

AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE SOUTH TEXAS SECTION

HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

DISTRICT 14 ARES®

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



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Revisions Page

Harris County, Texas
District 14 Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES®)
Emergency Communications Plan

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To implement Part 97.1 of the FCC regulations, and Federal and international treaty law applying to Amateur Radio and specifically to Harris County, Texas, District 14 ARES®.

Part 97.1 Basis and purpose

The rules and regulations in Part 97.1 are designed to provide an amateur radio service having a fundamental purpose as expressed in the following principles:

- 1.1.1 Recognition and enhancement of the value of the Amateur Radio Service to the public as a voluntary non-commercial communications service, *particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.* [Emphasis added]
- 1.2 Harris County, Texas is a part of the American Radio Relay League, hereinafter referred to as ARRL®, South Texas Section. The South Texas Section is divided into fourteen (14) districts. District 14 is the only district in the South Texas Section containing only one county. Most districts are comprised of a few to several counties. Harris County is designated South Texas Section ARES® District 14, and it is the only county in District 14. District 14 is further divided into four quadrants. Interstate Highway 10 is the north and south boundary line. Interstate Highway 45 is the east and west boundary line north of Interstate Highway 10, and Highway 288 is the east and west boundary line south of Interstate Highway 10.
- 1.3 The primary responsibility of the Harris County, Texas, District 14 ARES® is to provide effective and efficient communications in the event of a natural disaster or emergency involving any major threat to life or property, to supplement normal communications, or in the event of communications failures to provide the necessary communications links where applicable and possible.
- 1.4 All drills, training and instruction will be planned and executed to ensure maximum readiness and capability to respond expeditiously and to provide effective and efficient Federal Communications Commission, hereinafter FCC, licensed radio operator volunteers for emergency communications whenever the need arises.

1.5 The following agencies may be served during an emergency situation requiring supplemental communications: all agencies or entities with whom District 14 ARES® has entered into Memorandums of Understanding, hereinafter referred to as MOUs, and other agencies or entities, which may from time-to-time request assistance from District 14 ARES®. Agencies with MOUs will receive first priority for the resources of District 14 ARES®.

1.6 District 14 ARES® is organized to merge with the overall management template of the Incident Command System, hereinafter ICS, and the National Incident Management System, hereinafter NIMS. The organizations served by ARES® units across the United States are required to work within the NIMS and ICS. On 23 February 2003, President Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, which required the Homeland Security Secretary to develop and administer a National Incident Management System. NIMS is a comprehensive, national approach to incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. All District 14 ARES® communications personnel are most strongly encouraged to take FEMA courses IS-100, IS-200, IS-700 and IS-800, which describe the Incident Command System, National Incident Management System and The National Response Plan.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 ARES® members are FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators who have voluntarily registered their capabilities and equipment for public service communications duty. All District 14 ARES® personnel are strongly encouraged to obtain a State of Texas Division of Emergency Management State RACES Authorization Unit Number.

2.2 Under Federal regulations, Amateur Radio public service communications are furnished without compensation of any kind. All District 14 ARES® radio operator personnel are federally licensed, receive no remuneration of any kind for their services, and in most cases, provide the equipment utilized at their own expense.

2.3 District 14 ARES® functions under this Emergency Plan by direction of the District Emergency Coordinator, hereinafter DEC, who is appointed by the ARRL® South Texas Section Manager.

2.4 Where conflict may exist between this Emergency Plan and the South Texas Section Emergency Plan, the South Texas Section Emergency Plan will take precedence and the District 14 Emergency Plan will be subordinate.

- 2.5 As an ARES® volunteer you are working for ARES® and operate within the ARES® guidelines and FCC regulations. You are not an employee of the served agency and although we serve and operate strictly within their operational rules and regulations we are not their employees. The following statement has been taken from the South Texas Section Emergency Plan and is pertinent to this issue:

When ARES® operators are assigned to a duty post anywhere, they remain an ARES operator for the full length of the ARES® assignment. That operator is responsible directly to the EC (and Assistant ECs), and to no one outside of the ARES® organization.

The officials of a served agency must never be permitted to take control of ARES® operators assigned to them, or to absorb them into their own organization, though they may some times attempt that. ARES® does not recruit and train operators for other groups to use for non-ARES purposes.

If you desire to take on an assignment other than your current District 14 ARES® assignment you must clear that with the on-site District 14 ARES® leader or supervisor you are currently working with and ensure that a qualified replacement is available to cover your assignment for the remainder of its duration.

- 2.6 The following is required by the Section Emergency Plan and this District 14 Emergency Plan:

The DEC is the chief ARES® official for District 14 ARES®. The duties of DEC require a serious commitment of time and effort, together with supervisory and managerial skills, to bring about the harmonious coordination of the District 14 ARES® organizations within Harris County. The DEC shall coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of the Emergency Coordinators, hereinafter EC(s) in his district. The DEC will coordinate the interrelationship between all District 14 unit emergency plans and between communications networks within District 14 ARES®, and nationally when the need arises. (See appendix A ARRL® District Emergency Coordinator Job description for a more detailed description of the DEC duties and responsibilities, which duties and responsibilities are incorporated herein and made a part of this Emergency Plan by their reference hereto.)

The EC is the chief ARES® official in their assigned areas of responsibility, and are directly responsible to the DEC. The duties of EC require a serious commitment of time and effort by the volunteer who accepts this position.

The EC's duties will be many, varied and complex. No EC can do everything himself. To be effective, he must delegate duties to Assistant Emergency Coordinators, hereinafter AEC(s). The EC may appoint as many AECs as are needed to effectively manage and develop an effective organization. AEC appointments do not need approval by any other ARES[®] official, although as a matter of precedence and deference the EC will discuss AEC appointments and request advice and direction from the DEC. All AECs are aggressively encouraged to become ARRL[®] members. They are also strongly encouraged to complete the ARRL Emergency Communications Course Level I and FEMA 100, 200, 700 and 800. ICS training is now mandatory for emergency responders and volunteers. ARRL[®] Emergency Communications Level II is highly recommended. AECs serve at the pleasure of the EC and their appointments lapse when the EC resigns or is replaced, although any or all of the same individuals may be reappointed by the new EC at that EC's discretion.

The EC organizes and coordinates Amateur Radio communications in his specific assigned area of responsibility to accommodate the needs of agencies served and, to merge with the overall productive efforts of ARES[®] District 14, and the South Texas Section of the ARRL[®]. The District 14 ARES[®] organizational structure will merge with the overall management and production template of the ICS and NIMS. (See appendix B ARRL[®] Emergency Coordinator Job description for a more detailed description of the EC duties and responsibilities, which duties and responsibilities are incorporated herein and made a part of this Emergency Plan by their reference hereto.)

- 2.6.1 Each EC will develop an emergency plan and operations manual, which will compliment the South Texas emergency Plan and this document. Wherever conflicts occur, if any, this document and the South Texas Emergency Plan will prevail.
- 2.6.2 Each EC will include within their emergency plans job descriptions for each of their AECs, which shall include as a minimum those AEC duties and responsibilities described on the ARRL[®] site where job descriptions are listed. Another source for a succinct job description is the Emergency Coordinator's Manual, which is published by the ARRL[®].
- 2.7 Liaison stations to the following National Traffic System (NTS) nets and local VHF and UHF communications nets will be assigned as necessary:

H.F. Frequencies (+/- QRM)

- 3.873 MHz Night Emergency Net
- 7.285 MHz Day Emergency Net
- 3.935 MHz Night Health and Welfare Net
- 7.290 MHz Day Health and Welfare Net
- 7.0925 MHz Day Digital
- 3.5925 MHz Night Digital

VHF & UHF Frequencies used by District 14 ARES®

See Appendix C for VHF & UHF Frequencies

* Memorandum of Understanding for use of the repeater has been agreed to.

