

SONOMA OPERATIONAL AREA
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE
(ACS)

Basic Operation Manual

- *Mission, Organization & Policies*
- *Standard Operating Procedures*
- *Volunteer Handbook*
- *ACS Plan*
- *Planning References & Resources*



March 2007
(Version 4.2)

*This page intentionally left blank
(inside front cover)*

Sonoma Operational Area ACS Organization and Standard Operating Procedures

Table of Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations	iii
Acknowledgments and Credits.....	iv
Scope and Purpose of ACS	1
Purpose and Organization	1
Mission	1
ACS Activation	2
Personnel Allocation and Assignments.....	2
Personnel Policies:	
ACS Volunteer Qualifications	4
Disaster Service Worker Registration	4
Insurance Coverage.....	4
ACS Use of Amber Lights	5
Dress Code	6
Volunteer Policies Handbook	7
Other Policies and Procedures	7
ACS Training Incentive Program.....	8
ACS Organization:	
ACS Organization Diagram	9
Position Description - ACS Radio Officer (RO)	10
Position Description - Assistant Radio Officers (ARO).....	12
Position Description - Local Com Unit Leader (UL)	13
Emergency Action Checklists:	
Emergency Action Checklist: RO	14
Emergency Action Checklist: ARO.....	15
Emergency Action Checklist: Liaison	16
Emergency Action Checklist: NCS	17
Emergency Action Checklist: UL	18
Emergency Action Checklist: Radio Operators	19
Activation and Frequency Coordination:	
OES Network Service Levels	20
VHF and UHF Band Plan	21
HF Band Plan.....	21
Message Handling and Radio Traffic Procedures:	
Prowords and Prosigns	23
Prioritization of Messages	24
Operating on a Tactical Radio Net	25
Formal Written Messages	27
Phone Patch Procedures	28
EOC Addresses and Tactical Call Signs	28

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: *Department of Emergency Services Volunteer Handbook*

Attachment B: *ACS Plan (August 2002)*

Attachment C: *MOU between Sonoma County and San Francisco Section ARES
(March 2003)*

Attachment D: *ACS Forms, Reports and Planning Tools*

- ACS Net Script
- ACS Activity Report
- Operator/Unit Activity Log
- Message Form
- Assignment Form
- Incident Radio Communications Plan, ICS 205
- Operational Planning Work Sheet
- Emergency Equipment and Skills Survey
- Volunteer Timesheet Form

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACC - Auxiliary Communications Center	ICS 205 - Incident Communications Plan Form
ACS - Auxiliary Communications Service	ICS 209 - Incident Status Summary Form
ARC - American Red Cross	ICS 215 - Operational Planning Worksheet
ARES - Amateur Radio Emergency Service	MARS - Military Affiliate Radio System
ARO - Assistant Radio Officer	MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
ARRL - American Radio Relay League	NCO - Net Control Officer
ASAP - As soon as possible	NCS - Net Control Station
ATV - Amateur Television	NIMS - National Incident Management System
CAP - Civil Air Patrol	NTS - National Traffic System
CESRS - California Emergency Services Radio System	OASIS - Operational Area Satellite Information System
CLERS - California Law Enforcement Radio System	OES - Office of Emergency Services
DEC - District Emergency Coordinator	Op Area - Operational Area
DES - Department of Emergency Services	PIO - Public Information Officer
DOC - Department Operations Center	POC - Point of Contact
DSW - Disaster Service Worker	RACES - Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service
EC - Emergency Coordinator	REACT - Radio Emergency Affiliated Citizen Teams
EDIS - Emergency Digital Information System	RDF - Radio Direction Finding
ESC - Emergency Services Coordinator	REOC - Regional Emergency Operations Center
EOC - Emergency Operations Center	ReStat - Resource Status
FCC - Federal Communications Commission	RIMS - Response Information Management System
FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency	RO - Radio Officer
FM-SSB - Frequency Modulation-Single Side Band	SATERN - Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network
FOG - Field Operations Guide	SAR - Search and Rescue
H&W - Health and Welfare	SEC - Section Emergency Coordinator
HF - High Frequency	SEMS - Standardized Emergency Management System
HICS - Hospital Incident Command System	SitStat - Situation Status
IAP - Incident Action Plan	SOC - State Operations Center
IC - Incident Commander	SOP - Standard Operating Procedures
ICP - Incident Command Post	UHF - Ultra High Frequency
ICS - Incident Command System	UL - Unit Leader
	VHF - Very High Frequency

Acknowledgments and Credits

These materials are not copyrighted. However, the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services (DES) and the author disclaim any liability and assume no responsibility for any damage resulting from the use or effect of information specified in this manual.

The ACS Organization and SOP manual is the result of the efforts of many people and includes both original materials and items begged, borrowed and perhaps inadvertently stolen from many communications personnel and organizations. The major author and compiler was Darlene LaMont (KD6GCK).

Thanks to Bob Sears (AA6VS); Peter Hatton (N6JBV); Jim Robinson (KE6UAR) and Chris Godley (DES) for their support of all three of these projects. Their assistance in fielding problems and providing editorial comments and input were invaluable.

Thanks to Eran Glago (KD6KVO) for compiling the Message Handling and Frequency Coordination sections. Thanks to the Sonoma County ACS Staff, Local Area Comm Unit Leaders and Training Committee for their many contributions. Thanks to Lee Dibble (KE6EAQ) for developing the Staffing Log Form; to Bob Sears (AA6VS) for the Equipment and Skills Survey form; and to Dale Westerterp (WB6TMS) for developing the Resource Status Board.

Thanks to Kelly Cureton (KD6CJQ), Ken Harrison (N6MHG), Roger Sigtermans (KF6RWE), and Christopher Helgren for their work with the June 1999, December 2000 and December 2002 revisions.

A partial list of materials used to research these documents includes:

- Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Regulations and Guidelines
- Incident Command System (ICS 420)
- Response Information Management System User Manual
- Sonoma County Emergency Operations Plan
- Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services Volunteer Policies Handbook
- Silicon Valley Emergency Communications System (SVECS) Handbook
- Yolo County ACS Plan
- San Mateo County Ham Plan
- Contra Costa RACES Plan and Emergency Communications Manual
- County of Alameda Instant Trainer
- ARES Field Resources Manual
- Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Plan for the Sea Ranch
- Emergency Communications Contingency Plan for Petaluma RACES
- Utah County Sheriff's Communications Auxiliary Team
- ARRL: The National Traffic System (NTS) 'Public Service Communications Manual'
- 1997-1998 Repeater Information Directory, California Edition
- The ARRL Repeater Directory

Questions, comments and requests should be directed to

Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services
Attn: ACS Program
2300 County Center Drive, Building A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Tel: 707/565-1152 Fax: 707/565-1172

Email: info@sonoma-county-accs.org
<http://sonoma-county-accs.org>

Scope and Purpose of ACS

The Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) is a program created by government to supplement its emergency communications with professional, unpaid staff. ACS is not a ham radio club, but is part of local government and operates under the authority of the Sonoma County / Operational Area (Op Area) Department of Emergency Services (DES). The ACS is a reserve primarily supported by volunteer staff. The ACS Radio Officer, is management, rather than technically oriented, and directly manages the ACS organization.

Purpose and Organization

The ACS has its genesis in units originally designed for radio communications by Amateur Radio operators on FCC authorized frequencies. Dramatic changes in technology and expansion of governmental Public Safety systems indicated the need for a broader service. Activities include much more than operations on selected frequencies of a single service.

ACS supports government public service communications systems in the event of failure, overload or other problems that might jeopardize their usefulness. ACS provides tactical, logistical and administrative support and communications for all government communications systems.

The Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) is part of ACS and has the same mission: to augment public safety communications during emergencies and exercises. RACES operates according to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules and regulations. RACES operations are further outlined in the ACS Plan (see Attachment B)

During an emergency, the Communications Manager of the Sonoma County Information Systems Department holds the position of Communications and Data Unit Leader in the Logistics Section of the Op Area EOC. DES and the Communications and Data Unit Leader supervise the ACS and Message Units at the EOC. The Communications and Data Unit Leader is responsible for developing plans for the effective use of incident communications equipment and facilities; installing and testing of communications equipment; distribution of communications equipment to EOC personnel; and the maintenance and repair of communications equipment. 'Communications equipment' includes radios, telephones, cellular telephones, pagers, computers, and related equipment. On a day-to-day basis the ACS Radio Officer and the Auxiliary Communications Center (ACC - County EOC Radio Room) staff works closely with staff in the Information Systems Department, DES and local repeater owners to operate and maintain equipment used by ACS. Examples include repeaters, antennas and radios installed at repeater facilities, the Auxiliary Communications Center and the ACS mobile communications van (2945).

Mission

The mission of the ACS is to serve the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services (DES) in support of any possible need relative to communications in an emergency. This means far more than being activated in sporadic emergencies. It includes day-to-day involvement in the affairs of DES. In effect, ACS becomes an integrated aspect of DES staff, albeit unpaid.

The ACS unit of the Department of Emergency Services (DES) provides a variety of professional unpaid (volunteer) skills, including administrative, management, technical and operational, for emergency (tactical, administrative, and logistical) communications between the county and its jurisdictions, county and city governments and neighboring county governments.

ACS may provide communications support using amateur radio, cellular and regular phones, computers, e-mail, facsimile, internet, microwave, public service radio (police, fire, law enforcement), satellite, television, and video-conference systems; as well as field and in-office support of personnel. In order to maintain the highest possible level of staff and equipment readiness.

ACS will, in a professional manner, provide auxiliary communications and other support services to local government and the community as is necessary to support disaster response and recovery efforts. Typically, ACS's mission objectives may include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Establishing and operating primary and secondary radio networks to carry public safety and emergency communications utilizing amateur as well as a variety of government systems;
- ◆ Providing communications and administrative support by answering phones, making calls, relaying messages within the EOC and other command centers and between various facilities utilizing computer networks, FAX, e-mail and other methods and provide any other support assistance as may be necessary;
- ◆ Reporting from the field weather and damage conditions, supply and service requests as well as progress on response and recovery actions by way of radio, telephone, television and other forms of communications;
- ◆ Collecting, summarizing and reporting intelligence about the disaster and the extent of damage as well as the nature of various response and recovery activities that are underway, as determined through monitoring a variety of media and communications sources; and
- ◆ Maintain communications equipment in an ongoing state of readiness and conduct regular communications test at all Emergency Operation areas including hospitals, colleges and shelters.

Participants in the ACS are expected to be more than just operators of radios in a "call me if you need me" situation. They are skilled professionals who work as unpaid staff with the local emergency management agency to enhance its response and recovery in any possible emergency. This includes preparation of plans, systems and personnel for response to any kind of situation or incident.

ACS Activation

ACS volunteers will only respond if officially activated by the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services or designated emergency services coordinators as communicated through the call-out procedures established by ACS management. Proper activation is required for Disaster Service Worker insurance coverage.

All ACS volunteers when activated for duty or while participating in training exercises will conduct themselves in a professional manner. ACS volunteers will observe all the rules and work place expectations of the government agency to which they are assigned. ACS volunteers will carry out their assigned duties as directed by the command authority at the agency to which they are assigned, or by the incident command structure at a field location to which they are assigned or by their ACS team leader.

Personnel Allocation and Assignment

Definitions:

Assignment: formal designation of an individual responsible for executing a specific mission.

Allocation: distribution of resources from one component of an organization or governmental agency to another.

Mutual Aid: assistance from one independent organization or governmental agency to another. In ACS, this refers to apportionment of resources outside of the Sonoma Operational Area, includes incoming and outgoing.

Resources: Personnel and/or equipment.

☐ Non-Emergency Periods**Radio Officer:**

- Selection of ACS Admin Unit staff and Assistant Radio Officers (AROs). AROs serve terms concurrent with Radio Officer.
- Nomination of Local Communications Unit Leaders. Final appointment by the Emergency Services Coordinator in conjunction with affected municipalities, when applicable.

Communication Unit Leaders:

- Assignment of specific duties to locally-allocated operators (including one or more Assistant Unit Leaders).

☐ During Emergency Periods**Radio Officer:**

- Allocation of resources between affected Communications Units, after coordination with ULs. The RO requests resources from ULs for allocation to other affected areas.
- Allocation of technical specialists between affected Communications Units, after coordination with ULs. The RO requests personnel and other resources from ULs for allocation to other affected areas.
- Assignment of ACS Admin Unit staff.
- Requests for, coordination and allocation of incoming mutual aid resources.
- Coordination and resourcing of outgoing mutual aid support.

Communication Unit Leaders:

- Notification to RO of Unit activation/situation.
- Assignment of specific duties to assigned or allocated operators (including operators allocated from outside the affected Communications Unit).
- Fills RO resource requests for allocation to other Communications Units.

Personnel Policies

ACS Participant Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications for ACS Volunteers: Sonoma County Volunteer Program Guidelines require that the supervising department approve all volunteer positions. To clarify the department's expectations the DES Volunteer Coordinator provides: written job descriptions, an application form, a contract and the *Volunteer Policies Handbook*. The Volunteer Coordinator also maintains a record of hours worked by each volunteer. **All ACS volunteers are responsible for reading, understanding and complying with the Department of Emergency Services *Volunteer Policies Handbook*.**

Requirements for ACS volunteers:

- ☐ Minimum age for volunteers is eighteen.
- ☐ Registration with DES as a volunteer.
- ☐ Register as a California Disaster Service Worker (DSW) as required by law to qualify for Worker's Compensation insurance.
- ☐ Volunteers who drive on duty must carry current California auto insurance and a valid driver's license.
- ☐ Certain specialized assignments may require:
 - A records check to determine that the applicant is free of any felony convictions.
 - A DMV check for volunteers who tow the mobile communications unit.
- ☐ Amateur Radio operators must possess a current Amateur Radio License issued by the FCC and have a record free of FCC violations.

Disaster Service Worker Registration

A disaster service worker is anyone registered with a disaster council approved by the California Emergency Council, or any person ordered by a person or body having authority to command the aid of citizens to carry out assigned duties to perform services during a "state of war emergency" or any "state of emergency" or "local emergency."

ACS utilizes pre-registered volunteers because they are experienced in operating under a unified command structure and performing executive, administrative, technical, and clerical functions for the organization. Registration of ACS volunteers as disaster service workers is done by Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services during the application process. Registration is accomplished by using a Disaster Service Worker Registration form that contains a loyalty oath. An authorized official administers the required loyalty oath and signs the form.

Spontaneous (convergent) volunteers are members of the general public at large who spontaneously volunteer during emergencies or disasters. They are not usually involved with organized volunteer organizations and usually lack specific disaster training when there is very little time and few resources to train them. Guidelines for the registration of volunteer disaster service workers by Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services are published in a separate document. The registration and use of spontaneous volunteers is at the discretion of the Department of Emergency Services and the ACS Radio Officer.

Insurance Coverage

Workers Compensation Benefits:

Upon registration with Sonoma County Emergency Services as a Disaster Service Worker, all ACS volunteers are eligible for workers' compensation benefits while performing assigned duties or undergoing authorized training activities. Any injury under these circumstances is covered no matter where it occurs.

Volunteer disaster service workers may be covered by workers' compensation insurance from the moment they leave their home until their safe return home. This is true only if they are dispatched for duty during an emergency by competent authority prior to departure and no route deviations are made for personal reasons.

For example, Radio Amateurs from a non-impacted area may be covered while en route to a disaster response area if properly dispatched for mutual aid purposes by an official Emergency Coordinator. On the other hand, the same Radio Amateurs mentioned above, traveling to the disaster impacted area on their own initiative without official orders or permission would not be covered by disaster workers' compensation insurance until they physically register (log-in) with the authorities at the disaster site.

Coverage is also available for scheduled disaster preparedness activities including authorized training, but not while en route to and from the reporting place for these activities. Travel performed in support of training events (organizers and instructors) is covered. "Authorized" training events are those that are approved and documented by the Department of Emergency Services. Training must be directly related to the ACS mission. *(Note: ARRL/ARES or radio club activities are not considered authorized ACS training events unless ACS participation is approved and documented by the Department of Emergency Services.)*

ACS volunteers are registered as Disaster Service Workers in the "Communications" classification. Services such as traffic control, scene security, or other non-communications functions are not part of the ACS mission and should be avoided by ACS volunteers when they are fulfilling ACS assignments. If an ACS volunteer is injured while performing a task outside of their communications role, they will not be eligible for workers' compensation benefits.

This does not preclude any individual who is a volunteer of ACS from participating in other volunteer activities, however if they are not ACS communications activities, it is important to understand that the individual would not be performing as an ACS volunteer. Nothing prevents an individual from being enrolled as a Disaster Service Worker in more than one classification providing that the registration and training requirements are met for each classification.

Automobile Insurance: Upon registration with Sonoma County Emergency Services as a County Volunteer, all ACS volunteers *who use their vehicles as part of their volunteer assignment* are covered under the County's Excess Liability Automobile Insurance. The coverage is in effect when the volunteer is taking part in:

- ◆ Activation during an actual declared local emergency:
 - When assigned to a specific worksite, travel to and from the worksite is covered.
 - Travel involving personal detours or delays for any reason is not covered.
- ◆ Participation in Sonoma Operational Area ACS training events - as authorized by the Emergency Services Coordinator.
 - Travel to and from the training site is not covered.

The Excess Automobile Liability Insurance is an excess insurance - this acts as a rider above and beyond what is covered by the volunteer's own personal insurance policy. The volunteer's personal insurance is the primary policy in force in the event of an accident. There is no comprehensive or collision coverage provided.

General Liability Insurance: The County provides a General Liability insurance coverage for all registered ACS volunteers when they are an assigned duty during an emergency or authorized training event. This covers acts of omission or negligence.

ACS Use of Amber Lights

Background: The use of amber lights by ACS volunteers is permitted, under limited circumstances, by Vehicle Code Section (25259.1 CVC). The pertinent elements of the law are: (1) the vehicle operator is a *registered disaster service worker*; and (2) the operator has *received training from the public agency or disaster council that he/she is registered with*; and (3) there *must be a declared Local or State of Emergency*; and (4) light may only be used *while at the scene*; and (5) light *must be covered or removed when not in use*.

