



**Hillsborough
County Florida**

Office of Emergency
Management

RACES Communications Operations Plan

October 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

By my signature, I acknowledge the contents, requirements, and responsibilities outlined in this Plan.

Title	Name (Print)	Signature	Date
Director of Emergency Management	Timothy Dudley, Jr.		

RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of this plan will be handled by Hillsborough County Office of Emergency Management and provided to all necessary and appropriate County departments, offices, and partners.

Group	Department/Office	Name/Title of Recipient	Distribution Method (elect./hard copy)	Date
1				
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RECORD OF CHANGES

The record of changes will be kept, documented, and distributed by the Hillsborough County Office of Emergency Management. The record of change will include the change number, date of change(s), the section(s) and page(s) changed, a summary of the change(s), and who the changes were made by. Upon publication, the change will be considered part of this document.

Change Number	Date of Change	Section/Page Changed	Summary of Change	Name of Person Making Change
1	10/19/23	Plan in entirety	Made revisions and changes that did not comply with the Style Guide. Added the authorities and forms etc.	E. Roman G. Stewart
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I. INTRODUCTION

The Hillsborough County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) are emergency communications units supporting emergency tactical, administrative, and logistical communications. It is involved daily for familiarization and training in any situation that may benefit served agencies with its support.

A. PURPOSE

1. The Hillsborough County ARES/RACES (HCAR) is structured as a dual function Organization. The ARES function is organized under the auspices of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules (47CFR97). The RACES function is organized and authorized by FCC Part 97, Section 407, and established by Hillsborough County Office of Emergency Management to support served organizations (See below). This organization provides 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 special events.
2. The Hillsborough County ARES/RACES Administrative Plan, Communications Operations Plan, and Training Plan provide procedures, policies, organizational structure, concept of operations, and guidance for amateur radio operators performing emergency communications responsibilities on behalf of the Hillsborough County ARES/RACES (HCAR) program. To the extent possible, the procedures and policies developed within these plans will be complementary to the Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and the West Central Florida (WCF) American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Section. The training plan, curriculum, and activities will support the mission and vision of the organization in a manner that enhances member knowledge and competence.

SCOPE

1. The plans and procedures in these documents apply to all radio operators within Hillsborough County providing services under the auspices of ARES/RACES, regardless of other organizational affiliations.
2. Traditionally, the ARES/RACES organization has served many governmental, non-government organizations (NGOs), and non-profit organizations. During a declared emergency, ARES/RACES is directed by the local emergency management agency. The EM organization's priority for communications becomes ARES/RACES' priority; as resources allow, the organization attempts to meet those needs. One of emergency management's priorities during a declared emergency is staffing shelters to provide backup communications, with Special needs shelters prioritized among shelters. Likewise, support of County/ OEM designated "Mission Critical" positions, such as support of HCFR Battalion Chiefs, will be prioritized. If additional resources are available, secondary priorities will be supported.

B. SITUATION

1. Background
 - a. Hillsborough County is situated on Florida's west central coast. The County encompasses almost one thousand square miles and has a population of about one million.
 - b. There are various hazards or threats, natural and technological, that Hillsborough County citizens could encounter. Regardless of an incident's nature, ARES/RACES volunteers stand ready to assist. ARES/RACES personnel train to function in their support role in support of Hillsborough County but also as a mutual aid resource available to provide support to other jurisdictions that experience disruptive incidents if not needed in Hillsborough County.
 - c. The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) are membership organizations charged with the responsibility of providing backup and auxiliary communications during times of emergency. ARES is sponsored and organized through the field organization of the American Radio Relay

League (ARRL). The RACES program is sponsored and organized through Hillsborough County Emergency Management. In Hillsborough County both the ARES and RACES organizations are consolidated under one leadership structure headed by a volunteer Emergency Coordinator/RACES Officer and several assistant emergency coordinators.

- d. The advantages of a consolidated program are many. For instance, amateurs need not worry which organization they belong to. Once registered with the HCAR leadership, they are members of both ARES and RACES. This allows for great flexibility when supplying emergency communications. Whether in a declared emergency or serving an agency needing auxiliary communications capability. The HCAR program, with its single leadership structure, provides quick and effective responses. HCAR members need not concern themselves with the label they wear; different served organizations know us under different titles. We are trained personnel using our equipment and skills to provide backup and auxiliary communications to served agencies.

