

# **SECTION 3**

## **Call-out Procedure & Net Operation**

**Section 3 - Call-out Procedure & Net Operation**

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## Section 3 - Call-out Procedure & Net Operation

### I. INTRODUCTION

As you studied Sections 1 and 2, you have become aware that the local ARES/RACES organization is quite structured. During an emergency/disaster [exercise], this structure is further enhanced by standard procedures for calling out members and establishing an emergency communications network. While the network discussed in this section is primarily voice, a digital (packet) network may also be established, as set forth in Section 4B.

The emergency voice communications network described in this section can progress from a Preliminary Information Net, to a Call-out Net, and finally to a Local Coordination Net along with two Emergency Operations (OPS 2 and OPS 3) Traffic Nets, depending on the situation. See the discussion at the end of this Section of the manual.

### II. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION NET

Before we go on to discuss the formal call-out procedure and emergency net operation, it is important to recognize that some period of time may pass after the beginning of an emergency/disaster before formal requests are made for amateur emergency communications. The following is a general guideline to follow during this "preliminary" time, if you become aware of an emergency or disaster situation:

- When you become aware of an emergency or disaster situation, **your first obligation is for your own personal safety and that of your family and those close about you.** Once you are comfortable that you can volunteer for emergency communications work, monitor the primary frequency designated in the local ARES/RACES Plan. Check and assemble your equipment (including your Emergency 72-hour Survival Kit) for possible call-out.
- The first ARES/RACES station to come up on this frequency should establish an informal "information" net. This serves two purposes: 1) it provides a source of preliminary information about the emergency and 2) it "guards" the frequency for a possible official call-out by the Emergency Coordinator and subsequent establishment of an emergency communications network.
- Although it is termed "informal", this net should be a **directed net** with the first ARES/RACES station acting as net control. Net control may be passed on to other member stations as necessary, but control must be maintained at all times until the Emergency Coordinator takes over. It is informal in the sense that written traffic is not passed.

If the designated primary frequency (147.240 MHz repeater) becomes unusable, then ARES/RACES member stations should monitor 147.240 MHz simplex. (See Appendix C of the manual for a list of ARES/RACES frequencies.)

### III. CALL-OUT PROCEDURE

As provided for in the local ARES/RACES Plan, members will be mobilized by a call-out on the local repeater, by telephone (if available), by announcement on a local broadcast station, or by any other suitable means available. Any, or all of the above may be used. The result should be a "check-in" of each available member on the designated frequency.

#### A. Order-of-command

The order-of-command for calling out ARES/RACES members is:

1. Emergency Coordinator/RACES Radio Officer (EC/RO).
2. Assistant EC/RO.
3. Net Manager.
4. Training Officer.
5. Technical Officer
6. Packet Coordinator

The highest-in-command is the first available person on the list.

Local authority for the call-out may come from the highest-in-command, or it may come from the Manager of the County Department of Emergency Services through the highest-in-command. From this point on, in the discussion, the highest-in-command will be referred to as the EC/RO or simply EC.

#### B. The Call-out Net

The EC (or designee), acting as net control, will establish a call-out net on the designated primary frequency (or next designated frequency, if required). He/she may do this by taking control of the preliminary net mentioned above.

The International Phonetic Alphabet should be used for amateur call signs until check-in has been completed and acknowledged by Net Control (NC). Throughout all of the examples in this section, notice that items enclosed in brackets [...] refer to test exercises. Notice, also, the use of standard communications protocol:

- When calling a station, the call sign of the **called** station is said first, followed by the **calling** station call sign. For example: "K7CCL... (this is) K7SUQ".
- "OVER" means "I am turning the conversation *over* to you; it is your turn".
- "OUT" means "I have completed my conversation with you and I do not expect a reply.
- "ROGER" means "I understand and acknowledge what you said".

Following are examples of initial call-out exchanges:

### 1. EXAMPLE: Initial Call-out and Check-in

Emergency Coordinator/Net Control:

"ALL STATIONS THIS NET... THIS IS *KILO SEVEN CHARLIE LIMA LIMA*, CLARK COUNTY (ACTING) EMERGENCY COORDINATOR. THIS IS A CALL-OUT FOR CLARK COUNTY ARES/RACES MEMBERS FOR AN (EARTHQUAKE) EMERGENCY [EXERCISE... REPEAT THIS IS AN EXERCISE... THERE IS NO CURRENT EMERGENCY].