Note: The above frequencies are consistent with the VHF and UHF band plans listed in the current edition of The ARRL Repeater Directory; however, these plans are subject to local requirements, which may from time-to-time change. With the advent of D-Star in the Houston area some simplex designated areas of the two meter and seventy centimeter bands may be re-coordinated to accommodate D-Star repeater pairs. Never interfere, always be courteous and report the circumstances relating to interference to the appropriate District or unit digital / repeater restoration AEC. Restrict the use of repeater output frequencies for simplex communications to repeater outages, emergencies, or situations where specifically authorized by the repeater trustee. Follow the band plans for all HF, VHF and UHF Amateur Radio bands.

If you are intentionally interfered with on a simplex or repeater frequency ignore the interference. Confrontation is what the interfering station wants. Ignore it, move on and report the circumstances with as much information as possible.

See the District 14 ARES® site for the repeater training net schedule.
<http://harriscountyares.org/>.

2.7.1 District 14 ARES® personnel are dispatched to supported agencies and other assignments as required. Supported agencies with MOUs, will have priority for District 14 ARES® resources.

2.7.2 Operators of home stations with extended emergency power capabilities may be requested and coordinated to function as temporary “Key Stations”, if required. (See appendix D definitions.)

3. ACTIVATING THE PLAN

3.1 Any member of District 14 ARES® who for any reason believes that a communications emergency exists, or is imminent, should monitor the South Texas Section ARES® District 14 information / bulletin repeater, 147.000 MHz (+) PL 103.5 Hz. This repeater should be monitored for bulletins, announcements and other pertinent information relative to an event, or drill. Activation will occur by the automated ARES® District 14 emergency call up system and/or the phone tree and email notification systems.

- 3.2 In the event of an actual emergency, or an impending emergency in which FCC licensed volunteer radio operators, who are ARES[®] members, could be deployed to serve the community, District 14 ARES[®] will be alerted. The actual alert will normally come through the ARES[®] District 14 DEC. The automated alert system may be used for the initial alert.

The phone tree and email notification systems may also be employed in addition to the automated system. The net frequencies for each unit in District 14 ARES[®], and other vital information will be transmitted on the 147.000 MHz (+), PL 103.5 repeater.

4. MOBILIZATION PROCEDURE: Each unit EC, or an AEC will initiate mobilization by direction of the ARES[®] South Texas Section SEC or ARES[®] District 14 DEC. Instructions, including frequencies, will be given with directions for stations to be dispatched to shelters, assembly areas, or the situation site as appropriate. Net control may be handled from Transtar, a mobile unit in route, or other fixed station location depending on availability, requirements and severity of the situation. Monitor the 147.000 MHz (+) 103.5 District 14 bulletin ARES[®] / information repeater for information concerning the alert and/or mobilization.

Ready Response Team, hereinafter RRT, Leaders, or their designated duty officer, should be in contact with served agency personnel with regard to that agency's intention. Information on all served agency alert status will be passed to Operations to ensure proper dissemination. See paragraph 12.

- 4.1 If telephone service is available, the appropriate duty officer, EC or AEC, will also activate the telephone tree and the email alert system. The Section or District EC will activate the automated alert system. All District 14 ARES[®] members should check their email, monitor their phones and cell phones, and monitor the regularly utilized repeater frequencies, especially the District 14 information / bulletin repeater 147.000 MHz (+) PL 103.5 Hz.

- 4.2 When notification, or knowledge, that a communications emergency exists, members of each unit will check into their designated unit's local net and remain on frequency for instructions. The repeaters in use by all units will be announced on the 147.000 MHz (+) 103.5 information / bulletin repeater. Each unit will announce the specific net frequencies for their areas of responsibility.

- 4.3 RRT(s) are activated and should be at their designated sites, or in route, within thirty minutes of the mobilization and receipt of instructions.

NOTE: Each served agency in Harris County shall have a RRT assigned. These teams consist of three to five individuals, including a RRT Leader. Each team has

its own pre-written ICS plan for that particular served agency. Upon activation the team enters the pertinent information on their plan and is ready to operate in accordance with the plan. RRTs report to operations.

4.4 Tactical control will be on the announced primary tactical repeater for each unit. The actual location of the net control station will be as directed by the unit Communication Incident Commander, and appropriate to the specific emergency situation. The net control station will list all stations on frequency, and identify the simplex relay stations in the event that simplex operation is required. Simplex frequencies shall be published within the each unit's communication plan. The national simplex calling frequency is 146.520 MHz and should **not** be used as a NET frequency. 146,520MHz should be used as a calling frequency or simplex frequency to make announcements directing volunteers to other frequencies.

4.5 Anticipate that in the confusion that inevitably occurs during the early stages of an emergency, *you may be refused admittance to an area to which you have been dispatched*. Be courteous. Attempt to explain. Follow the orders of the person in charge, or the official with whom you are in contact. Call the NCS and standby for further instructions. *Be courteous and maintain a positive attitude. Always think in terms of how can I make this work to the best advantage of the mission*. Tact and diplomacy work extremely well. Be part of the solution and do not become a part of the problem.

NO *District 14 ARES*[®] personnel are authorized to go to the scene of an emergency or disaster without authorization, or an invitation, from the on scene commander, or individual in charge at the site. Mobile stations, and assigned personnel may proceed to assembly areas in the general vicinity to await further instructions and authorization. The assembly areas may be announced on the net, or disseminated prior to the event.

4.5.1 When assembly areas are required, and designated, an Intake Coordinator shall be dispatched to the assembly areas as needed. The Intake Coordinator disseminates instructions and directions to volunteers. The Intake Coordinator, using the appropriate ICS forms, will maintain an accurate and clearly legible record of all who have checked in and the location(s) to which they have been dispatched. This record will be passed to the relief Intake Coordinators and turned over to Logistics when the event has been secured. Accurate records of participating *ARES*[®] personnel are extremely important and must be retained.

4.5.2 In an actual emergency, training exercise or drill, the NCS may operate from a “Key Station”. Key stations may be extensively utilized during any communications emergency or training exercise. In order to be designated a Key Station, the station must have full emergency power capability, and in an actual emergency the station would have relief operators assigned to ensure that continuous operation over a prolonged period will be sustained.

4.6 Key Stations: There is one permanently designated Key Station used by District 14, Harris County ARES®:

4.6.1 Harris County Transtar, Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Management, call sign N5TRS, which is the Primary Key Station, which is located in the NWQ.

4.6.2 *Each unit shall identify Key Stations in their individual unit emergency plans.*

5. Operations

5.1 All written messages for the NTS must be in standard ARRL® format using the approved ARRL® transmission and receipt protocol and message forms. Formal messages within the ICS must be on the ICS 213 message form.

5.2 See paragraph 7.3.2 of the South Texas Emergency Communications Plan, Appendix T, for information on Winlink 2000.

5.3 *All messages must include the signature and title of the official originating the message.* The official signing the message assumes full responsibility for the message content. When drafting a formal message the criteria must be more than, *can this message be understood.* The final check and criteria must be not only be can this message be understood, it must also be scrutinized from the perspective of, *can this message be misunderstood?* Only then should the message be sent. *Never change the text of a message without written permission of the person that drafted the message.* If the message does not look correct and the authorizing person directs you to send the message, even after you have pointed out a possible error, then *send the message exactly as the originator wrote it.* Always ensure that originators of message traffic to be sent over Amateur Radio circuits understand that Amateur Radio is **NOT** a secure mode of transmission.