2. Mission

- a. The Hillsborough County ARES/RACES program comprises organized, trained, and identified Amateur Radio operators who augment and support vital communications on behalf of the public through partner agencies and organizations during emergencies and events.

3. Vision

- a. The Hillsborough County ARES / RACES organization, through its skilled, volunteer-licensed radio communicators, strives to be an effective partner in emergency and disaster response, providing public service partners at all levels with a wide range of emergency and disaster communications techniques, including radio communications expertise, capability, and capacity.

C. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. Policies and procedures to support and guide the HCARES Organization and its members will be developed, promulgated, and maintained as The HCARES Administrative Manual by the Emergency Coordinator.

D. PLAN MAINTENANCE AND AFTER-ACTION REPORT

1. This Plan will be maintained by annual and revision, as needed, to ensure it remains current to meet the organizational and membership needs. Reviews and Changes will be noted in the section provided. This process and activities will be led by the Planning Officer/ Assistant Emergency Coordinator and supervised by the Emergency Coordinator.

E. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

1. Authorities
 - a. American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules (47CFR97)
 - b. FCC Part 97, Section 407

F. LOGISTICS

1. Capability
 - a. ARES groups have actively engaged in the following steps so that they can perform certain actions and meet their objectives. Further, a goal of the ARES/RACES program is to ensure that program participants continue to improve and develop additional capabilities for serving the needs of partners.
 - i. Net operations and traffic passing provide experience in on-the-air operating, including net procedures and routines that are easily learned and adopted. The experience resulting from regular net participation ensures that established procedures and routines for net participation become rote practices for participants.
 - ii. The Amateur Radio discipline of contacting distant stations (DXing) offers ways of improving skills in operating under adverse conditions like interference (QRM) and static (QRN). The skills involved in copying transmissions subject to severe noise levels or interference come only through the actual experience of operating under severe conditions. Contacting DX stations, even occasionally, offers the unique experience necessary for skill level improvement.

- iii. Effective exercises offer locally, regionally, and state/nationwide developed scenarios to practice for hazards and threats. Having an established written policy relating to the most likely emergency scenarios allows ARES/RACES participants to understand the procedures for activating any given situation. A well-written emergency communications plan simplifies activation procedures and ensures smaller items are not inadvertently overlooked.
- iv. Emergency and disaster response provides experience with actual pressures and changing requirements in such environments. Having the opportunity to participate in emergency or disaster response offers valuable lessons and experiences. Therefore, it is essential for those involved in the response to participate in the After-Action Reports (AAR) and debriefing process so that all members and partners can learn from those who have operated in emergency conditions. Careful attention to detail and retention of notes is an integral part of completing this important educational task.
- v. Job aids, standardized forms, and documentation to include those guided by the Incident Command System and related training guide member actions and related documentation through mobilization, response, and demobilization.

2. Capacity

- a. In this application, capacity means the limits imposed by available ARES/RACES resources and the scope of the Amateur Radio service. These limits may be technical, personnel, equipment, or regulatory and may prevent an ARES/RACES group from providing certain requested services. The ARES/RACES group has capacity limits, and it is incumbent for ARES/RACES Leadership to be acutely aware of their capacity to serve so the group is never overcommitted. Further, each group should strive to match its plans and capacity with known partner needs and plans for building its capacity as appropriate.
- b. There are two methods for establishing and determining capacity:
 - i. Various field resources for communicating, such as VHF, UHF, HF, repeaters, accepted simplex frequencies, and local/regional HF networks.

- Integrating messaging networks such as high-speed multimedia (HSMM) networks, the National Traffic System (NTS), and NTS-Digital (NTSD), along with new technology and data communications.
 - Cross-training with other communications services such as Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN), Military Auxiliary Radio Service (MARS), and local public safety.
- ii. Engagement with the Community through:
- Working with state and local officials,
 - Participation in neighborhood programs,
 - Cooperating with local CERT, National Weather Service SKYWARN and similar programs and
 - Assisting with community events, such as rallies, races, marathons, and parades, which create training opportunities and team building.

