

**Oswego County Emergency Communicators/  
RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service)**



***STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES***

## Organization and Standard Operating Guidelines

### Table of Contents

RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service).....	1
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES.....	1
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	4
Acknowledgements and Credits.....	5
Scope and Purpose of OCEC/RACES.....	5
GOAL OF OCEC/RACES.....	5
Personnel Policy.....	6
Membership Requirements.....	6
STAFFING POSITIONS.....	8
Radio Officer.....	8
Alternate Radio Officer, Administration.....	9
Alternate Radio Officer, Planning.....	10
Alternate Radio Officer, Logistics.....	11
Alternate Radio Officer, Operations.....	12
Unit Leader, Skywarn.....	13
Unit Leader, Packet.....	13
Liaisons.....	14
ACTIVATION.....	15
RESPONSE LEVEL AND ACTIVATON CODES.....	15
NET CONTROL STATION DEFINED.....	16
RADIO OPERATORS.....	18
HF BAND PLAN.....	19
VHF and UHF BAND PLAN.....	19
NET TECHNIQUES, VOICE.....	20
ON THE AIR TRAINING NET.....	21
OPERATING ON A TACTICAL RADIO NET.....	21
ADDRESSES AND TACTICAL CALL SIGNS.....	24
FORMAL WRITTEN MESSAGES.....	25
MESSAGE HANDLING AND RADIO TRAFFIC PROCEDURES.....	26
PROWORDS AND PROSIGNS.....	26
ITU PHONETIC ALPHABET.....	28
ON THE AIR MEETING VHF NET PROLOGUE.....	29
ON THE AIR MEETING HF NET PROLOGUE.....	30
ACTIVATED NET PROLOGUE.....	32
COMMUNICATIONS LOG.....	33
Using the Communications Log.....	33
Using the Incident Radio Communications Plan.....	34
Message Forms.....	35

Standard Message Form..... 36  
Standard Message Form Content ..... 37  
Distribution ..... 38

TAB A-FIELD OPS LOCATIONS

TAB B-PERSONNEL

TAB C –CALL UP TREE

TAB D –EQUIPMENT LIST

TAB E -EQUIPMENT OPERATION

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGENCY ARC, CAP, etc.	MCC – Mobile Communication Center
ARC - American Red Cross	NCS – Net Control Station
ARES - Amateur Radio Emergency Service	NWS – National Weather Service
ARO - Alternate Radio Officer	NYS OEM NY State Office of Emergency Management
ARRL - American Radio Relay League	OCEC/RACES Oswego County Emergency Communicators/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service
ASAP - As Soon As Possible	PMC – Personnel Monitoring Center
ATV - Amateur Television	PIO – Public Information Officer
CAP - Civil Air Patrol	RACES – Radio Amateur Civil Emergency. Service
DEC - Department of Environmental Conservation	REACT – Radio Emergency Affiliated Citizen Teams
EMO - Emergency Management Office	RDF – Radio Direction Finding
EOC - Emergency Operations Center	RC –Reception Center
EOF – Emergency Offsite Facility	RO – Radio Officer
FCC - Federal Communications Commission	RTTU-1 RACES Tower Trailer Unit 1
FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency	SATERN – Salvation Army Team Emerg. Radio Network
H&W - Health and Welfare	SAR – Search and Rescue
HF - High Frequency	SOG – Standard Operating Guidelines
IC – Incident Commander	SOP – Standard Operating Procedures
ICP – Incident Command Post	TEC Training and Exercise Committee
ICS – Incident Command System	UHF – Ultra High Frequency
JIC – Joint Information Center	VHF – Very High Frequency
LEPC – Local Emergency Planning Committee	
MARS – Military Affiliate Radio System	

## **Acknowledgements and Credits**

These materials are not copyrighted. However, the Oswego County Emergency Management Office and the author disclaim any liability and assume no responsibility for any damage resulting from the use or effect of information specified in the manual. The "Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES SOG" manual was written in compliance with FEMA's Civil Preparedness Guide CPG 1-15 and NYSEMO's Guidance for Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

## **Scope and Purpose of OCEC/RACES**

The RACES, of OCEC/RACES, purpose is to operate and maintain Amateur, Public Safety and other communication systems and to perform unique, accurate and efficient communications services to assist government officials, in the protection of life and property.

RACES means Amateur Radio Operators who provide communications for a State or a local government. No more, no less. RACES is not a separate or detached function, activity or club. RACES enables Amateur Radio Communications for all elements of a State or a local government and cannot ever be dedicated to serving one department.

RACES is organized under FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and operates according to Federal Communications Commission rules to augment public safety communications during emergencies and exercises.

OCEC's purpose is to provide communications services during periods of severe weather and to assist event organizers in support of community events and activities or others as may be directed by the Director of Emergency Management.

## **GOAL OF OCEC/RACES**

The goal of OCEC/RACES is to provide trained communicators

- that understand message traffic flow, significance of message forms and the mechanics of net operation.
- that are familiar with and accustomed to operating the various radio equipment at the EOC and other sites, plus the equipment in the Mobile Communications Center.

## Personnel Policy

Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES encompasses both the Amateur Radio operator and persons interested in emergency communications but who do not possess an Amateur Radio license. The second group may consist of citizen band operators, and others that may have a means to provide communications or other services during an emergency. As this area expands, sections will be added to this manual to properly define their role in this organization.

Anyone with an interest in emergency communications is eligible to apply for membership in the OCEC/RACES. Application forms are available at the Emergency Management Office or from the staff of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators. Accepted applicants will be enrolled as an OCEC/RACES responder and a photo I.D. will be issued. This ID is recognized throughout the county and is required when entering certain areas requiring communicator's skills during an emergency.

### Membership Requirements

The world has changed and the need to be recognized as a top notch service arm of Emergency Management has led us to redefine what an OCEC/RACES member must achieve to be recognized as a major player in the Homeland Security family. As technology changes so must our ability to meet the ever newer demands.

