

American Radio Relay League South Texas Section

Harris County, Texas

District 14 ARES®

Emergency Communications Plan



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Table of Contents

| | Page |
|--|------|
| Table of contents | i |
| List of revisions | ii |
| District 14 ARES® Emergency Communications Plan | 1 |
| Purpose | 1 |
| General Information..... | 2 |
| Harris County District Geography | 2 |
| District Organization..... | 2 |
| Frequencies..... | 3 |
| District organization..... | 4 |
| Unit Organization..... | 5 |
| Activating the Plan..... | 6 |
| Mobilization Procedure..... | 6 |
| Operations..... | 6 |
| Message Handling..... | 6 |
| Served Agencies..... | 7 |
| Safety..... | 7 |

Revisions Page

Revision 1 – 04 April 2021.

1. Rewrite of the communications plan to focus on communications and activation.

Revision 2 – 28 June 2024.

1. Update to ICS-205
2. Update of paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 to consider activation during outage of utilities and repeaters

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

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 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 an 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.
- 1.2 District 14 ARES® and each of the Units in the District are organized to merge with the overall management template of the Incident Command System, known as ICS, and the National Incident Management System, known as NIMS.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 2.1 District geography - Harris County is designated South Texas Section District 14 ARES® and it is the only county in District 14. District 14 is further divided into four geographical areas, southwest (SW), northwest (NW), northeast (NE) and southeast (SE). 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. Each area is served by an ARES organization within that defined area which are called units and named for the geographic area.
- 2.2 District organization - Each Unit in District 14 ARES® is under the operational coordination of a Unit EC (Emergency Coordinator) recommended by the DEC (District Emergency Coordinator) and appointed by the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC). Each of the Unit ECs is tasked with developing a Unit Emergency Plan that incorporates the broad guidelines in the District plan. It is recognized that each Unit because of its geographical, demographic and infrastructural differences will develop an Emergency Plan and incorporate allowances and provisions for coping with these unique differences. Each Unit plan is subject to approval and periodic review by the DEC.
- 2.3 WebEOC, is an Internet-based tool used for communicating resource/supply request, and/or situations reports to served agencies may be used if available. Access should be coordinated with the Unit Emergency Coordinator.
- 2.4 NTS Liaison stations to the below National Traffic System (NTS) nets and local VHF and UHF communications nets will be assigned as necessary.

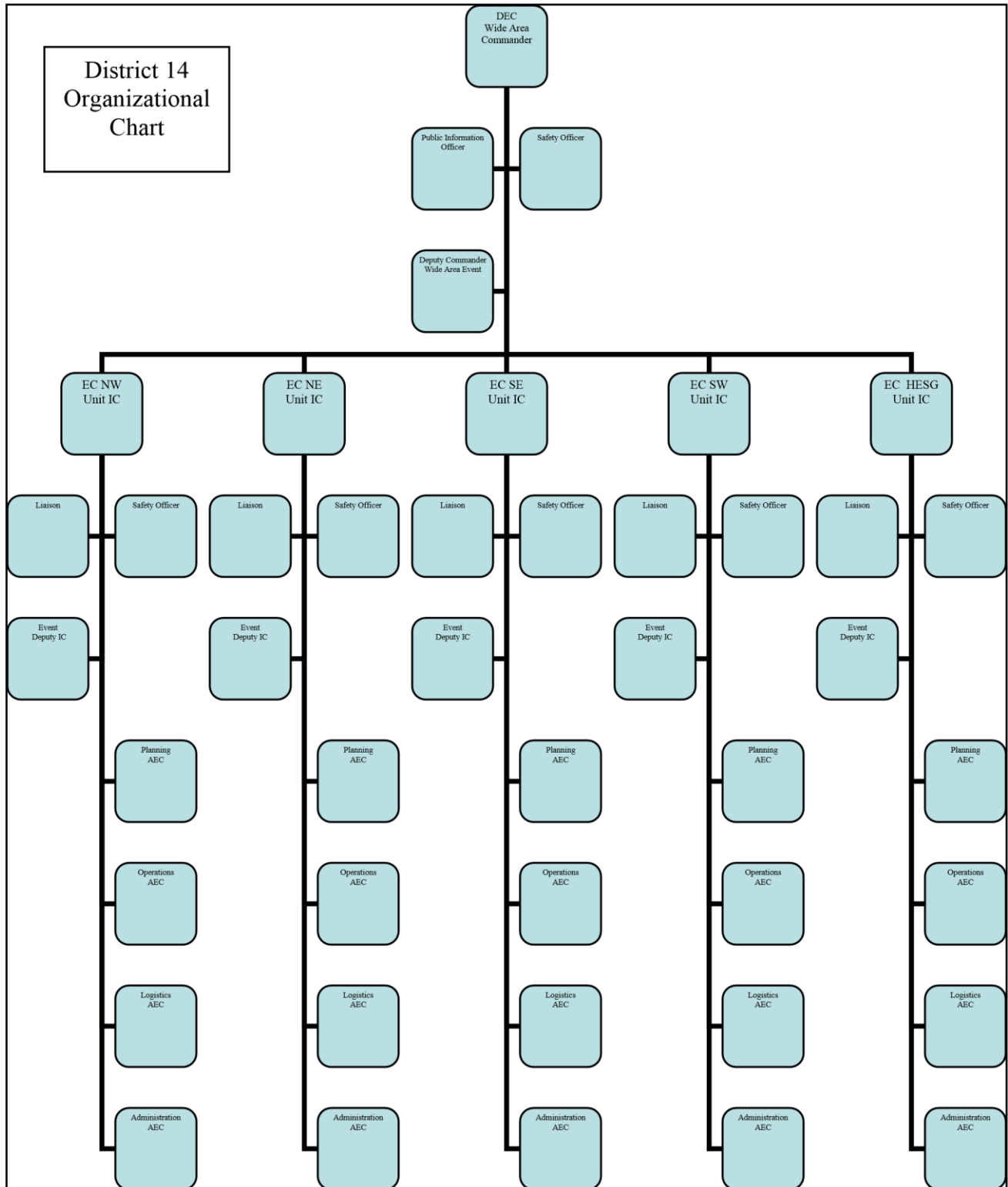
2.5 Frequencies used:

| INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN ICS-205A | | | Incident Name | <i>District 14 Communications Plan</i> | Date prepared: 6/21/2021 Updated: 06/28/2024 | | Time prepared: 1200 local | |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------|--|--|----------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | | | Notes: all FM are wide band, if repeater not functional use SIMPLEX on repeater output | | | |
| Ch # | Function | Assignment | RX Freq | RX Tone | TX Freq | Tx Tone | Mode | Remarks |
| 1 | HF Night Emerg Net | South Texas | 3.873 MHz | N/A | 3.873 MHz | N/A | LSB | |
| 2 | HF Day Emerg Net | South Texas | 7.285 MHz | N/A | 7.285 MHz | N/A | LSB | |
| 3 | HF Night Health and Welfare Net | South Texas | 3.935 MHz | N/A | 3.935 MHz | N/A | LSB | |
| 4 | HF Day Health and Welfare Net | South Texas | 7.290 MHz | N/A | 7.290 MHz | N/A | LSB | |
| 5 | Countywide Operations | D14 | 147.000 MHz | N/A | 147.600 MHz | 103.5 Hz | FM | Primary |
| 6 | Countywide Operations | D14 | 145.370 MHz | N/A | 144.770 MHz | 123.0 Hz | FM | Secondary (backup) |
| 7 | Countywide Operations | D14 | 145.170 MHz | N/A | 144.570 MHz | 123.0 Hz | FM | Tertiary (backup) and Hospitals |
| 8 | Countywide Winlink RMS Gateway | D14 | 145.090 MHz | N/A | 145.090 MHz | N/A | Vara/Packet | 1200 baud packet |
| 9 | Countywide Winlink RMS Gateway | D14 | 145.050 MHz | N/A | 145.050 MHz | N/A | Packet | 1200 baud packet |
| 10 | Countywide Winlink RMS Gateway | D14 | 446.150 MHz | N/A | 446.150 MHz | N/A | VARA | VARA Wide |
| 11 | Countywide P2P/Drills | D14 | 145.070 MHz | N/A | 145.070 MHz | N/A | Vara/Packet | 1200 baud packet |
| 12 | NW Primary | NW Unit | 146.720 MHz | N/A | 146.120 MHz | 123.0 Hz | FM | Primary |
| 13 | NW Secondary | NW Unit | 146.840 MHz | N/A | 146.240 MHz | 151.4 Hz | FM | Secondary (backup) |
| 14 | NE Primary | NE Unit | 147.280 MHz | N/A | 147.880 MHz | 103.5 Hz | FM | Primary |
| 15 | NE Secondary | NE Unit | 145.430 MHz | N/A | 144.830 MHz | 107.5 Hz | FM | Secondary (backup) |
| 16 | SW Primary | SW Unit | 145.19 MHz | N/A | 144.590 MHz | 123.0 Hz | FM | Primary |
| 17 | SW Secondary | SW Unit | 145.170 MHz | N/A | 144.570 MHz | 123.0 Hz | FM | Secondary (backup) |
| 18 | SE Primary | SE Unit | 146.640 MHz | N/A | 146.040 MHz | 123.0 Hz | FM | Primary |
| 19 | SE Secondary | SE Unit | 145.390 MHz | N/A | 144.790 MHz | 123.0 Hz | FM | Secondary (backup) |
| 20 | Winlink RMS Gateway List | D14 | | N/A | see channel selection RMS client | | | |
| Prepared by: David Underwood WB5HJV Updated by John Sawyer KD5U (as directed by D14 DEC, Sherwin Klemm) | | | | | Incident Location: Harris County Texas | | | |