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II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. The ARES/RACES program pursues growing its membership with interested and motivated licensed radio communicators. Through its training program, it facilitates interested individuals in obtaining FCC licensure. It promotes member development and effective use of persons skilled in various communications modalities, such as computers, computer networks, microwave, radio, satellite, videoconference, etc. It also requires effective use of those skilled in administration, logistics, and management.
2. Level 1 – Volunteer
 - a. This is the primary level for those who choose a non-leadership role and those new to Amateur Radio or emergency communications. This introductory training is conducted by the local ARES/RACES group to meet their needs and those of their served agency or partners. This training could be formal or informal and would introduce the ARES/RACES participant to the fundamentals of emergency communications and provide instruction on how participants are to conduct themselves while serving in the field or otherwise activated. Participants may elect to remain at this level, or any level, based upon the extent of their desired ARES/RACES involvement. Local training at this level includes such subjects as radio techniques, Net participation and Net Control, Message Handling (Both ICS213 and NTS), Shelter Operations, and SKYWARN.
3. Level 2 – Volunteer
 - a. To qualify for this level, participants shall have completed the following courses: ARRL's EC-001 Introduction to Amateur Radio Emergency Communications (a no-cost program) and FEMA IS-100, IS-200, IS-700, and IS-800. Participants are also encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities available through partners to enhance their knowledge and skill set.

4. Level 3 – Volunteer

- a. This level of training prepares ARES/RACES participants to take on leadership positions such as EC, AEC, ADEC, DEC, ASEC, SEC, and other designated positions in the ARES/RACES program. Participants are required to complete ARRL's EC-016, Emergency Communications for Management, when available along with FEMA Professional Development Series of courses IS120, IS-230, IS-240, IS-241, IS-242, IS-244, and IS-288 the Role of Voluntary Organizations in Emergency Management. Participants also are encouraged to complete the FEMA courses IS-300 and IS-400 should they be available locally.

B. OFFICIAL EMERGENCY STATION

1. The regular volunteer staff of the unit. They have accepted job responsibility and have agreed that ARES/RACES is their primary emergency response activity. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of activities at this level, a record check with fingerprints may be required. Any convictions or records of conduct considered adverse by management are grounds for rejection. On record check clearance and approval for participation, they are issued an identification card. They are expected to report to assignments as quickly as possible following the assignment.

C. LEADERSHIP

1. Emergency Coordinator / RACE Officer
 - a. Must be an ARRL member; overall manager of the ARES and RACES program; develops relationships with served agencies; pursues memorandums of understanding and other agreements when in the best interest of ARES/RACES; handles and/or delegates media requests; works with a team of leaders to accomplish the goals of the organization; seeks training opportunities for the organization; promotes amateur radio and especially emergency communications; and provides regular updates, and communicates with the WCF section emergency coordinator, and local emergency management officials.
2. Executive Assistant Emergency Coordinator / Deputy RACES Officer

- a. Must be an ARRL member and serve as the backup to the Emergency Coordinator if he/she is unavailable.
3. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Public Information Officer / Deputy RACES Officer
 - a. The Public Information Officer is the messenger for ARES/RACES and is responsible for media relations as well as the social media presence for the organization. During an activation, the PIO may be assigned to the County PIO Staff or JIC to ensure a unified message is delivered to the public.
4. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Safety / Deputy RACES Officer
 - a. Monitors activities to ensure that members are following established policies and procedures. The Safety Officer will be responsible for developing and implementing policies and procedures.
5. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Liaison / Deputy RACES Officer
 - a. Interface with amateur radio clubs in Hillsborough County through meetings, email, correspondence, phone calls, and radio nets; promote emergency communications; promote ARES/RACES membership; encourage clubs to be active in public service and weekly nets; maintain a list of resources that each club has; and provide regular reports about club activity, as it relates to emergency communications to the RACES Officer/EC.
6. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Operations / Assistant RACES Officer
 - a. Manages all tactical activities. Is responsible for the maintenance of all radio equipment that is utilized during an incident, event, or activation. Oversees all data gathering and analysis. Participates in planning meetings and provides input into the IAP and Frequency Assignment/allocation for documentation in the “Incident Communications Plan” (ICS205) for each operational period. They are responsible for overseeing the training division and ensuring that adequate resources are available for any incident or event at the ARES/RACES level of responsibility.
7. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Training / Assistant RACES Officer
 - a. Interface with the various groups in Hillsborough County through meetings, email, correspondence, phone calls, and radio nets to promote emergency communications

and amateur radio public service, promote ARES/RACES membership; encourage amateurs to complete the recommended ICS/NIMS and emergency communication courses, provide additional service training and provide regular reports about training activities to the RACES Officer/EC.

8. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Planning / Assistant RACES Officer

- a. Manages all Planning activities. Is responsible for the maintenance of all program plans, including the “Communications Resource Availability Worksheet” (ICS217)) that guides member radio programming as well as the “Incident Communications Plan” (ICS 205) that is utilized during an incident, event, or an activation. Oversees the maintenance of situational awareness, data gathering, and analysis including the After-Action Report and Improvement Plan (AAR-IP). Conducts planning meetings and prepares the IAP with all leadership Input, for each operational period. They are responsible for overseeing the administrative division.

9. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Logistics / Assistant RACES Officer

- a. Interface with a technical pool of amateurs that can troubleshoot, install, and repair amateur infrastructure, i.e., repeaters and associated equipment; plan for the use and deployment of portable repeaters; advise of equipment needs; liaison with repeater owners to ensure repeater resources are available to ARES/RACES as needed; and provide regular status reports concerning the availability of the amateur infrastructure to the RACES Officer/EC.

10. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Communications / Assistant RACES Officer

- a. Works to increase membership and participation in Hillsborough County ARES/RACES by promoting the organization and its activities on local nets. Duties include writing and distributing net announcement scripts that promote the organization on VHF and UHF Nets. Works with PIO and Social Media personnel to help promote awareness of ARES/RACES nets and activities. Support other staff members who help by making net announcements and serving as net control operators on various nets. Assists with on-the-air NCS Training in conjunction with the AEC Training. Assists the AEC of Logistics in evaluating repeaters for net suitability.

11. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – HF / Assistant RACES Officer

- a. Must have at least a general class license, identify HF stations registered with ARES/RACES that are capable of emergency operations; provide liaison to section nets, and other HF emergency nets such as the Hurricane Watch Net, and SATERN Net; maintain a list of HF nets and their frequencies; coordinate inbound and outbound emergency traffic; coordinate health and welfare traffic; and provide regular status reports concerning HF operations to the RACES Officer/EC.

12. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Administration / Assistant RACES Officer

- a. Duties include recruitment, personnel records, equipment inventory, reporting, and any other duties as assigned. Works with the PIO on messaging to apprise the membership of upcoming events, meetings, or training.

D. HC ARES / RACES Organizational Chart

1. The current Organizational Chart is provided in Appendix A.

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III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. OVERVIEW

1. During Major Deployments, Hillsborough County ARES/RACES will employ a Primary Operations Center (PSOC) and 3 Supplemental Operations Centers. The Operations Centers will be designated as follows:
 - a. Primary Operations / North-East County Quadrant – Hillsborough County PSOC.
 - b. Backup EOC / North-West County Quadrant – Old Hillsborough County EOC on Hanna, staffed by Tampa ARC.
 - c. HF Operations / Kings Point ARC will have Web EOC access.
 - d. South County Quadrant – Sun City ARC, Sun City Center.
 - e. During Minor Deployments, Hillsborough County ARES RACES will employ only the Primary Operations Center at the PSOC
2. All written messages will be in either the standard ARRL format or other forms as required by our served agencies.
3. All written messages must be signed by the official who originates them, with his/hertitle, taking responsibility fortheir contents.
4. Message precedence of Emergency, Priority, Welfare, and Routine, as defined on ARRL Form FSD-3, shall be used on all messages using the ARRL Radiogram.
5. Hillsborough County ARES/RACES members are not authorized to give official statements tothe media or make official statements regarding the extent of the disaster/emergency over the air. Such official statements are to be made and/or released by the agency controlling the emergency activity. Questions regarding the emergency/disaster should be directed to the public information officer of the agency controlling the emergency activity.
6. Stations do not transmit unless invited to do so by the net control station. The only exception is for a station having emergency traffic.
7. After Action Reports and Traffic reports will be submitted to the EC and Net Manageras

soon as possible after the termination of the emergency, exercise, or drill.