5.4 The appropriate message precedence of Emergency, Priority, Welfare, or Routine, as defined on ARRL[®] FORM FSD-3, are to be used at all times. The message precedent **Emergency** is always written out. The first initial of the precedence, as in “P”, “W” and “R” abbreviations are used for Priority, Welfare and Routine, respectively. **Emergency is always written out as “EMERGENCY”**. The Emergency Precedence is never abbreviated on the message form.

5.5 Stations should not transmit unless directed to do so by the net control station. Stations with pertinent information for the net such as updates on situational information should break the net with the pro-words “re-check”, “info”, “relay”, or their call sign as appropriate. *Call sign is preferred*, and facilitates more expeditious communications because the NCS knows who called. It is inappropriate and incorrect procedure on the net to use non-standard phonetics, or to transmit only the words “net control” when attempting to be recognized by the net control station. It *is appropriate* for a station with emergency traffic, or emergency information, to break the net at anytime by transmitting the station call sign with the words **emergency traffic**. Alternatively, a station may transmit the pro-word “break” two times in succession, as in “Break Break” which means that the transmitting station has an emergency. *Use of the station’s call sign with the word Emergency is preferred*. Refrain from using the word “break” unless you have an emergency.

6. Drills and Alerts

6.1 Each year in October District 14 ARES[®] will participate in the ARRL[®] Simulated Emergency Test (SET). Other units in District 14 ARES[®] may also participate in other drills and tests. The National Weather Service and other entities also run drills and tests and District 14 ARES[®] units may be requested to participate.

District 14 ARES[®] members are encouraged to participate in public service events even when District 14, may not be participating. These public service events frequently provide realistic training in real life situations, enable the participants to acquire valuable experience and promote ARES[®] and Amateur Radio to the general public.

6.2 District 14 ARES[®], if requested, will regularly provide public service communications in conjunction with local events, to test the effectiveness of ARES[®] communications operations. District 14 ARES[®] will actively participate in the annual MS-150 and other exercises, such as the CERT Rodeo.

- 6.3 Each unit shall establish a Training NET each week on the designated repeater or simplex frequency as established in their unit emergency communications plan. Check the District 14 ARES[®] website at: <http://harriscountyares.org>, or simply Google Harris County ARES[®].
- 6.4 At the discretion of the EC, and with authorization of the DEC, the District 14 ARES[®] NET will be activated unannounced via the automated alert system, telephone tree, or email system at least once per year.
7. Federal Terrorism Threat Level Warning Codes
- 7.1 The federal Department of Homeland Security has created a warning system that represents increasing terrorism threat levels by a Green, Blue, Yellow, Orange and Red color code progression. Since this was first implemented, the warning code level has been changed several times from Yellow to Orange and back again. These colors correspond to Moderate, and High threat levels, respectively. Each unit shall adopt emergency readiness procedures that correspond to these levels. See the South Texas Section Emergency Plan for an explanation of the codes and the actions to be taken by South Texas Section ARES[®] members.
- 8 NET OPERATIONS: The Texas Traffic Net System embraces many types of net operations, using many modes of communication. Traffic nets operate around the clock, seven days a week, three hundred sixty-five days a year on a wide variety of schedules. The basic cluster of Section nets in Texas subscribes to, and functions within, the operating procedures of the NTS as well as a variety of special-purpose nets such as the Texas Traffic Net, the ARRL[®] Information Net, various circuits operating CW, together with a number of other digital modes.
- 8.1 In addition, a great many VHF and UHF local or semi-local nets operate every day, and in just about every mode authorized by the FCC. These include repeaters, which by their inherent nature, may be defined as nets, and may or may not become subject net control situations. Each of these nets has its own procedures, schedules and operating practices, and many of them shift almost automatically from routine casual operation to emergency mode when the circumstances and situation dictate.
- 8.2 Procedures for any of these nets unless they are explicitly part of a unit, District, or Section ARES[®] program vary widely. Individual participation in almost any well-conducted net in any mode, on any frequency is strongly encouraged and recommended as a way to become familiar with net operating procedures and how different nets function and operate. The discussions below refer to and recommend procedures for ARES[®] affiliated nets.

- 8.3 It should be noted that most of these procedures work efficiently and effectively for most well disciplined traffic nets or emergency nets. The ARES[®] North, South and West Texas Sections operate combined traffic nets, which serve all three sections. Please note that the frequencies listed are +/- QRM.
- 8.4 The primary daytime HF SSB traffic net is the 7290 KHz Traffic Net, which meets Monday through Saturday from 1000 local through noon Central Time, and Monday through Friday from 1300 to 1400 Central Time on 7,290 KHz.
- 8.5 In an emergency, either one or both nets may be activated. When operating in emergency session:
- 8.6 Emergency and tactical traffic will be handled on 7,285 KHz during the daytime and 3,873 KHz at night.
- 8.7 Health and Welfare Traffic will be handled on 7,290 KHz during the day and 3,935 KHz at night.
- 8.8 There are two CW nets that also serve the combined ARES[®] North, South and West Texas Sections. The Texas CW Net operates daily from 1900 to 2200 Central time on 3,643 KHz. The Texas Slow Speed CW Net operates daily at 2000 Central Time on 3,719 KHz.

9 STAGING AREA OPERATIONS.

- 9.1 When amateur operators in large numbers augment Harris District 14 ARES[®] in response to a disaster or emergency one or more staging areas may be established and announced on the 147.000 MHz (+) 103.5 repeater, or other designated repeaters. Incoming amateurs will report to the Intake Coordinator at the designated staging area to be briefed, given directions, and assignments in accordance with their capabilities and matched to the needs for support at that time. The District 14 ARES[®], or designated unit official managing a staging area will maintain close liaison with the appropriate unit EC, or other designated District 14 ARES[®] personnel, via net control on the resource net, or tactical net if no resource net has been established, to ensure effective use of resources.
- 9.2 The Intake Coordinator managing the staging area will record the following: operator names, call sign, license class, cell and home phone numbers, capability to provide HF, VHF, UHF and digital modes without assistance, and the length of time the operator is able to operate. The Intake Coordinator should note special needs such as food and shelter or other important information on the appropriate ICS forms. Each unit shall include copies of ICS forms in their communications plan. It is important to note how long each volunteer operator is prepared to operate. Forms shall be retained and given to Logistics.

9.3 One or more staging areas may be set up at appropriate locations based on the type of emergency response required. Sites should be readily accessible along main routes that are unlikely to cause any traffic congestion or conflict in any way with sites in use by the County or State. Where available, sites will have the capability to temporarily park up to 20 vehicles without interfering with commercial or institutional activities that may be in progress. Ordinarily, schools, churches, or other high volume traffic sites would **not** be designated as staging areas.

9.4 Staging area sites are as follows:

9.4.1 HEB Parking lots.

9.4.2 Wal-Mart Parking Lots

9.4.3 Other locations that may be designated during NET operations.

10. District 14 ARES[®] Alert Definitions and Increased Readiness Conditions.

NOTE: These alert definitions have been taken from the South Texas Section Emergency Plan. Each has additions to make them more applicable to the District 14 ARES[®] Emergency Plan while still maintaining the direction and intent of the South Texas Section Emergency Plan. The word **Level** may be used interchangeably with **Condition** and corresponds to the Transtar alert plan, which uses the word “**Level**”.

Most natural occurring emergencies follow some recognizable build-up period during which actions can be taken to achieve a state of maximum readiness. These readiness conditions are used as a method of increasing the alert posture of District 14 ARES[®] members within their respective units.

10.1 **Condition 4 – Awareness.** A Condition 4 situation suggests that a higher level of readiness is required. This condition could be triggered by possibility of a weather watch or possibility of increased fire threat because of drought conditions. This condition could also be invoked when there is some potential possibility of civil disorder or terrorism threat.