Training: Completion of a structured and approved training program is required before any volunteer is permitted to use amber lights on their personal vehicles. This training program strictly follows the guidelines that the Vehicle Code Section has established.

Procedure: Local Communications Unit Leaders will recommend training for ACS volunteers that may be assigned field duties where the use of amber lights may be warranted. These names will be forwarded to the Radio Officer for consideration. If approved, the Radio Officer will then coordinate an authorized training session. Upon successful completion of the training, participants will obtain approval for use of amber lights and receive additional policies and procedures to follow.

Any ACS volunteer that is found in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the organization (see Volunteer Policies Handbook).

Dress Code

The Volunteer Policies Handbook states the following: "As representatives of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services, all ACS volunteers are responsible for presenting a positive image to clients and to the community. Volunteer staff will dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties."

There is no standardized ACS uniform other than the wearing of the official ACS identification card, but in order to establish continuity of appearance and identify what is appropriate attire for ACS operations, these guidelines apply in addition to the above policy. No ACS volunteer shall deviate from these requirements without prior specific authorization from their supervisor. Temporary deviations from this policy may be permitted due to unique duty assignments and circumstances.

All personnel shall present an appearance that will engender public confidence and acceptance. Such attire shall conform to standards acceptable of a traditional business and professional appearance. All garments shall be clean, well fit, and in good condition. Garments displaying political or religious statements, obscenity, or other controversial subject matters are prohibited. Excessive patches, pins, buttons, and other accessories do not create a professional appearance and are also prohibited while performing ACS functions or while engaged in ACS sponsored activities.

All supervisory ACS personnel should set an example and be accountable for the appearance of their subordinates. Additionally, they should initiate corrective action upon observing deficiencies or violations of this policy by any volunteer.

Any clothing or safety garments with ACS-related insignia shall be worn only while actually engaged in authorized ACS activities and should be appropriate for the function.

Identification Cards:

Identifications will be issued to all ACS volunteers as part of their Disaster Service Worker registration process. Identification cards should be carried on-person at all ACS operations, including drills, exercises, and meetings. The ACS ID card may only be worn at these sanctioned ACS events. Casual wearing of the ACS ID card at amateur radio club meetings, and other non-ACS events is inappropriate. When the ACS ID card is worn during ACS activities it should be displayed on the lapel, breast pocket, on the upper torso area, or hanging from a lanyard.

The ACS ID card, or any other issued equipment, are official ACS property and are for use by ACS volunteers ONLY. Do not allow others to use or wear your ID card or other ACS equipment. Upon leaving the ACS organization, all previously issued ID cards or equipment must be returned to the Department.

Miscellaneous Items:

Safety vests: OSHA approved orange mesh or fabric with "communications" clearly stenciled on back. Reflective stripes are the only acceptable additions to the vest. These are only to be worn when needed for safe operation or when easy identification is required, such as during a field emergency response or exercise. Wearing of the ACS safety vest at any other time, such as routine business meetings, is strongly discouraged. Safety vests are considered safety equipment, not a uniform.

Flashlights: Not to exceed four "D" cell in size.

Headgear: (if required during field response) - white plastic OSHA approved, front brim, safety helmet. Reflective stripes are the only acceptable decals.

Prohibited Items:

All firearms, police equipment, handcuffs, batons, saps, or other law enforcement equipment is strictly forbidden, as are fixed blade knives, folding knives longer than four inches, any weapon as defined under California Penal code.

Volunteer Policies Handbook

All ACS volunteers receive a copy of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services Volunteer Policies Handbook (see Attachment A). This handbook contains additional information on the volunteer program, management procedures, code of conduct, supervision, and other issues that may be relevant to ACS volunteers.

Other Policies and Procedures

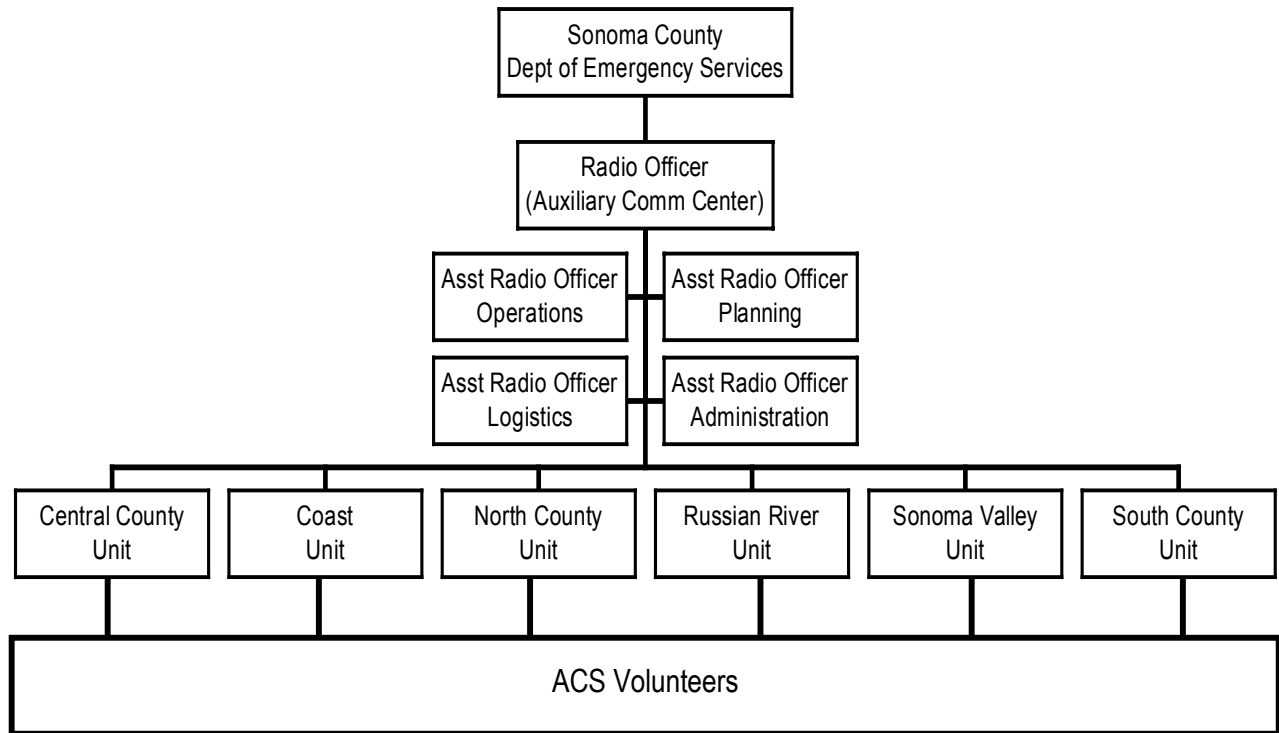
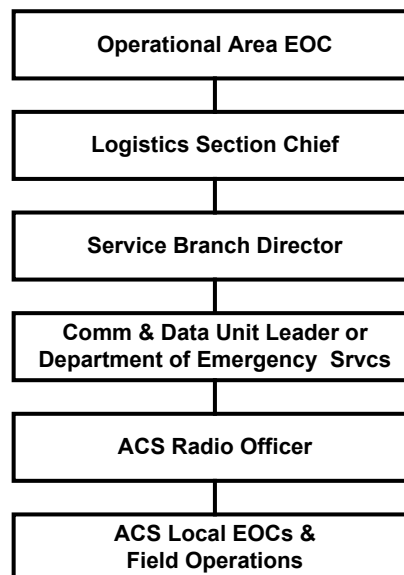
Additional policies and procedures may be developed to further explain and clarify issues not contained within this manual. ACS volunteers will be made aware of these additional policies when applicable and they will be incorporated into future revisions of the Volunteer Policies Handbook and/or this manual.

ACS Training Incentive Program

This program is designed to establish standards of competence and professionalism among volunteer ACS communicators. The goal of the program is to ensure that participants are qualified to and confident in providing service to agencies during emergency operations. The training program includes three levels of skills and experience. All ACS training subjects must have the approval of the Radio Officer.

Approved ACS Training			
Legend: R – Required S – Suggested O – Optional / by Recommendation	Level I	Level II	Level III
<i>IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System</i>	R	R	R
<i>Introduction to SEMS</i>	R	R	R
<i>ACS Mission, Structure and Organization</i>	R	R	R
<i>ACS Alert and Mobilization Procedures</i>	R	R	R
<i>Formal Message Handling</i>	S	R	R
<i>Net Control Operations</i>		R	R
<i>IS-200 ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents</i>		S	R
<i>EOC Orientation</i>		S	R
<i>Working with Agencies</i>			R
<i>Volunteer Management</i>			R
<i>ACS activation, exercise, or public service event</i>	O	1	1
<i>ACS radio net check-in, local unit meeting or optional / suggested training</i>	3	6	9
Packet Operations	O	S	S
Mobile Operations training		S	S
"Shadow" Operations		S	S
Amateur Television (ATV)		S	O
Public Safety communications systems		S	S
Response Information Management System (RIMS)		O	S
Public Information Officer		O	S
Public Information Hotline Call-takers	O	O	O
CPR / First Aid	S	S	S
Personal Emergency Preparedness	S	S	S
Hazardous Materials Awareness	O	O	O
Electrical Safety	O	O	O
Fire Extinguisher Training	O	O	O

All local training and informational sessions provided to ACS volunteers must be documented and approved in advance by the Radio Officer. All sessions must include a lesson plan or outline of material presented; student materials / handouts; and a record of attendance. All course records are to be submitted to the Radio Officer upon completion of training session.

ACS Organization / Chain of Command**Chain of Command
During Emergencies**

Position Description - ACS Radio Officer (RO)

Alternate:..... an Assistant Radio Officer (ARO) or a local Unit Leader
Reporting Organization: Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services (DES)
Immediate Manager: DES Emergency Services Coordinator (ESC) or Deputy ESC
Immediate Supervisor in Op Area EOC: DES or Communications and Data Unit Leader
Responsibilities: Provide supplementary communications services when required by the Op Area. Coordinate all ACS activity in the Op Area, as well as mutual aid assigned outside of Sonoma County. Manage ACS resources on a day-to-day basis. Attend and/or conduct regular meetings with ACS and DES personnel; maintain records and files; supervise ACS personnel during training, exercises and incidents; update documents; interact with other ACS groups; recruit ACS personnel; plan response activities; encourage standardized training programs; and delegate responsibilities as needed. (See RO Action Checklist p. 14.)

1.0 Desirable Qualifications

- 1.1 Adequate time and interest to perform the duties with enthusiasm. Ability to carry out the duties in a professional manner and work comfortably in a public atmosphere. Ability to maintain cooperative working relationships, to delegate tasks, to perform assigned duties independently or with minimal supervision, and to work in stressful conditions.
- 1.2 Possession of a current Amateur Radio license and a full understanding of the ACS program and the FCC Rules and Regulations governing Amateur Radio. Knowledge of safe work practices, basic office equipment including computer operation.
- 1.3 All ACS personnel are unpaid volunteers for the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services. The RO and Staff are encouraged to carry pagers and a copy of the ACS roster at all times.

2.0 Appointment Process

- 2.1 DES appoints the RO in consultation with the ACS Unit Leaders and participants. The Radio Officer shall serve for a period of two years. DES may renew appointments at the end of a term.

3.0 Operations

- 3.1 During emergencies staff the Op Area EOC, ACC, 2945 and establish a Unified Command as needed.
- 3.2 Operate fixed and mobile communications facilities at exercises and incidents as needed.
- 3.3 Develop communications modes to support emergency missions. Coordinate frequencies, install, modify, remove, or operate communications equipment (with permission from the owner).
- 3.4 Create conditions to enable EOC and field personnel to safely and successfully complete their tasks.
- 3.5 Submit budget requests for review by DES to update and replace communications equipment, supplies, service and travel to support the county ACS program.
- 3.6 Provide a scheduled local ACS radio net to disseminate information and guidance. Participate in State and Region familiarization nets, such as the California Emergency Services Nets on Monday evening and Wednesdays.
- 3.7 Transmit pertinent items from the weekly State ACS Newsletter to DES ESC, ACS Staff and Unit Leaders.
- 3.8 Advance the goals and mission of ACS through meetings, public appearances, conferences, training, written and radio communications.

4.0 Planning

- 4.1 Maintain the County ACS Plan in accordance with the suggested state OES model including written job descriptions. (Update if more than four years old.)
- 4.2 Encourage local Unit Leaders to maintain a resource file of specialized equipment applicable to ACS operations (VHF/UHF-FM repeaters, ATV, portable/mobile HF-SSB radios, facilities with 2-Meter antennas, portable packet digipeaters, and Emergency Response Teams). Keep a copy of these lists.
- 4.3 Foster preparedness by conducting a survey of all city and local area ACS communications plans:
 - a. Obtain a copy of each plan, including the date of the most recent revision.
 - b. Encourage Unit Leaders to prepare plans where none exist.
 - c. Request and assist jurisdictions to update any plan more than four years old.

- 4.4 Develop a Communications Plan (ICS 205) during emergencies, track situation status and ensure that proper documentation procedures are used during training, exercises and incidents (RIMS, After Action Reports, etc.).
- 4.5 Recommend program policy and direction to the Sonoma County DES ESC or Deputy ESC.
- 4.6 Schedule meetings for ACS Staff and Unit Leaders and their assistants/alternates to exchange information, plan and critique response, receive training and guidance from County DES staff. Develop agendas and maintain minutes.
- 4.7 Plan semi-annual communications exercises to maintain proficiency and interest (including RACES operations using FCC Amateur Radio Service frequencies and complying with FCC regulations.)

5.0 Logistics

- 5.1 Recruit, register, supervise and make training available to communications personnel.
- 5.2 Staff fixed/mobile communications facilities at incidents and exercises as needed, including shift supervisors and radio operators. Evaluate staffing needs daily. Anticipate need for Mutual Aid in the next 24 hour period.
- 5.3 ACS personnel may be used in operations, technical and administrative functions, or to support any communications related system of the county, including but not limited to, computer, cellular, microwave, radio, satellite and television.
- 5.4 Maintain a proactive and close working relationship with local Unit Leaders and obtain an updated roster of their personnel. Prepare periodic mailings to all county ACS volunteers to provide continuity, maintain interest, and share information.
- 5.5 Compile and maintain a list of ACS Staff, Unit Leaders and adjacent Op Area radio Officers, their home and work telephone numbers, pagers (if any), e-mail addresses, Fax numbers and alternate means of contact.

6.0 Administration and Training

- 6.1 Serve as the communications liaison between DES and ACS, ARRL/ARES, CDF/VIP, CAP, Amateur radio organizations and individuals, local government telecommunications personnel, State and Coastal Region OES ACS Communications coordinators, and adjacent county Radio Officers to establish Mutual Aid procedures. Represent ACS at the Op Area Emergency Coordinators Forum.
- 6.2 Serve as the principal Point of Contact (POC) with emergency response agencies for all matters relating to volunteer emergency communications activities. Encourage agencies to pre-position equipment at key locations and recruit radio operators from within their staff.
- 6.3 Submit written reports to DES including: ACS Roster, RIMS Status Reports (Resource Information Management System), Staffing Logs, Communications Plans, After Action Reports, etc. following activation.
- 6.4 Maintain a file for the Op Area that contains: Local communications plans, policies, and procedures; various reports; resources lists and inventories; correspondence and any other significant records. Turn over all files intact to any successor.
- 6.5 Training, Exercising and Job Orientation:
 - a. As volunteer employees of the County, ACS personnel will receive training on: county government organization (names and titles, broad responsibilities), county policies and procedures, county communications systems, Incident Command System (ICS), Standardized Emergency Management Systems (SEMS), standard operating procedures in communications.

Position Description - Assistant Radio Officers (ARO)

Alternate:..... an Assistant Radio Officer (ARO) or a local Unit Leader

Reporting Organization: Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services (DES)

Immediate Manager: Operational Area Radio Officer (RO)

Immediate Supervisor in Op Area EOC: Radio Officer (RO)

Responsibilities: Assist in coordinating all ACS Unit activity in the Sonoma Op Area. Assist in managing ACS personnel and resources on a day-to-day basis. Attend and/or conduct regular meetings with ACS and DES personnel and report to RO. Assist in maintaining records and files; supervision of ACS personnel during training, exercises and incidents; update documents; interact with other ACS groups; recruit ACS personnel; plan response activities; and other related duties. See the ARO Action Checklist (p. 15) for specific emergency duties.

1.0 Appointment Process

- 1.1 ACS Staff (AROs and Liaison Officers) are selected by the Radio Officer. AROs serve at the discretion of the Radio Officer for a term that is concurrent to that of the Radio Officer.

2.0 ARO – Operations

- 2.1 Maintain regular contact with EOC Auxiliary Communications Center (ACC) staff, designated Liaison Officers and other key staff. Assess preparedness for emergency response.
- 2.2 Coordinate simplex and repeater frequencies to provide adequate coverage to all areas.
- 2.3 Test and maintain county-owned and amateur equipment and facilities in coordination with the County Communications and Information Systems Department and the ACC Unit Leader.

3.0 ARO – Planning

- 3.1 Plan semi-annual exercises with DES.
- 3.2 Assist RO in preparing agendas and maintaining minutes for ACS meetings.
- 3.3 Conduct critiques after exercises and actual events. Write After Action Reports.

4.0 ARO – Logistics

- 4.1 Maintain regular contact with Unit Leaders. Address preparedness needs at pre-designated locations.
- 4.2 Maintain regular contact with Technical Specialists and other personnel who support ACS operations.
- 4.3 Maintain a current ACS roster. Provide updated copies semi-annually to the DES Volunteer Coordinator.
- 4.4 Assist with the maintenance of the ACS Web Page.

5.0 ARO - Administration/Training

- 5.1 Develop a training schedule.
- 5.2 Maintain operational records.
- 5.3 Work with RO, DES and other agencies to include ACS personnel in Op Area trainings and drills.
- 5.4 Write and update standard operating procedures, planning and training documents.
- 5.5 Interact with ACS groups in neighboring counties, Coastal Region and State OES. Facilitate communications between ACS volunteers by publicizing training, emergency conferences, internet activities, etc.