B. ACTIVATION

1. The Hillsborough County ARES/RACES organization will activate upon the direction of local emergency management or the EC/RACES Officer once a request for backup communications has been made, determined to be necessary, cannot be supplied by regular means, and available resources.
2. Upon activation, the Net Manager or an appointed Net Controller will initiate a coordination net on the frequency established in the VHF/UHF band plan and use the alert message found in Appendix 5 to coordinate secondary nets and assign and dispatch amateurs to provide backup communication. The Net Manager will provide the parameters by which the nets will operate, control traffic flow in the network, specify message handling requirements, and make any other necessary adjustments to ensure smooth traffic flow. Depending on the nature of the activation, the role of the net and the communications needs may change. For instance, before a storm, the role of the net may be exclusive to providing weather and shelter communications. After a storm, the net may support search and rescue, damage assessment, or points of distribution.
3. Flexibility and net discipline are key factors in successfully providing effective communications. All amateurs entering the net should not transmit unless they are responding to a request from the net control operator. Tactical call signs are to be established for all assigned stations. ARES/RACES provides communications. It does not decide what to communicate or communicate information without authorization. Don't forget the basics: when passing traffic, someone is writing it down, so speak as if you are writing it, speak clearly, and enunciate.

C. ACTIVATIONS LEVELS



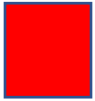
Activation Level 4 (Green): No ARES/RACES Operations in progress or projected. Normal Amateur Radio Operations.



Activation Level 3 (Yellow) (ALERT): ARES/RACES Officials have been notified by one or more served agencies that Amateur Radio Communicators may be needed soon. No time limit is associated with this alert level. ARES/RACES Members should check their equipment and supplies for possible deployment. ***Members should stay tuned to the assigned emergency frequencies for further news and developments.***



Activation Level 2 (Orange) (Standby): There is a high probability of a full ARES/RACES activation. ARES/RACES Members should always have their READY KIT available. Approximate periods are associated with this level. ***Members should prepare to deploy to assignments or staging areas for assignment. Nets will be established and will pass information on as it becomes available. The PSOC may be partially activated, and PSOC Staff should respond accordingly.***



Activation Level 1 (Red) (Activate): ***ARES/RACES Members will proceed to their assignments or staging areas for assignments. Nets begin entire operation. Available ARES/RACES Members will check into their assigned nets upon arrival at their assignments.*** Situation reports will be passed to the SEC by the EC every 4 hours. Full emergency communications protocols will be implemented. The PSOC will be fully activated, and all Operations Center Staff should respond accordingly.

D. ACTIVATION PROCEDURE

1. Any member of Hillsborough County ARES/RACES who, for any reason, suspects a communications emergency exists should monitor the 147.105 (+) (146.2 Hz) (N4TP) repeater for net activity and/or announcements.
2. If local telephone service is available, the EC and/or AEC(s) should be notified by telephone.
3. The Office of Emergency Management will activate Hillsborough County ARES/RACES for duty in an emergency. Self-mobilization of /RACES members are discouraged.
4. Hillsborough County ARES RACES has adopted four activation levels to better inform ARES/RACES members and teams of impending actions within Hillsborough County, Florida, and out of state. This will allow members and teams to judge, in an approximate time frame, the extent of the involvement they will be requested to respond to.

E. NOTIFICATION

All operators should tune in to the primary frequency indicated in the VHF/UHF band plan to receive information and instruction during times of emergency. Each ARES/RACES member is expected to have a basic awareness of events that might result in an emergency or disaster. In addition, information concerning impending activations and situation updates will be distributed through established e-mail distribution lists.