10.1.1 **District 14 ARES[®] Action** - All members should review their unit emergency plan.

10.2 **Condition 3 – Caution.** A Condition 3 alert is automatically triggered when the National Weather Service or local weather service, issues a “Watch” condition, or anytime Harris County Transtar goes to Level 3. In Condition 4 Alert there is no immediate threat to life or property; however, in a Condition 3 Alert it is recognized that conditions may deteriorate into a more hazardous situation. The possibility of weather conditions that would normally trigger a Condition 3 Alert may include the following. The possibility of the threat of civil disorder or terrorism could also trigger a Condition 3 Alert.

10.2.1 Conditions that would typically initiate a Condition 3 alert would include, but not be limited to the following sever weather conditions:

10.2.1.1 Hurricane Watch.

10.2.1.2 High wind advisories with wind velocities in excess of 50 mph.

10.2.1.3 High water watch.

10.2.1.4 Flash flood watch.

10.2.1.5 Tornado watch.

10.2.1.6 Winter storm watch.

10.2.1.7 Similar conditions in adjacent or nearby counties that could escalate into a mutual aid requirement.

10.2.2 **District 14 ARES® Action** – Follow instructions in your unit emergency plan. Be prepared. Your welfare and your family’s welfare take priority. Review Section Four of this Operations Manual.

ECs and AECs monitor the Texas ARES® HF net at not less than three hour intervals beginning at 1900 local time each evening during the alert. All District 14 ARES® members should monitor the District 14 ARES® bulletin repeater (147.000 MHz [+] 103.5) and check their email for information bulletins. NET may be activated for roll call and to pass advisory information.

- 10.3 **Condition 2 - Alert.** A Condition 2 Alert is automatically triggered by severe weather warnings or anytime that Harris County Transtar issues a Level 2 Alert. A weather warning is issued when hazardous weather is observed or imminent. An increased possibility of civil disorder or terrorism may also trigger a Condition 2 Alert. Weather warnings, which would include, but not be limited to the following conditions will automatically trigger a Condition 2 Alert:
- 10.3.1.1 High wind warnings with winds in excess of 60 miles per hour.
 - 10.3.1.2 High water warnings.
 - 10.3.1.3 Tornado warnings.
 - 10.3.1.4 Flash flood warnings.
 - 10.3.1.5 Winter storm warnings.
 - 10.3.1.6 Similar conditions in adjacent or nearby counties when the DEC there has advised that there may be a requirement for assistance and mutual aid from District 14 may be requested.
- 10.3.2 **District 14 ARES® Action** - Follow instructions in your unit emergency plan. Be prepared. Expect the unexpected. Family first.
- 10.3.2.1 EC and AECs monitor the Texas ARES® HF net at not less than three hour intervals beginning at 1900 local time each evening during the alert. All District 14 ARES® members should monitor the 147.000 MHz (+) 103.5 bulletin repeater and check their email for information bulletins. A net may be activated for roll call and to pass advisory information.
 - 10.3.2.2 Planning and operational aspects of emergency activation should be reviewed and refined by the DEC, Unit EC and AECs. Operations AEC and Logistics AEC should be in contact with RRT leaders, the NET Manager, NCS operators, Duty Officers and Intake Coordinators to ensure their availability and readiness. Planning AEC should review and update the appropriate served agency Incident Action Plans (IAPs) and ensure that the most current version has been sent to all concerned.
 - 10.3.2.3 Depending on the situation's synoptic overview, and anticipated developments, any and all nets may be activated by direction of the DEC or EC.

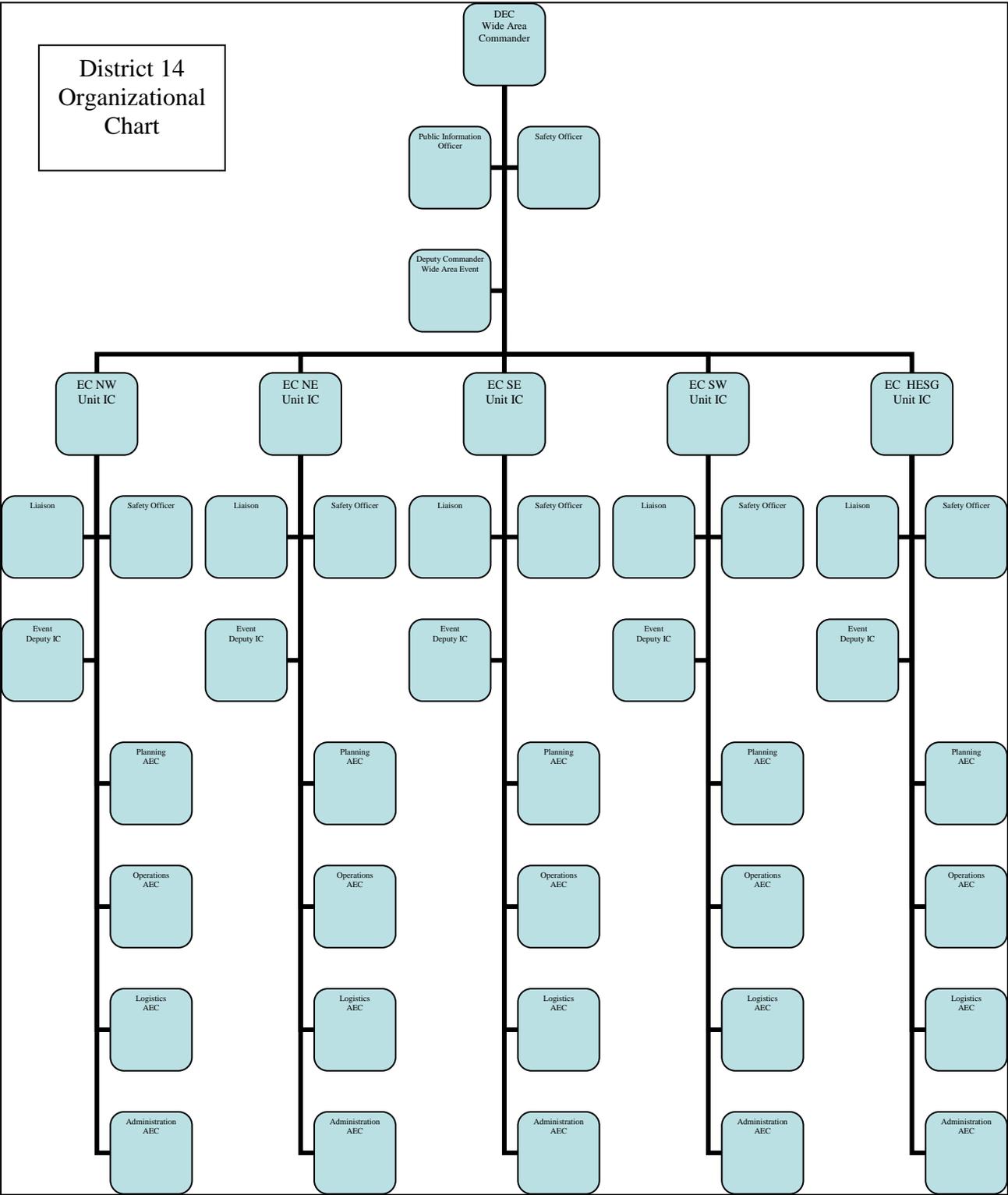
- 10.3.2.4 All District 14 ARES[®] members should monitor the NET frequencies announced on the 147.000 MHz (+) 103.5 District 14 ARES[®] bulletin repeater.
- 10.3.2.5 All District 14 ARES[®] members should be aware that the automatic call up and alert system, the phone tree and the email alert system could be initiated in a Condition 2 Alert.
- 10.4 **Condition 1 Alert – Imminent Danger.** A Condition 1 Alert is triggered by actual weather conditions or severe weather warnings when the danger to personal property and life may be threatened. This level of alert will only be issued when there is a situation that has put the region, state or nation in extreme danger.
- 10.4.1 The South Texas Section SEC or the District 14 ARES[®] DEC would normally be the ARES[®] authority that would be authorized to trigger a Condition 1 Alert. **Condition 1 Alert will not be automatic.** Only in extreme circumstances will the unit EC issue a Condition 1 Alert. An example of an extreme circumstance could be the touching down of a tornado in southwest Harris County with the probability of extensive damage.
- 10.4.2 Condition 1 Alert – Imminent Danger could be triggered by civil disorder, terrorism, or any condition including, but not limited to the weather events listed:
- 10.4.2.1 Extremely high winds approaching Hurricane Category 1 status.
- 10.4.2.2 Tornado sightings or tornado sightings moving toward Harris County.
- 10.4.2.3 Actual flooding.
- 10.4.3 **District 14 ARES[®] Action** – This is the highest alert level in the South Texas Section and District 14 ARES[®]. All preparations have been made by all District 14 ARES[®] members and all are at the ready and standing by for instructions. The automated alert system has been activated. Assuming that there was sufficient warning and time available, the telephone tree and email systems have also been activated.
- 10.4.3.1 All District 14 ARES[®] units have been activated.
- 10.4.3.2 Assigned personnel have been activated and are at, or in route to Transtar, the Greater Houston American Red Cross Headquarters and Disaster Control, and all other EOCs.