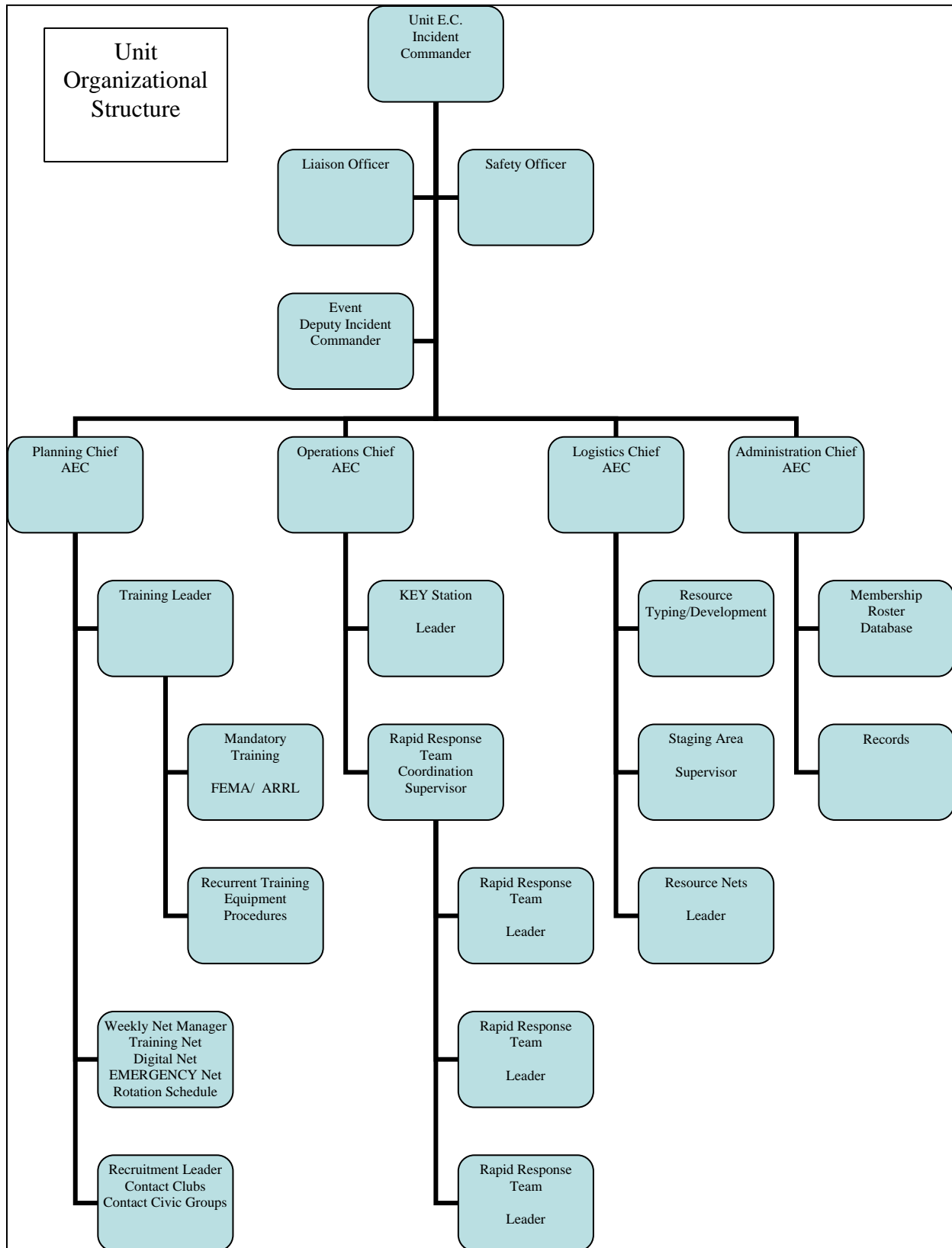
The convention calls for frequency lists to show three digits after the decimal place. Listed frequencies to be programmed in a portable or mobile radio. Repeater and base stations must be programmed with the Rx and Tx reversed.

