Communications Team Operations
Emergency Operations Center

1. Introduction

    In the event of Gwinnett County Government's activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the EOC Communications Team (ECOMM) serves as the focal point for all Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®) traffic to and from the EOC.

2. Responsibilities

    ECOMM is responsible for the relay of all communications via ARES® in and out of the EOC. Traffic is between the EOC and all other participating organizations and personnel.

3. Related Publications

    Gwinnett County Support Plan 200-1 (Operation County Response)

    Gwinnett County Support Plan 200-2 (Operation Damage Assessment)

    NET 1-3 Net Frequencies

4. Definition of Terms

    ARES®   Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES® and Amateur Radio Emergency Service® are registered service marks of the American Radio Relay League.)

    ARRL   American Radio Relay League

    ECOMM   Emergency Operations Center Communications Team

    EOC   Emergency Operations Center

    GJAC   Gwinnett Justice & Administration Center

    GEMA   Georgia Emergency Management Agency

    ICS   Incident Command System

    NTS   National Traffic System

5. Logistics

    5.1. Physical Layout

    While the EOC may need to be setup at any location, this document will focus on the main site. Future revisions of this document will add alternate sites as well as a field site setup.

    5.1.1   Primary Site - GJAC

    The primary EOC site is located in the Information Technology Training Room on the third floor of the GJAC. Inside the communications room adjacent to the EOC, the following equipment will be

set up. Three (3) dual band radios will be set up for UHF/VHF voice, and one packet station will be available for UHF/VHF packet.

Due to limited space inside the EOC and the inability to install outside antennas on the building, one (1) HF station will be setup in the parking lot adjacent to the building to provide communications to locations outside of the county, to GEMA and any other locations beyond the normal range of VHF and UHF frequencies. Three (3) dual band radios will be set up for UHF/VHF voice and one station will be available for UHF/VHF packet.

5.1.2   Alternate Site – Gwinnett County Police Department Training Room

The backup EOC is currently the Gwinnett County Police Department Training Room. This site has not been surveyed at the time of this revision.

5.2. Staffing

The ECOMM response team will consist of approximately twelve (12) members. Approximately half of the team members will be issued identification cards allowing them access to the EOC and will be trained on the equipment and operation inside the EOC. The other team members will be trained to operate the external HF facility in the parking lot and will not require identification cards allowing access to the EOC. The team staffing level should allow both locations at the EOC to be staffed 24 hours per day for an extended period of time if necessary.

5.2.1.   Main Site - GJAC

The interior and exterior stations will both be staffed with two operators capable of operating HF, VHF, and UHF voice and packet radio station.

5.2.2.   Alternate Site – Gwinnett County Police Department Training Room

This site has not been surveyed at the time of this revision.

5.3. Operating Guidelines

The guidelines listed below will facilitate smooth routing of message traffic in a two way exchange between the served agencies staffing the EOC, their staff, and other participating organizations outside of the EOC.

5.3.1.   Tactical Call Signs

EOC – Internal ECOMM station.

EOC HF – External HF ECOMM station.

5.3.2.   Frequencies

147.075 + PL 82.5	Resource Net
444.525 + PL 82.5	Tactical Net
446.950	Simplex voice between OPCENTER & HF
440.950	Simplex packet between OPCENTER & HF

5.3.3. Link/Net Responsibilities

Both EOC and EOC HF ECOMM stations will monitor the Resource Net, Tactical Net, simplex voice, and packet frequencies between the EOC and EOC HF stations.

5.4. Guideline

All message traffic originating from or arriving to the EOC from the EOC or EOC HF station should be written and handled in ARRL NTS Radiogram or Incident Command General Message format imbedded with ARRL NTS Radiogram header information.

5.4.1. Message Handling

Messages relayed to the served agencies via the EOC station will be entered into the EOC email system for delivery to the served agency it is addressed to in the EOC.

Messages originating from the EOC will be sent via email to the EOC for relay to the intended individual or organization.

6. Procedure

The following procedure will be enacted in the case of an emergency activation.

6.1. Initial Response

First responders will begin by assisting the served agencies in any form necessary. At the earliest opportunity, VHF/UHF voice stations will be activated in the EOC to establish communications with all nets. The team should be in operation within 30 minutes of activation.

6.2. Setup of Sustained Resources

After establishing the primary VHF/UHF voice link in the EOC, the remaining stations in the facility and at the EOC HF station will be operational, if required, within one hour of activation.

6.3. Sustaining Operations

Arrangements for shifts, food, and shelter will be in place if activation is determined to be greater than eight (8) hours. Additional resources and support should be requested through the Resource Net.

7. Release Information

Scott Hartlage - KF4PWI, EOC Response Team Leader, is the author of this document.

The date of publication for this document is June 8, 2004, and adds the ICS General Message format to acceptable message forms.