge smaller batteries from other larger batteries. You can build a solar charging device. If you’re lucky, you may have access to a power generator that can be used in place of the normal electrical lines. Have more battery capacity than you think you might need. Have several methods available to connect your radios to different power sources.

b. Gain antennas - You can expect to need some kind of gain antenna for your HT, as well as additional gain antenna that can be used on either your HT or your mobile rig. The extra antenna might be needed by someone else, or your first antenna might break. For VHF and UHF, you can build a J-pole from a TV twinlead, for an inexpensive and very compact antenna. Have several lengths of coax in your kit, totaling at least 50 feet and with barrel connectors to connect them together.

c. Personal - Include staples: water, or a reliable water filtration and purification system, enough food for three days, eating utensils, a drinking cup and, if needed, a means of cooking your food. Shelter is also important. Here, you are only limited by the size of your kit and the thickness of your wallet. Some hams plan to use their RVs as shelter, conditions permitting. Other disaster conditions may make the use of an RV impossible, so you should have several different plans for shelter. Light is important psychologically during an emergency. Make sure that you have several light sources available. Various battery-powered lights are available, and propane or gasoline-fueled lanterns are also

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good possibilities.

9. Auxiliary Communications Service Program Information

9.A Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS)

The Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) is a program created by a governmental disaster or emergency management office to supplement its emergency communications with unpaid staff. Skilled and dedicated people, licensed and unlicensed, can serve in one or more of four categories: administrative, management, technical, and operations. The ACS program can support a city, a county or a state. It may have the ACS name or another of local choice.

The ACS evolved out of a 1970 concept of the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) program that it was limited to Amateur radio licensees, which was incorrect – only that operations on Amateur radio frequencies required an FCC license. Also, often officials had mental images of the RACES that limited it from reaching its potential or caused its demise. The ACS began with requests to the unit at the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (California) for help with the programming of computers, then with telephone and satellite systems, which lead to field support of OES deployable communications assets.

When the local amateur radio role expanded beyond traditional ARES/RACES activities, the ACS concept was adopted in Sarasota County in 2005 as a better fit to what was being accomplished. Sarasota County amateurs operated under a combined ARES/RACES program, so the switch was made by giving it a new name.

9.B Auxiliary Communications Service Mission

The mission of the ACS is to establish an emergency communications reserve supported by unpaid (volunteer) staff. ACS operates in partnership with Sarasota County Emergency Management.

The purpose of the reserve, is to:

a. Support any and all public service communications systems in event of failure, overload or other problems that might jeopardize their usefulness and purpose. This shall include but not be limited to the following systems and departments: 9-1-1, fire, sheriff/police, Emergency Management.

b. Provide access to FCC Amateur Radio Service frequencies during times of emergencies.

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- c. Maintain communications equipment in an on-going state of readiness.
- d. Set up and staff at locations as specified in the current operations plan.
- e. Weather watch during unusual weather such as tornadoes, hurricanes or heavy rains.
- f. Activate a minimum level of support whenever ACS is alerted to a potential or existing emergency; minimum level being at least one unpaid staff (volunteer) on duty at the EOC.
- g. Provide operators for all necessary positions to sustain operations as long as the EOC is activated.
- h. Handle message, information, command and liaison 'traffic' as is required for any communications needed in an emergency or threat of an emergency.
- i. Conduct such training and familiarization events as shall accomplish all of the above.

9.C Auxiliary Communications Service Guidelines

The following guidelines have been established by Sarasota County Emergency Management.

- a. Emergency Management has designated the ACS organization as their amateur radio partner and auxiliary communications service provider, tasked with recruiting, organizing, and deploying ham radio operators for emergency activations in Sarasota County.
- b. ACS operates under the direction of Emergency Management as part of Emergency Support Function 2 (ESF2, Communications). The ACS Radio Officer is appointed by Emergency Management.
- c. Based on the incident type and projected needs, Emergency Management specifies what assignments ACS is needed to fill. ACS fills those positions by priority and available resources (members available to help). Manpower needs may also be filled by incoming volunteer resources, requested through the State and/or mutual aid agreements. ACS will coordinate these efforts.
- d. Anyone wishing to become involved with Emergency Communications work for Sarasota County, is eligible to join ACS. However, training requirements must be met within 6 months to qualify for "missions".