Position Description - Local Com Unit Leader (UL)

Alternate: Assistant Unit Leader or other designee
Reporting Organization: Local officials and Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services (DES)
Immediate Manager: Operational Area ACS Radio Officer (RO)
Immediate Supervisor in Local Area EOC or ICP: Emergency Coordinator
Function in Local Area EOC or ICP: Logistics Section, Communications Unit
Work Station: Local Area Radio Room or "on-air"
Responsibilities: Ensure volunteers sent into the field have had minimal training. Coordinate ACS Unit activity in the local area and/or unincorporated area assigned. Manage local communications personnel and resources on a day-to-day basis. Attend and/or conduct regular meetings with local area emergency coordinator and response agencies (report to RO), attend ACS Unit Leader meetings; maintain and update unit records, documents and files; supervise local ACS personnel during training, exercises and incidents; recruit local communications personnel; plan response activities; and other related duties. (See UL Emergency Action Checklist p. 18.)

1.0 Appointment Process

- 1.1 ULs are nominated by the RO and appointed by DES. In the cases involving incorporated jurisdictions, appointments will be made in consultation with designated Emergency Coordinator of the affected jurisdiction. Appointments shall be for a period of four years. DES may renew appointments at the end of a term.

2.0 Non-emergency responsibilities

- 2.1 Ensure that local emergency management agencies are informed of capabilities/limitations of ACS assistance.
 - a. Make regular personal contact and attend agency emergency planning meetings or assign a liaison.
 - b. Check equipment at each location for reliability and accessibility.
 - c. Store Message Forms, Position Logs, a FOG Manual and ACS Notebook at each location.
- 2.2 Maintain a communications resource list. Check the status of local resources:
 - a. Coverage of local repeaters and simplex frequencies; availability for emergency use.
 - b. UHF/VHF and HF portable/mobile radios, packet digipeaters, portable antennas, coax, etc.
 - c. Facilities with 2-Meter antennas and paperwork at those facilities. (See the *Attachments* for forms.)
- 2.3 Develop a group of Unit radio operators and personnel to respond to local and Op Area emergencies.
 - a. Maintain an up-to-date roster of licensed volunteers and record their hours of service monthly.
 - b. Provide training and opportunities for volunteers to participate in day-to-day activities with local agencies and public service events. (Examples: Low Band EOC to EOC test, disaster exercises at local schools, hospitals and Disaster Councils, fire department training, etc.)
 - c. Ensure that volunteers are registered as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) with valid date and have completed county paperwork.
- 2.4 *Keep the Radio Officer informed of the activities of the Unit. The Department of Emergency Services must be informed of ACS activations, immediately if possible. Follow the chain of command.*
- 2.5 Develop and maintain a local ACS Plan.
- 2.6 Recruit new volunteers. Conduct and supervise ACS personnel during training, exercises and incidents.
- 2.7 Coordinate frequencies, resources and training with other Unit Leaders

3.0 Emergency Responsibilities (See the *Action Checklist* p.18 for details.)

- 3.1 Provide radio communications from point to point in the local area: hospitals, ICPs, shelter sites, local EOC and agency officials.
- 3.2 Transmit ongoing local status reports to the Op Area EOC using the RIMS format. (See *Appendix*)
- 3.3 Coordinate repeaters/simplex frequencies, activate radio stations, ATV, packet and other equipment.
- 3.4 Make staffing assignments in your area. See page 2, for assignment of Op Area personnel.

Emergency Action Checklist: ACS RADIO OFFICER (RO)

PRIMARY: ACS Radio Officer

ALTERNATE: Assistant Radio Officer, local Unit Leader, or Assistant Unit Leader

REPORT TO: Communications and Data Unit Leader or Emergency Services Coordinator

SUPERVISE: ACS volunteers; convergent Amateur Radio and communications volunteers

WORK STATION: Op Area EOC, Auxiliary Communications Center

RESPONSIBILITIES: Provide radio communications from point to point where other forms of communications are limited; assist with ongoing status reports; provide additional or alternative communication capability to hospitals, Public Information Officer (PIO), shelter sites, ICPs, the Op Area EOC, etc. Coordinate VHF/UHF-FM repeaters/simplex frequencies, activate radio stations, ATV, packet and other equipment in support of an emergency response. Coordinate all volunteer emergency communications unit activity within the Sonoma Op Area. Request DES for an official activation as needed.

ACTION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Identify yourself to your supervisor(s) as the Auxiliary Communications Services (ACS) Radio Officer.
- ☐ Obtain a briefing on the extent of the emergency from the Communications & Data Unit Leader or DES staff. Provide communications support as directed.
 - *Contact DES to report status if you are operating outside of the Op Area EOC*
- ☐ Establish communications links with all ACS personnel working in Op Area and local EOCs, Incident Command Posts (ICPs), hospitals, and VIP or other field units.
 - Make arrangements to use frequencies and repeaters for nets. (Tactical, Resource, Command)
 - Assign tactical call signs according to the ACS Plan. ("County EOC", "Forestville ICP")
 - Gather situation **Status** and damage assessment information from cities/unincorporated areas.
- ☐ Assist the Communications & Data Unit Leader in analyzing existing communications capabilities in the Op Area, including technical information and geographic limitations of equipment in use.
- ☐ Prepare a Frequency Directory: **Radio Communications Plan (ICS 205)**. See Attachments.
- ☐ Provide standard communications, Emergency Digital Information System (EDIS), packet capabilities and other modes as required to the following:
 - Sonoma Operational Area Emergency Operations Center
 - Office of Emergency Services Coastal Region
 - State of California Office of Emergency Services if no contact with the Region is possible.
- ☐ Maintain an **ACS Activity Log** of all messages received and sent and all significant actions taken. Maintain a record of all ACS volunteers participating, their assignment, location and hours on duty (**RIMS Status Report**). Maintain a record of all equipment deployed, county equipment needing repair or testing (**Resource Status**). Coordinate the response of local units and Mutual Aid as needed.
- ☐ Demobilize the ACS Unit according to the Logistics Chief's Communications Deactivation Plan.
- ☐ Prepare and submit an **After Action Report** Form to the Communications and Data Unit Leader or the Emergency Services Coordinator.

Emergency Action Checklist: ASSISTANT RADIO OFFICERS (ARO)**PRIMARY:** Assistant Radio Officer (ARO)**ALTERNATE:** Assistant RO, local Unit Leader, or Assistant Unit Leader**REPORT TO:** Radio Officer**SUPERVISE:** Assist in the supervision of ACS volunteers; and communications volunteers**WORK STATION:** Op Area EOC, Auxiliary Com Center or via Tactical, Resource or Command Nets

RESPONSIBILITIES: Assist in the provision of radio communications from point to point where other forms of communications are unavailable; assist with ongoing status reports; provide additional or alternative communication capability to hospitals, PIO, shelter sites, ICPs, the Op Area EOC etc. Operate VHF/UHF-FM repeaters and radios, ATV, packet and other equipment in support of an emergency response. Assist in coordinating volunteer emergency communications unit activity within the Op Area. Serve in local or Op Area EOC as Acting Unit Leader as needed.

ACTION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Identify yourself as an Assistant Radio Officer. Report to the Radio Officer or ACC Unit Leader.
 - Read this entire checklist. Identify your area of responsibility.
 - Obtain a briefing on the extent of the emergency from the Radio Officer.

ARO - Operations: Provide support and supervision to ACS personnel.

- ☐ Establish regular communications with ACS personnel in EOCs, ICPs, hospitals & field locations.
- ☐ Arrange for the use of frequencies and repeaters for nets.
- ☐ Have Control Operators put repeaters into emergency mode as needed.
- ☐ Establish a frequency for each Op Area net. (Tactical, Resource, Command, etc.)
- ☐ Provide communications links between staging areas, ARES, VIP, CAP, liaison agencies, Coastal Region and State OES, etc. (See p. 21 for OES Net Levels 1-4 and A-D.)
- ☐ Provide communications modes as needed: EDIS, packet, ATV, UHF, VHF, HF, etc.
- ☐ Maintain a **Position Log** of all messages received and sent and all significant actions in the Ops Section.
- ☐ Supervise Net traffic. Coordinate Nets. Assist local Unit Leaders and ACS personnel in the ACC.
- ☐ Ensure safe working conditions and assess needs in Op Area and local Units.
- ☐ Manage communications equipment and provide technical information, as needed.
- ☐ Regularly ask ULs and NCSs if they need resources. Relay requests to Logistics.
- ☐ Supervise demobilization (nets, staff, equipment) according to the Communications Deactivation Plan.

ARO - Planning: Ensure communications continuity by anticipating and projecting overall needs. Prioritize needs.

- ☐ Assist the RO in analyzing existing communications capabilities and needs in the Op Area.
- ☐ Gather damage assessment information from Nets to provide input for the **RIMS Status Report**.
- ☐ Schedule planning conferences with ACS personnel at the ACC, and "on the air" with local Unit Leaders.
- ☐ Recommend frequencies and modes to meet situation requirements.
- ☐ Prepare a Frequency Directory for each operational period. Use **Communications Plan (ICS 205)**.
- ☐ Attend planning meetings of the Op Area EOC Logistics Section. Discuss critical issues for ACS operations.
- ☐ Prepare and submit an **After Action Report** Form to the Emergency Services Coordinator.

ARO - Logistics: Manage Op Area ACS personnel and track equipment. Track convergent volunteers.

- ☐ Coordinate staffing assignments, including NCSs, with local Unit Leaders.
- ☐ Maintain a record of all ACS volunteers, their assignment, location and hours on duty. (**Staffing Log**)
- ☐ Compile above information for the **RIMS Status Report** daily.
- ☐ Ensure safety of ACS personnel en route to and from assignments using the Resource Net.
- ☐ Maintain a record of all equipment deployed, county equipment needing repair or testing (**Resource Status**).
- ☐ Evaluate requests from local units and for incoming or outgoing **Mutual Aid** as needed.

ARO - Administration/Training: Evaluate operations for proper maintenance of records and training needs.

- ☐ Provide "Instant Training" on Standard Operating Procedures and SEMS as needed.
- ☐ Collect documentation (Activity Logs, Communication Plans, Sit Stat, Re Stat, RIMS forms) from all units.

Emergency Action Checklist: ACS LIAISON

PRIMARY: ACS Liaison (to American Red Cross, Volunteer Center, Salvation Army, CDF, hospitals, schools or other agencies that need ACS services)

ALTERNATE: Assistant ACS Liaison

REPORT TO: Radio Officer (RO)

SUPERVISE: This is not a supervisory position, coordination only.

WORK STATION: Agency Headquarters, EOC or ICP

RESPONSIBILITIES: Act as the principal Point of Contact (POC) between the response agency and ACS. During emergencies assist in the provision of radio communications from point to point where needed by the Agency; provision of ATV, packet and other capabilities in support of the emergency response including Shadows and Third Party Traffic for key Agency personnel. Work with the Agency to provide real opportunities for ACS personnel to participate in exercises, public service events and other day-to-day activities to become familiar with Agency procedures, forms and communications needs. Encourage the Agency to preposition equipment and have realistic expectations of ACS capabilities.

ACTION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Identify yourself as the ACS Liaison Officer.
 - Read this entire checklist.
 - Obtain a briefing on the extent of the emergency from the Radio Officer or Net Control.
- ☐ Set up an ACS station at Agency Headquarters as needed.
 - Establish communications links between Agency Headquarters, Op Area or local EOC and field locations as needed.
 - Brief all ACS personnel about Agency procedures and forms, such as:
 - Incident Status Summary (ICS 209) for CDF
 - Shelter Registration Forms for Red Cross
 - RIMS Care and Shelter Status information to be transmitted daily.
 - (# of shelters, # of people displaced, # being sheltered, # of fixed feeding sites, # of people fed in the last 24 hours, # of people to be fed in the next 24 hours)
 - Use the Resource Net to request ACS personnel (station operators, shadows, etc.)
 - Request a Shelter Net if needed. (Or a Hospital Net, School Net, etc.)
 - Monitor the Command Net (if it is operational) to coordinate with the Op Area EOC and Unit Leaders at local EOCs.
- ☐ Ensure that proper documentation is used at all locations. (See the *Attachments* for forms.)
 - Maintain an ACS **Staffing Log** for the Agency. Keep one copy.
 - Ensure that all positions maintain an **Activity Log** of all messages and important decisions.
 - Have Agency officials use **Message Forms** for all interagency communications.
 - Write a summary of ACS communications activities - an **After Action Report**.
 - Turn in copies of all documentation to the ARO for Administration and Training.

Emergency Action Checklist: NET CONTROL STATION (NCS)

PRIMARY: Net Control Station

ALTERNATE: Local Communications Unit Leader (UL)

REPORT TO: ACC Unit Leader

SUPERVISE: Control message traffic on the radio net.

WORK STATION: Op Area or local EOC or ICP

RESPONSIBILITIES: Supervise and coordinate "on air" operations of ACS personnel on assigned net.

ACTION CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Activation:** If the RO, ARO or UL has not assigned the position of Net Control Station and you believe there is a need for one, assume the function of NCS until relieved by the RO, or until there is no further need for a Net Control Station. Assess the overall situation in the Op Area. Take damage reports and check-ins.
 - Test your equipment and antenna. Make sure your location is safe - no gas smell, no smoke, etc.
 - Ensure that there is an alternate NCS standing by in case you go off the air. Begin your **Activity Log**.
 - Say: "Is there a Net Control Operator on frequency? BREAK, BREAK. This is a fire / medical / earthquake / general Alert. This is NOT a drill. All stations copy. This is a fire / medical / earthquake / general activation of the Sonoma Operational Area ACS Net. Stations available for assignment, please check in when requested." Initially this will be both a Tactical and Resource Net.
 - Ask other stations to repeat information bulletins on other area repeaters to help keep the frequency clear.
- ☐ Supervise the flow of emergency-related traffic. Keep unrelated traffic off of the frequency.
 - Poll stations for pending traffic. Instruct all stations to call out the priority of their traffic when they answer roll call. (Notify ACC Unit Leader if net traffic is too heavy to handle effectively.)
 - Emergency traffic - Life safety issues
 - Priority traffic - Time Value Messages (Agency requests, status/damage assessment reports, etc.)
 - Outgoing Health and Welfare (H&W) - Out-going messages / government workers and their families
 - Routine traffic - Ordinary incident related messages. After the above, send these in the order received.
 - Incoming H&W - Messages coming in to the disaster area (when staffing is adequate)
 - Facilitate traffic between two stations. Allow short conversations to proceed. Refer longer conversations to another frequency. When finished the stations check back in to the Net.
 - Take traffic for your location or assign another station to do so. Request a messenger if necessary.
- ☐ Watch for potential frequency and technical problems.
 - Distinguish intentional from accidental interference. Troubleshoot and resolve equipment difficulties.
 - Know the available alternate frequencies.
 - Designate a different frequency for the net if needed.
- ☐ Maintain net discipline and help stations do their job effectively.
 - Instruct all stations to stay on frequency. Make sure that operators have been fed and are not overworked.
 - Provide on-the-job training on net protocol as needed.
 - Call roll every hour. Provide briefings on situation Status or list stations currently on the net every 30 min.
 - Repeat the Net Control ID every 30 minutes (when message traffic is slow):
"This is (FCC Call), Net Control for the Sonoma Operational Area Tactical Net . This is a directed net. Permission to pass traffic must come from the Net Control Station. Is there any emergency or priority traffic at this time?" (If not, take more check-ins and ask for lower priority traffic.)
- ☐ Maintain a Net Control **Activity Log**.
 - Request a Message Manager to assist you if traffic is too heavy to perform the task alone, or assign another station to record the log.
 - Announce shift changes at your location and have stations announce theirs.
 - Notify the RO or UL when there is no longer a need for a Net Control Station. Request that the repeater be turned back to the supporting club or owner ASAP. Thank them for the use during the emergency.

Emergency Action Checklist: LOCAL COMMUNICATIONS UNIT LEADER (UL)

PRIMARY: Local Communications Unit Leader (UL)

ALTERNATE: Assistant local Communications Unit Leader (Assistant. UL)

REPORT TO: Op Area Radio Officer (RO) or ARO - Operations and Agency/local authority

SUPERVISE: Direct supervision of ACS volunteers in local EOCs, ICPs and in the field.

WORK STATION: Local EOC or ICP

RESPONSIBILITIES: Provide local radio communications from point to point; gather damage assessment reports; provide communication capability to hospitals, ICPs, PIO, shelter sites, the local EOC. Coordinate frequencies, activate radio stations, ATV, packet and other equipment. Coordinate the assignment of volunteers to Op Area.