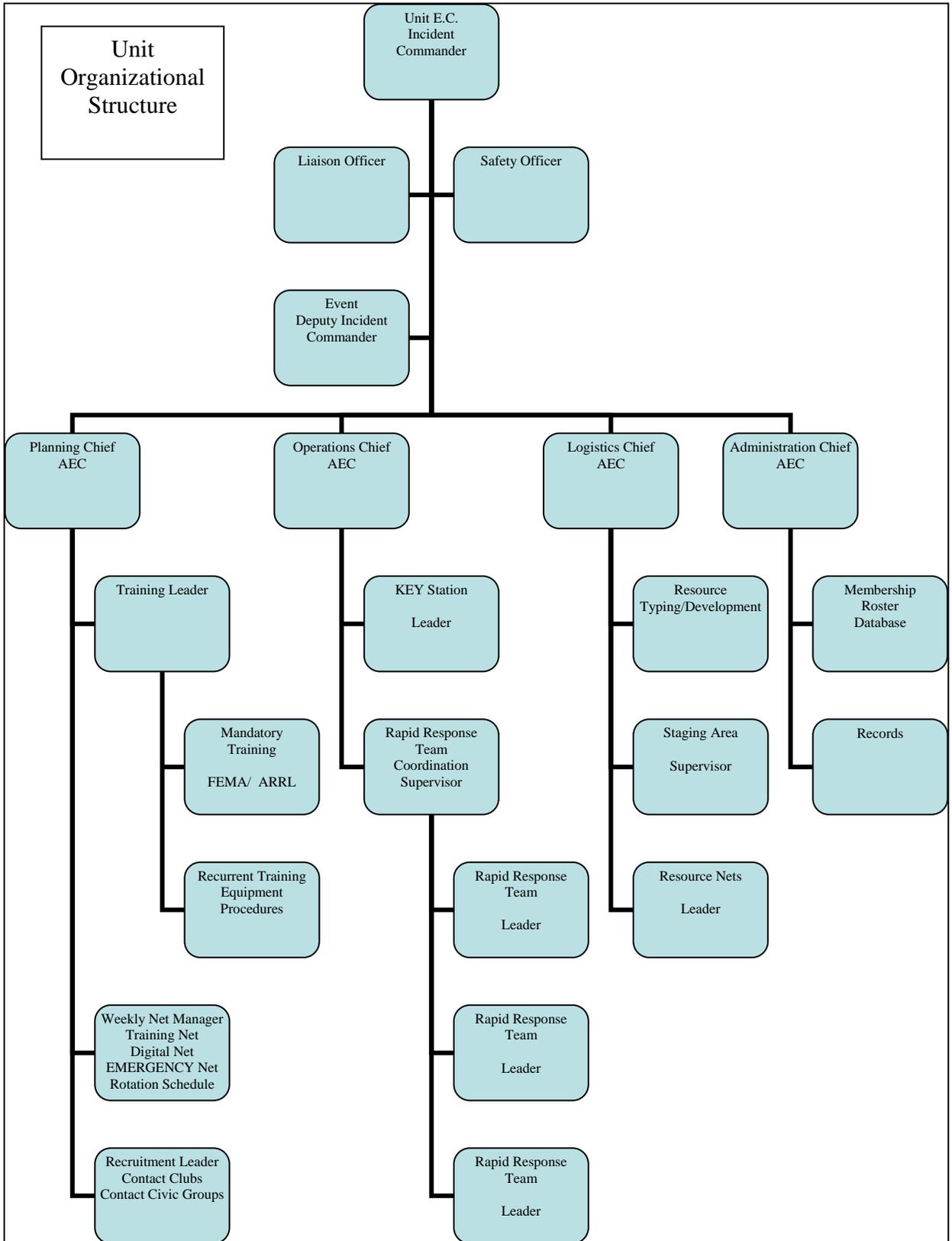
- 10.4.3.3 Other personnel have been activated and are at, or enroute, to their assignments.
- 10.4.3.4 Assigned teams are in standby and making any final preparations.
- 10.4.3.5 Each unit's tactical net is in operation.
- 10.4.3.6 Each unit's resource net is in operation.
- 10.4.3.7 Harris County Transtar is on Level 1 alert status.

11. District 14 Organizational Structure and Organization Charts.

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District 14
Organizational
Chart





- 11.1 In response to the attacks on 11 September 2001 President George W. Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) in February 2003. HSPD-5 called for a NIMS and identified steps for improved coordination of Federal, State, local, and private industry response to incidents and described the way these agencies will prepare for such a response. All District 14 ARES® ECs have had some ICS training. The DEC, Unit EC and all AECs are required to have ICS training and ARRL® Emergency Communications Training, in accordance with Homeland Security Presidential Order 5. The Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security announced the establishment of NIMS in March 2004. One of the key features of NIMS is the ICS.
- 11.2 District 14 ARES® is organized to function within the broad guidelines of the ICS. The ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demand of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.
- 11.3 The ICS has considerable internal flexibility. It can grow or shrink to meet different needs. This flexibility makes it a very cost effective and efficient management approach for both small and large situations. The ICS is just as applicable to a multi-agency situation as it is to an ARES® communications EmComm operation.
- 11.4 All of the organizations with which District 14 ARES® could be involved in an emergency situation will be operating within an ICS/NIMS organizational template. All ARES® personnel must have a working knowledge of the ICS/NIMS. The agencies we serve expect all ARES® EmComm personnel to have that working knowledge.
12. Ready Response Teams, hereinafter referred to as RRT(s).
- 12.1 Most ARES® units employ some form of response team. In some areas they are called Quick Response Teams (QRTs). The ARRL® Emergency Communications Course calls them Rapid Response Teams, and there are many other variations. While the team name may be different, they all have a similar role to play in the EmComm scheme of things. That role is to provide effective and efficient emergency communications when required. Within District 14 ARES® the goal is to have a RRT assigned to each served agency. Served agencies with which a MOU has been entered into will receive priority.
- 12.2 Objective of the RRT. The RRT primary objective is to provide preeminent client service as a team of qualified EmComm communicators to the specific served agency to which it is assigned. When not called upon to support their assigned agency, the secondary objective is to provide backup support to other RRTs.