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e. ACS membership requirements must be met in order to work at County and/or government run facilities or sites. These requirements meet FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, and County directives regarding NIMS compliance. Members not meeting the membership requirements will have secondary status, and not be eligible to work at County and/or government run facilities or sites.

f. ACS will not maintain formal partnerships or liaisons with area radio clubs, but ACS representatives will be available to provide ACS membership information, when desired, to area radio clubs or non-affiliated amateur licensees. Assistant ACS Radio Officers, who may be members of local clubs, are available to answer general questions about ACS.

g. Printed updates on ACS activities are available on the ACS web site or via ACS member e-mail.

h. ACS equipment is not available for use by non-ACS members for non-ACS events or activities. Usage of County owned equipment is at the sole discretion of Emergency Management.

#### 9.D Auxiliary Communications Service Training Requirements

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, and the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, have stated:

All federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and non-governmental personnel with a direct role in emergency management and response must be NIMS and ICS trained. This includes all emergency services related disciplines such as EMS, hospitals, public health, fire service, law enforcement, public works/utilities, skilled support personnel, and other emergency management response, support and volunteer personnel, as follows:

Entry Level

FEMA IS-700: NIMS, An Introduction

ICS-100: Introduction to ICS or equivalent

First Line, Single Resource, Field Supervisors

IS-700, ICS-100 and ICS-200: Basic ICS or its equivalent

Middle Management: Strike Team Leaders, Division Supervisors, EOC Staff, etc.

IS-700, IS-800 NRP, ICS-100, ICS-200 and ICS-300

Command and General Staff; Area, Emergency and EOC Managers

IS-700, IS-800, ICS-100, ICS-200, ICS-300 and ICS-400

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For ACS members to be compliant with FEMA and DHS guidelines, ACS members must take the following minimum training classes.

a. IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System, I-100  
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100A.asp>

b. IS-700 National Incident Management System (NIMS)  
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700a.asp>

c. Level 1 Amateur Radio Emergency Communications, EC-001  
<http://www.arrl.org/cce/courses.html#ec001>  
(Training manuals for ACS members are available for self study)

or in lieu of c,

d. Emergency Communications Basics Course and 100 question exam  
<http://www.saracs.org/docs/eombas.pdf>

ACS members wishing to deploy for "mutual aid" outside the county, are required to complete these classes, in addition to the ones listed above.

a. IS-200 ICS for Single Resource and Initial Action Incidents, I-200  
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS200A.asp>

#### 9.E West Central Florida Frequency list

This is a list of primary emergency frequencies that will be in use during emergencies. These frequencies can be pre-programmed into your radio, so they will be easily available should you need to deploy elsewhere. If you use an "alpha numeric" display, you can simply dial up the "channel name" and you'll be on the correct operating frequency.

#### Section Wide

3.911 MHz (HF)

7.281 MHz (HF)

WCF-1 145.430 - (PL 100.0) Verna (Manatee County)

WCF-2 145.290 - (PL 100.0) High Point (Pinellas County)

WCF-3 146.760 - (PL 100.0) Port Richey (Pasco County)

WCF-4 442.825 + (PL 100.0) Pebbledale (Polk County)

WCF-5 442.950 + (PL 100.0) Verna (Manatee County)

WCF-6 442.550 + (PL 100.0) Riverview (Hillsborough County)

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WCF-7 443.450 + (PL 100.0) High Point (Pinellas County)

Charlotte

Cha-1 146.745 -  
Cha-2 147.255 + (PL 136.5)  
Cha-3 147.585 (Simplex)  
Cha-4 147.120 + (PL 136.5)  
Cha-5 146.865 -