The following are the opportunities for achieving and maintaining the operating skills required for OCEC/RACES members:

- **Monthly Meetings**, including the required yearly radiological training meeting. The meetings will consist of a business session and a training session. Technical discussions and hands on training will be encouraged. Message handling techniques may be tested. Members may be called on to give a training session and/or a presentation on ideas to enhance emergency communications.
- **Sunday Night VHF nets** meet bimonthly on the first and third Sunday of each month, except December and when falling on a holiday. These meetings are for practicing the transmitting and receiving of messages. Solutions to handling problems will be discussed and improvements initiated. Typical messages will be used and a difficult environment will be simulated. The goal is to send and receive messages accurately, the responsibility of both the sender and the receiver. Members will be asked act as net control so that they can attain proficiency directing communications traffic flow.
- **Sunday Night HF nets** meet bi-monthly prior to the VHF nets with the purpose of exploring antenna types and mounting to be
- **Packet Nets** are held bi-monthly on a designated night with the intent to develop our digital capabilities. Net control stations will be appointed by the Packet Group Leader, the RO or ARO that is present at that particular session. Packet operators are expected to be able to set up a portable station, either one of their own or one from the EOC. Transcription of message data from the computer onto a standard message form and

preparing it for delivery. Packet operators are also trained on the operation of the packet equipment in the EOC.

- **EMO sanctioned drills** provide operator training in a real world condition, whether it be as support for drill controllers or as participants in the scenario. Use of tactical operations and message accuracy is stressed.
- **Work Bees are** help periodically to maintain equipment. They also provide an opportunity for members to become familiar with the areas that they may be requested to operate or maintain during an emergency.
- **Public Service Events** are supported by OCEC/RACES members. While Public Service Events do not generally fall into a RACES program they excellent opportunities to become familiar with operating in a group and having responsibility for the safety and health of others.

New members are required to attain certificates of completion for ICS-100, Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-700, National Incident Management System. These may be obtained in local classes held periodically in Oswego County or taken on line at the FEMA Home Study web site.

New members must also complete a class in Radiological training during the first year.

The sequence of call out upon the request of the Emergency Management Office will start with the active members.

Members will be considered active when meeting the following criteria.

1. Attend at least 4 of the formal Wednesday night monthly meetings.
2. Participate in at least 10 bi-monthly on the air meetings and/or the scheduled packet nets.
3. Participate in at least 2 EMO sanctioned drills.
4. Participate in work bee and community service as designated by the Radio Officer.

Active members will be equipped with a pager and be listed in the first call Active roster.

The Reserve roster consists of those that are unable to participate at the more vigorous level, but do make an effort to participate in OCEC/RACES activities as circumstances permit and will be equipped with desk top tone alert monitors as supplies allow.

## STAFFING POSITIONS

### Radio Officer

The Oswego County Radio Officer is appointed by the Director of Emergency Management and serves at that positions pleasure.

#### Primary Responsibilities:

- The organizing and administration of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES communications system as directed by the Director of Emergency Management and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.
- Advise Emergency Management Office on all matters concerning the use of personnel for emergency responses.
- Maintain personnel records.
- Evaluate day to day and emergency operations to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness.
- Supervise staff, operations and activities.

#### Qualifications:

- Possess a General or Extra Class Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100, ICS-200, ICS-300, IS-700 and IS-800.
- Have background in an emergency communications environment and possess leadership skills.

#### When Activated:

- Report to the Supervisor of the active EOC, or as directed by the Director of Emergency Management and obtain briefing on the extent of the emergency. Activate Alternate Radio Officer's (ARO's) and members.
- Review communications needs with the Operations, Planning, Administration and Logistic ARO's..
- Monitor progress of event and review data from the field for possible action.
- Prepare and submit an After Action Report to the Emergency Management Director.

## **Alternate Radio Officer, Administration**

The Oswego County Alternate Radio Officer is appointed by the Radio Officer and confirmed by the Director of Emergency Management.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Assists in the organization and administration of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES communications system as directed by the Director of Emergency Management and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.
- Advise the Radio Officer on all matters concerning the use of personnel for emergency responses.
- Oversee maintenance of the Standard Operating Guidelines manual..
- Monitor personnel training achievements.
- Manages training nets.
- Perform the duties of the Radio Officer's position when required.

### **Qualifications:**

- Possess a General or Extra Class Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100, ICS-200 and IS-700.
- Have background in an emergency communications environment and possess leadership skills.

### **When Activated:**

- Report to the Radio Officer and obtain briefing on the extent of the emergency.
- Coordinate with Operations, Planning and Logistics for response staffing..
- Monitor operating procedures..
- Act as Liason to the Public Information Officer..
- Assist in the preparation of the After Action Report to the Emergency Management Director.

## **Alternate Radio Officer , Planning**

The Oswego County Alternate Radio Officer is appointed by the Radio Officer and confirmed by the Director of Emergency Management.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Assists in the organizing and administration of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES communications system as directed by the Director of Emergency Management and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.
- Advise the Radio Officer on all matters concerning training and exercises for emergency responses.
- Participates in the Local Emergency Planning Committee and the Training and Exercise Committee.
- Prepares training scenarios for responses..
- Supervises readiness of the Mobile Communications Unit.
- Perform the duties of the Radio Officer's position when required.

### **Qualifications:**

- Possess a General or Extra Class Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100, ICS-200 and IS-700.
- Have background in an emergency communications environment and possess leadership skills.

### **When Activated:**

- Report to the Radio Officer and obtain briefing on the extent of the emergency.
- Collect, evaluate and disseminate operational information.
- Interfaces with served agencies to provide for their communication needs.
- Coordinate with Administration, Logistics and Operation ARO's for response staffing.
- Coordinate dispatch of comm Van.
- Monitor status of resources assigned to event.
- Assist in the preparation of the After Action Report to the Emergency Management Director.

## **Alternate Radio Officer ,Logistics**

The Oswego County Alternate Radio Officer is appointed by the Radio Officer and confirmed by the Director of Emergency Management.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Assists in the organizing and administration of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES communications system as directed by the Director of Emergency Management and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.
- Advise the Radio Officer on all matters concerning the communication's infrastructure.
- Prepares recommendations for upgrades and servicing of equipment.
- Maintain equipment inventory records.
- Supervise the readiness of repeaters and digital equipment..
- Perform the duties of the Radio Officer's position when required.