ACTION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Determine current needs in the local area when an emergency is occurring or imminent.
 - **Contact the ACS Radio Officer or Assistant Radio Officer to report local status.**
 - Activate a Net on the local ACS frequency to assess the availability of volunteers.
 - Collect intelligence about local conditions from hams, radio and TV. Place volunteers on alert.
 - Assess and prioritize local Agency needs. (City EOC, hospitals, shelters, ICPs, etc.)
 - Identify yourself as the local Com Unit Leader to local officials and staff. Inform them about your capabilities (3rd Party Traffic, Shadows) and current communications operations in the area.
 - Track Situation Status (SitStat) and provide regular briefings on all active nets.
- ☐ Develop a **Communications Plan (ICS 205)**. Assign specific duties to staff. Coordinate local resources.
 - Set objectives and determine short and long range strategies to meet the objectives. Be pro-active.
 - Open Tactical, Resource and Command Nets as needed.
 - Make arrangements to use frequencies and repeaters for nets. Assign tactical call signs.
 - Assign Net Control Operators and Message Managers to assist them if there is heavy traffic.
 - Limit incoming Health & Welfare Traffic to slow times or non-emergency frequencies.
 - Establish Packet, ATV and HF linkages as needed. Assign a voice frequency to manage packet.
 - Set up local staffing schedules with shifts to provide continuous coverage when needed.
 - Location and hours of operation of each station, staff assignments, special equipment needs.
 - Anticipate future needs. Will you need assistance or Mutual Aid? Will you need antennas, generators?
 - Confirm dispatch and estimated time of arrival (ETA) of staff and equipment at each location.
 - Provide briefings to each shift of volunteers to minimize confusion and clarify responsibilities.
 - Assign experienced staff as Shadows for agency officers, Net Control Station, Message Manager.
 - Assign untrained volunteers with a "buddy", provide "instant training", or refer them to the Resource Net for assignment. Sign up convergent volunteers or have them register at the Volunteer Center.
 - Assign home operators to monitor frequencies for intelligence or pass health and welfare traffic.
 - Assign non-hams: to monitor broadcast radio, TV, EDIS, scanner, emergency frequencies; data entry; phone bank, documentation, equipment and food delivery, computer/Fax technicians, etc.)
- ☐ Supervise staff at each location and track the status of unit activities. Help personnel to be successful.
 - Monitor safety, work load, comfort (water, food, sleep) and resources available at all locations.
 - Set up a **Resource Status (ReStat)** board to track staff and open nets (purpose, frequency, NCS).
 - Ensure that an **Activity Log** is kept for each location (including UL). (Shadows or scribes can keep logs.)
 - Be prepared to transmit **RIMS Status Forms** to the Op Area EOC near the end of each day.
 - Activate Radio Direction Finding (RDF) teams to find and stop purposeful or inadvertent interference.
 - Supervise demobilization of stations and tactical and command nets. Release Mutual Aid resources first.
 - Ensure that records are completed. Collect Activity Logs from all positions.
 - Inventory equipment and supplies to be returned/replenished.
 - Conduct a local "hot wash" critique immediately after demobilization. Contribute to the Op Area critique.
- ☐ Coordinate with Op Area EOC (Auxiliary Com Center) and other Unit Leaders on the Command Net.
 - Notify the Radio Officer of unit activation. Monitor Command Net to exchange current information.
 - If possible, release some local personnel for assignment to other affected areas or the Op Area.
 - Coordinate media requests/problems with the ACS RO, particularly if you hear erroneous information.

Emergency Action Checklist: RADIO OPERATORS*If an emergency is occurring, or is imminent.*

- ☐ Assure the safety and security of yourself and your family first.
- ☐ Stand-by for assignment, don't wait to be called. (Advise your Unit Leader if able to respond.)
 - Observe local conditions. (Is your area affected? To what extent? Utilities? Access?)
 - Monitor broadcast radio, TV, Internet or a scanner to determine the extent of the emergency.
 - Prepare to go on assignment. (Make family arrangements. Check radio gear and "Jump Kit" including your Field Operations Guide [FOG].)
 - Monitor Op Area Tactical Net. (See FOG.) (Has the Op Area EOC been activated? Local EOCs?)
 - Check in on your local ACS frequency. (If no net has been opened, you may need to open one.)
 - The local Com Unit Leader (UL) makes assignments and tracks resources in your area.
 - It is easier for your UL to assign you if you are willing to be available "on-call".
 - If your area is unaffected, you may volunteer to serve in an affected area or the Op Area.
 - Your UL may release you to the Op Area Resource Net for assignment. (The Resource Net is also used as a "travel frequency" for staff en route to or from an assignment.)
- ☐ When you receive an assignment use the **ACS Assignment Form** (in FOG) to record the details. Typical assignments: radio operator (in an EOC radio room, communications van, ICP, shelter, etc.); net control station; shadow; phone bank; equipment delivery or maintenance; media monitor; scribe, runner, etc.
 - Incident and Logistics officer's name, time of call, assignment description, mission number.
 - Reporting location, time, shift length, name of supervisor, local conditions, status of utilities.
 - Radio/personal equipment needed, frequency & PL, tactical call, Activity Log, Message Forms (FOG).
 - Begin a personal log (time activated, time departed, mileage, etc.)
 - Drive safely. Monitor broadcast radio for current road conditions, incident status.
 - Check in with Resource Net Control Station when you depart. Advise of arrival at assignment.
- ☐ Upon arrival at location:
 - Set up equipment. Test with Net Control Station. Organize your work area and forms.
 - Receive briefing from your immediate ACS supervisor and the staff you are relieving.
 - Sign in on **Activity Log**. Review the log and check on the status of messages awaiting reply.
 - Introduce yourself to Agency staff (i.e. Red Cross, Fire). Explain your mission.
 - Sign in with Net Control Station. Listen to the assigned Net continuously.
 - Transmit/receive messages using tactical call. Use FCC call at end of message only.
 - Keep transmissions short. Observe net discipline.
 - Log all message traffic. Use **Message Forms** for inter-agency messages. Be exact.
 - Notify Net Control Station if you will be off the air even for a short time.
 - Observe radio traffic precedence: 1 = Emergency, 2 = Priority, 3 = Outgoing Welfare, 4 = Routine
 - Refer media to your supervisor or the Agency staff in charge.
- ☐ Upon completion of shift:
 - Brief your relief staff. Review Activity Log. Note change of operators in Log. Sign Out with NCS.
 - Assist your relief in setting up and testing equipment. Introduce relief operator to Agency staff.
 - Contact Resource Net when you depart and when you arrive home.
- ☐ Non-emergency responsibilities:
 - Participate in local and regional training, exercises, public service events and operate as a Net Control Station to maintain and increase skill levels.
 - Review your family emergency plans. Increase your level of preparedness.
 - Talk to your Com Unit Leader about ways you can help local agencies plan to supplement emergency communications. (City emergency coordinators, Disaster Council, schools, hospitals, public safety agencies, etc. need help in planning their emergency communications.)
 - Check in on the weekly ACS Net.
 - Notify your Unit Leader of license upgrades, address, phone number, Fax or e-mail changes, etc.

Activation and Frequency Coordination

ACS services are not self-activated and must be done through established procedures. ACS is activated by Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services staff for Operational Area level incidents. Op Area activities are based at the Op Area Emergency Operations Center (EOC), located in the County Administrative Center near the county jail. ACS personnel must wear ACS identification and identify themselves to security personnel as an "ACS Operator" to obtain access. For local incidents, ACS is activated by local government emergency services coordinators. Local activities are based at local EOCs.

OES Network Service Levels

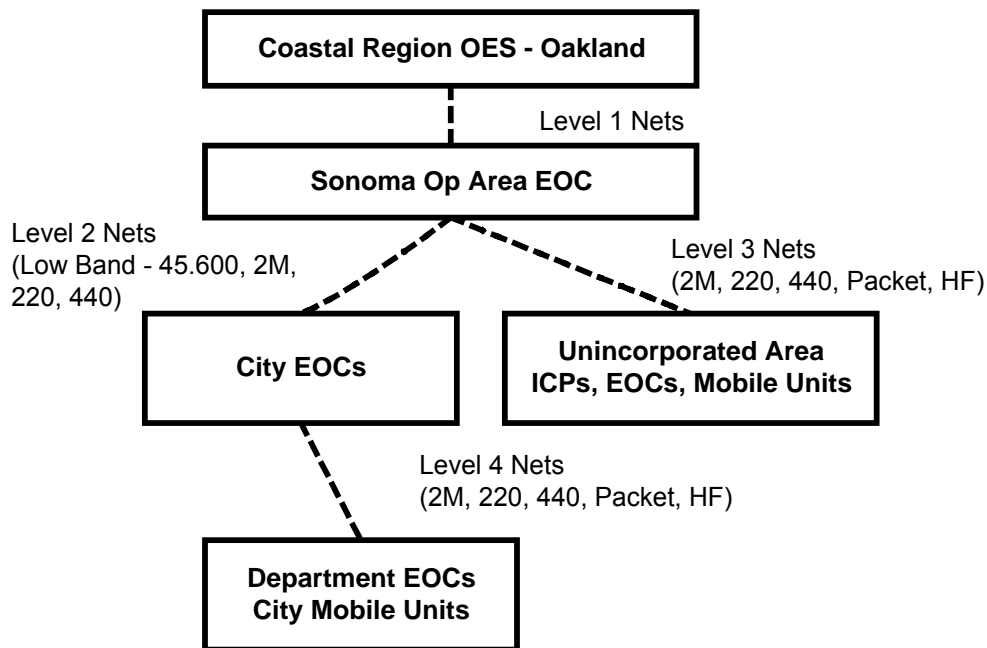
Counties normally communicate with State OES at the Region level. If such communication is not possible, the county may then establish communications with State OES Headquarters directly using A or B Level nets. Op Area ACS units normally activate the 4 numeric network levels listed below.

Level 1: provides communications between the California Office of Emergency Services Regional EOC (REOC) and the Op Area EOC.

Level 2: provides communications between the Op Area EOC and jurisdictions within the Op Area.

Level 3: provides communications between the Op Area EOC and deployed mobile units and other authorized units within the Op Area.

Level 4: provides communications between jurisdictional (i.e., City) EOCs and deployed mobiles and other authorized units within the City.



In a *State Emergency activation* the State ACS may establish the following alpha level nets. The *State Emergency* frequencies listed below are not used in operational area or local emergencies. (The net levels and frequency assignments are listed here only to help operators understand the statewide system.)

Level A nets provide communications from California to other states and federal government.

Level B nets provide communications from state EOC to other state agencies (example: Caltrans).

Level C nets provide communications from state agencies HQs to state agency regional EOC.

Level D nets provide communications from state agency regional EOC to agency field units.

VHF and UHF Band Plan

Frequencies used within the Operational Area are coordinated by the ACS Radio Officer who resolves interference problems within the Area. Refer to the *ACS Field Operations Guide (FOG)* for a list of frequencies and PL tones typically used during emergencies in Sonoma County. UHF and VHF frequencies are ideal for the distances and terrain in Sonoma County, and are used to their full potential with mountaintop repeaters. **If a designated repeater is off the air, use the output frequency on simplex.** Relay traffic if necessary. When the repeater comes back on the air, it will be obvious by the tone.

When choosing additional simplex frequencies to use, choose the highest frequency practical for your needs. Use UHF (220 or 440 bands) if you can, and if line of sight is available (e.g. across town). The higher the frequency, the greater need for line of sight transmission. If line of sight is not available (e.g. from one valley to another) VHF (2 Meters) will work better than UHF. Directional antennas can be very helpful.

Sonoma Operational Area and Local Emergency Repeater Assignments:

146.730 (-) is the primary frequency for all ACS emergency operations in Sonoma County. The tactical call is: "County EOC". This frequency is used for the Monday ACS Net and many public service events.

145.350 (-) is the secondary frequency for all ACS operations in Sonoma County. This frequency is often used for personnel and equipment requests and tracking. The tactical call is "Op Area RESOURCE".

145.190 (-) is the primary VIP frequency and the primary emergency frequency for the Russian River Unit.

146.955 (-) is the secondary VIP frequency and the primary frequency for the Rohnert Park/Cotati Unit.

146.910 (-) is the primary emergency frequency for the Petaluma Valley Unit and is linked to 145.170 (-).

146.205 (+) is the primary emergency frequency for the Sonoma Valley Unit.

223.760 (-) is the primary Command frequency for communications between county ACS staff and Unit Leaders.

440.200 (+) is the primary UHF back-up frequency and the primary packet coordination frequency.

444.750 (+) is an alternate UHF back-up frequency.

440.775 (+) is a wide coverage UHF back-up for the Russian River Unit, linked to 441.025 (+) in Hopland.

State Emergency Digital Simplex frequencies: (See the Field Operations Guide for Op Area frequencies.)

144.91 Amateur radio packet direct connect: W6SIG-1; maximum of two nodes or digi-peaters.

144.91 Amateur radio packet on-line mailbox: W6SIG-2. Amateur radio digital address by packet is via any WESTNET BBS to: W6SIG @WA6NWE.#NOCAL.USA.

HF Band Plan

Sonoma Operational Area and Local Emergency Coordination Frequencies: (LSB = Lower Side Band)

7245 KHz LSB - Primary Daytime 40 Meter frequency. Listen on the hour if phones are down.

3915 KHz LSB - Primary Nighttime 80 Meter frequency. Listen on the hour if phones are down.

ARRL National Traffic System (NTS) Frequencies: (The main usage of the following frequencies is for Health and Welfare Traffic. NTS is capable of transmitting hundreds of messages a month per trained operator. If it is determined that Health and Welfare traffic needs to be passed; notify the NTS resource personnel. NTS staff can pick up messages at shelters. Or messages may be transmitted to them using simplex on 146.520 or 147.480.)

14345 KHz USB - Primary frequency for traffic to the Eastern US. Nets @ 1030 and 1430.

7275 KHz LSB - Daytime NTS Net @ 1530.

3598 KHz LSB - Nighttime NTS Net to Southern California @ 1915.

3630 KHz LSB - Nighttime NTS Net @ 1900.

3705 KHz LSB - Nighttime NTS Nets @ 1945 and 2030.

General HF Frequencies:

7240 KHz LSB - National ARRL 40 Meter calling frequency.

3856 KHz LSB - ARRL National Traffic System Net for Northern California (Mission Trail Net)

State Emergency - Primary Coordination Frequencies: (These frequencies are used by the California Emergency Services Net for weekly tests and periodic exercise. If they are occupied, check 10 KHz above or below the stated frequency.)

7230 KHz LSB - Primary Daytime Amateur Radio Frequency (40 Meters)
3992 KHz LSB - Primary Nighttime Amateur Radio Frequency (80 Meters)
3552 KHz LSB - Primary Amtor Frequency
1987 KHz LSB - Alternate Nighttime Amateur Radio Frequency (160 Meters)

National Emergency - RACES Frequencies designated by the FCC:

1987.0L State RACES 160 meter voice primary
3545.5L State RACES Amtor/CW
3992.0L State RACES 80 meter voice primary
3960.0L State RACES 80 meter voice secondary
3997.0L State RACES 80 meter voice for military station contact & coordination communication
3999.5L State RACES 80 meter voice Tertiary
7097.5L State RACES CW/Amtor
7120.0L State RACES CW/Amtor
7248.5L State RACES 40 meter voice Primary
14050.0 State RACES CW/Amtor
14220.5 State RACES 20 meter voice Primary

Message Handling and Radio Traffic Procedures

Prowords and Prosigns

The use of procedure words and signs (prowords/prosigns) provides a framework in which traffic can be passed in minimum time with a minimum of errors and misunderstandings. Below are the definitions of some of the most commonly used prowords/prosigns:

Recommended Proword..... Definition

ADDRESS GROUP	Name, title, location, time and date.
AFFIRMATIVE	Yes, correct.
BREAK	For start and end of text, or for a pause.
CALL SIGN	The word group that follows is a call sign.
CLOSE	I am closing my station. (Closing down.)
COPY	I have received your traffic.
CORRECTION	I have made an error. Transmission will continue from the last correct word.
DIRECT	Station copied directly. No relay is required.
DRILL, DRILL TRAFFIC.....	Used to indicate that the message is not real and is for exercise purposes only.
EMERGENCY	Highest message precedence. Life/Death messages.
FIGURE GROUP	The next word group is or begins with numbers.
FROM.....	Signifies the ADDRESS GROUP or CALL SIGN of the message originator.
I SPELL	I will spell the next word using the ITU alphabet.
LETTER THE TEXT	Missing word(s): Repeat the first letter or number of each word group phonetically.
MAYDAY	International distress call in emergencies.
MORE TO FOLLOW	I have another message for you.
NEGATIVE	No.
OUT	This is the end of my series of transmissions to you.
OVER.....	This is the end of my transmission to you. I am waiting for your response..
PRIORITY	Second highest message precedence (Non-life threatening, or property damage).
RELAY	Transmit this traffic to or for other stations.
ROGER.....	Message received and understood. (It does not mean "yes" or signify agreement.)
ROUTINE	Fourth highest message precedence, below Outgoing Health and Welfare Traffic.
SAY AGAIN.....	Repeat.
TEXT	The body of a message.
THIS IS	This transmission is from <u>(call sign)</u> .

TO Signifies the ADDRESS GROUP or CALL SIGN to whom the message is going.

UNKNOWN STATION..... Call sign/identity of a station is unknown.

STAND BY I must pause for a moment.

WELFARE TRAFFIC Outgoing Health and Welfare traffic is third highest message precedence.
Incoming H&W is fifth highest precedence, after Routine Traffic.

ALL AFTER..... All the text that follows (the last word given) .

ALL BEFORE All the text that precedes (the next word given) .

WORDS TWICE Transmit each phrase or word twice, under difficult radio conditions.

WRONG..... Your last transmission is not correct.

Prioritization of Messages

EMERGENCY - Communications having life or death urgency.

PRIORITY -

- Important messages relating to property damage.
- Messages having a specific time limit.
- Official messages not covered in the emergency category.
- Messages directly relating to safety and providing shelter and food to displaced people.

OUTGOING WELFARE:

Health and Welfare communications originating **in the disaster area** on behalf of disaster victims and directed to relatives and friends in other areas. Outgoing H&W traffic for emergency responders may be given priority.

ROUTINE:

Other emergency-related traffic such as informational or staffing traffic handled via ACS will fall into this category.

INCOMING WELFARE:

Health and Welfare communications originating **outside** the disaster area. The quantity of these communications should be minimized as they are destined for either non-disaster areas where telephone service is available or for disaster areas where the ability to deliver is uncertain.

NOTE: Within each precedence, a mobile radio (mobile, portable, or airborne) has priority over any other type of radio station.

Operating on a Tactical Radio Net

Tactical Radio Net

A radio net consists of several stations on one radio channel, following organized procedures, and directed by a Net Control Station (NCS).

Types of Nets

- **Directed net:** Stations must get permission before using the net. Address all calls to the NCS.
- **Open net:** NCS permits net stations to call one another. NCS intervenes only to straighten out confusions.
- Or the NCS may allow casual calls and conversations on the channel, speaking up only when there is net traffic to pass.

Get to your assignment ahead of time.

Arrive at your assigned operating point 10 to 30 minutes before your shift starts to get set up and get a briefing before the start of your shift.

Don't help the NCS.