2.6 Organization

District:



Unit:



3.0 ACTIVATING THE PLAN

- 3.1 Any member of District 14 ARES® who for any reason believes that a communications emergency exists, or is imminent, or has been notified of an activation, should monitor the South Texas Section District 14 ARES® repeater, 147.000 MHz (+) PL 103.5 Hz. If this repeater is compromised, also monitor the county wide backup repeaters 145.370 MHz (-) PL 123 Hz and 145.17 (-) PL -123 Hz.
- 3.2 The South Texas ARES depot paging system will be used to notify ARES members via email and/or text paging at the district or unit level. If this service is unavailable due to a communications outage, activation may occur via voice on the currently selected county wide repeaters.

4.0 MOBILIZATION PROCEDURE

- 4.1 Each Unit EC, or an AEC will initiate mobilization by direction of the ARES® South Texas Section SEC or District 14 ARES® DEC or at the request of listed served agencies.
- 4.2 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 the scene commander, or individual in charge at the site.

5.0 OPERATIONS

- 5.1 During a severe communications emergency, the district net frequency should be monitored at the top of the hour with the unit nets monitored at the bottom of the hour.
- 5.2 During net operations, stations should not transmit unless directed to do so by the net control station (NCS).

6.0 MESSAGE HANDLING

- 6.1 *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. Plain language should be used. *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.

- 6.2 Use of ICS forms, NTS forms, or forms prescribed by the served agency is permissible.

7.0 SERVED AGENCIES

- 7.1 Harris County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
- 7.2 American Red Cross Texas Gulf Coast Region
- 7.3 Texas Department of Emergency Management
- 7.4 Salvation Army
- 7.5 Public Service Agencies (Police, Fire, Other)
- 7.6 Hospitals (as assigned)

8.0 SAFETY

- 8.1 If any requested action involves unacceptable risk, the person should NOT take the action. Upon refusal, the person should notify the net control station that they will not be performing the requested action, along with a brief statement of their risk assessment. There is not any ARES assignment which is so important that it cannot be done safely.
- 8.2 Be prepared. Your welfare and your family's welfare take priority.



ARRL *The national association for*
AMATEUR RADIO

ACCEPTANCE OR TERMINATION OF FIELD SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

1. The ARRL is not obligated to accept volunteer service from anyone.
2. The ARRL is not obligated to continue to accept volunteer service from anyone, even if it has accepted such service in the past.
3. The ARRL does not discriminate in accepting volunteer service based on suspect classifications, including race, skin color, nationality, sex, age, sexual orientation, or religion.
4. The ARRL does not require criminal background or credit checks as a precondition to volunteer service.
5. Local Field Service units may conduct searches of public databases when considering whether to accept volunteer services.
6. If local Field Service units wish to terminate the volunteer service of any existing member, the ARRL has determined the primary responsibility for notifying the volunteer of the decision to terminate the volunteer's service should lie with the Section Manager, or his designee. This procedure permits a uniform response to be maintained across all Sections. The written communication from the Section Manager, or his designee, should substantially conform to the form provided by the ARRL. The written communication, letter or email, should thank the volunteer for the volunteer's past service and advise the person their service is no longer required. The written communication should not, under any circumstance, state a reason for the decision to terminate the volunteer's service.
7. Local Filed Service units may decline to accept volunteer service based on the results of public database searches, provided the decision to decline volunteer service is not based on suspect classifications. However, no reason should be stated, orally or in writing, for the unit's decision not to accept the volunteer's service.