### **Qualifications:**

- Possess a General or Extra Class Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100, ICS-200 and IS-700.
- Have background in an emergency communications environment and possess leadership skills.

### **When Activated:**

- Report to the Radio Officer and obtain briefing on the extent of the emergency.
- Review resource needs with Operations, Planning and Administration ARO's.
- Assist in safety evaluation of operational sites..
- Maintain records of materials used during an event.
- Monitor progress of event and review data from the field for possible action.
- Assist in the preparation of the After Action Report to the Emergency Management Director.

## **Alternate Radio Officer , Operations**

The Oswego County Alternate Radio Officer is appointed by the Radio Officer and confirmed by the Director of Emergency Management.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Assists in the organization and administration of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES communications system as directed by the Director of Emergency Management and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.
- Advise the Radio Officer on all matters concerning the use of communication systems for emergency responses.
- Evaluate event operations.
- Coordinate with Administration for training needs.
- Supervise readiness of remote communication facilities.
- Perform the duties of the Radio Officer's position when required.

### **Qualifications:**

- Possess a General or Extra Class Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100, ICS-200 and IS-700.
- Have background in an emergency communications environment and possess leadership skills.

### **When Activated:**

- Report to the Radio Officer and obtain briefing on the extent of the emergency.
- Oversee tactical operations..
- Coordinate with Administration, Planning and Logistics ARO's for assignment of resources..
- Monitor conditions for safe operations..
- Assist in the preparation of the After Action Report to the Emergency Management Director.

## **Unit Leader, Skywarn**

The Oswego County Skywarn Unit Leader is appointed by the Radio Officer.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Coordinates with the National Weather Service for implementing the Skywarn call up.
- Advise the Radio Officer and Emergency Management of severe weather activation.
- Reviews and recommends revisions to the Skywarn section of the SOG.
- Coordinate with the National Weather Service for yearly Skywarn Spotter training.

### **Qualifications:**

- Possess an Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100 and IS-700.

### **When Activated:**

- Initiates a Skywarn net to collect severe weather data.
- Appoints a liaison to the NWS, Buffalo for relaying severe weather reports.
- Provides a status and personnel participation report to the Radio Officer.

## **Unit Leader, Packet**

The Oswego County Packet Unit Leader is appointed by the Radio Officer.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Oversees the infrastructure and operation of the Oswego County packet network.
- Provides operator training in packet radio operation.
- Coordinates with the Administration ARO for updates to the SOG
- Coordinates with the Logistics ARO for upgrades and/ or servicing needs to the packet system.

### **Qualifications:**

- Possess an Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100 and IS-700.

### **When Activated:**

- Coordinates deployment of portable stations and operators with the ARO Comms.
- Monitors the overall traffic flow on the packet system.

## **Liaisons**

The Radio Officer will appoint Liaisons, as required, to represent OCEC/RACES in support and coordination with external agencies.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Review the external agency's need for emergency communications.
- Coordinate with the Administration, Planning, Operations and Logistics ARO's to ensure the needs are met.

### **Qualifications:**

- Posses an Amateur Radio License.
- Complete NIMS training for ICS 100 and 700.

### **When Activated:**

Coordinate procurement of resources to satisfy the external agency's needs.

Provide status reports periodically to the Radio Officer.

## ACTIVATION

Whenever assistance of the OCEC/RACES is needed, a request is made to the Director of Oswego County Emergency Management. If the request is in the best interest of the public and/or its safety, the Director will notify the Radio Officer and request activation of OCEC/RACES. If the RO is not present, a request to page the RO can be made to the 911 Dispatch Center. If the RO does not respond, an Alternate Radio Officer can be contacted to activate OCEC/RACES.

There are three methods of notifying OCEC/RACES members. Pagers, activated by the Fire Dispatcher, a modified weather radio tone alert activated by the 147.15 repeater or by a call up tree.

## RESPONSE LEVEL AND ACTIVATION CODES

The response level will be determined based on conversations between the RO and the Oswego County EMO. Activation will be via pager, tone alert monitor or call up tree.

- **Alpha Response**- Potential of an upcoming situation exists. General monitoring only is required. There is no net activation. However a continuous monitor is assigned for answering questions, addressing concerns, etc. Time limit is two (2) hours or as directed by the EMO. All other amateur activities continue during this level.
- **Bravo Response** An imminent situation exists. A net is activated expecting a response from all stations and their location for the next 6 hours is required. Roll call will be at 2 hour intervals, the rest of the time casual monitoring is sufficient. At the 6 hour point, if no upgrade is requested, the response is automatically down-graded to the Alert level for a maximum of 2 hours.
- **Echo Response**- An emergency situation exists. All-OCEC/RACES personnel are expected to check into the net with their availability. Any traffic not associated with the emergency will be asked to "give way" to the OCEC/RACES operators. Any non-OCEC/RACES operators that check in will be asked for their capabilities and NIMS rating and will be put on a stand-by list. In the event of a National Emergency Declaration - Standard RACES procedures would prevail. All traffic will be "official" only.
- **Sierra Response** – A request for Skywarn™ severe weather spotters has been received from the National Weather Service. Severe weather is imminent.

## NET CONTROL STATION DEFINED

### Emergency Action Checklist: NCS

- PRIMARY:** Net Control Station
- ALTERNATE:** Alternate Net Control Station
- REPORT TO:** ARO Administration
- SUPERVISE:** Control message traffic on the radio net
- WORK STATION:** Assigned area, Emergency Operations Center or Incident Command Post
- RESPONSIBILITIES:** Supervise and coordinate "on air" operations of OCEC/RACES personnel on net.

### ACTION CHECK LIST

- ❑ **Activation:** If the RO or ARO has not assigned the position of Net Control and you believe there is an obvious need for one, assume the function of NCS until relieved by the RO, or until there is no further need for a Net Control Station. *Assign an Alternate Net Control.* Assess the overall situation in the Operational Area. Take damage reports and check-ins.
  - Test your equipment and antenna. Make sure your location is safe – no smoke, no gas smell, etc.
  - Say: "Is there a Net Control Operator on frequency? Break. Break. This is a fire/medical/earthquake/general alert. This is NOT a drill. All stations copy. This is a fire/medical/earthquake/general activation of the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES Net. Stations available for assignment please check in." Follow standard net control procedures.
  - Ensure that there is an alternate NCS standing by in case you go off the air.
  - Begin your Activity Log.
  - Ask other stations to repeat information bulletins on other area repeaters to help keep the frequency clear.
  