- Resist the urge to help the NCS.
- Act as a relay station only if the NCS, or another radio station, asks for a relay and you can fulfill the requirement.
- If you call the NCS or dispatcher and do not get a reply, be patient and call again in a minute or two.
- If you have an emergency, say "Emergency Traffic" after you identify yourself when you call the NCS.

Use tactical and FCC call signs efficiently.

- By using Tactical Call Signs, the net can be conducted without regard to which operator is at the radio.
- Use the tactical call sign to identify your transmissions and address another station by its tactical call sign.
- No call sign is necessary in a two-way conversation once communication has been established.
- To comply with FCC rules, add your FCC call sign to your last transmission in a series.
- It is not necessary to add the receiving party's call sign, just your own.

Never leave a net without checking out.

- If you know you will be unable to participate for an interval, tell that to the NCS before you leave.
- Check in with the NCS when you return.
- Never depart at the end of your shift without making certain that the NCS knows that you are leaving.

Brief the operator who relieves you.

- Tell the operator who takes your place everything they need to know to do the job.
- Try to write down most of the information during activity lulls.
 - The radio channel or channels you are using.
 - Radio, power, or antenna details.
 - All the tactical call signs and where the stations are located; possibly also names and FCC calls.
 - The location of the nearest telephone, if any.
 - The name and titles of the officials you are serving; how to find and recognize them.
 - The specific purpose and responsibilities of your station.
 - The overall situation and expected changes.
 - Pending activity: messages you have sent and replies you expect (Who gets the reply?).
 - Location of the toilet, water, food, etc.
- Sign out on the Activity Log. Complete all paperwork before you leave.

Keep transmissions short in order to:

- Allow other stations to interrupt if they get more urgent traffic.
- Let the NCS exercise control promptly.
- Lose less time if the transmission was partly or completely unreadable, due to radio problems, simultaneous transmissions (doubles), noise nearby, etc.

Stop transmitting if you stop talking.

Always release the push-to-talk (PTT) button if you need to pause for some reason: to think of a street name, to remember everything you wanted to report, to listen to something urgent that is happening nearby, etc.

Don't use VOX, or a locking PTT switch.

PTT (push-to-talk transmission) is better than VOX (voice-activated transmission) on a tactical net. PTT allows you to control exactly when to transmit. Avoid locking PTT switches.

Listen before transmitting.

- If you haven't been monitoring all along, listen a while (15 seconds minimum) before transmitting.
- Be sure the transmitting station is finished, not just pausing.

Avoid unnecessary transmissions.

Stay off the air unless you are sure you can be of assistance.

How to Interrupt the Net.

It is proper to interrupt the net, that is, to transmit when Net Control has not invited you to. That is the purpose of leaving gaps between transmissions: it gives other stations a chance to break in.

If you interrupt, key very briefly, only enough to ID or state something about the nature of the interruption. For example: "N6ABC", "emergency traffic", or "info".

Use short simple phrases and common courtesy.

Don't chew gum or eat while transmitting. Sound alert. If you are tired, get a relief operator. Avoid angry comments on the air at all costs. Obscene statements are not necessary and are out of place at all times.

Acknowledge transmissions to you.

Acknowledge transmissions promptly, even when it is obvious from the context that you were asked to do something that you cannot do instantly.

Answer questions as directly as possible; do not explain.

If asked a question, just answer it; do not volunteer additional detail or an explanation of why something is so, but use good judgment. You may believe that the simple answer is misleading. The question may indicate that the person asking it does not understand the actual situation. If you think it necessary, volunteer some more information. Be brief; let the questioner ask for more detail if they choose to.

Ask who the message is for, if you don't know.

As you copy a message, consider what you are going to do with it. If you cannot tell, then ask the station that is sending it; particularly if the message originates there. The sender may notice that the message shouldn't be sent to your station after all, and cancel the message.

Let third parties speak over your radios.

Allowing an agency official to use your radio is often better and faster than passing messages back and forth. It is just as legal as passing third-party messages. Make sure the third party understands how to talk through a repeater, i.e., wait for the courtesy tone, etc.

Minimize misunderstandings.

- Only transmit facts.
- If your message is a question, deduction, educated guess, or hearsay, identify it as such.
- Be sure you are clear what the other party means if you hear one of these terms.
- Never pass victim or patient names over the radio.

Wait after keying before speaking.

- Wait a fraction of a second after pressing the mike button before speaking, to make sure you don't clip the first syllable.
- Your radio may take a moment to change over to transmit; and the repeater may introduce its own delay.
- If the station you are calling has a hand-held transceiver (HT) in battery-saver mode, and the channel has been quiet, the first second or two of your transmission might go unheard.

Don't talk louder in a noisy environment.

It's natural to talk louder if it gets noisy around you, but don't do that on the radio. Talking too loudly into a microphone makes your signal less understandable, not more.

Shield your microphone from the wind.

Wind blowing across the microphone can make it impossible to understand you. Close the car windows, pull up your collar, or stand by a shield.

Your HT may not work on your belt.

You may have to hold your HT in your hand to transmit reliably, or even to hear well.

Keep your body still while transmitting.

When on the fringes of coverage, look for a receiving "hot spot" site and use it. Don't walk around talking while in a communications fringe area. Even if you have a good signal *from* a repeater, you may not have a good signal *in to* the repeater.

Operating while mobile.

Always know your location, whether mobile or portable and moving around. Keep a sharp lookout for landmarks. You must be able, if called upon, to accurately describe your location at any time. This is particularly important if you are with a search team or other mobile units.

Formal Written Messages

All written traffic must include the following information: (See the Attachments or FOG for ACS Message Form.)

- **Preamble:**
 - Location and function to where message is to be delivered.
 - Your outgoing message number.
 - Time/date.
 - Subject.
 - Precedence (Emergency, Priority, Routine and Welfare).
- **Text:**
 - The actual message.
 - Try to limit the message to 25 words or less.
- **Signature:**
 - Function (and/or name if the function is unknown) of person initiating message.
 - The location where message originated.
 - Operator's call sign.

When sending Formal Written Messages:

- Address traffic to a specific station, not to the NCS.
- Pass the traffic exactly the way you receive it.
- Say the message in short phrases. Say "break" and release the button between each phrase.
- Do not repeat without being asked to (in most cases).
- Repeat verbatim what you said before; do not paraphrase it.
- If the receiver's read-back is correct, say so without repeating any of the message.
- Be sure that the receiver acknowledges copying the message.
- When transmitting numbers (house numbers, street, telephone etc.), transmit number sequences as a series of individual numbers. Never say numbers in combinations (i.e. "three, six", not "thirty-six").
- If a proper name needs to be transmitted, always spell it out using the ITU phonetic alphabet, after pronouncing it clearly. Do not use self-invented or other phonetics.

When receiving Formal Written Messages:

- Ask for any repeats or explanations you need.
- When you've copied the whole message, acknowledge receiving it, or if uncertain, read it back.
- When the sender agrees with your read-back, say you copied the message.
- If you do not understand the whole message given to you or if you missed a word out of the transmission, reply with "Say Again," or "Say again all after/ before".

▪ Phone Patch Procedures

Announce the problem. Then listen.

- Say that you are calling by radio (the mention of radio is important).
- Briefly state the essence of the problem, then let the dispatcher proceed.
- Avoid a long description of the accident, number and location of cars, resulting traffic jam, etc., etc.
- Your call may be transferred to someone else to handle.
- The dispatcher may ask you just enough to confirm previous reports on the same incident.
- Let the dispatcher direct the sequence of details. They are usually filling in a form.
- Let go of the push-to-talk button while you think.
- If the dispatcher asks for your phone number, say: *"I am on amateur radio."*
- Avoid police and ham radio codes.

EOC Addresses and Tactical Call Signs

The addresses of EOCs (Op Area, Cities, Jurisdictions and Agencies) are listed in the Field Operations Guide. The Planning Section assigns Tactical Calls to each station as it is established. The Resource Net Control informs ACS operators of the tactical call when each assignment is given. To avoid confusion tactical calls are not to be shortened. Examples:

"County EOC" "Lucchesi Shelter" "Forestville ICP" "Palm Drive Hospital" "County Water Agency DOC"

Tactical call signs shall be used at all times. In addition, the operator's FCC call sign is required:

1. At the END of a contact (a series of transmissions) and/or
2. At 10 minute intervals
3. At the END of an unanswered call

The tactical call sign remains constant, however the operator (and his/her FCC call sign) changes at the end of each shift. This is an ICS procedure designed to provide operational clarity and continuity. An Activity Log is kept at each operating position in order to document the time the position was "on the air", the tactical call assigned, the operators who filled the position at each shift, and the messages sent.

Sample Exchange: a) Establish a contact b) Transmit the message. c) Confirm. d) End the contact.

- a) Originating Station: "Sonoma Valley EOC, this is First Street Shelter.
Receiving Station: "First Street Shelter, this is Sonoma Valley EOC. . . Go ahead."
b) Originating Station: "This message is for the Logistics Section Coordinator . . .Break." (Pause)
"The First Street Shelter was open as of 0830. . . Break." (Pause)
"25 people are registered."
c) Receiving Station: "Copy: The First Street Shelter was open at 0930. 25 people are registered."
Originating Station: "Correction: First Street Shelter opened at 0830."
d) Receiving Station: "Copy: 0830. . . Sonoma Valley EOC, KD6KVO Clear."
Originating Station: "First Street Shelter, N6KM Clear."

ATTACHMENTS

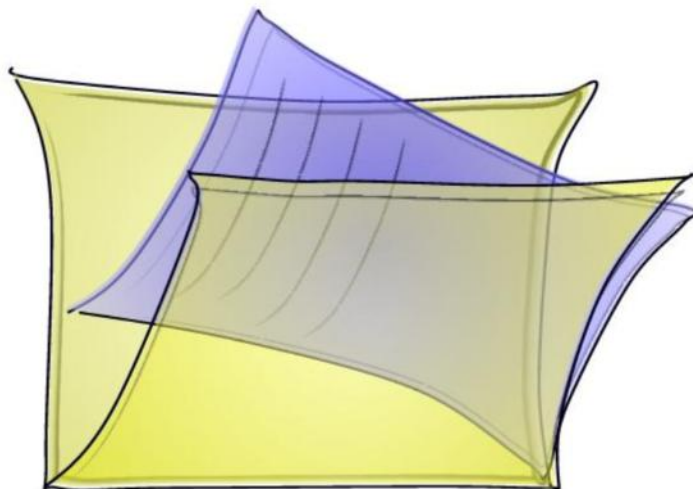
Attachment A: *Department of Emergency Services Volunteer Handbook*

Attachment B: *ACS Plan (August 2002)*

Attachment C: *MOU between Sonoma County and San Francisco Section ARES
(March 2003)*

Attachment D: *ACS Forms, Reports and Planning Tools*

- ACS Net Script
- ACS Activity Report
- Operator/Unit Activity Log
- Message Form
- Assignment Form
- Incident Radio Communications Plan, ICS 205
- Operational Planning Work Sheet
- Emergency Equipment and Skills Survey
- Volunteer Timesheet Form



This page intentionally left blank



VOLUNTEER POLICIES HANDBOOK

AUGUST 1999

SONOMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

2300 County Center Drive #221A

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Tel: 707/565-1152 FAX: 707/565-1172

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

SONOMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

The Department is committed to providing efficient and effective emergency response, planning, recovery, education and protection for disasters, fires, and hazardous materials incidents within Sonoma County by:

- Providing quality informational programs;
- Sponsoring public outreach programs to increase awareness and provide a forum for communication with the community we serve;
- Utilizing a corps of volunteers to support goals;
- Ensuring a strong partnership with the local communities through local advisory committees.

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide overall guidance and basic information for volunteers who have committed time to work with the Department. This Handbook is designed to serve as a guide and does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or employment agreement.

SECTION 2: THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

OVERALL POLICY ON INVOLVEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

The County of Sonoma is committed to the principle of volunteerism. Volunteers are a valuable resource in enhancing the County's ability to deliver services in a cost effective manner by providing services which would not otherwise be available to the public.

The achievement of the Department of Emergency Services' goals is improved by the active participation of members of the community. The Department accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers within appropriate programs and activities.

ROLE OF THE SONOMA COUNTY VOLUNTEER OFFICE

Responsibility for implementation of volunteer policies and procedures is assigned to the County Volunteer Office within the Personnel Department. All volunteer positions must be approved through the County Volunteer Office.

The County Volunteer Office provides support to County departments by assisting in the development of volunteer jobs; recruitment of volunteers to fill job requests; ensuring that volunteers meet minimum qualifications; maintaining the necessary records for all volunteers; handling insurance issues related to volunteer work; consulting with appropriate County departments about any problems involving volunteers; holding annual recognition activities for volunteers; and issuing an annual report to the Board of Supervisors on volunteer program activities.

ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The productive involvement of volunteers requires a planned and organized effort. The function of the Department Volunteer Coordinator, in collaboration with the County Volunteer Office, is to provide a coordinating point for effective volunteer resources engagement within this Department. The Department Volunteer Coordinator assists paid and volunteer staff efforts in support of the organization's mission.

DEFINITION OF A "VOLUNTEER"

A Department of Emergency Services volunteer is an individual who, beyond the confines of paid employment and normal responsibilities, contributes time and service to assist the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services in the accomplishment of our mission. Unless specifically stated, volunteers will not be considered as "employees" of the Department.

Volunteers must have the following on file with the Department Volunteer Coordinator:

- **completed *County Volunteer Application***
- **signed *Volunteer Contract***
- **signed *Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgment / Code of Conduct Certification***

VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteers are viewed as valuable resources to this Department, staff and clients. Volunteers will be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, be treated as equal co-workers, effective supervision, involvement and participation, and recognition for work done. In return, volunteers agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of this Department.

SECTION 3: MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services is a government agency dedicated to providing service to the public. The Department of Emergency Services has traditionally requested and received the highest ethical performance from volunteers. In an effort to maintain the high standard of conduct expected and deserved by the public and to enable the organization to continue to offer services required, the Department of Emergency Services operates under the following Code of Conduct, applicable to all volunteers.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Volunteers shall:

- Treat other volunteer co-workers in a respectful, cooperative and courteous manner at all times.
- Communicate all official business in a professional manner and refrain from making comments of a racial, sexual or derogatory nature. (including e-mail, Internet, two-way radio, etc.).
- Use the name, emblem, endorsement, services or property of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services for official business only.
- Not accept or seek on behalf of himself/herself or any other person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value which may be offered as a result of the volunteer's affiliation with the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services.
- Not publicly utilize any Department of Emergency Services affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue not in conformity with the position of the Department of Emergency Services.
- Keep confidential all Department of Emergency Services information that is available solely as a result of the volunteer's affiliation with the Department of Emergency Services.
- Not knowingly take action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the Department of Emergency Services in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.
- At all times act in any manner that is consistent with the best interests of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services.

In the event that the volunteer's obligation to operate in the best interests of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services conflicts with the interests of any organization in which the individual has a financial interest or an affiliation, the individual shall disclose such conflict to the Department of Emergency Services upon becoming aware of it, shall absent himself or herself from the room during deliberations on the matter, and shall refrain from participating in any decisions or voting in connection with the matter.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services, in recognition of the volunteer staff, as well as the community it serves, reaffirms its policy to assure fair and equal treatment in all of its practices, for all persons. We will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or national origin, nor against a qualified disabled individual, disabled veteran or war veteran. The Department holds its volunteers to the same standard.

PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT

The Department is committed to offering volunteer opportunities and to maintaining an environment free of discrimination. As a matter of law and of common decency, as a volunteer, you are entitled to pursue your volunteer activities free from harassment. This includes inappropriate and disrespectful conduct and communication of sexual nature. Therefore, harassment by anyone will not be tolerated. Anyone engaging in such activity is acting beyond the scope of any authority they may have from the Department. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any manager or supervisor who is made aware of a complaint of harassment and fails to take action will be subject to disciplinary action.

Sexual harassment has been defined by federal and state regulations as a form of sex discrimination. It refers to behavior which is unwelcome, is personally offensive, debilitates morale, and interferes with the work performance or effectiveness of a volunteer. It can consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature by supervisors or others in the workplace.

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any volunteer who feels he/she has experienced harassment should immediately report the matter to their supervisor, the Department Volunteer Coordinator or the appropriate Division Manager. The confidentiality of a sexual harassment complaint will be maintained and the complainant protected from reprisal.
2. All complaints will be promptly investigated and appropriate action will be taken to stop any harassment.
3. If we are able to validate the complaint, disciplinary action up to and including discharge, will be taken against the harasser.

If you feel you have experienced harassment, we urge you to talk to your supervisor or the Department of Emergency Services staff. We do not want you to feel that you must tolerate an inappropriate or uncomfortable situation. All complaints will be quickly investigated and action will be taken to stop any harassment.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of the Department, whether personal, philosophical, or financial will be accepted to serve as a volunteer.

REPRESENTATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Prior to any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate the Department,

volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate staff. Volunteer staff are authorized to act as representatives of the Department as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

Failure to observe the Code of Conduct or any of these policies may result corrective action or termination of the volunteer's relationship with the Department.

DRESS CODE

As representatives of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services, all staff members are responsible for presenting a positive image to clients and to the community. Volunteer staff will dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

TIME SHEETS

Individuals are responsible for the accurate completion of time sheets, when utilized within their line of service. It is also the responsibility of the individual to submit completed time sheets to their supervisor at the end of each calendar month. Maintenance of these records enables the County Volunteer Office and the Department Volunteer Coordinator to effectively document and recognize volunteer staff contributions.

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

A system of records is maintained on each volunteer in the County Volunteer Office within the Personnel Department, including skills and interests, dates of service, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of work (if evaluation is requested by volunteer), and awards received. Designated staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to the Department Volunteer Coordinator in a timely and accurate fashion. Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as paid staff personnel records.

SECTION 4: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Volunteer staff will be provided with a current description of the duties and responsibilities of the position for which they have volunteered and been engaged to fill. All descriptions shall include a description of the purpose and duties of the position, a designated supervisor and a listing of job qualifications .