DeSoto

Des-1 147.075 + (PL 100.0)  
Des-2 147.180 + (PL 100.0)  
Des-3 442.000 + (PL 100.0)

Hardee

Har-1 146.625 - (PL 127.3)

Highlands

Hig-1 147.270 + (PL 100.0)  
Hig-2 147.045 + (PL 100.0)  
Hig-3 147.550 (Simplex)  
Hig-4 442.350 + (PL 100.0)  
Hig-5 145.210 - (PL 100.0)  
Hig- 6 145.330 - (PL 103.5)

Hillsborough

Hil-1 147.105 + (PL 146.2)  
Hil-2 146.940 - (PL 146.2)  
Hil-3 146.520 (Simplex)  
Hil-4 443.025 + (PL 136.5)  
Hil-5 443.675 + (PL 146.2)  
Hil-6 444.900 + (PL 141.3)

Manatee

Man-1 145.430 - (PL 100.0)  
Man-2 146.820 + (PL 100.0)

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Man-3 443.225 + (PL 100.0)  
Man-4 147.195 + (PL 100.0)  
Man-5 442.125 + (PL 100.0)  
Man-6 443.200 + (PL 100.0)

Pasco

Pas-1 145.330 -  
Pas-2 146.670 -  
Pas-3 146.550 (Simplex)  
Pas-4 146.640 -

Pinellas

Pin-1 145.170 - (PL 156.7)  
Pin-2 147.030 + (PL 103.5 N, 156.7 M, 192.8 S)  
Pin-3 146.430 (Plan A) County Wide Simplex  
Pin-4 146.430 (Plan B) North Zone Simplex  
Pin-5 146.470 (Plan B) South Zone Simplex

Polk

Pol-1 146.985 - (PL 127.3)  
Pol-2 146.685 - (PL 127.3)  
Pol-3 146.550 (County Wide Simplex)  
Pol-4 146.565 (East Polk Simplex)  
Pol-5 146.580 (West Polk Simplex)  
I-NET / DATA 1253.450 KJ4ACN RPS  
Pol D\*-1 1293.550 - KJ4ACN A  
Pol D\*-2 444.775 + KJ4ACN B  
Pol D\*-3 147.372 + KJ4ACN C

Sarasota

Sar-1 146.730 - (PL 100.0)  
Sar-2 145.130 -  
Sar-3 147.120 + (PL 136.5)  
Sar-4 146.580 (Simplex)  
Sar-5 147.390 - (PL 100.0)  
Sar-6 443.550 + (PL 100.0)  
Sar-7 146.520 (Simplex)  
Sar-8 442.300 + (PL 82.5) Sarasota

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Sar-9 444.600 + (PL 82.5) Murdock  
Sar-10 444.875 + (PL 151.4) Bradenton

10. Basic Operating Procedures

10.A Principles of Repeater Operation

- a. Use minimum power. Otherwise, especially in heavily populated areas, you may run the risk of keying more than one repeater, thus causing unnecessary QRM. Low power also conserves batteries.
- b. Use simplex, whenever possible. Use a gain antenna at fixed locations for simplex operation.
- c. Observe the “pause” procedure between exchanges. When it is your turn to transmit, after the transmitting station stands by, count to two or three before pressing your transmit switch.
- d. Listen much, transmit little. Announce your presence on a repeater when you are certain of being able to assist in an emergency, and don't tie it up with idle chatter.
- e. Monitor local ACS net frequency, when otherwise not busy.
- f. Think before you talk. Anyone with an inexpensive public-service-band receiver can monitor. Stick to facts, control your emotions. Remember, during an emergency is the time when you are most apt to act and speak rashly.
- g. Articulate, don't slur. Speak close to your mike, but talk across it, not into it. Keep your voice down. In an emergency situation one often gets excited and tends to shout. Talk slowly, calmly - this is the mark of an experienced communicator.

10.B Principles of Disaster Communication

- a. Keep the QRM level down. In a disaster, crucial stations may be weak. All other stations should remain silent unless they are called upon. If you're not sure you should transmit, don't.
- b. Monitor established disaster frequencies. Many localities and some geographical areas have established disaster frequencies where someone is always (or nearly always) monitoring for possible calls.