- ❑ Supervise the flow of emergency-related traffic. Keep unrelated traffic off of the frequency.
  - Poll stations for pending traffic. Instruct all stations to call out the priority of their traffic when they answer roll call.
    - Emergency traffic – life safety issues (Emergency traffic always get priority of the net)
    - Reply Required – Traffic requiring an answer from the receiving location.
    - Information Only – Traffic that does not need an answer.
  - Facilitate traffic between two stations. Allow short conversations to proceed. Refer longer conversations to another frequency. When finished, the stations check back into the net.
  - Take traffic for your location or assign another to do so. Request a runner if necessary.
  
- ❑ Watch for frequency and technical problems.
  - Distinguish intentional from accidental interference.
  - Know the available alternate frequencies.
  - Designate a different frequency for the net if needed.
  
- ❑ Maintain net discipline and help stations do their job effectively.
  - Instruct all stations to stay on frequency.
  - Provide on-the-job training on net protocol as needed.

- Call roll every hour. Provide briefings on situation Status or list stations currently on the net every 30 minutes.
  - Repeat the net ID every 30 minutes (when message traffic is slow):  
"This is (FCC Call), Net Control for the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES Net. This is a directed net. Permission to pass traffic must come from the Net Control Station. Is there any emergency or urgent traffic at this time?" (If not, take check-ins and ask for traffic.)
- Maintain a Net Control Activity Log.
  - Request a runner to assist you if traffic is too heavy to perform the task alone, or assign another station to record the log.
  - Announce shift changes at your location and have stations announce theirs.
  - Notify the RO when there is no longer a need for a Net Control Station. Request the repeater be turned over to normal use and thank the repeater owners.

***Alternate Net Control***

- ***The Alternate Net Control Station, when appointed by the Net Control Station, will log and follow all happenings on the net.***
- ***Alternate Net Control station will assume the duties of Net Control when directed to by the Net Control Station or if during an active net, the transmissions by the Net Control Station is interrupted or fails to respond to a call for 30 seconds or more.***

## RADIO OPERATORS

### Emergency Action Checklist: Radio Operators

#### **If an emergency is occurring, or is imminent:**

- ❑ Assure the safety and security of yourself and family first.
- ❑ Check the primary emergency frequency for activity. If none, proceed to activate a net. If a net has started, advise the RO if you are able to respond.
  - Observe local conditions. (Is your area affected? To what extent? Utilities? Access?)
  - Monitor broadcast radio, TV, Internet or a scanner to determine the extent of the emergency.
  - Prepare to go on assignment. Make family arrangements. Check radio gear and "Jump Kit.
  - Locate RACES identification (green card) in a prominent location on your torso.
  - Monitor the repeaters for possible EOC activation.
- ❑ When you receive an assignment record the details. Typical assignments are: radio operator (in an EOC radio room, ICP, shelter, etc.); Net Control Station; shadow; media monitor; scribe; runner; etc.
  - Drive safely. Monitor broadcast radio for current road conditions, incident status.
  - Check in with net control when you depart. Advise of arrival at assignment.
- ❑ Upon arrival at location:
  - Set up equipment. Establish communications with the Net Control Station. Organize your work area and forms.
  - Receive briefing from your immediate supervisor and the staff you are relieving.
  - Sign in on Activity Log. Review the log and check on the status of messages awaiting reply.
  - Introduce yourself to the agency staff. Explain your mission.
  - Sign in with the Net Control Station. Listen to the assigned Net continuously.
  - Transmit/receive messages using the tactical call. Use FCC call at end of message only.
  - Keep transmission short. Observe net discipline.
  - Log all message traffic. Use message form for inter-agency messages. Be exact.
  - Notify Net Control Station if you will be off the air even for a short time.
  - Observe radio traffic precedence: Emergency; Urgent or Routine.
  - Refer media to your supervisor or the Agency staff in charge.
- ❑ Upon completion of shift:
  - Brief your relief staff. Review Activity Log. Note change of operators in Log. Sign out with NCS.
  - Assist your relief in setting up and testing equipment. Introduce relief operator to Agency staff.
  - Contact Net Control Station when you leave and when you arrive home.
- ❑ Non-emergency responsibilities:
  - Participate in local and regional training, exercises, and public service events and operate as Net Control Station to maintain and increase skill levels.
  - Review your family emergency plans. Increase your level of preparedness.
  - Notify the RO of license upgrades, address, phone number, Fax or e-mail changes, etc.

## HF BAND PLAN

H.F. Statewide Primary 3993.5 KHz LSB                      Local Primary 3997.5 KHz LSB

H.F. Secondary Local 7245.0 KHz LSB                      Secondary 28.495 MHz USB

## VHF and UHF BAND PLAN

Frequencies used within Oswego County are coordinated by the RO who resolves interference problems within the area. UHF and VHF frequencies are ideal for the distances and terrain in Oswego County, and are used to their full potential with various repeaters. See below for a list of frequencies and PL tones. **If a designated repeater is off the air, use the output frequency on simplex.** Relay traffic if necessary. When the repeater comes back on the air, it will be obvious by the tone.

When additional simplex frequencies are needed, select the UHF (220 or 440) bands, if line of sight is available. The higher the frequency, the greater is the need for line of sight transmissions. If line of sight is not available, (e.g. from one town to another) VHF (2 meters) will work better than UHF. Directional antennas can be very helpful.

V.H.F. Repeaters            147.15 + PL tone: 103.5

146.85 –

U.H.F. Repeater            442.35 + PL tone 103.5

Simplex            VHF    146.520 MHz    National Call Frequency

146.550 MHz

146.565 MHz

146.580 MHz

UHF    446.000 MHz

446.500 MHz

Packet User Ports and SSIDs, locations and frequency (See Packet Section for complete local network)

Fulton K2QQY            145.090 MHz (Backbones to state wide network)

Scriba KA2AON            145.690 MHz (Backbones to Fulton and Clay)

## NET TECHNIQUES, VOICE

### Operating Signals:

- ❑ Operating signals (Q signals) will not be used for voice operation. Plain language, concise phrases, procedures and prowords as described in the following pages will convey operating information.