F. MOBILIZATION

1. If telephone service is available, The EC or designee will initiate a telephone recall/alert.
2. Upon awareness of notification that a communications emergency exists, **available members with assignments of Hillsborough County ARES/RACES should report to those assignments and call in on the "check-in/accountability" repeater, 146.940 (-) (146.2 Hz) (NI4M) repeater, (see IC-217/IC-205) when enroute and onsite. Those without assignment should call into the same repeater to report availability to receive assignment,** and likewise, provide updates when enroute and on arrival at assignment.
3. If telephone service is available, members not having 2-meter capability will call the EC and/or AEC(s) notifying him/her of their availability.
4. ARES/RACES members will be advised on activation and where to report for duty.
5. The AECs for Operations and Planning will prepare the appropriate ICS forms for ARES/RACES operations during the incident. These will be forwarded to the Incident Communications Unit Leader for inclusion into the Incident Communications Plan.
6. The EC or AEC(s) will assume net control or designate another station as a net control station (NCS).
7. This station (NCS) is designated as a "Key Station" and will be extensively utilized during a communications emergency. Key Stations should have full emergency power capability with relief operators assigned to ensure continuous operation.

G. NET CONTROL OPERATIONS

1. The Hillsborough County Emergency Net will be "called to order" by the NCS.
2. Available members of Hillsborough County ARES/RACES will "checked-in" to the net from their mobile or home stations to await further instructions.

3. A liaison station will be assigned to the National Traffic System and/or Statewide Emergency net (as required):
 - a. Eagle Net (via NI4CE Repeater System)
 - b. SKYWARN Net (via NI4CE Repeater System)
 - c. Other liaison stations will be assigned to other nets, repeaters, and/or frequencies and modes as required.
 - d. Mobile stations will be dispatched to the requesting agency(s) as required.
 - e. Operators of home stations not on emergency power are coordinated to operate the "Key Stations" as required effectively.
4. HF Activities
 - a. The AEC-HF will contact designated HF stations to provide liaison and traffic handling with section and other emergency nets. The AEC-HF will notify the section-level official responsible for HF operations regarding which stations represent ARES/RACES. The HF band plan in Appendix 1 lists those nets and their frequencies.
 - b. Kings Point ARC (W4KPR) in Sun City Center will provide primary/Backup HF communications as required.
 - c. After a disaster, HF stations will provide emergency and priority traffic in and out of the area. If time permits, one-way health and welfare (H&W) messages out of the area may be provided. Incoming H&W will not be accepted without the approval of the AEC-HF.
5. Digital Activities

Digital modes can afford increased operating efficiencies when resources and training are available. It is the goal of the ARES/RACES program to leverage digital modes to the extent possible to provide emergency communications wherever possible.

H. MUTUAL AID

1. During extended operations, mutual aid may be needed to provide relief for local Amateur Radio operations. Mutual Aid coming into Hillsborough County will be coordinated with the Office of Emergency Management, with all requests being placed into WebEOC.

2. All aid coming into or going out of the County will have a mission number assigned by the State of Florida. Teams coming into Hillsborough County will stage at a location determined by local emergency management or ARES/RACES EC. The AEC - Liaison will coordinate this activity locally. All mutual aid teams should be self-sustaining for at least 72 hours. In addition, at a minimum, each mutual aid team should have a high-powered VHF / UHF radio, antenna, and emergency power supply, such as a generator or automotive battery. Teams will be dispatched as needed and given appropriate information about their assignment. Additionally, mutual aid may be coordinated via ESF-2 inside PSOC or the State Emergency Response Team (SERT).

I. DEMOBILIZATION

1. Communicate release by Host/ site manager to HCARES/RACES CNC Net /PSOC to determine the need for services elsewhere.
2. If cleared, leave the site and return any HCARES/RACES Equipment.
3. Notify Accountability frequency of status when demobilized from the site and when Enroute Home.
4. When home and "off the air," review the event from your perspective and provide at least 3 positive items describing what went well and any identified opportunities for improvement for future activations via email to Admin@hcaresraces.org.

J. EXERCISES, TESTS, AND ALERTS

1. An annual test will be conducted (usually) in conjunction with the nationwide or statewide ARRL Simulated Emergency Test.
2. Hillsborough County ARES will regularly supply public service communications in conjunction with local events to test the effectiveness of the operation.
3. At the discretion of the EC, Hillsborough County ARES will be activated unannounced via a telephone recall at least once per year.