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c. Avoid spreading rumors. During and after a disaster situation, especially on the phone bands, you may hear almost anything. Unfortunately, much misinformation is transmitted. Rumors are started by expansion, deletion, amplification or modification of words, exaggeration or interpretation. All addressed transmissions should be officially authenticated as to their source. These transmissions should be repeated word for word, if at all, only when specifically authorized.

d. Authenticate all messages. Every message which purports to be of an official nature should be written and signed. Whenever possible, amateurs should avoid initiating disaster or emergency traffic themselves. We do the communicating; the agency officials we serve supply the content of the communications.

e. Strive for efficiency. Whatever happens in an emergency, you will find hysteria and some amateurs who are activated by the thought that they must be sleepless heroes. Instead of operating your own station full time at the expense of your health and efficiency, it is much better to serve a shift at one of the best-located and best-equipped stations, suitable for the work at hand, manned by relief shifts of the best-qualified operators. This reduces interference and secures well-operated stations.

f. Select the mode and band to suit the need. It is characteristic of all amateurs to believe that their favorite mode and band is superior to all others. However, the merits of a particular band or mode in a communications emergency should be evaluated impartially with a view to the appropriate use of bands and modes. There is, of course, no alternative to using what happens to be available, but there are ways to optimize available communications.

g. Use all communications channels intelligently. While the prime object of emergency communications is to save lives and property (anything else is incidental), Amateur Radio is a secondary communications means; normal channels are primary and should be used if available. Emergency channels other than amateur which are available in the absence of amateur channels should be utilized without fear of favoritism in the interest of getting the message through.

h. Don't "broadcast". Some stations in an emergency situation have a tendency to emulate "broadcast" techniques. While it is true that the general public may be listening, our transmissions are not and should not be made for that purpose.

i. NTS and ACS leadership coordination. Within the disaster area itself, the ACS Radio Officer is responsible for emergency communications support. The first priority of those NTS operators who live in or near the disaster area is to make their expertise available to the ACS Radio Officer or Deputy ACS Radio Officer where and when needed. For timely and effective response, this means that NTS operators should coordinate with

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ACS before the time of need so that they will know how best to respond.

11. Appendix

11.A Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in the public interest when disaster strikes. Every licensed amateur, regardless of membership in ARRL or any other local or national organization, is eligible for membership in ARES. The only qualification, other than possession of an Amateur Radio license, is a sincere desire to serve. Because ARES is an amateur service, only amateurs are eligible for membership. The possession of emergency powered equipment is desirable, but is not a requirement for membership.

ARES Organization

There are three levels of ARES organization - section, district, and local. At the section level, the Section Emergency Coordinator is appointed by the Section Manager (who is elected by the ARRL members in his section) and works under his supervision. In most sections, the SM delegates to the SEC the administration of the section emergency plan and the authority to appoint district and local EC's.

It is at the local level where most of the organization and operation is effected, because this is the level at which most emergencies occur and the level at which ARES leadership makes direct contact with the ARES member-volunteers and with officials of the agencies to be served. The local EC is therefore the key contact in the ARES. The EC is appointed by the SEC, usually on the recommendation of the district EC (DEC). Depending on how the SEC has set up the section for administrative purposes, the EC may have jurisdiction over a small community or a large city, an entire county or even a group of counties. Whatever jurisdiction is assigned, the EC is in charge of all ARES activities in his area, not just one interest group, one agency, one club or one band.

In large sections, the SEC's have the option of grouping their EC jurisdictions into "districts" and appointing a district EC to coordinate the activities of the local EC's. In some cases, the districts may conform to the boundaries of governmental planning or emergency-operations districts, while in others they are simply based on repeater coverage or geographical boundaries.