### Signal strength and readability:

- ❑ A station assumes it has a readability of "good" unless otherwise notified.
- ❑ When a report is necessary, concise phrases such as "weak but readable" or "strong but distorted" are to be used.

### Phonetic Alphabet:

- ❑ The standard phonetic alphabet will be used when necessary for purposes of clarity, to spell difficult words or groups (words, numbers or combinations), or to identify any letter of the alphabet.
- ❑ A single letter of the alphabet will be identified phonetically, preceded by the proword "initial".

### Use of numbers:

- ❑ Numbers may be sent as digits or spelled out. When spelled out, numbers are expressed in words for each digit except **even hundreds or thousands**. Examples: 123.4 is said as one two three decimal four and thus is unmistakable. However, if this were said as one twenty three decimal four it could be mistaken as 1203.4. Cardinal numbers will be used whenever practical (i.e. for the number 62, six two will be said instead of sixty-two. Large numbers, such as 5,000 will be said as five thousand.).

### Tactical Call signs:

- ❑ Tactical call signs will be employed for all field stations. Tactical call signs will also be used for all inter-county and statewide emergency nets. The use of the tactical call sign does not relieve the operator from station identification requirements listed in Part 97. Tactical call signs will identify the location of the station, rather than the individual RACES operator. This is especially important when operations extend for more than one operational period or operator shift.

## ON THE AIR TRAINING NET

The on the air training nets will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month at 1930 hours for the HF net and at 2000 hours local on the 147.15 repeater for the VHF net.

These are directed nets and there will be practice in sending and receiving training messages and discussion of net and traffic procedures.

The net will follow the sequence given in the Net Prologue as generally outlined below.

### PROCEDURE:

- ❑ The net will open with the Net Prologue (See Pages 2-30 for VHF & 31 for HF). The Net Control Station (NCS) will ask for check-ins and for stations to indicate whether or not they have traffic and whether or not their tone alert monitor or pager activated.
- ❑ After stations have checked in, Net Control will appoint an Alternate Net Control and an alternate frequency.
- ❑ Traffic will be handled in accordance with standard procedures and priority.
- ❑ The net will close after all comments and/or questions have been taken.
- ❑ *The alternate net frequency is used for operators to pass traffic and for when the assigned net frequency has become unusable. When operating a net on a repeater, all stations will move to the alternate frequency if the repeater becomes inoperable. The net control station, and/or the alternate net control station will try to establish contact on the repeater output frequency to inform of the switch. This move will occur after 60 seconds of repeater quiet.*
- ❑ *In the event that the net control station goes silent during the opening phases of the net (checkins) and an alternate net control stations has not been indicated, the first person checking in shall assume the role of net control.*

## OPERATING ON A TACTICAL RADIO NET

### Tactical Radio Net

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

### Types of Net

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

### Don't help the NCS

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

**Use tactical and FCC call signs efficiently**

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

**Never leave a net without checking out**

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

**Brief the operator who relieves you**

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

**Keep transmissions short in order to:**

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

**Stop transmitting if you stop talking**

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

**Don't use VOX or a locking PTT switch**

PTT (push-to-talk transmission) is better than VOX (voice-activated transmission) on a tactical net. PTT allows you to control exactly when to transmit. Do not use locking PTT switches.

**Listen before transmitting**

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

**Avoid unnecessary transmissions**

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

**How to interrupt the net**

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

If you interrupt, key very briefly, only enough to give your call or the word "break". A more urgent situation with immediate attention required, give the word break followed by your callsign.

**Use short simple phrases and common courtesy**

Don't chew gum or eat while transmitting. Sound alert. If you are tired, get a relief operator. Avoid angry comments on the air at all costs. Obscene statements are not necessary and are out of place at all times. Keep in mind that the general public and non RACES amateurs are listening and judging our professionalism by what they hear.

**Acknowledge transmissions to you**

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

**Answer questions as directly as possible; do not explain**

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

**Ask whom the message is for, if you don't know**

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

**Let third parties speak over your radio**

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

**Minimize misunderstandings**

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

**Wait after keying before speaking**

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

**Don't talk louder in a noisy environment**

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

**Shield your microphone from the wind**

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

**Your HT may not work on your belt**

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

**Keep your body still while transmitting**

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

**Operating while mobile**

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

## **ADDRESSES AND TACTICAL CALL SIGNS**

The addresses of various established op centers are listed in the Field Locations and Equipment section. Tactical call signs are pre-assigned and will be given to each station as it is established. Tactical call signs are not to be shortened. Examples of pre-assigned tactical call signs:

"Oswego JIC"

"Onondaga RC"

"Jefferson EOC"

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

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

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

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

*The following is a non-formal type of information exchange. A generic form is used in this case.*

- a) Originating Station: "Oswego EOC, this is First Street Shelter."  
Receiving Station: "First Street Shelter, this is Oswego EOC ...Go ahead."
- b) Originating Station "This message is for the Logistics Section Coordinator".  
"The First Street Shelter was open as of 0830  
"25 people are registered."
- c) Receiving Station: "Copy: the First Street Shelter was open as of 0930. 25 people are registered."  
Originating Station: "Correction: First Street Shelter opened at 0830."
- d) Receiving Station: "Copy: 0830 ...Oswego EOC, W2ABC Clear."  
Originating Station: "First Street Shelter, N2ABC Clear."

## FORMAL WRITTEN MESSAGES

All written traffic must include the following information:

- **Heading:**
  - Agency message number.
  - Status, Info Only or Reply Required.
  - To Agency and Location.
  - From Agency and Location.
  - Subject.
  - Date.
  - Time.
- **Text**
  - The actual message.
  - Use plain language
- **Signature and Authority**
  - Signature of the person originating the message, not necessarily the radio operator.
  - The name of the person authorizing the message.