- 12.3 Organization of the RRT: Each RRT is composed of three to four qualified Amateur Radio operators, and a RRT Leader who are members of the unit ARES® team.
- 12.3.1 The RRT Leader has the following responsibilities:
- 12.3.1.1 Act as the liaison between operations and the served agency. Ensure that a current copy of the served agency's emergency plan is available to the unit EC and the unit Operations AEC.
- 12.3.1.2 Maintain a current listing for each of the team members including their most current contact information.
- 12.3.1.3 Each Team Leader is responsible for maintaining the team's operating schedule during drills and during actual emergencies. When personnel shortages exist the team leader will immediately notify operations and logistics.
- 12.3.1.4 The RRT Leader is responsible for ensuring that each of his team members has been trained on the operation of all Amateur Radio equipment at the served agency site.
- 12.3.1.5 If there is no radio equipment at the served agency site the RRT Leader shall be responsible for making arrangements for Amateur Radio equipment to be fulfill the served agency's EmComm requirements. This can be done in the form of a "Communications Go Kit" with radio(s), coax, antennas and power source, as applicable to the particular served agency, which each member assigned to the RRT has contributed to. Or, it may be a situation where the served agency has provided an antenna and coax down to the operating position and members bring their own equipment to the site for the operating period. It is the responsibility of the RRT Leader to work out these details with the team members. As always, members of the District 14 ARES® leadership team and other members are available to help with working out the details of the operation.
- 12.3.1.6 When District 14 ARES® is alerted it is the RRT Leader's responsibility to communicate with the served agency, find out what their intended response will be, what their requirements may be and communicate that information to operations.
- 12.3.1.7 It is the RRT Leader's responsibility to inform the operations of the served agency's EmComm requirements and their intended response to the alert.
- 12.3.1.8 The RRT Leader must have a working knowledge of the ICS and NIMS.
- 12.3.1.9 The RRT Leader must be a qualified NCS operator and must be willing to run the local unit ARES® Training Net from time to time to maintain NCS operator proficiency.
- 12.3.1.10 It his highly recommended that the RRT Leader have completed the ARRL Emergency Communications Course Level I. Completion of Level II is highly recommended.

- 12.3.1.11 The RRT Leader is responsible for the team's performance.
- 12.3.1.12 The RRT Leader will rely on the assistance of the unit ARES® EC, Operations AEC and Logistics AEC in locating and recruiting members for their team.
- 12.3.1.13 The RRT Leader should have thorough knowledge of the served agency emergency plan.
- 12.3.1.14 In circumstances where the RRT leader is unavailable, one, or more, of the RRT members shall be trained to take command during the RRT leaders absence.
- 12.3.1.15 Each RRT may have designated "Duty Officers" who share that responsibility. These individuals would function as the served agency contact. Each RRT leader based on the requirements of the served agency and the needs of the RRT will determine their designation and rotational schedule. If Duty Officers are designated and a rotational schedule established that information must be available to the Operations AEC, who will ensure its proper dissemination.
- 12.3.1.16 Team members will train as a unit specifically for a served agency. Each RRT is responsible to determine its logistic requirements relating to support, lodging and food. Some served agencies may make all these available, while others may provide only some support. In some cases no support will be available. Team members must be aware of these circumstances and make provisions for their own support as needed.
- 12.3.1.17 Each RRT member should have a reasonable understanding of where each of the other RRT members are during the work week and make arrangements for RRT members on vacation, out of town on business, or when out of commission because of an illness or family emergency. This is particularly critical during the period from 1 June through 1 November when this area can be subject to tropical weather.
- 12.3.1.18 Served Agency Site Preparation for RRTs: EOCs, such as fire stations, police stations, City EOCs, etc., with pre-installed radio equipment are critical to the success of the RRT concept. Served agencies that expect RRT personnel to be on site and ready to operate within thirty minutes of notification need to make provisions for a permanent station. *As an unreduceable minimum, preinstalled antennas, coax cables and an operating position where RRT members can connect their own equipment must be available.* A UPS source of power must also be available at the operating site.
- 12.3.1.19 The RRT Leader will have to improvise if the minimum required EmComm equipment has not been provided by the served agency. The extent of that improvisation will depend on the served agency's commitment to utilizing

Amateur Radio Emcomm operators as a back-up source of emergency communications.

12.3.1.20 Some RRT Leaders will conclude that the best situation is for the served agency to provide the antenna(s), coaxial cables to the antennas, a place to operate and an uninterrupted power source. The RRT would operate with their own radios and back up equipment, or with their RRT "Communications Go Kit" and radios. This concept ensures that each operator is familiar with the equipment that will be used and that all of the necessary components are present when needed.

12.4 Advance Preparations for RRTs.

12.4.1 The preparations made by RRT members are critical to the team's success. Each member will require significant advance training and practice, a set of specific assignments and the proper equipment and personal gear for the EmComm support mission. All of this must be ready to go at a moments notice.

12.5 Education and Training.

12.5.1 RRT members shall develop their own training syllabus designed to be consistent with the requirements of the served agency. Well in advance of any anticipated emergency, all team members should complete the following training:

12.5.1.1 FEMA ICS and NIMS courses.

12.5.1.2 ARRL Emergency Communications Course Level I.

12.5.1.3 The Team Leader should complete the ARRL Emergency Communications Courses Level I. Level II is highly recommended, especially if acting as an NCS, or as a net manager.

12.5.1.4 All RRT members should be familiar with, and have a clear understanding of the District 14 emergency plan and their unit's emergency plan.

12.5.1.5 All RRT members should be familiar with and have a clear understanding of their emcomm mission.

12.5.1.6 Experience in operating all of the equipment at the served agency pertaining to their emcomm mission.

12.5.1.7 Demonstrated skills as NCS in several regular training net sessions.

12.5.1.8 Practice getting assigned stations operational at the supported facility within thirty minutes.

12.5.1.9 Participation in a simulated activation designed to test their notifications system.

12.5.1.10 Periodic “refresher” training sessions.

12.6 Equipment and Information.

12.6.1.1 It is strongly suggested that each team member have at least the following information and equipment available to them when activated:

12.6.1.1.1 A laminated wallet sized card containing information on the notification system and key phone numbers and frequencies relating to their specific emcomm mission.

12.6.1.1.2 Identification: FCC license, ARES, RACES, and the appropriate served agency ID cards.

12.6.1.1.3 Seventy-two hour response pack, including water, food, protective clothing/footwear and cash for personal needs.

12.6.1.1.4 A vehicle equipped with a two-meter or dual band mobile radio. Amateur Radio license plates. Magnetic identification signs for the doors are desirable.

12.6.1.1.5 Stop and fill up the gas tank when in route to the served agency site if possible.

12.6.1.1.6 A handheld two-meter or dual-band radio, with spare rechargeable and alkaline battery packs, rubber duck antenna, telescoping whip, twenty-five feet RG-58 or mini-8 feed line, ribbon J-Pole antenna and earphone headset in a fanny pack, shoulder carry bag or back pack.

12.6.1.1.7 Anderson PowerPole connectors on all of their equipment DC connections.

12.6.1.1.8 Two-meter or dual band mobile radio, magnetic mount gain antenna, fifty feet of coaxial cable and a switching power supply in a portable carrying case or bag.

12.7 Relief and Back-up.

12.7.1 All personnel must be aware that they may be called on to fill in for a missing RRT member or to relieve members of a RRT that have exceeded a reasonable crew duty time. Operations and logistics must be keenly aware of RRT replacement needs during drills and actual emergencies and plan accordingly.