K. AFTER ACTION REPORTS

1. An after-action report (AAR) will be generated for each activation, test, exercise and /or alert. The AAR will be documented in Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Guidance and format to include a summary of the event/exercise, strengths, and

opportunities for improvement to be addressed in an improvement plan which will be incorporated into the AAR-IP and progress tracked accordingly.

L. CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

1. In the absence of the ARES/RACES Officer, the following is the order of succession:
 - a. Executive Assistant Emergency Coordinator
 - b. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Safety
 - c. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Planning
 - d. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Training
 - e. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Logistics
 - f. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – Communications
 - g. Assistant Emergency Coordinator – HF
2. If any Assistant ECs are unavailable to fulfill their duties, others may fill in. The EC/RACES Officer may appoint someone from the organization to fill the position on an interim basis or may request a section official to provide qualified staff.

IV. INTERACTION WITH OTHER PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

A. THIS PLAN IS NOT INTENDED TO “STAND ALONE”

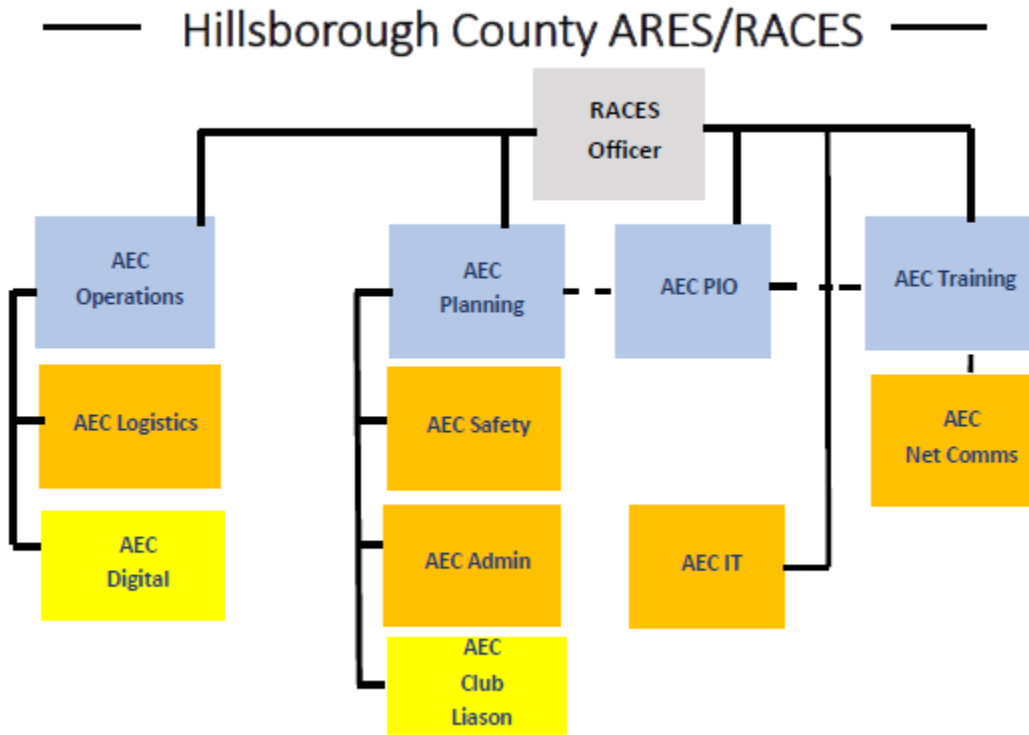
1. The activities of the HCARES RACES program as described in this plan are to guide HCARES RACES members in responding to alerts and events. The organization has also established administrative and training plans to guide member activities, development, and readiness. Additionally, as noted above the organization’s mission is to support “Served Agencies” therefore when mobilized in a support role to any agency some activities will be influenced or guided by the supported agency approach to managing the incident and related operations. Should a member have concerns about any conflict in specific activities, they should reach out to the command-and-control function for guidance and support.

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V. APPENDIXES

- A. HC ARES/RACES Organizational Chart
- B. Communications Resource Availability Worksheet (Form [ICS 217](#))
- C. Communications Plan (Form [ICS 205](#))

A. HC ARES/RACES Organizational Chart



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