When sending Formal Written Messages:

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

When receiving Formal Written Messages:

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

## MESSAGE HANDLING AND RADIO TRAFFIC PROCEDURES

### PROWORDS AND PROSIGNS

#### Recommended Proword .....Definitions

AFFIRMATIVE	Yes, correct, granted
ALL AFTER	Say again all that part of your transmission after _____
ALL BEFORE	Say again all that part of your transmission before _____
BREAK	Used to indicate the separation of the text of a message from the other parts of that message. Also used to mean "I desire you to stop your transmission".
AUTHORITY	Name of official authorizing transmission of message
COPY	Used to acknowledge message or information received.
CORRECT	you are correct, that is correct
CORRECTION	I have made an error. Transmission will continue from the last correct word.
COUNT	Same as groups.
DISREGARD THIS TRANSMISSION	This transmission is in error, disregard it. (This proword will not be used to cancel any transmission that has been completed and receipted for.)
DRILL, DRILL TRAFFIC	Used to indicate the message is not real and is for exercise purposes only.
FIGURE(S)	Numeral(s) or number(s) to follow.
FROM	Signifies the ADDRESS GROUP (Agency) or CALL SIGN of the originator.
GROUPS	Signifies the number of "word groups" contained in the message.
INCORRECT	You are incorrect; that is incorrect, the correct version is _____
INITIAL(S)	A group of one or more letters..
I READ BACK	I am reading back that portion of the transmission as you instructed.
I SAY AGAIN	I am repeating the transmission or portion indicated.
I SPELL	I will spell the next word group using the ITU phonetic alphabet.
I VERIFY	That which follows has been verified at your request and is repeated (to be used only as a reply to "verify").
LETTER THE TEXT	Missing word(s): Repeat the first letter or number of each group phonetically.
MAYDAY	International distress call in emergencies.
MIXED GROUP	Following may contain letters, numbers and/or symbols.

MORE TO FOLLOW	I have more messages, traffic or information for you.
NEGATIVE	No, not received.
OUT	This is the end of my series of transmissions to you.
OVER	This is the end of my transmission(s) to you. I am waiting for your response.
READ BACK	Repeat this entire transmission back to me exactly as received.
ROGER	Message received and understood.
SAY AGAIN	Repeat. When special instructions are given, give requested information.
SPEAK FASTER	Your transmission is too slow. Increase speed of transmission.
SPEAK SLOWER	Your transmission is too fast. Decrease speed of transmission.
THIS IS	This transmission is from <u>(call sign)</u>
TIME	Following is the time or the date – time group of the message.
TO	The addressee, whose designations immediately follow, are to act on this message.
UNKNOWN STATION	The identity of the station with whom I am attempting to contact is unknown.
STAND BY (WAIT)	I must pause for a moment.
VERIFY	Verify entire message (or portion indicated) with the originator and send correct version. To be used only at the discretion of the addressee to whom the questioned message was directed.
WAIT ____	I MUST PAUSE FOR _____ MINUTES (EXPRESSED IN NUMERALS).
WORD AFTER	Repeat the word after _____ .
WORD BEFORE	Repeat the word before _____ .
WORD TWICE	Transmit each word or phrase twice, under difficult radio conditions

## ITU PHONETIC ALPHABET

<b>Alpha</b>		<b>November</b>
<b>Bravo</b>		<b>Oscar</b>
<b>Charlie</b>		<b>Papa</b>
<b>Delta</b>		<b>Quebec</b>
<b>Echo</b>		<b>Romeo</b>
<b>Foxtrot</b>		<b>Sierra</b>
<b>Golf</b>		<b>Tango</b>
<b>Hotel</b>		<b>Uniform</b>
<b>India</b>		<b>Victor</b>
<b>Juliet</b>		<b>Whiskey</b>
<b>Kilo</b>		<b>X-Ray</b>
<b>Lima</b>		<b>Yankee</b>
<b>Mike</b>		<b>Zulu</b>

## ON THE AIR MEETING VHF NET PROLOGUE

Note:

Net control should monitor the net frequency several minutes prior to net time to insure that the frequency will be free at net time. If the frequency is busy, join in the conversation and ask those using the frequency if they would like to join the upcoming net. This serves as a reminder that the net is upcoming and may also bring in new members. It should be noted however, that in the unlikely event that stations using the frequency refuse to leave or join in, they have every legal right to do so and net control may have to use an alternate frequency.

**Check-ins that are not current members should be asked for their name and location and welcomed to the net.**

- This is (Net Control Call) opening this session of the OCEC/RACES net.
- Stations with emergency traffic are to "break" into the at any time.
- This is a directed net and you are asked to follow the directions of net control. This net meets on the first and third Sunday of each month at 2000 hours local time on the 147.15 repeater with alternate repeaters of 146.85, 442.35 or on 145.565 simplex.
- This is a training and discussion net covering message formats that might be used during an emergency operation. RACES, Skywarn™ and message handling discussions are encouraged. All Amateurs are invited to check in and traffic is welcomed.
- Stations to check in please call now and state if you have traffic for the net and whether or not your pager/tone alert activated. (For anyone indicating traffic, ask them the nature of the traffic) (Check ins not on our list, ask for name and location)
- Are there any more check ins at this time? If so, please call now and state if you have traffic for the net and whether or not your pager/tone alert was activated.
- Alternate Net Control for this evening is \_\_\_\_\_. (Appoint an alternate net control and verify the list of check-ins).
- Alternate Net Frequency is \_\_\_\_\_(repeater or simplex).
- Next item on the agenda is training. (Net control or other will have a training message prepared to be sent to an individual acting as an agency. All others copy the message for discussion. If the State RACES message is of pertinent information it may used.)
  - \*\*After the time group, say break, unkey your mic and pause for any station trying to "break in".
  - \*\* Key up and transmit the message body slowly and clearly.
  - \*\*After the body of the message has been given, say break and unkey your mic again. (This provides an opportunity for another station to break in if they have a need to)
  - \*\*Give the signature and authority..
  - \*\*Ask for a read back by the receiving station.
  - \*\* If the read back is correct sender will "confirm read back".. Receiver will respond with "I roger the confirmation"..
- Query the net for any questions or comments concerning the message.
- Anyone wishing to check in to the Oswego County Emergency Communicators net please do so at this time. Please state if you have traffic for the net and whether or not your pager/tone alert activated.
- Handle any other traffic that was indicated at the time of check in and has not been taken care of already.
- Does the Radio Officer have any comments for the net this evening?
- Does anyone have any queries, comments or announcements?

