



Mission Viejo RACES – ARES HANDBOOK



**Memorandum of Understanding Between the
County Of Orange Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (OCRACES),
City Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (City RACES),
Orange County Emergency Management Organization (OCEMO),
And
The Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross**

INTRODUCTION

The Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and the Orange County Emergency Management Organization (OCEMO) are responsible for providing various levels of emergency communications in Orange County.

PURPOSE

Section 97.407 of the Federal Communications Commission Rules and Regulations prohibits RACES stations from communicating with non-RACES stations unless certified by a civil defense organization. The purpose of this MOU is to establish the framework in which the County of Orange civil defense organization (Sheriff's Emergency Management) certifies Amateur Radio operators designated by the Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross, thus allowing communications to occur during RACES activation. It is the intent of this MOU to cover OCRACES and any interested City RACES organization under one umbrella as it relates to RACES communications with the American Red Cross Orange County Chapter.

This agreement between the listed parties establishes a framework of cooperation and a close working relationship with volunteer Amateur Radio operators organized under the authority of the Red Cross, the County of Orange, and the various cities of Orange County.

THE ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

The Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross is responsible for all local Red Cross activities within its jurisdiction, subject to the policies and procedures (3000 series). The Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross's Disaster Emergency Services department studies the disaster hazards of the locality and surveys local resources for personnel, equipment, supplies, transportation, emergency communications, and facilities available for disaster relief. The Chapter's disaster leadership also formulates cooperative plans and procedures with local government agencies and private organizations for carrying on relief operations should a disaster occur.

COUNTY OF ORANGE RACES (OCRACES) & CITY RACES (City RACES)

Founded in 1952, the County of Orange Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (OCRACES) is a public service that provides communications personnel to government agencies in times of extraordinary need. During periods of activation, RACES personnel are called upon to perform various tasks for the government agencies they serve. Although the exact nature of each activation is different, the common thread is communications. OCRACES, provides service to the County, any city within the county as needed, and also functions as the RACES Operational Area Mutual Aid Coordinator. An individual city may establish their own City RACES program.

ORANGE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION (OCEMO)

OCEMO consists of the members the Orange County Operational Area and establishes the Operational Area Plan, policies and procedures, training and exercises necessary to ensure that the Operational Area Plan, policies, procedures, training and exercises meet the emergency needs of the Subdivisions, County and Operational Area.

METHODS OF COOPERATION

In order that the communications resources of the American Red Cross and RACES may be coordinated and used to the fullest advantage during disasters and emergencies, the Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross and the Orange County Operational Area City/County RACES organizations have agreed to the following:

1. Maintain liaison with Disaster Emergency Services at the American Red Cross Orange County Chapter.
2. Work together to form the closest possible cooperation in emergency communications planning and coordination of local radio service communications for disaster relief operations.
3. The Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross will include MOU participants in pre-disaster planning, exercises and during disasters. The Red Cross welcomes the cooperation and assistance of the listed parties to extend emergency communications planning into the jurisdiction.

4. When a disaster or an emergency requires the use of local Amateur Radio communications resources, the American Red Cross may request the assistance of the MOU participants. This assistance may include:

Alerting and mobilizing volunteer emergency communications personnel in accordance with a pre-arranged disaster plan.

Establishing and maintaining fixed, mobile, and portable emergency communications facilities for local radio communications coverage and point-to-point contact between Red Cross officials and locations, as required.

Providing adequate local communications for the duration of the emergency or until substantial regular communications are restored. The MOU participants recognizes that the American Red Cross, working with officials in the disaster area, may need to establish guidelines concerning the acceptance, transmission, and distribution of disaster well being (disaster welfare) traffic by Amateur Radio. Accordingly, the MOU participants will be encouraged to handle traffic in adherence to the guidelines provide by American Red Cross personnel in the disaster area.

Develop detailed operating plans for the utilization of the communications facilities of the Amateur Radio service will be developed by the Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross in cooperation with the MOU participants.

An American Red Cross communications fast track for MOU participants to increase their knowledge of Red Cross operations as well as policies and procedures. The Communications fast track includes the following classes: Orientation, Introduction to Disaster Services, Mass Care - An overview, Communications, plus any other training of interest. Upon completion of these courses the Red Cross will issue an American Red Cross identification card. It is recommended but not required that all MOU participants attend the Red Cross Communications fast track.

ACTIVATION PROCEDURES

The following procedures shall be followed when the Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross requests RACES assistance.

County of Orange RACES (OCRACES) - The authorized American Red Cross paid or volunteer staff will contact the County of Orange Control One communications center supervisor at (714) 628-7008, requesting Orange County RACES be activated. The Control One supervisor will obtain basic information and a contact/call back number, and then initiate a call-out. An OCRACES representative will make contact with the Red Cross representative to obtain specific details and then, if able, provide the requested resources.

City RACES Organization - The authorized American Red Cross paid or authorized volunteer staff will contact City RACES organization, requesting the activation. The City RACES organization representative will make contact with the Red Cross representative to obtain specific details and then, if able, provide the requested resources."

Operational Area Mutual Aid - This MOU will not replace established mutual aid procedures. OCRACES, as RACES Operational Area Mutual Aid Coordinator, will handle all requests for additional RACES mutual aid support that cannot be provided by the requesting jurisdiction. Upon receiving such a request, OCRACES may seek assistance from the American Red Cross in order to fill the request.

SIGNATURES

This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect upon it's signing by authorized representatives of the Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross, Sheriff Emergency Management, OCRACES and OCEMO.

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended by mutual agreement of all parties and will remain in effect until terminated. The Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross Manager of Disaster Emergency Services and the authorized representative of the MOU participants will review this agreement in 5 years and coordinate such revisions as may be necessary. Upon 60 day written notice, any party may terminate this Memorandum of Understanding.

Patrick F. Baker Date
Chief Operating Officer
American Red Cross
Orange County Chapter

Len Hayes Date
Operational Area Manager
Orange County Sheriffs Department
Emergency Management

Robert Stoffel Date
Emergency Communications Coordinator
County of Orange, OCSA/Communications

Anna Lee Cave Date
Chairman
Orange County Emergency
Management Organization