Special-interest groups are headed up by "assistant emergency coordinators", designated by the EC to supervise activities of groups operating in certain bands, especially those groups which play an important role at the local level, but they may be designated in any

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manner the EC deems appropriate. These assistants, with the EC as chairman, constitute the local ARES “planning committee” and they meet together to discuss problems and plan projects to keep the ARES group active and well-trained.

There are any number of different situations and circumstances that might confront an EC, and his ARES unit should be organized in anticipation of them. There is no specific point at which organization ceases and operation commences. Both phases must be concurrent because a living organization is a changing one, and the operations of a changing organization must change with the organization.

**11.B Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)**

RACES, administered by local/county/state Emergency Management agencies, with guidance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is part of the Amateur Radio Service that provides radio communications for civil-preparedness purposes only, during periods of local, regional or national civil emergencies. These emergencies are not limited to war-related activities, but can include natural disasters such as fires, floods and earthquakes.

**Operating Procedure**

Amateurs operating in a local RACES organization must be officially enrolled in the local civil-preparedness group. RACES operation is conducted by amateurs using their own primary station licenses, and by existing RACES stations. The FCC no longer issues new RACES (WC prefix) station call signs. Operator privileges in RACES are dependent upon, and identical to, those for the class of license held in the Amateur Radio Service. All of the authorized frequencies and emissions allocated to the Amateur Radio Service are also available to RACES on a shared basis. But in the event that the President invokes his War Emergency Powers, amateurs involved with RACES could be limited to certain specific frequencies (while all other amateur operation would be silenced).

While RACES was originally based on potential use for wartime, it has evolved over the years, as has the meaning of civil defense (which is also called civil preparedness), to encompass all types of emergencies.

While operating in a RACES capacity, RACES stations and amateurs registered in the local RACES organization may not communicate with amateurs not operating in a RACES capacity. (Of course, such restrictions do not apply when such stations are operating in a non-RACES - such as ARES - amateur capacity.) Only civil-preparedness communications can be transmitted (as defined in the FCC Rules). Test and drills are permitted only for a maximum of one hour per week. All test and drill messages must be clearly identified as such.

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### ARES and RACES

Although RACES and ARES are separate entities, the ARRL advocates dual membership and cooperative efforts between both groups whenever possible. An ARES group whose members are all enrolled in and certified by RACES operate in an emergency with great flexibility. Using the same operators and the same frequencies, an ARES group also enrolled as RACES can “switch hats” from ARES to RACES and RACES to ARES to meet the requirements of the situation as it develops. For example, during a “non declared emergency”, ARES can operate under ARES, but when an emergency or disaster is officially declared by government emergency management authority, the operation can become RACES with no change in personnel or frequencies.

### 11.C National Traffic System (NTS)

The National Traffic System is designed to meet two principal objectives: rapid movement of traffic from origin to destination, and training amateur operators to handle written traffic and participate in directed nets. NTS operates daily, and consists of four different net levels - Area, Region, Section, and Local - which operate in an orderly time sequence to effect a definite flow pattern for traffic from origin to destination.

#### Local Nets

Local nets are those which cover small areas such as a community, city, county or metropolitan area, not a complete ARRL section. They usually operate at VHF (typically 2-meter FM) at times and on days most convenient to their members. Some are designated as emergency nets, nets that do not specialize in traffic handling. Local nets are intended mainly for delivery of traffic. Some NTS local nets operate on a daily basis, just as do other nets of the system, to provide outlets for locally-originated traffic and to route the incoming traffic as closely as possible to its actual destination before delivery - a matter of practice in a procedure that might be required in an emergency. Most local nets and even some section nets in smaller sections are using repeaters to excellent effect. Average coverage on VHF can be extended tenfold or more using a strategically located repeater, and this can achieve a local coverage area wide enough to encompass many of the smaller sections.

#### Section Nets

Coverage of the section may be accomplished either by individual stations reporting in, by representatives of NTS local nets or both. The section may have more than one net (a CW net, a VHF net and an SSB net, for examples). Section nets are administered by an appointed Section Traffic Manager or Designated Net Managers. The purpose of the section net is to handle intra-section traffic, distribute traffic coming down from higher

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NTS echelons, and put inter-section traffic in the hands of the amateur designated to report into the next-higher NTS (region) echelon. Therefore, the maximum obtainable participation from section amateurs is desirable.