- Welcome any stations that have checked in and are not on our active list. Ask them to tell a bit about themselves and their opinion of the net.
- **(Alternate Net Control)** please comment on tonight's net operation and confirm number of check ins.
- Last call for check ins.
- This has been the Oswego County Emergency Communicators Net. Anyone needing information about this net, please contact John, K2QQY, the RACES Radio Officer or any Oswego County Emergency Communicator. If you have topics you would like covered, please bring them to the next on the air meeting, or to our formal meeting at the County Building in Fulton Wednesday **(Month and Date)**. As net control for this session, I hereby declare this net closed at **(Local time in 24 hour format)** local time..

All stations, in order of check in, sign off as "clear". At end of sequence, This is **(Your Call) OUT**

## **ON THE AIR MEETING HF NET PROLOGUE**

- This is \_\_\_\_\_ opening this session of the Oswego County New York Emergency Communicators/RACES net.
- Stations with emergency traffic are to "break" into the net at any time.
- This is a directed net and you are asked to follow the directions of net control. This net meets on the first and third Sunday of each month at 1930 hours local time on 3993.5 KHz LSB with alternate frequencies of 3997.5 KHz LSB, 7.245 MHz LSB, or on 28.495 MHz USB.
- This is a training and discussion net covering RF propagation, antennas, and transmission modes that might be used during an emergency operation. RACES, Skywarn™, and technical discussions are encouraged. All Amateurs are invited to check in and traffic is welcomed.
- Stations to check in please call now. **(For anyone indicating traffic, ask them the nature of the traffic) (Check ins not on our list, ask for name and location)**
- Are there any more check-ins or relays at this time? If so, please call now.
- Alternate Net Control for this evening is \_\_\_\_\_. **(Appoint an alternate net control and verify the list of check-ins).**
  
- **Protocol for Propagation Discussions**  
Exchange Signal Reports with all stations on the net and determine if all can be heard.  
Request a description of antenna types and transmit power in use.  
If alternate antennas (dipoles, NVIS, verticals, mobile, etc...) are available switch antennas and request deltas in signal strength/quality.
  
- **Protocol for Training Messages**  
**(Net control or other will have a training message prepared to be sent to an individual acting as an agency. All others copy the message for discussion. If the State RACES message is of pertinent information it may used.)**  
**\*\*After the time group, say break, unkey your mic and pause for any station trying to "break in".**  
**\*\* Key up and transmit the message body slowly and clearly.**  
**\*\*After the body of the message has been given, say break and unkey your mic again. (This provides an opportunity for another station to break in if they have a need to)**  
**\*\*Give the signature and authority..**  
**\*\*Ask for a read back by the receiving station.**  
**\*\* If the read back is correct sender will "confirm read back".. Receiver will respond with "I roger the confirmation".**
- Query the net for any questions or comments concerning the message.

- Does anyone have any queries, comments or announcements?
- Welcome any stations that have checked in and are not on our active list. Ask them to tell a bit about themselves and their opinion of the net and topics they would like covered.
- **(Alternate Net Control)** please comment on tonight's net operation and confirm number of check ins.
- Last call for check ins and relays.
- This has been the Oswego County New York Emergency Communicators Net. Anyone needing information about this net, please contact John, K2QQY, the RACES Radio Officer or any Oswego County New York Emergency Communicator. If you have topics you would like covered, please bring them to the next on the air meeting, or to our formal meeting at the County Building in Fulton, NY Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_. As net control for this session, I hereby declare this net closed at **(Local time in 24 hour format)** local time. This is **(Your Call)** OUT.

## ACTIVATED NET PROLOGUE

Note:

Whenever a net is raised in response to an emergency, it is important to realize that many operators and listeners will be "tuned in" to hear what is happening. There will be offers of help from other operators and there will be attempts to make contact with people in the affected area. This will all take place during the first hours of the emergency and it will be very distracting to the net control station. It is not possible to block off repeaters to the outside world, so it will be necessary to recognize the needs of others and handle them in a reasonable manner. The prologue should include instructions for those operators that want information or want to contact others as to how it can be accomplished. Net control should, at all times maintain control of the net and make note of these requests. It is **very** important that any promises or assurances given are fulfilled at the earliest possible moment.

Check ins that are not from the Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES should be queried as to an affiliation to an emergency services organization, such as another RACES, ARES, Red Cross, etc.

<p><b>The Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES has been activated by the authority of _____, (title)_____ at _____ hours due to _____</b></p> <p>_____ (reason for activation).</p> <p><b>All non-emergency traffic is asked to keep transmissions short if emergency activity is quiet, otherwise please log your request with net control. Please leave time in between transmissions for emergency traffic.</b></p> <p><b>All Operators are asked to check in at this time.</b></p>
---

Take checkins and do assignments as directed by the Radio Officer or designee.

At the end of the activation announce

**Oswego County Emergency Communicators/RACES is released from the \_\_\_\_\_ incident at \_\_\_\_\_ hours. Date \_\_\_\_\_**

**Thank you for your help. This is \_\_\_\_\_ OUT**

## COMMUNICATIONS LOG

<b>LOG</b> RECORD COMMS AND MAJOR EVENTS		<b>INCIDENT #</b>	DATE PREPARED: 7/15/07 TIME PREPARED: 2000
FOR OPERATIONAL PERIOD # 7/15 -7/15		<b>TASK NAME: Sunday night net drill</b>	
OPERATOR NAME AND CALL: John Darling k2qqy		TACTICAL I.D.	
<b>MESSAGE AND ACTION LOG</b>			
TIME	STATION CALLED/CALLING	SUBJECT OR TASK:	
1958		Activated pagers and tone alerts	
2001		Opened net	
2002	wd4ekb		
2002	Ka2aon		
2003	Wa2aff		
2004	wb2nvy		
2013	Wb2pko		
2027		Closed net	
PAGE _1_ OF 1		<b>ICS 309</b> OSWEGO3/38/07	

### Using the Communications Log

The Communications Log provides a means to conveniently record time line information of your station activity or a net if you are the net control.