12.8 Mutual Aid and the RRT.

12.8.1 In some situations it is probable that resources within District 14 ARES® will be overwhelmed. One unit may be devastated while another may survive an event unscathed. RRTs should be prepared to render assistance where needed. Additionally, areas outside of Harris County may require assistance. The District 14 ARES® leadership and unit ARES® organizations shall render service to their primary areas of responsibility first and secondarily provide assistance as

- 12.8.2 Each unit ARES[®] communications plan will provide for the development of an Amateur Radio Communications Team (ARCT) consistent with the ARRL definition of Amateur Radio Communications Teams (ARCT).
- 12.8.3 Resource Typing: Each District 14 ARES[®] unit will *type* their personnel to ensure *resource* consistency between assigned and unassigned ARES[®] volunteer personnel.

Official ARRL Field Organization Appointment Description: District Emergency Coordinator

[ARRL Field Organization](#)

The ARRL District Emergency Coordinator is appointed by the [SEC](#) to supervise the efforts of local Emergency Coordinators in the defined district. The DEC's duties involve the following:

1. Coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of Emergency Coordinators in your district of jurisdiction.
2. Make local decisions in the absence of the SEC or through coordination with the SEC, concerning the allotment of available amateurs and equipment during an emergency.
3. Coordinate the interrelationship between local emergency plans and between communications networks within your area of jurisdiction.
4. Act as backup for local areas without an Emergency Coordinator and assist in maintaining contact with governmental and other agencies within your area of jurisdiction.
5. Provide direction in the routing and handling of emergency communications of either a formal or tactical nature, with specific emphasis being placed on Welfare traffic.
6. Recommend EC appointments to the SEC.
7. Coordinate the reporting and documenting of ARES activities in your district of jurisdiction.
8. Act as a model emergency communicator as evidenced by dedication to purpose, reliability and understanding of emergency communications.
9. Be fully conversant in National Traffic System routing and procedures as well as have a thorough understanding of the locale and role of all vital governmental and volunteer agencies that could be involved in an emergency.
10. District Emergency Coordinators are encouraged to earn certification in Levels 1 and 2 of the ARRL Emergency Communications Course < <http://www.arrl.org/cce/> >.

Recruitment of new hams and League members is an integral part of the job of every League appointee. Appointees should take advantage of every opportunity to recruit a new ham or member to foster growth of Field Organization programs, and our abilities to serve the public.

Requirements: Technician or higher class; Full ARRL membership.

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Official ARRL Field Organization Appointment Description: Emergency Coordinator

[ARRL Field Organization](#)

The ARRL Emergency Coordinator is a key team player in [ARES](#) on the local emergency scene. Working with the [Section Emergency Coordinator](#), the [DEC](#) and [Official Emergency Stations](#), the EC prepares for, and engages in management of communications needs in disasters. EC duties include:

1. Promote and enhance the activities of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) for the benefit of the public as a voluntary, non-commercial communications service.
2. Manage and coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of interested amateurs working in support of the communities, agencies or functions designated by the [Section Emergency Coordinator/Section Manager](#).
3. Establish viable working relationships with federal, state, county, city governmental and private agencies in the ARES jurisdictional area which need the services of ARES in emergencies. Determine what agencies are active in your area, evaluate each of their needs, and which ones you are capable of meeting, and then prioritize these agencies and needs. Discuss your planning with your Section Emergency Coordinator and then with your counterparts in each of the agencies. Ensure they are all aware of your ARES group's capabilities, and perhaps more importantly, your limitations.
4. Develop detailed local operational plans with "served" agency officials in your jurisdiction that set forth precisely what each of your expectations are during a disaster operation. Work jointly to establish protocols for mutual trust and respect. All matters involving recruitment and utilization of ARES volunteers are directed by you, in response to the needs assessed by the agency officials. Technical issues involving message format, security of message transmission, Disaster Welfare Inquiry policies, and others, should be reviewed and expounded upon in your detailed local operations plans.
5. Establish local communications networks run on a regular basis and periodically test those networks by conducting realistic drills.
6. Establish an emergency traffic plan, with Welfare traffic inclusive, utilizing the [National Traffic System](#) as one active component for traffic handling. Establish an operational liaison with local and section nets, particularly for handling Welfare traffic in an emergency situation.
7. In times of disaster, evaluate the communications needs of the jurisdiction and respond quickly to those needs. The EC will assume authority and responsibility for emergency response and performance by ARES personnel under his jurisdiction.
8. Work with other non-ARES amateur provider-groups to establish mutual respect and understanding, and a coordination mechanism for the good of the

public and Amateur Radio. The goal is to foster an efficient and effective Amateur Radio response overall.

9. Work for growth in your ARES program, making it a stronger, more valuable resource and hence able to meet more of the agencies' local needs. There are thousands of new Technicians coming into the amateur service that would make ideal additions to your ARES roster. A stronger ARES means a better ability to serve your communities in times of need and a greater sense of pride for Amateur Radio by both amateurs and the public.
10. Report regularly to the SEC, as required.
11. Emergency Coordinators are encouraged to earn certification in Level 1 of the ARRL Emergency Communications Course <http://www.arrl.org/cce/> .

Recruitment of new hams and League members is an integral part of the job of every League appointee. Appointees should take advantage of every opportunity to recruit a new ham or member to foster growth of Field Organization programs, and our abilities to serve the public.

Requirements: Technician or higher class license; Full ARRL membership

District 14 ARES® Emergency Communications Plan
“VHF/UHF Frequency Guide”

Because of the vast size of Harris County there are few repeaters that can effectively cover the entire County. This dictates that several repeaters may have to be used in different parts of the County and for different purposes such as informational, tactical, and logistics nets. Because repeater availability may change from time-to-time, this guide will be reviewed and updated at frequent intervals. Refer to the Harris County ARES® web site for the most current repeater updates.
http://harriscountyares.org/resources/ARES_repeater.pdf

Two meters (144-148 MHz) is the most heavily utilized band by Amateur Radio operators, and more equipment is available for this band. Because of this, preference shall be given to two-meter frequencies.

Countywide operations

147.000 (+)(103.5) – Harris County ARES informational net. This net exists primarily to keep the general membership informed.
 145.170 (-)(123.0) is the back up to the 147.000 repeater.
 444.600 (+)(71.9) is the UHF countywide repeater and may be used for other coordinating nets if needed.

Geographical operations

<p>Northwest Quadrant</p> <p>146.720 (-)(123.0) 146.760 (-)(103.5) 147.300 (+)(151.4) 146.660 (-)(141.3)</p> <p>146.440 Simplex 147.440 Simplex</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Northeast Quadrant</p> <p style="text-align: right;">145.430 (-)(none) Simplex (if repeater down) 147.280 (+)(100.0) Simplex (if repeater down) 444.825 (+)(103.5) 443.550 (+)(103.5) 146.410 simplex 28.410 USB</p>
<p>Inside the IH-610 Loop</p> <p>145.170 (-)(123.0) 146.840(-)(103.5) 146.960(-)(167.9) 147.080(+)(none) 147.320(+)(none)</p> <p>D-Star Data 1293.??</p>	
<p>Southwest Quadrant</p> <p>145.190 (-)(123.0) 146.940 (-)(167.9) 145.170 (-)(123.0) 147.200 (+)(141.3) 442.350 (+)(103.5)</p> <p>146.560 simplex 147.560 simplex</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Southeast Quadrant</p> <p style="text-align: right;">146.640 (-)(none) 145.130 (-)(none) 145.370 (-)(123.0) 146.860 (-)(100.0) 146.780 (-)(none)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">145.600 simplex 145.700 simplex</p>

Last update: 31 Dec 2007

Definitions

AEC – Assistant. Emergency Coordinator

APRS – Automatic Position Reporting System – A digital system that transmits and displays data on maps on computer screens. Highly effective as a parallel to voice circuits.

ALERT Definitions: See paragraph 7 and paragraph 10 of this manual.