INTERVIEWING

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, all volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for and interest in that position. The interview should determine the qualifications of the volunteer, their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the position, and should answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position.

CERTIFICATE OF ABILITY

The County of Sonoma strongly supports the goals of the Americans With Disabilities Act. We do not discriminate against disabled volunteers who are otherwise qualified to perform the essential functions of a particular assignment. Volunteers under a course of treatment which might affect their ability to perform their volunteer work may be asked to provide written verification of suitability from their physician. Any volunteer who, after acceptance and assignment by the Department, enters a course of treatment which might adversely impact upon the performance of their volunteer duties should consult with their immediate supervisor and/or the Department Volunteer Coordinator.

SECTION 5: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

ORIENTATION

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services, an orientation on the nature and operation of the program or activity for which they are recruited, and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the position which they are accepting in that effort.

TRAINING

Volunteers will receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment. For some positions, formal training is offered/required. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

All volunteer staff should attempt to improve their levels of skill during their terms of service. Additional training and educational opportunities may be made available to volunteers during their connection with the Department. This continuing education may include both additional information on performance of their current volunteer assignment as well as more general information, and might be provided either by the Department or by encouraging the volunteer to participate in educational programs provided by other agencies.

SECTION 6: SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

REQUIREMENTS OF A SUPERVISOR

Each volunteer staff person who is accepted to a position with the Department must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor will be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and will be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Volunteer staff are entitled to necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers are included in and have access to appropriate memos, materials, and meetings relevant to the work assignments. To facilitate the receipt of this information, volunteer staff should be included on distribution schedules and should be assigned a site for receipt of information distributed in their absence. Primary responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer receives such information will rest with the direct supervisor of the volunteer. Lines of Communication should operate in both directions and should exist both formally and informally.

If a personnel issue arises at any level, and cannot be resolved, it shall be immediately brought to the attention of Department of Emergency Services staff. All personnel issues are considered confidential and shall only be discussed with affected parties, the Department of Emergency Services staff, and appropriate County offices.

EVALUATIONS

Volunteer staff will receive, if requested, periodic evaluations to review their work. The evaluation session is an opportunity for both the volunteer staff member and his/her supervisor to examine and improve their relationship.

ABSENTEEISM

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regularly scheduled and timely basis. If expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform their staff supervisor as far in advance as possible so that other arrangements may be made. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's work assignment or term of service.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

The Open Door Policy simply means that we want volunteers to feel free to bring their questions, suggestions or concerns to their Supervisor or Department of Emergency Services staff for discussion and resolution. Any time a volunteer has an unresolved issue regarding his or her job, working conditions, or relationships with other volunteers or employees, they should first discuss the matter with their immediate supervisor. Since their supervisor is closest to the work situation, they are in the best position to resolve problems and will attempt to do so as soon as possible. This discussion will be considered confidential to the volunteer and their supervisor. When you feel that your supervisor has not answered your questions or has not provided a reasonable solution to the problem, you may wish to discuss it with the Department

of Emergency Services staff. You are encouraged to bring forward any situation you believe requires correction or needs resolution. You can be assured that you will not be criticized nor will your position be jeopardized for doing so.

SERVICE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Department welcomes and accepts the service of volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the Department.

DISMISSAL OF A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the Department or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to corrective action and/or dismissal. Unsatisfactory behavior or performance will be brought to the attention of the volunteer. The volunteer will be given an opportunity to change or correct the problem, when appropriate.

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of agency equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers, failure to abide by Department policies and procedures, failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

RESIGNATION

Volunteers agree to provide services for the time period specified in the Volunteer Contract, but may decide to sever the relationship with the Department. Prior notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible. It is highly recommended that the volunteer participate in an Exit Interview with the County Volunteer Office to ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have to improve the position, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity within the County.

DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR – VOLUNTEER STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

The Department Volunteer Coordinator also serves as Staff Representative for volunteers. Those staff who are supervising volunteers are responsible for maintaining regular communication with the Department Volunteer Coordinator on the status of volunteers and are responsible for the timely provision of all necessary paperwork. The Department Volunteer Coordinator should be informed immediately of any substantial change in the work or status of a volunteer. It is required that the Department of Emergency Services staff be consulted in advance before any corrective action is taken.

SECTION 7: SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION

ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT PROPERTY AND MATERIALS

As appropriate, volunteer staff will have access to Department property and materials necessary to fulfill their duties and shall receive training in the operation of any equipment. Property and materials shall be utilized only when directly required for Department purposes. Specific procedures and guidelines (if applicable) will be explained when a volunteer receives an orientation for their specific volunteer position(s).

INSURANCE

All volunteer injuries/illnesses that arise out of or occur during the performance of a volunteer's job duties for the County must be reported immediately to the volunteer's supervisor. Certain workers' compensation benefits are available to cover such injuries/illnesses. Generally, as prescribed in the State Labor Code, these benefits include full payment of all medical expenses and reimbursement for travel to and from medical facilities. Additionally, if a job-incurred injury/illness cause a volunteer to lose time from a regular paid position elsewhere, some salary compensation benefits may be paid on a wage-loss basis.

Volunteers working in County approved programs are covered by the County for liability claims of others that may be filed against them and/or the County because of alleged negligent acts or omissions within the scope of the volunteer's duties for the County.

When a volunteer will be driving in the scope of his/her duties, the following will be required: (1) proof of a valid California Driver License; (2) evidence of automobile insurance. The County of Sonoma has Excess Automobile Liability Insurance for volunteers that use their vehicles as part of their volunteer assignment. A volunteer's private auto insurance provides primary protection. The Excess Automobile Liability Insurance extends the volunteer's coverage to further protect the County from claims. Volunteers are encouraged to consult with their own insurance agents regarding the extension of their personal insurance to include community volunteer work.

Note: Getting to and from the worksite is not considered driving for the County and is the responsibility of the volunteer.

Volunteers who are registered Disaster Services Workers and are engaged in regularly scheduled Disaster Services activities, including authorized training, are covered only **during** such activities - not while en route between home and the place to which they are to report for service or training. However, if a Disaster Service Worker is suddenly called to duty during an emergency, workers' compensation coverage starts when the Disaster Service Worker leaves their home and lasts until they are able to return, as long as they make no route deviations for personal reasons.

RECOGNITION

Recognition of the many and varied contributions of volunteer staff is accomplished both formally and informally. Informal recognition (including positive feedback for a job well-done) is the responsibility of each supervisor. Formal activities are coordinated in cooperation with the County Volunteer Office. The Volunteer Office is responsible for setting standards for recognition activities. Formal recognition activities include, but are not limited to, an annual Volunteer Recognition Event and development of nominations for annual awards beyond the Department.



SONOMA OPERATIONAL AREA State of California

AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE (ACS)

ACS PLAN

August 2002

Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services
2300 County Center Drive, Suite 221A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Tel: 707/565-1152
FAX: 707/565-1172

www.sonoma-county.org/oes

Sonoma Operational Area Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) Plan

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
DISTRIBUTION.....	2
PURPOSE.....	3
1.0 HAZARDS OR THREATS.....	3
2.0 JURISDICTIONS AND AREA COVERED.....	4
3.0 AUTHORITY.....	5
4.0 ORGANIZATION.....	5
5.0 PARTICIPANTS.....	6
6.0 IDENTIFIERS - TACTICAL CALLS.....	7
7.0 REPEATER IDENTIFICATION - STATION LOCATIONS.....	7
8.0 EQUIPMENT RESOURCES.....	7
9.0 FREQUENCY AND FREQUENCY COORDINATION.....	7
10.0 NETWORKS.....	8
11.0 STRUCTURED RESPONSE SYSTEMS (<i>SEMS, RIMS, ICS, MACS</i>).....	8
12.0 COMMUNICATIONS MUTUAL AID.....	9
13.0 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION / USAGE.....	10
14.0 FCC RACES OPERATIONS.....	10
15.0 REVIEW.....	11
APPROVALS AND CONCURRENCES.....	12
APPENDIXES:	
APPENDIX A: ADMINISTRATIVE AND MUTUAL AID REGIONS.....	13
APPENDIX B: MUTUAL AID - FLOW OF RESOURCES GRAPHIC.....	14
APPENDIX C: MUTUAL AID - DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC GRAPHIC.....	15

Separate documents that supplement this plan are referenced herein and include Resource Directories, Repeater locations and frequencies, Standard Operating Procedures manual, Field Operations Guide, laws, regulations, and codes.

INTRODUCTION

The Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) is an emergency communications organization for support of emergency tactical, administrative and logistical communications. It is on-going and is intended to be involved with this jurisdiction on a day-to-day basis for familiarization and training for eventual use in any situation that may benefit from its support. The ACS program is multi-functional:

- (a) It provides personnel skilled in a variety of communications modalities for support of the Operational Area in general, the Operational Area Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and supporting agencies.
- (b) Resources of this service are an essential staff resource intended to augment agency and Public Safety communications.
- (c) Participants may be used at any time, from one person to any number as appropriate.
- (d) No declaration of an emergency is required.
- (e) The ACS program provides education and leadership to cities and agencies in this Operational Area as to the benefits of the ACS program.
- (f) Pursuant to direction of the Operational Area Emergency Services Coordinator, the ACS executive staff coordinates ACS-type communications mutual aid in the Operational Area and to/from the State Office of Emergency Services (OES) Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC.)

ACS personnel are unpaid volunteers registered as Disaster Service Workers (DSW). They shall not be used to replace available paid-staff, nor to save paid-staff overtime, nor to eliminate or avoid a paid-staff position.

This plan complies with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), the California Emergency Plan, and the Sonoma Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan. Similar to the State Emergency Plan and the Sonoma Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan, this ACS plan is an overview and not a detailed operations document.

DISTRIBUTION

2	State OES Headquarters, Sacramento
2	State OES Mutual Aid Region Office - Coastal Region
4	Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services (DES)
4	Sonoma Op Area ACS Radio Officer and Assistant Radio Officers
10	Sonoma Op Area ACS Local Communications Unit Leaders
150	ACS volunteers
1	ACS Mobile Communications Trailer (2929)
1	Sonoma County Sheriff
1	Sonoma County Communications Manager
1	Sonoma County Volunteer Program
1	CA Department of Forestry Ranger Unit
11	City / Agency Emergency Coordinators
	♦ Cloverdale ♦ Petaluma ♦ Sebastopol ♦ SSU
	♦ Cotati ♦ Rohnert Park ♦ Sonoma ♦ SRJC
	♦ Healdsburg ♦ Santa Rosa ♦ Windsor
4	Cooperating Agencies / Organizations
	♦ Sonoma County Water Agency ♦ Russian River ICP (Forestville Fire Station)
	♦ American Red Cross ♦ Sonoma County Volunteer Center
3	Adjoining County ACS Officers or RACES Officers
1	ARES San Francisco Section Emergency Coordinator
1	ARES San Francisco District Emergency Coordinator
<hr/>	
197	Total initial distribution

PURPOSE

The Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) is authorized, established and administered by the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services. This plan provides for the participation of unpaid [volunteer] professional communications specialists, administrators and Amateur Radio operators for essential communications during events or periods of national, state or local emergency, declared or undeclared and for all training and familiarization thereto requisite.

1.0 HAZARDS or THREATS

Sonoma County faces a variety of threats, both natural and technological, for which it must be prepared to respond. A wide range of potential emergencies has to be considered by emergency services personnel - whether paid or unpaid. Any of these threats could occasion the requirement for qualified emergency communicators to assist, supplement, augment or replace existing government facilities. Such threats include:

- Chemical and hazardous material spills and chemical releases that affect the population with both immediate and long-term health hazards.
- Dam failure from natural or man-made causes -- whether in this or a neighboring jurisdiction, or upstream -- can result in extensive damage and potential loss of life in areas that would be affected by the sudden surges of water and debris.
- Large scale transportation accidents that can occur from a variety of causes, including automobiles, buses, military and civil aircraft, trains and other means.
- Earthquakes are notorious natural hazards due to the geologic construction of the state. Earthquakes can cause extensive damage and interruption in public and private facilities, death and destruction to any jurisdiction.
- A major disaster in other operational areas (such as earthquake or tsunamis from offshore seismic activity in the Pacific basin) can cause property damage and loss of life extending far beyond the directly-affected area. Such activity can induce major or sudden population shifts that could provide this operational area with an emergency situation.
- Severe storms, high winds, tornadoes, flash floods and landslides can lead to unusual disasters; as can slower rising but devastating floods along major river basins and valleys. Heavy storms increase danger of levee failures. Icing and snows may be an additional hazard under certain conditions.
- Fires are threats to wooded areas and adjacent communities. Hot dry winds and low humidity conditions are a recurring condition that can push wildland blazes into urban areas. The resulting loss of ground cover of steeply sloped areas can lead to devastating landslides as well as the loss of natural habitat, citizen housing, injury and death to the populace.
- Nuclear or radiological incidents from military installations, transportation systems or military aircraft crashes or terrorist activity.
- Unusual incidents can arise out of terrorism, urban unrest or mass actions.
- Military bases and key economic and industrial centers in California could be targets for nuclear, conventional war or armed aggression.

2.0 JURISDICTIONS AND AREA COVERED

2.1 The jurisdictions covered by this plan are in the County of Sonoma, hereinafter referred to as the Sonoma Operational Area (OA). The term “operational area” is used in this plan rather than “county”. The California Emergency Services Act defines an operational area as “. . . an intermediate level of the state emergency services organization, consisting of a county and all political subdivisions within the county area.” (Section 8559). Further, “. . . an operational area may be used by the county and the political subdivisions comprising the operational area for the coordination of emergency activities and to serve as a link in the communications system during a state of emergency or a local emergency.” The term “political subdivisions” includes cities and special districts. Each operational area is a special purpose organization, created to prepare for and coordinate the response to emergencies within a county area. Operational Areas coordinate inter-jurisdictional emergency operations and mutual aid. Operation Areas have other legal responsibilities based on legislation (CCR, Title 19, §2409)

2.2 All local government jurisdictions in the Sonoma Operational Area have formally accepted ACS services as administered by the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services as their principal method of auxiliary emergency communications. ACS services are provided to the local municipal governments and other agencies, but the ACS program is managed and coordinated by the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services. Operational control of local ACS units assigned to local jurisdictions is at the discretion of the local jurisdiction, provided that the chain of command and ACS policies and procedures are maintained. Local jurisdictions may direct the work of the local ACS unit, but may not supercede existing ACS policies and must follow the established ACS chain of command. Local unit policies and procedures that are developed must be consistent with this plan and ACS guidelines. All local government unit plans and policies must be submitted to and approved by the ACS Radio Officer.

2.3 Local government jurisdictions within the Operational Area are shown herein. The local jurisdictions within Sonoma County have a contractual agreement with the Operational Area and representation on the Sonoma County / Operational Area Emergency Council. The name, title of the position responsible for the development of emergency services and the office addresses are listed in a separate Resource Directory. Also listed are certain agencies or organizations that actively participate in emergency planning and response in the Sonoma Operational Area.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ♦ County of Sonoma | ♦ City of Sonoma |
| ♦ City of Cloverdale | ♦ Town of Windsor |
| ♦ City of Cotati | ♦ Sonoma State University |
| ♦ City of Healdsburg | ♦ Santa Rosa Junior College |
| ♦ City of Petaluma | ♦ American Red Cross |
| ♦ City of Rohnert Park | ♦ Fire Protection Districts |
| ♦ City of Santa Rosa | ♦ Volunteer Center of Sonoma County |
| ♦ City of Sebastopol | ♦ Sonoma County Water Agency |

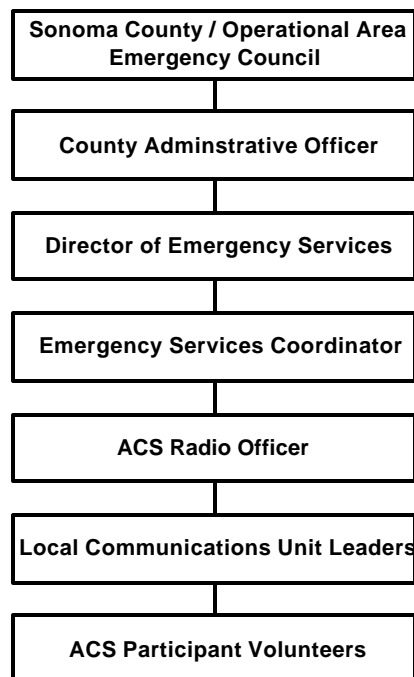
3.0 AUTHORITY

References include the following sources noted herein. California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 2 Emergencies and Major Disasters and Chapter 5, Natural Disaster Act; State Emergency Plan, May 1998; California Emergency Services Act (§8550 GC, et seq); the California Emergency Plan; Section 8607 California Government Code; DSW Rules and Regulations (revised December 15, 1998).

- 3.1 Authority for the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) program derives from the Sonoma County / Operational Area Emergency Council. The Sonoma County / Operational Area Emergency Council has delegated responsibility for the development of emergency services, emergency management, and disaster activities to the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services. (See the Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program Guidance manual issued April 2001 by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.)
- 3.2 Development of this plan utilizing the state DSW program and selecting and appointing the ACS Radio Officer and other ACS leadership positions is the responsibility of the Emergency Services Coordinator.
- 3.3 This service is an authorized emergency response resource. It is authorized to provide or receive communications mutual aid to/from similar duly registered organizations with other jurisdictions through the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) structure.

4.0 ORGANIZATION

- 4.1 Operational Area emergency services organization structures applicable to the ACS are:



- 4.2 The volunteer (unpaid) staff position responsible for the implementation and administration of this service is the ACS Radio Officer appointed by the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services. The ACS Radio Officer is directly responsible to the County Emergency Services Coordinator position and serves at the pleasure of the holder of that position. While an FCC Amateur radio license is beneficial it is not mandatory as the program includes broad aspects beyond Amateur radio. Rather than technical experience and skills, this position requires emergency communications planning and managerial experience or ability, preferably with volunteers.
- 4.3 Names and contact information for the Emergency Services Coordinator, the ACS Radio Officer and other key personnel are in a separate Resource Directory.
- 4.4 ACS response structure is in accord with the five functions of the Incident Command System (ICS), namely:
- Command
 - Planning and Intelligence
 - Operations
 - Logistics
 - Finance/Administration
- 4.5 Local area ACS Unit Leaders are responsible for providing ACS services to a local jurisdiction while remaining within the chain of command of the Sonoma Operational Area ACS program. Local Unit Leaders report to the ACS Radio Officer and must follow ACS policies and procedures.
- 4.6 Written operational procedures are issued as required and maintained in a separate Standard Operating Procedures manual.