The “Subject or Task” column is used to record assignments, reason for contact and when a station leaves a net, or any other significant information.

<b>INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN</b>			1. INCIDENT NAME  REPP Drill	2. DATE/TIME PREPARED  1/11/07	3. OPERATIONAL PERIOD DATE/TIME  1/11/07 0830 1411
4. BASE RADIO CHANNEL UTILIZATION					
SYSTEM/CACHE	CHANNEL	FUNCTION	FREQUENCY/TONE	ASSIGNMENT	REMARKS
HF		NYS Liaison	3993.5 KHz LSB	EOC	Use channel for converse mode
UHF		Field Intercom	4446.000 MHz Simplex (446.500 MHz Alt)	JIC, EOF, EOC	
VHF		Packet	145.090 MHz	JIC, EOF, EIC	
5. PREPARED BY (COMMUNICATIONS UNIT)					

### Using the Incident Radio Communications Plan

The Communication Plan is a key reference document that will contain names of nets and assigned frequencies. Radio types, if other than amateur, will also be indicated here.

## **Message Forms**

Message forms are very much part of emergency communications. Whenever there is an emergency, it is important that all actions, as much as possible, be recorded so that proper financial responsibility can be assessed. All messages are considered "formal" when they deal with anything that would have a cost associated with it. Formal messages require the acknowledgement of a responsible person that the message is being sent and that they are aware of any incurring costs. The other aspect of formal messages is that they provide a tracking of the events of the emergency which can be used to improve response and mitigation.

OCEC/RACES members must be aware of the major forms for formal messages. The first or most used one is the Standard Oswego County Message Form. This form is based on the ICS-213 message form with slight modifications.. All agencies and departments use this form. Instructions for the use of this form can be found on Pages 37.

The next form is ones that may come from the outside, such as the State RACES office. New York State RACES uses an amended ARRL form for its messaging. This form is primarily one that would carry RACES information and may at times be used by a county that does not have its own or use the third form. Instructions for the ARRL form can be found on Page 39.



## **Standard Message Form Content**

Seldom, if ever, will a formal message be originated by a radio operator, unless an "authority" is dictating the content.. The content of the fields are as follows:

- Agency Message Number – This is how an agency keeps track of the messages they produce.
- Information Only or Reply Required – Informs recipient of the message status.
- TO – The recipient agency and where it is located. If a message arrives at the radio operator with a name in this field and a location, we have to assume that that person is at that location. Send it.
- FROM – The originating agency and its location. Again, if a name is used, copy it into this field.
- Subject – The subject of the message. This information might be helpful when logging the message.
- Date and Time – When originator prepared the message.
- RACES – This is a catch all block. Can be used for a "word count" if conditions require it, otherwise use it for indicating that you handled the message by entering your call and the time.
- Message – Body of the message. Transmit message as written.
- Signature – Person preparing the message.
- Authority – Person responsible for the actions of the message.
- Reply – When a reply is requested, the message is written here. When receiving a reply, you will be using a clean form. Copy all information given writing the message body in the lower half.
- Date and Time – When the reply was prepared.
- Signature / Authority – Message preparer and person responsible for the action of the message.

Messages are prepared by agency representatives and may not always be "technically correct", but that does not make them any less important. If information is missing that prevents the forwarding of the message to its designated receiver, it is your responsibility to try and get that information. If you are unable to obtain the information, log the circumstances and mark the message accordingly about the missing information.

## **Distribution**

EOC – Messages will be delivered to the radio room via a runner who will place them in a IN basket. A traffic manager, appointed for the event, will determine the best method, VHF, UHF, HF, voice, packet or CW, in which to pass the message.

For incoming messages, the message will be placed in the OUT basket for delivery by a runner to the recipient.

OFFSITE – Messages will be given to the operator by a runner or a designee for transmitting. Received messages will be given to a runner or designee.

Instructions for Using the ARRL Form

THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE <b>RADIOGRAM</b> VIA AMATEUR RADIO							
NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	FX	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
<b>TO</b>  _____  TELEPHONE NUMBER  _____ _____ _____ _____						THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT AMATEUR STATION _____ PHONE _____ NAME _____ STREET ADDRESS _____ CITY AND STATE _____	
<b>REC'D</b>	FROM	DATE	TIME	<b>SENT</b>	TO	DATE	TIME
THIS MESSAGE WAS HANDLED FREE OF CHARGE BY A LICENSED AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR, WHOSE ADDRESS IS SHOWN IN THE BOX AT RIGHT ABOVE. AS SUCH MESSAGES ARE HANDLED SOLELY FOR THE PLEASURE OF OPERATING, NO COMPENSATION CAN BE ACCEPTED BY A "HAM" OPERATOR. A RETURN MESSAGE MAY BE FILED WITH THE "HAM" DELIVERING THIS MESSAGE TO YOU. FURTHER INFORMATION ON AMATEUR RADIO MAY BE OBTAINED FROM A.R.R.L. HEAD-QUARTERS, 225 MAIN STREET, NEWINGTON, CONN. 06111				THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE, INC., IS THE NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SOCIETY OF LICENSED RADIO AMATEURS AND THE PUBLISHER OF QST MAGAZINE. ONE OF ITS FUNCTIONS IS PROMOTION OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS AMONG AMATEUR OPERATORS. TO THAT END, THE LEAGUE HAS ORGANIZED THE NATIONAL TRAFFIC SYSTEM FOR DAILY NATION-WIDE MESSAGE HANDLING.			
PRINTED IN U.S.A.							

- NUMBER* Assigned by originating station.
- PRECEDENCE* Emergency; Priority; Welfare; Routine.
- STATION OF ORIGIN* callsign of originating station.
- CHECK* Word count of message.
- PLACE OF ORIGIN* This is the "from" field, SEMO, etc.
- TIME FILED* Local time in 24 hour format.
- DATE* Month and date message filed. Year is optional.
- TO* Agency person message going to.
- Signature added at bottom followed by "by authority of".

When receiving a message that has been prepared on this form, enter the "PLACE OF ORIGIN" in the From Agency and Location positions on the Standard Message Form. Enter the "TO" information in the To Agency and Location positions. The "STATION OF ORIGIN", amateur radio callsign, can be recorded in the top margin.