#### Operating During Disasters

When a disaster situation arises, NTS is capable of expanding its cyclic operation into complete or partial operation as needed. The ACS Radio Officer in a disaster area determines the communications needs and make decisions regarding the disposition of local communications facilities, in coordination with agencies to be served. The SEC, after conferring with the affected DEC's and EC's, makes his recommendations to the Section Traffic Manager and/or NTS net managers at section and/or region levels. The decision and resulting action to alert the NTS region management may be performed by any combination of these officials, depending on the urgency of the situation. While the local ACS Radio Officer is, in effect, the manager of ACS nets operating at local levels, and therefore makes decisions regarding their activation, managers of NTS nets at local, section, region and area levels are directly responsible for activation of their nets in a disaster situation, at the behest of and on the recommendation of officials at lower levels.

#### 11.D Types of Emergency Nets

a. Tactical Net - The Tactical Net is the front line net employed during an incident, usually used by a single government agency to coordinate with Amateur Radio operations within their jurisdiction, There may be several tactical nets in a single incident depending on the volume of traffic and number of agencies involved. Communications include traffic handling, and resource recruiting.

b. Resource Net - For larger-scale incidents, a Resource Net is used to recruit operators and equipment in support of operations on the Tactical Nets. As an incident requires more operators or equipment, the Resource Net evolves as a check-in place for volunteers to register and receive assignments.

c. Command Net - As the size of an incident increases and more jurisdictions become involved in the incident, a Command Net may become necessary. This net allows the incident managers to communicate with each other to resolve inter- or intra-agency problems, particularly between cities, or within larger jurisdictional areas. It is conceivable that this net could become cluttered with a high volume of traffic. It may also be necessary to create multiple command nets to promote efficiency.

d. Open and Closed Nets - A net may operate as an Open or "free form" net, or as a Closed net where a net control station is used to control the flow of transmissions on the channel. Typically, when the amount of traffic is low or sporadic a net control isn't

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required, an Open net is used. Stations merely listen before they transmit. When a net is declared a “closed” net, then all transmissions must be directed by the NCS.

#### 11.E Incident Command System (ICS)

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a management tool that is rapidly being adopted by professional emergency responders throughout the country. ICS provides a coordinated system of command, communications, organization, and accountability in managing emergency events. Due to the wide spread use of ICS, Amateur Radio operators should be familiar with the system, as well as how they interface with agencies employing ICS. Integral to the ICS is the concept of *Unified Command*. There is only one boss, the Incident Commander, who is responsible for the overall operation. For any incident, there are a number of functions that must be performed ranging from planning and logistics to handling the press. The functional requirements of planning, logistics, operations, and finance are always present despite the size of the incident. They may be handled by a single individual for a small incident, or a “Command Staff” in a large incident. Another characteristic of ICS is “span of control.” In simple terms, any manager should only directly manage a small number of people. ICS uses the number of five for organizational purposes. The number five isn’t hard and fast, but provides a useful organizational guide line.

How does the Amateur Radio volunteer fit into the Incident Command System? We are expected to be communicators, and within the ICS, this would place us in the Logistics Section in the Service Branch as part of the Communications Unit. The communications unit provides all communications services for the operation.

Amateurs should be familiar with the use of ICS Form 205 (Communications Plan) and ICS Form 214 (Activity Log). These are the most commonly used forms during an ICS event.

#### 11.F Internet and E-mail

a. Information on ACS and upcoming activities can be found on the Sarasota County ACS Web Site, <http://www.saracs.org>

b. In order to promote ACS and amateur radio to the public, additional information about ACS can be found on the "social networking" sites, MySpace, <http://myspace.saracs.org>, Facebook, <http://facebook.saracs.org>, Twitter, <http://twitter.saracs.org>, and YouTube, <http://youtube.saracs.org> .

c. A Sarasota County ACS E-mail mailing list is used to keep members informed and to alert them of any potential activation. ACS members who have e-mail capabilities, will

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be added to this mailing list when they join ACS.