ARES[®] – Amateur Radio Emergency Service; a part of the ARRL[®] field organization.

ARRL[®] – American Radio Relay League – National Amateur Radio organization dedicated to implementing Part 97 of the FCC regulations.

CEM – County Emergency Manager or County Emergency Management.

Communications emergency – as defined the FCC occurs when normal communications systems are disrupted in a specified area.

County – Any geographical jurisdiction assigned to an EC. For ARES[®] purposes a County can be an actual County, a portion of a County, or a combination of counties.

County Warning Point – A county public safety site, such as a Sheriff's dispatch office that functions 24 hours a day. It is a principal contact point for the State Warning Point.

DEC – District Emergency Coordinator, an appointee in charge of ARES[®] activities in a county cluster of contiguous counties comprising a District.

DEM also **TDEM** – The Texas Division of Emergency Management.

Disaster – An event causing death or serious injury to humans or a major loss of property.

Distress traffic – Any traffic relating to an acute, immediate threat to human safety or property; i.e. SOS, MAYDAY, or EMERGENCY traffic.

District – A county or cluster of contiguous counties assigned to a District Emergency Coordinator (DEC).

DRO – District Radio Officer. A RACES title used to describe the radio operator in charge of a RACES district.

DPS – Department of public service.

D-Star - (Digital Smart Technologies for Amateur Radio) is a digital voice and data protocol specification developed for use in amateur radio. D-Star compatible radios are available on VHF and UHF amateur radio bands. In addition to the over-the-air protocol, D-Star also provides specifications for network connectivity, enabling D-Star radios to be connected to the Internet or other networks. D-STAR is the result of research by the Japan Amateur Radio League to investigate digital technologies for amateur radio.

EC or **Emergency Coordinator** – An ARES appointee who supervises emergency planning operations in a specified geographical area. Reports to the DEC.

Email – Electronic messages exchanged over the Internet or local computer network.

EOC – Emergency Operations Center.

Emergency – any situation in which human life or property is threatened. The emergency ceases when relief agencies have no further need for our services. (See "Disaster") Also the highest priority message precedence used in the traffic system. When used in a message the word "EMERGENCY" is always written out.

Emergency Net – A group of Amateur Radio operators using the same frequency and associated side frequencies to support emergency relief measures.

EOC or **Emergency Operations Center** – An emergency headquarters. The Harris County EOC is Transtar. See Transtar in these definitions.

ESF or **Emergency Support Function** – Each of the 16 ESFs is a group of people in an EOC dealing with specific kinds of problem.

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

Formal traffic – Written traffic in ARRL message form. It is used when Amateur Radio operators relay information between third parties.

GATEway Stations – Fixed stations providing liaison between two nets.

HAZMAT – Hazardous Materials.

Hot Standby Alert – Activation with deployment is immanent.

ICS, or Incident Command System– The Incident Command System (ICS) is a management tool designed to bring multiple responding agencies, including those from different jurisdictions, together under a single overall command structure.

Informal communications” – Radio exchanges between two people not requiring verbatim relay to any third party. Classified as non-traffic; not handled on emergency nets.

Jump Team – A group of experienced Amateur volunteers selected and trained to mobilize on a very short notice to meet an emergency. See also Rapid Response Team.

Key City – A cluster of GATEway stations within a specific geographic area-providing liaison between activated emergency nets or a served agency HQ.

Key Station – An Amateur Radio station with the capability to stay operational without commercial power for a week or more. The Key Station would be able to sustain itself and its operators in addition to staying on the air.

LGL – Local Government Liaison is an appointment by the State Government Liaison (SGL) for any specific task.

NM – Net Manager.

NOAA or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – Home agency for the National Weather Service.

No alert – Normal operations.

NTS – National Traffic System. A field organization of the American Radio Relay League.

NWS – National Weather Service.

QNC – QN signal for CW or digital net use meaning “All net member stations please copy.” It indicates that the message to follow is of general interest. A comprehensive listing of “Q” signals used by military and Amateur Radio operators can be found on the Internet by simply entering “comprehensive list of Q signals” in Google or other search engine.

QST – Attention all listening stations. A comprehensive listing of “Q” signals used by military and Amateur Radio operators can be found on the Internet by simply entering “comprehensive list of Q signals” in Google or other search engine.

RACES – Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service – **RACES** is defined by the FCC as a Service, like the Citizens Band Service. Where it is functional in Texas, it operates at the County level under direct control of the County Emergency Management Director or at the State level under the control of State Races Officer who is appointed by the Governor under the authority of, and in accordance with the following:

1. Federal Communications Rules and Regulations, Part 97
2. Texas Disaster Act of 1975 (Texas Government Code, Chapter 418)
3. Executive order of the Governor of the State of Texas
4. State of Texas Emergency Management Plan

Rapid Response Team (RRT) Level 1 – Flexible and adaptive concept that can provide a timely initial response to any emergency. The goal is a limited, coordinated, operational response within 30 – 60 minutes. Some ARES® groups refer to these teams as Rapid Response Teams, Ready Emergency Deployment Teams (RED Teams), and Quick Response Teams (QRT). In SWHCA these are the teams assigned to various supported agencies. **NOTE:** In District 14 ARES® RRT are called Rapid Response Teams. They are comprised of a group of 3 to 5 qualified EmComm operators who are permanently assigned to a served agency. A Team Leader is responsible for their organization and training. RRTs should be prepared to operate from an assigned agency for 36 to 48 hours, with operators rotating, and under a pre-planned ICS formatted plan.

Rapid Response Team (RRT) Level 2 – In some ARES® organizations this would be a follow on to a RRT Level 1 response, which would occur within two to three hours, or whatever time frame resources and served agency requirements dictate.

Section – ARRL administrative unit headed by elected Section Manager (SM). Texas has three Sections; Northern, Southern, and West Central.

SEC or Section Emergency Coordinator – Official responsible for all ARES activities within a Section.

Secondary net – A communications channel associated with the primary emergency net used for traffic handling and other time-consuming net business.

SEOC – State Emergency Operations Center in Austin, Texas.

SET – Simulated Emergency Test, which is a national communications

exercise held each year in October. The American Radio Relay League sponsors the annual SET.

SGL – State Government Liaison is an appointment made by the Section Manager. The role is that of interface between amateur radio and all facets of state government.

Side Frequency – Secondary Net or frequency used to send traffic off the primary NET frequency.

SITREP – Situation Report – message-reporting status of emergency-related activities.

SM – Section Manager. ARRL® term used to describe the person in charge of a state ARRL® section.

SOC – State Operations Center.

SRO – State Races Officer.

Standby Alert – Activation is likely.

STM – Section Traffic Manager.

STS – South Texas Section.

SWP – State Warning Point – Communications center at the FDEM; operates 24 hours a day, everyday.

SWPAS – State Warning Point Amateur Station – An amateur station located at the State Warning Point in the State Emergency Operations Center in a state capitol. It is activated by the SEOC Operations Officer when needed, is staffed by amateurs recruited by the LGL who has that role, and serves the roles given to it by the SEOC Operations Officer. Usually that will include receiving input from the state GATEway, including SITREPS from the SEC, and transmitting traffic for County Emergency Managers from the SEOC. It will NOT usually include receiving or transmitting messages to individual amateurs unless they are serving County Emergency Managers or SECs. Not all states are organized in this manner.

Tactical traffic – Spoken instructions or consultation on the air.

Generally, no third party communication occurs, although third party informal traffic can and sometimes does occur.

Traffic – Any exchange of information between two or more Amateur Radio Stations.

Traffic Log – A list of incoming and outgoing traffic at an Amateur station.

Transtar – Harris County Transtar, Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Management. Transtar is the Harris County EOC.