5.0 PARTICIPANTS

- 5.1 The ACS program promotes effective use of persons skilled in various communications modalities, such as computers, computer networks, microwave, radio, satellite, video conference and others. It also requires effective use of those skilled in administration, logistics and management. All participants are expected to report to assignments as soon as practical following official activation.
- 5.2 All ACS volunteers enrolled under the provisions of this plan must complete an application and other documents required by the Department of Emergency Services. All registered ACS volunteers must keep current contact information on file with the Department of Emergency Services. Acceptance in the program is at the discretion of the Emergency Services Coordinator and the ACS Radio Officer.
- 5.3 All participants shall be registered as Disaster Service Workers in the COMMUNICATIONS classification in accordance with Section 3100 (et seq.) of the California Government Code, which includes a Loyalty Oath/Affirmation. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the activities involved with participation, a record check clearance and approval may be required. Any convictions or record of conduct considered adverse by management are grounds for rejection.
- 5.4 ACS utilizes pre-registered volunteers because they are familiar with the ACS organizational structure, policies and procedures. Convergent volunteers are members of the general public who spontaneously volunteer during emergencies. They are not involved with ACS on a regular basis and lack ACS-specific training and knowledge when there is very little time and few resources to train them. The use of convergent volunteers by ACS is at the discretion of

the Emergency Services Coordinator and the ACS Radio Officer. Guidelines for the registration of volunteer disaster service workers by Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services are published in a separate document.

- 5.5 There are three levels of ACS volunteer participants. Minimum training and participation requirements for each volunteer Level are described in the "ACS Organization and Standard Operating Procedures" manual.

5.5.1 Level I: Pre-registered volunteers who choose not to serve as regular active participants, but may be available to work in some emergencies.

5.5.2 Level II: The regular active volunteer staff. They have accepted the basic volunteer job responsibilities.

5.5.3 Level III: Includes leadership volunteer staff of the organization. They have accepted management, or other specific job responsibilities and have agreed that ACS is their primary emergency response activity.

6.0 IDENTIFIERS – TACTICAL CALLS

Tactical Calls are an essential part of Incident Command System (ICS) communications, as they do not change once assigned to a location during an event. Communications response and training, whether on the Public Service or Amateur frequencies, will use tactical station identifiers as well as the appropriate authorized call sign. Tactical call information is in the "ACS Organization and Standard Operating Procedures" manual.

7.0 REPEATER IDENTIFICATION - STATION LOCATIONS

Repeater location(s) for Amateur Radio frequencies, and other stations (and their tactical identifiers) operated under this plan are listed in a separate Resource Directory , a current copy of which is provided to the State OES Region ACS Officer for coordination of mutual aid requests.

8.0 EQUIPMENT RESOURCES

There are fixed, portable, and mobile stations operating under the provisions of this plan. Equipment (computers, radios, antennas) provided by the Operational Area is listed in the separate Equipment Resource Directory. Other equipment may be participant owned and brought in for temporary use. All network levels, as defined in Section 11.0 of this plan, will be available at the Operational Area Emergency Operations Center (Op Area EOC) and at the alternate Op Area EOC.

9.0 FREQUENCIES AND FREQUENCY COORDINATION

- 9.1 Frequencies used within the Operational Area are coordinated by the ACS Radio Officer who resolves interference problems within this Area in coordination with the State OES Region ACS Officer.

- 9.2 Day-to-day activities in this service will use Public Safety frequencies and callsigns, not those of the Amateur Radio Service. Amateur Radio Service frequencies may be used for any emergency or for training and familiarization of emergency operations. Use of Amateur Radio frequencies for day-to-day government business is a contradiction of the FCC regulations for Amateur Radio licensees and is not permitted.

- 9.3 In mutual cooperation with other Amateurs, this service may use any frequency in any Amateur Radio band, for which appropriate licensed operators are available, provided that Amateur band frequencies are used ONLY for emergency communications and/or exercises, drills and other events related thereto for purpose of familiarization, training and testing.

10.0 NETWORKS

This service operates the following four network levels within the Operational Area:

Level 1 Nets provide direction & control communications between the State OES REOC (Regional Emergency Operations Center) and the Operational Area Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Level 2 Nets provide direction & control communications between the Operational Area EOC and the jurisdictions within the Operational Area; and between the Operational Area EOC and the Emergency Alert System stations in the Operational Area.

Level 3 Nets provide communications between the Operational Area EOC and deployed mobile units and other authorized units within the Operational Area.

Level 4 Nets provide communications between jurisdictional (i.e., City) Emergency Operations Centers and deployed mobiles and other authorized units within the jurisdiction.

11.0 STRUCTURED RESPONSE SYSTEMS (*SEMS, RIMS, ICS, MACS*)

Due to state legislation that serves to eliminate duplication of efforts and enhance response by standardization, emergency communications organizations serving governments in this state encounter structured systems that they must know, and use. The State Emergency Plan (May 1998) defines the emergency management system used for all emergencies in California, and establishes policies, concepts and general protocols for the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the systems that support it.

11.1 *SEMS* (Section 8607 California Government Code.)

SEMS consists of five organizational levels activated as necessary: field response, local government, operational area, region and state. These levels, together with the private sector, are the California Emergency Organization. (State Emergency Plan.)

SEMS is required for response to multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction emergencies in California. State agencies must use SEMS. Local governments must use SEMS to be eligible for state funding of certain response-related personnel costs. (CCR, Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 5, Natural Disaster Assistance Act, Sections 2920, 2925, and 2930.)

SEMS incorporates the use of the Incident Command System (ICS), the Master Mutual Aid Agreement, existing discipline specific mutual aid, the operational area concept, and multi-agency or inter-agency coordination. Other impacts include the *incorporation of* SEMS into all plans, training and exercises *and documentation of use of* SEMS in planning, training, exercises and actual emergencies. SEMS also led to the development and use of the Response Information Management System (RIMS)

11.2 *RIMS* (State Emergency Plan 5/98 Ed.)

Pursuant to SEMS legislation the major communications infrastructure created to provide information links for elements of the California Emergency Organization is the Response

Information Management System (RIMS). It links the Operational Area, the State OES REOC, the State Operations Center (SOC), and other state agencies.

RIMS is a computer-based system that replicates databases on manual or preset intervals for rapid interchange of Event/Incident Reports, Situation Reports, Status Reports, Incident Damage Estimate Reports, Response Plans, Operational Objectives, Levees Incident Status Reports, After Action and other reports, mutual aid requests. Categories in the above include Care & Shelter, Fire and Rescue, Medical and Health, Hazardous Materials, Law Enforcement, Movement, Summaries, Declarations and others.

11.3 *INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)*

The ICS provides a unified command structure, common terminology, consolidated action plans, modular organization, integrated communications, manageable span-of-control, pre-designed incident facilities and comprehensive resource management.

The ICS organizes any emergency response effort into five basic functions: 1. Command; 2. Planning and Intelligence; 3. Operations; 4. Logistics, and 5. Finance/Administration. Logistics includes Communications and Information Systems, as it must provide facilities, services, personnel, equipment and materials. CCR, Title 19, §2403 (c)(4)

11.4 *MULTI-AGENCY or INTERAGENCY COORDINATION SYSTEM*

This system, known as MACS, meets the requirement for multi-agency or inter-agency coordination at all SEMS levels. It allows diverse organizations to work together and communicate with each other in a coordinated effort to facilitate decisions for overall emergency response activities and sharing of critical resources and incident prioritization. Multi-agency coordination implies multiple agencies within a single area of jurisdiction, or a discipline.(such as between all agencies within a city or a county, including departments.)

Inter-agency coordination implies between disciplines, between different jurisdictions or between different political levels, such as between local police department, county sheriff, and a state police agency liaison to the EOC.

12.0 **COMMUNICATIONS MUTUAL AID (Resource Requests)**

12.1 Mutual aid is a voluntary provision of services and facilities by agencies, jurisdictions or organizations to assist each other when existing resources prove to be inadequate. Emergency mutual aid response and recovery activities are generally conducted at the request and under the direction of the affected local *government*. Requests flow from field to the city, to the county or special district (organized under SEMS as part of an Operational Area), and finally to the State OES REOC for coordination beyond the Operational Area. (See Appendix 2.)

12.2 The State Emergency Plan lists standardized discipline-specific statewide mutual aid systems, either coordinated from jurisdictional EOCs or by a Departmental Operations Center (DOC). Telecommunications has not achieved a similar statewide system although it is covered by the California Master Mutual Aid Agreement. (See Appendix 3.)

12.3 ACS and RACES communications resources may be requested by, and supplied to, other jurisdictions in accord with established inter-governmental mutual aid procedures. This includes the use of the ICS and RIMS between the Operational Area and the REOC, and existing agreements for mutual aid with adjoining jurisdictions. ACS Officers need to be aware that Operations and Logistics Officer assignments in an EOC, or a REOC, may rotate to those without knowledge of how to handle an ACS request.

13.0 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION / USAGE

These resources are available to all government services/agencies as required, but are not assigned exclusively to any one service. Specific needs for emergency communications using communications volunteers in government service by departments or agencies of this jurisdiction are a part of this service; and are coordinated by agency positions specified in this section.

The ACS is a staff resource intended to augment Public Safety communications. Participants (from one to all) may be used in support of County Public Safety *emergency communications needs at any time*. No declaration of an emergency is required.

ACS may only be activated by competent authority. ACS volunteers are not permitted to self-activate. Mobilization must be done through the established procedures outlined below.

- 13.1 For Operational Area incidents/exercises: the Director/Deputy Director of Emergency Services, the Emergency Services Coordinator/Deputy Emergency Services Coordinator and staff at the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services.
- 13.2 For local government incidents/exercises: the Emergency Services Coordinator, or their senior staff, for each local government jurisdiction. The name, title and contact information for each is listed in a separate Resource Directory.
- 13.3 Requests for communications support from any agency shall be directed to the County Department of Emergency Services or the local jurisdiction. See paragraphs 14.1 and 14.2.

Pre-designated activation procedures may be created to outline ACS mobilization under certain specific circumstances (such as, but not limited to, severe earthquake, major fire, civil unrest or flooding). Any such pre-arranged activation procedures must be in writing and approved by the ACS Radio Officer and Emergency Services Coordinator. These procedures would be outlined and published in a separate supplemental document or Standard Operating Procedures manual.

14.0 FCC RACES OPERATION (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service)

Operations on FCC Amateur Radio *frequencies* are provided for in the FCC regulations in a condition or service known as RACES. RACES can be a condition of operations, or an on-going communications program similar to but usually not as inclusive as an ACS program.

- 14.1 RACES, *as a condition of operations*, applies to FCC Amateur Radio Service Licensees when operating on the FCC Amateur Radio Service frequencies, and only those frequencies. FCC RACES regulations apply ONLY while operating on Amateur frequencies in the RACES condition (herein after defined) and only during the time the RACES condition is authorized. The use of FCC Amateur Radio *frequencies* is limited to training and emergency communications. When operating on government frequencies, RACES regulations do not apply.
- 14.2 RACES, *as a program or service*, is in the FCC Regulations so FCC Amateur licensees can continue to operate on specific frequencies after declaration of a national emergency (when other Amateur operations can be ordered to cease.) Non-national emergency situations require cooperation with other Amateur licensees who may be also operating on those frequencies in a non-RACES condition, as there is *no* exclusive right to a FCC Amateur frequency, although coordination does occur on VHF and UHF repeater frequencies.
- 14.3 RACES is an authorized and appropriate use of the ACS when so authorized by the Emergency Services Coordinator. This section of the plan (along with other appropriate

sections) shall serve as the Sonoma Operational Area RACES Plan. When authorized, the ACS Radio Officer will declare a RACES condition and assign duly licensed operators to that activity for an appropriate portion of the ACS. When the RACES condition ends, the ACS Radio Officer will terminate RACES operations by announcement, informing all those assigned RACES duties. Use of Amateur Radio *frequencies* is limited to training and emergency communications in cooperation with other Amateur licensees.

- 14.4 The State OES ACS Program Coordinator may authorize ACS Amateur Radio Service licensees to operate as the RACES on *FCC Amateur frequencies*. With local authorization, the ACS can operate jurisdiction Public Safety communications *at any time*.
- 14.5 In the event of an emergency invoking the President's war emergency powers, RACES operations will be governed by paragraph 97.407(b) of the FCC Rules and Regulations, 47 CFR. Operations will be restricted to frequencies assigned and coordinated by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.
- 14.6 When signed and filed with State OES, this plan will qualify Sonoma County for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) matching funds under the Federal Contributions Program. This section of the plan (along with other appropriate sections) shall serve as the Sonoma Operational Area RACES Plan. (Two signed copies of the plan and all revisions shall be filed with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (State OES), Sacramento, CA., Attention ACS Program Coordinator.)

15.0 REVIEW

This plan, and its appendices, shall be reviewed for completeness, currency, and accuracy not later than four (4) years after the latest approval date. Revisions and corrections will be issued to those listed on the distribution page.

APPROVALS AND CONCURRENCES

Date 08/26/02 _____ (signature on file)

Vern Losh, Director
Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services

Date 08/26/02 _____ (signature on file)

Sandy Covall-Alves, Emergency Services Coordinator
Sonoma County / Operational Area Emergency Services

Date 08/22/02 _____ (signature on file)

Ken Harrison, Radio Officer
Sonoma County / Operational Area ACS

Date 09/03/02 _____ (signature on file)

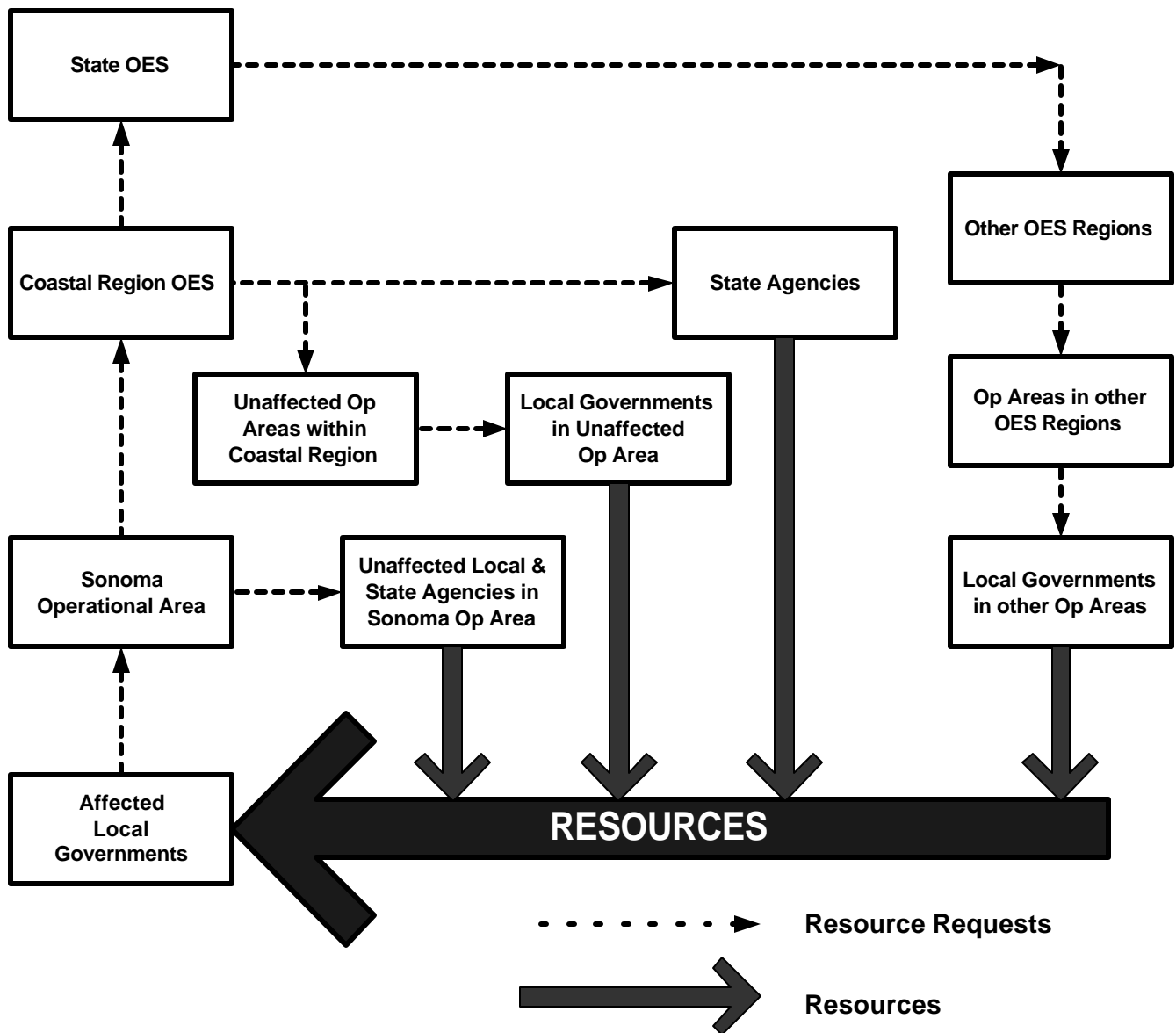
George Lowry, Telecommunications Coordinator
Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Coastal Region

Date 09/05/02 _____ (signature on file)