11.G Message Form

THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE <b>RADIOGRAM</b> VIA AMATEUR RADIO							
NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HR	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
1	R	G	K4IWW	12	CARY NC		DEC 20
TO JOHN Q PUBLIC 1234 MAPLE AVE ANYTOWN NC 27000						THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT AMATEUR STATION _____ PHONE _____ NAME _____ STREET ADDRESS _____ CITY AND STATE _____	
TELEPHONE NUMBER 919 555 1234							
ARRIVE	7PM	DEC	24	X			
LOOKING	FORWARD	TO	SEEING	YOU			
X	LOVE						
BETTY M PUBLIC							
RECD	FROM	DATE	TIME	SENT	TO	DATE	TIME
THIS MESSAGE WAS TRANSMITTED BY THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE... THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE... THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE...				THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE, INC., 5 THE AMERICAN... SOCIETY OF ELECTRIC... THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE...			

Form: Copyright 1995, American Radio Relay League. Used with permission

Number - This is the number of your message. Begin with 1 each month or year.

Precedence - One of these precedence codes will follow the message number:

Emergency - Any message having life and death urgency to any person or group of persons, which is transmitted by Amateur Radio in the absence of regular commercial facilities. This includes official messages of welfare agencies during emergencies requesting supplies, materials, or instructions vital to relief of stricken populace in emergency areas. During normal times, it will be very rare. When in doubt, do not use it.

Priority - Important messages having a specific time limit. Official messages not covered in the Emergency category. Press dispatches and other emergency-related traffic not of the utmost urgency. Notification of death or injury in a disaster are, personal or official.

Welfare - A message that is either a) an inquiry as to the health of an individual in the disaster area or b) an advisory or reply from the disaster area that indicates all is well, should carry this precedence. These messages are handled after Emergency and Priority

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traffic, but before routine.

Routine - Most traffic in normal times will bear this designation. In disaster situations, traffic labeled Routine should be handled last, or not at all when circuits are busy with Emergency, Priority, or Welfare traffic.

Handling Instructions (optional)

HXA - (followed by number) Collect landline delivery authorized by addressee within ... miles. (If no number, authorization is unlimited.)

HXB - (Followed by number) Cancel message if not delivered within ... hours of filing time; service originating station.

HXC - Report date and time of delivery (TOD) to originating station.

HXD - Report to originating station the identity of station from which received, plus date and time. Report identity of station to which relayed, plus date and time, or if delivered, report date, time, and method of delivery.

HXE - Delivery station get reply from addressee, originating message back.

HXF - (Followed by number) Hold delivery until ... (date).

HXG - Delivery by mail or landline toll call not required. If toll call or other expense involved, cancel message and service originating station.

Station Of Origin - The first amateur handler.

Check - Number or words/groups in text only.

Place Of Origin - City or town from where message is sent. Not necessarily location of station of origin.

Time Filed - The time message is filed. Optional with originating station.

Address - Address of person who will receive this message. Be as complete as possible, include zip code.

Telephone Number - Telephone number of person who will receive this message. Provide the complete phone number, including area code.

Text - This is the text of the message. Limit message to 25 words or less, if possible.

Note that "X", when used in the text as punctuation, counts as a word.

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Signature - This is the name of the person sending the message. It does not count as a word.

Received - During an emergency, an official who receives the message, should sign in the box. Otherwise, the amateur who receives the message signs. Message forms may vary, so if this area is not on the form, you may sign on the back of the form.

Sent - During an emergency, an official who sends the message, should sign in the box. Otherwise, the amateur who sends the message signs. Message forms may vary, so if this area is not on the form, you may sign on the back of the form.

Information in this section is taken from the *ARES Field Resources Manual, A Quick Trainer and Resource Guide for the Emergency Communicator*, published and available from the ARRL.

1. Incident Name Frequency/Function (Page 1)		2. Operational Period (Date / Time) From:		INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN ICS 205-OS	
3. BASIC RADIO CHANNEL USE					
SYSTEM / CACHE	CHANNEL	FUNCTION	FREQUENCY	ASSIGNMENT	REMARKS
SERC - Sarasota	SAR-1	County wide	146.730 MHz PL 100	Primary - SKYWARN Backup - Red Cross, Shelters Damage Assessment	Red Cross - Damage Assessment Red Cross - Shelters Damage Assessment - loc. specific
SERC - Laurel	SAR-2	County wide	145.130 MHz	Primary - Red Cross, Shelters Damage Assessment Backup - SKYWARN	Red Cross - Damage Assessment Red Cross - Shelters Damage Assessment - loc. specific
NPARC - North Port	SAR-3	Quadrant / Local	147.120 MHz PL 136.5	NPOD, Damage Assessment Administration, Staging	NPOD - location specific Damage Assessment - loc. specific
	SAR-4	Simplex	146.580 MHz	As needed	
SERC - Sarasota	SAR-5	County wide	147.390 MHz PL 100	Primary - TFIT, PSN, NPOD Admin., Mutual Aid, Staging Backup - CERT	Primary EOC operations
ACS - Sarasota	SAR-6	Quadrant / Local	443.550 MHz PL 100	NPOD, Damage Assessment Administration, Staging	NPOD - location specific Damage Assessment - loc. specific
	SAR-7	Simplex	146.520 MHz	As needed	
K4TAP - Sarasota	SAR-8	County wide	442.300 MHz PL 82.5	Primary - CERT Backup - TFIT, PSN, NPOD Admin., Mutual Aid, Staging	NPOD - location specific Damage Assessment - loc. specific
K4TAP - Murdock	SAR-9	County wide	444.600 MHz PL 82.5	Primary - CERT Backup - TFIT, PSN, NPOD Admin., Mutual Aid, Staging	NPOD - location specific Damage Assessment - loc. specific Liaison with Charlotte County
K4TAP - Bradenton	SAR-10	County wide	444.875 MHz PL 151.4	Primary - CERT Backup - TFIT, PSN, NPOD Admin, Mutual Aid, Staging	NPOD - location specific Damage Assessment - loc. specific Liaison with Manatee County
4. Prepared by: (Communications Unit)			Date / Time		
Ron Wetjen, WD4AHZ ACS Radio Officer			01/27/09 11:30		
INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN		June 2000		ICS 205-OS	

<b>1. Incident Name</b> Frequency/Function (Page 2)		<b>2. Operational Period (Date / Time)</b> From:		<b>INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN</b> ICS 205-OS	
<b>3. BASIC RADIO CHANNEL USE</b>					
SYSTEM / CACHE	CHANNEL	FUNCTION	FREQUENCY	ASSIGNMENT	REMARKS
ACS - Venice	SAR-11	Quadrant / Local	443.750 MHz PL 100	NPOD, Damage Assessment Administration, Staging	NPOD - location specific Damage Assessment - loc. specific
NI4CE - Verna	WCF-1	West Central Florida Section wide	145.430 MHz PL 100	Administration, Mutual Aid	
		West Central Florida Section wide	3.911 MHz	Administration	Official use only
		West Central Florida Section wide	7.281 MHz	Administration	Official use only
		North Florida Section State wide	3.950 MHz	Administration	Official use only Liaison with State EOC
		North Florida Section State wide	7.254 MHz	Administration	Official use only Liaison with State EOC
		Hurricane Watch Net	14.325 MHz		Official use only Liaison with National Hurricane Center
Winlink		Gateway	145.090 MHz		EOC Gateway WC4EM-10
MARS			MARS HF		Military Affiliate Radio System
<b>4. Prepared by: (Communications Unit)</b> Ron Wetjen, WD4AHZ ACS Radio Officer				<b>Date / Time</b> 01/27/09 11:30	
INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN			June 2000	ICS 205-OS	