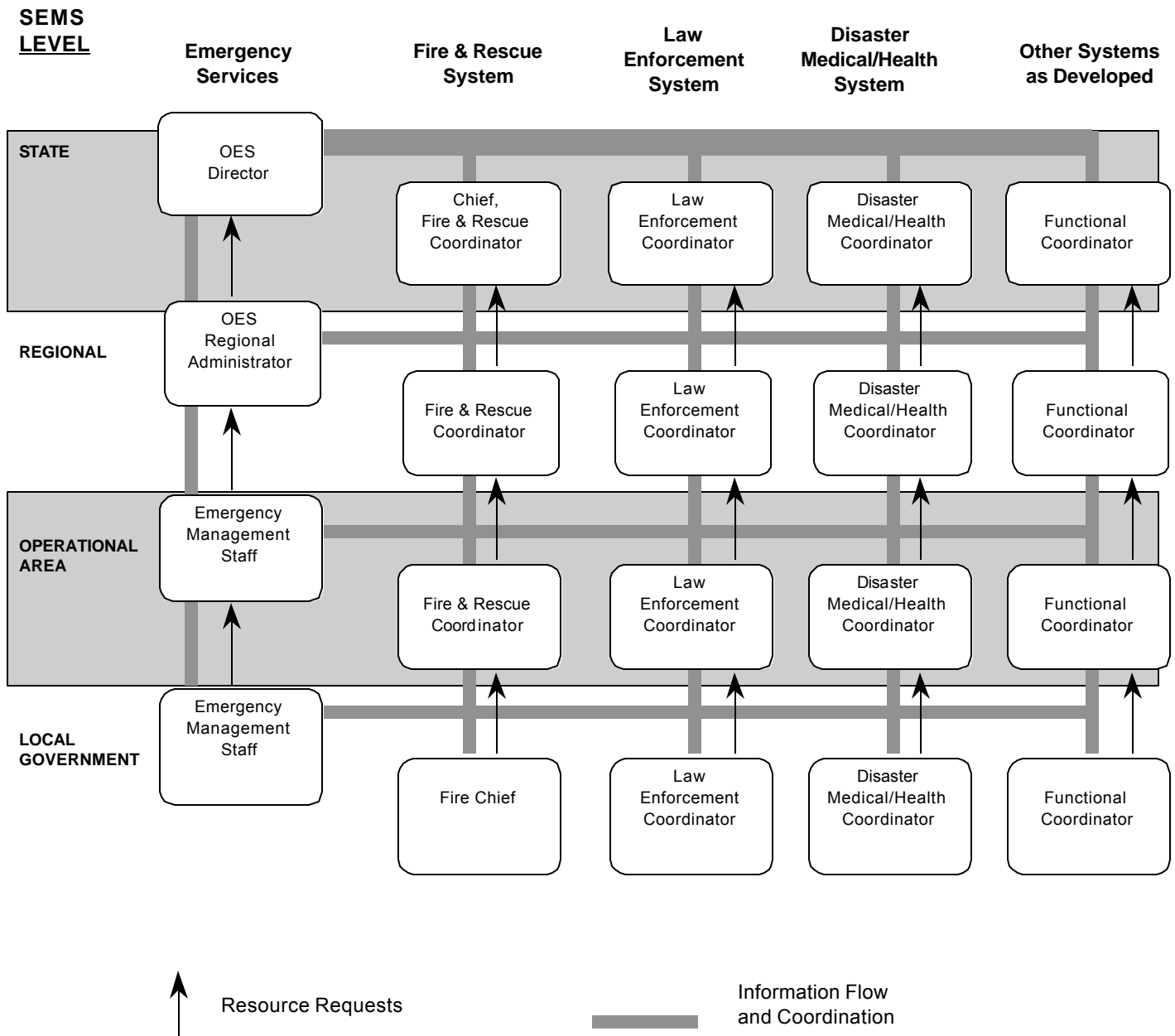
Cary Mangum, ACS Officer
Governor's Office of Emergency Services

[illegible]

APPENDIX B: MUTUAL AID - FLOW OF RESOURCES



APPENDIX C: MUTUAL AID – DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC SYSTEMS



This page intentionally left blank

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
between
the County of Sonoma and
the San Francisco Section
Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)**

March 14, 2003

**Memorandum of Understanding
between the
County of Sonoma
and the
San Francisco Section Amateur Radio Emergency Service**

I. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to state the terms of agreement between the County of Sonoma, a political subdivision of the State of California ("County") and the San Francisco Section Amateur Radio Emergency Service ("ARES"), sponsored by American Radio Relay League ("ARRL"), with respect to local emergency communications coordination within the County of Sonoma. This Memorandum of Understanding shall serve as a framework within which the parties may develop and maintain a spirit of cooperation while performing their respective roles in support of local emergency communications.

II. Recitals

A. Sonoma County / Operational Area Auxiliary Communications Service

Sonoma County's Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) is a team of volunteer communication professionals dedicated to assisting local government agencies within Sonoma County with public safety and emergency communications in times of disaster and/or community need. ACS is operated under the supervision of the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services and when applicable, operations will be in accord with the provisions of the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) as provided for by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The County-wide ACS organization has nine local geographic Units and one central coordinating Unit. Each of these ten Units has a designated Unit Leader that reports to the ACS Radio Officer. Each local area ACS Unit provides ACS services to a local government jurisdiction while remaining within the chain of command of the Sonoma County / Operational Area ACS program. ACS follows the principles of the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS).

County has formally selected ACS as the primary volunteer service that augments local government public safety communications for all local government jurisdictions and other disaster relief organizations within the County of Sonoma in the event of failure, overload or other problems that might jeopardize their usefulness. Further, all local government jurisdictions within Sonoma County have formally accepted ACS services as administered by the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services as their principal method of auxiliary emergency communications. ACS services are provided to the local municipal governments and other agencies, while the ACS program is managed and coordinated by the County. Operational control of local ACS units assigned to local jurisdictions is at the discretion of the local jurisdiction, following the ACS chain of command and ACS policies and procedures. Local unit policies and procedures that are developed must be consistent with ACS guidelines and be approved by the ACS Radio Officer.

B. Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is an emergency preparedness element of the Field Organization of the ARRL, a national amateur radio organization. The ARRL has formal national-level agreements with the American Red Cross (ARC), the National Weather Service (NWS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International (APCO-International), the National Communications System (NCS), the National Association of Radio and Telecommunications Engineers (NARTE), the Salvation Army, the Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE), the Quarterly Century Wireless Association, Inc. (QCWA), and Radio Emergency Associated Communications Team (REACT).

The ARRL has fifteen geographical Divisions, with each Division having three to seven Sections. Each Section may be further divided into Districts. The local section of ARES is the San Francisco Section of the Pacific Division. The Districts within the San Francisco Section consist of seven counties, including Sonoma County. The San Francisco Section ARES organization is administered under an elected Section Manager. The Section Manager appoints a Section Emergency Coordinator, who (along with appointed local Emergency Coordinators and District Emergency Coordinators) directs ARES communications preparedness activities in each section.

Amateur Radio Emergency Service is a radio communication service certified by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), and conducted by volunteer licensed radio operators, for providing emergency radio communications to public service organizations. In Sonoma County, ARES' primary responsibility is providing communications and logistic / resource allocation traffic for non-governmental agencies. ARES may be deployed to augment emergency communications for governmental agencies within the County of Sonoma when requested by ACS.

ARES volunteers are radio amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes. Many ARES volunteers specialize in the transmission of health and welfare information for the families and friends of disaster victims. ARES follows standard Incident Command System (ICS) protocols in times of emergency.

III. Cooperation Agreement

To coordinate the communications resources of ACS and ARES utilized during disasters and emergencies, and to the extent permitted or required under existing plans, procedures and regulations, the County, ACS participants and ARES have agreed to the following:

- A.** To ensure an efficient liaison between ACS and ARES, the points of contact will be as follows: For County, the ACS Radio Officer or designated Assistant Radio Officer. In the absence of the Radio Officer or designee, the point of contact will be the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services' Emergency Services Coordinator or designee. For ARES the point of contact will be the District Emergency Coordinator (DEC), or in the absence of a DEC, the ARES Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC). In the absence of the DEC and SEC, the point of contact will be San Francisco Section Manager or Assistant Section Manager.
- B.** ACS and ARES will generally encourage liaisons with each other and urge participants of both organizations to develop effective communications and cooperation through ongoing communications and information sharing. Regular, periodic reporting on activities, services, local agreements, plans and procedures and contact information will be provided in writing and kept current.
- C.** Each organization will work through its own lines of authority and respect the lines of authority of the other as outlined above.
- D.** ACS will encourage local interaction between the local ACS Unit Leaders and the local ARES Emergency Coordinators in an effort to establish cooperative relationships, and closer ties between the two organizations. Both parties recognize that when these relationships develop at the local level, effective service to the public is significantly enhanced. Neither organization will discourage its volunteers from participating in the other organization.
- E.** ACS and ARES will work to establish protocols and procedures that facilitate efficient field operations where both groups are involved in emergency communications response. Each organization retains the right to develop and maintain independent protocols and procedures that will accurately reflect the respective relationships agreed upon.

- F. Each organization will avoid duplicative or competitive activities in order to ensure effective delivery of emergency communications service. Local working relationships and existing local agreements between either of the two parties and their served agencies will be respected. Both parties recognize the principal roles of each group as outlined above.
- G. Other areas of mutual cooperation and future agreements may be developed and established as necessary.

VI. Implementation

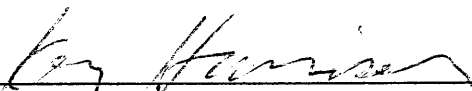
This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect upon signature by authorized officials of the County, ACS and ARES. This memorandum may be amended by mutual agreement in writing of both parties, and will remain in effect until terminated. Either party may terminate this memorandum upon 30 days written notice. Nothing herein will create any joint venture, partnership or other business association, nor shall either party enter into any obligation or commitment on behalf of the other. This memorandum does not create rights in, nor is it intended to benefit, any third parties.



Sandy Covall-Alves, Emergency Services Coordinator
Sonoma County / Operational Area Emergency Services

14 March 03

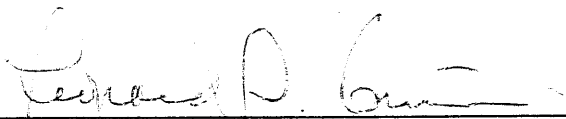
Date



Ken Harrison, ACS Radio Officer
Sonoma County / Operational Area Emergency Services

14 March 03

Date



Leonard Gwinn, Section Manager
San Francisco Section American Radio Relay League

14 March 2007

Date



Richard Freitas, Sonoma County District Emergency Coordinator
San Francisco Section American Radio Relay League

3-14-03

Date

ACS Forms, Reports and Planning Tools

- ACS Net Script
- ACS Activity Report
- Operator/Unit Activity Log
- Message Form
- Assignment Form
- Incident Radio Communications Plan, ICS 205
- Operational Planning Work Sheet
- Emergency Equipment and Skills Survey
- Volunteer Timesheet Form

This page intentionally left blank



COUNTY OF SONOMA
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
FIRE SERVICES • EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT • HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

**Auxiliary Communications Service -
Emergency Communications Net Script**

[At 1855 hrs] The Sonoma County ACS Net will start in 5 minutes. (callsign)

[At 1900 hrs] This is (*name / callsign / ACS Unit*), Net Control Station for the Sonoma Operational Area Auxiliary Communications Service. This net meets every Monday evening at 1900 hrs. This is a directed net. All stations should direct their traffic through the Net Control Station. If you have an emergency during the net, indicate so with the words "emergency traffic" on your first key-up.

The purpose of this net is to share information with ACS volunteers and practice the skills of traffic handling and standard net control operations.

Are there any announcements for this net? [Pause a short time.]

At this time I will call on the various ACS representatives for their reports:

[Note: there is no need to call individuals by callsign - just ask for representatives.]

UNIT [Local Net Frequency Info](#) (No need to read unless asked)

[Copy this page and complete with most current info.]

[Note: Admin Unit volunteers may be checking in as guests on local nets.]

Central County Unit Representative

Coast Unit Representative

North County Unit Representative

Russian River Unit Representative

Sonoma Valley Unit Representative

South County Unit Representative

Shortly, I will take guest check-ins, but until then, is there any other traffic for this portion of the net?
(Repeat as needed.)

[At this time, you should confirm the Net Control Station rotation for the next scheduled net - - we use the same order as listed above. NOTE: No weekly net on official County holidays.]

Any station that needs local area net information, or any guest stations, may check in now.

(Take any check-ins and handle as appropriate -- greet all visitors and invite them to join local nets.)

[Anyone interested in information about ACS can be referred to the ACS website at:
sonoma-county-acs.org "sonoma dash county dash A C S dot O R G"]

This is (*name / callsign / ACS Unit*) closing the Sonoma Operational Area ACS Emergency Communications Net. At this time all stations should move to their local area net frequency and check in for additional information and discussion ... good night.

This page intentionally left blank



ACS Activity Report

Every year ACS participants donate thousands of hours of volunteer service during emergencies, disaster exercises and other events. This form is used to record all ACS activities. This information is needed to document the important work of ACS volunteers and ensure suitable recognition and Disaster Service Worker insurance coverage. Please complete and return this form to the ACS Radio Officer as soon as possible.

1. Nature of activity (check all that apply): ☐ Emergency Activation (*emergency communications required*)
☐ Alert (*preventative deployment, no emergency*) ☐ Drill / Exercise (*scheduled training activity*)
☐ Training (*other than drill*) ☐ Meeting (*Unit meeting, other*) ☐ Public Service (*Parade, race, etc.*)
☐ Other (*explain*): _____

2. Brief description of activity: _____

3. Place or area involved: _____

4. Number of ACS Volunteers involved: _____ (see sign-in on reverse)
5. Start Date / Time: _____ End Date / Time: _____
6. How / by whom was ACS activated: _____
7. Date / Time Radio Officer or Dept of Emergency Services notified: _____
8. Nets and / or frequencies used: _____

9. Names of agencies / organizations receiving ACS support: _____

10. Other comments: _____

Reported by: Name / Callsign: _____ Date: _____

ACS Activity Report: Volunteer Sign-in

All ACS volunteers must register their arrival and departure times when participating in ACS activities.

Event / Activity: _____ Date: _____

	Name / Callsign	Arrival Time	Departure Time
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			

Return to: Sonoma County ACS
2300 County Center Drive #221A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Fax: 707/565-1172

SECTION / UNIT ACTIVITY LOG

[illegible]

(Get a briefing. Begin shift with sign-in time and name on this log. End shift with sign-out. Brief replacement staff on pending issues.)

This page intentionally left blank

Sonoma Op Area	1. TO: _____ (Name and Position)		4. TIME/DATE:	
ACS	2. SUBJECT: _____		5. MESSAGE #: _____ Tx Rx	
Message Form	3. PRECEDENCE: Emergency Priority Welfare Routine		6. OPERATOR-S INITIALS/CALL: _____	
M	_____			
E	_____			
S	_____			
S	_____			
A	_____			
G	_____			
E	_____			
FROM:	7. NAME/TITLE:		8. LOCATION:	
R	_____			
E	_____			
P	_____			
L	_____			
Y	_____			
9. REPLY FROM (Name/Position/Location):			10. DATE:	

ACS Assignment Form

Operator Name/Callsign: _____ ACS Unit: _____

Incident Name: _____ Call Date/Time: _____

Dispatched by: _____ Reporting Date/Time: _____

Reporting Location: _____

Incident Number (if any): _____ Request/Mission # (if any): _____

Route Information: _____

En route Frequency/PL: _____ Incident Frequency/PL: _____

Report to (Unit Leader/Supervisor): _____ Shift Time: _____

Tactical Call: _____

Assignment Title/Description: (Radio Operator, EOC Staff, Net Control, Shadow, etc.): _____

Date/Time Left: _____ Beginning Mileage: _____

Date/Time Returned: _____ Ending Mileage: _____

Notes: _____

INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN		1. INCIDENT NAME	2. DATE/TIME PREPARED	3. OPERATIONAL PERIOD	
4. BASIC RADIO CHANNEL UTILIZATION					
SYSTEM/CACHE	CHANNEL	FUNCTION	FREQUENCY	ASSIGNMENT	REMARKS
ICS 205	5. PREPARED BY (COMMUNICATIONS UNIT)				

ACS Operational Planning Work Sheet								1. Incident Name	2. Date/Time	3. Operational Period
4. Division/Group or Other Location	5. Work Assignments		6. Resources by Type					7. Reporting Location	8. Requested Arrival Time	
			Auxiliary Com Center	Mobile Com Van	Local EOCs, ICPs	Shelters Hospitals Schools	Shadows, Technical Specialist			
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
		Req								
		Hav								
		Nee								
Modified ICS 215	Total Resources Required							Prepared by: (Name & Position)		
	Total Resources Available									
	Total Resources Needed									

Enlarge to Ledger size to fill in. Resize to 8.5x11 to duplicate for Action Plan.

Emergency Equipment and Skills Survey

Date: _____

Name _____

Call Sign _____ License Class: _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____ Pager _____ Emergency Contact _____

Equipment Capability:

	160M	80M	40M	20M	WARC	10M	144MHz	220MHz	440MHz	CB
HT										
Mobile										
Fixed										
Portable										
Emrg Power										
Internet										
Morse										
SSB										
Packet										
AMTOR										
RTTY										
ATV										
Other										

Describe your VHF/UHF Portable/Mobile Antennas other than a "rubber duck": _____

Dual or Tri-Band HT/Mobile: _____

Scanner: _____	Portable Computer: _____	Cell Phone: _____	Generator: _____	KW: _____	Camper: _____
----------------	--------------------------	-------------------	------------------	-----------	---------------

Other emergency experience, training and/or skills:

NTS :	VIP:	ARES:	CAP:	MARS:	REACT:
1st Aid:	EMT:	Paramedic:	Nurse:	Doctor:	Veterinarian:
CPR:	Haz Mat:	1st Resp:	Mental H.:	2nd Language:	Other:

Describe these and other skills that might be useful in an emergency: _____

What is your availability? _____

Could you take an "out-of-county" mutual aid assignment? _____

ACS Volunteer Timesheet

[illegible]