INTERNATIONAL  
PHONETIC  
ALPHABET

A - *ALFA*  
B - *BRAVO*  
C - *CHARLIE*  
D - *DELTA*  
E - *ECHO*  
F - *FOXTROT*  
G - *GOLF*  
H - *HOTEL*  
I - *INDIA*  
J - *JULIET*  
K - *KILO*  
L - *LIMA*  
M - *MIKE*  
N - *NOVEMBER*  
O - *OSCAR*  
P - *PAPA*  
Q - *QUEBEC*  
R - *ROMEO*  
S - *SIERRA*  
T - *TANGO*  
U - *UNIFORM*  
V - *VICTOR*  
W - *WHISKEY*  
X - *X-RAY*  
Y - *YANKEE*  
Z - *ZULU*

THIS IS A DIRECTED NET.

PLEASE CHECK IN WITH YOUR CALL SIGN, USING INTERNATIONAL PHONETICS, YOUR TEAM NUMBER, AND YOUR COUNTY/STATE REGISTRATION NUMBER, IF KNOWN... OVER".

Initial Responses (stations check in from their current location):

"*NOVEMBER SEVEN ALPHA ALPHA ALPHA*, TEAM 1, E1234... OVER".

"N7BBB, I HAVE NO TEAM NUMBER... OVER".

"*KILO SEVEN CHARLIE ALPHA ALPHA*, TEAM 5, E1114... OVER".

"*NOVEMBER SEVEN DELTA DELTA DELTA*, TEAM 2... OVER".

EC/NC Acknowledgment:

"THIS IS *KILO SEVEN CHARLIE LIMA LIMA*, ACKNOWLEDGING:

*NOVEMBER SEVEN ALPHA ALPHA ALPHA,*  
*NOVEMBER SEVEN BRAVO BRAVO BRAVO,*  
*KILO SEVEN CHARLIE ALPHA ALPHA,*  
*NOVEMBER SEVEN DELTA DELTA DELTA.*

YOU ARE CHECKED INTO THIS EMERGENCY [EXERCISE] NET. PLEASE STAND BY FOR ASSIGNMENT [REPEAT... THIS IS AN EXERCISE. THERE IS NO CURRENT EMERGENCY]... OUT"



LEARN IT!  
USE IT!

- *Note: EC/NC continues taking check-ins until a sufficient number have responded, then initial assignments are made. [If this is an exercise, the Net Control will make frequent references to this fact and that no emergency currently exists.]*

### 2. EXAMPLE: Initial Individual and/or Team Assignment

The initial assignments will depend upon the status of the emergency. If the services of ARES/RACES has not yet been officially requested, the assignment may simply be to standby and monitor. The following example assumes an official request and that teams will be used:

EC/NC:

"ALL ARES MEMBERS THIS NET... THIS IS *KILO SEVEN CHARLIE LIMA LIMA*, EMERGENCY COORDINATOR...

PLEASE REPORT TO YOUR ASSIGNED TEAM STAGING AREA FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. YOU MAY USE YOUR ASSIGNED TEAM SIMPLEX FREQUENCY WHILE ENROUTE, OTHERWISE STAY ON THIS FREQUENCY. [THIS IS AN EXERCISE... THERE IS NO CURRENT EMERGENCY.]

THIS IS K7CLL... OUT".

*Note: Team 9 staging location is at the County Emergency Coordination Center (ECC). Team members will activate the station and check into the net as soon as they arrive.*

- *Note: In the example of 1. above, N7BBB appears to not be a member of the Clark County ARES/RACES group. Net Control would at this time make any specific assignments for this and other exceptions:*

EC/NC:

"NOVEMBER SEVEN BRAVO BRAVO BRAVO, THIS IS EC... OVER".

N7BBB:

"THIS IS N7BBB... GO AHEAD".

EC/NC:

"NOVEMBER SEVEN BRAVO BRAVO BRAVO, PLEASE STAND BY FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS... OVER".

N7BBB:

" QSL... THIS IS N7BBB... CLEAR".

- *Notice that non-members or new members might respond with something less structured, as in the example above. This should be accepted without comment or correction. Hopefully, these stations will listen and begin to use the suggested structure.*
- *After initial assignments, the Emergency Coordinator releases control of the net and assigns it to a Net Control Station (NCS):*

### 3. EXAMPLE: Net Control Assignment

EC/NC:

"ALL STATIONS... THIS IS EMERGENCY COORDINATOR, *KILO SEVEN CHARLIE LIMA LIMA* TURNING NET CONTROL OVER TO *KILO ALPHA SEVEN ROMEO SIERRA ZULU*... OVER".

KA7RSZ Response:

"THIS IS *KILO ALPHA SEVEN ROMEO SIERRA ZULU*, NOW ASSUMING NET CONTROL FOR THE CLARK COUNTY ARES/RACES (EARTHQUAKE) EMERGENCY [EXERCISE] NET... [REPEAT... THIS IS AN EXERCISE... THERE IS NO CURRENT EMERGENCY]... KA7RSZ... OUT".

- ***The Emergency Coordinator should now go to the County Emergency Coordination Center, if not already there, and begin coordinating individual and/or team assignments. EC communications will be directed through Net Control.***

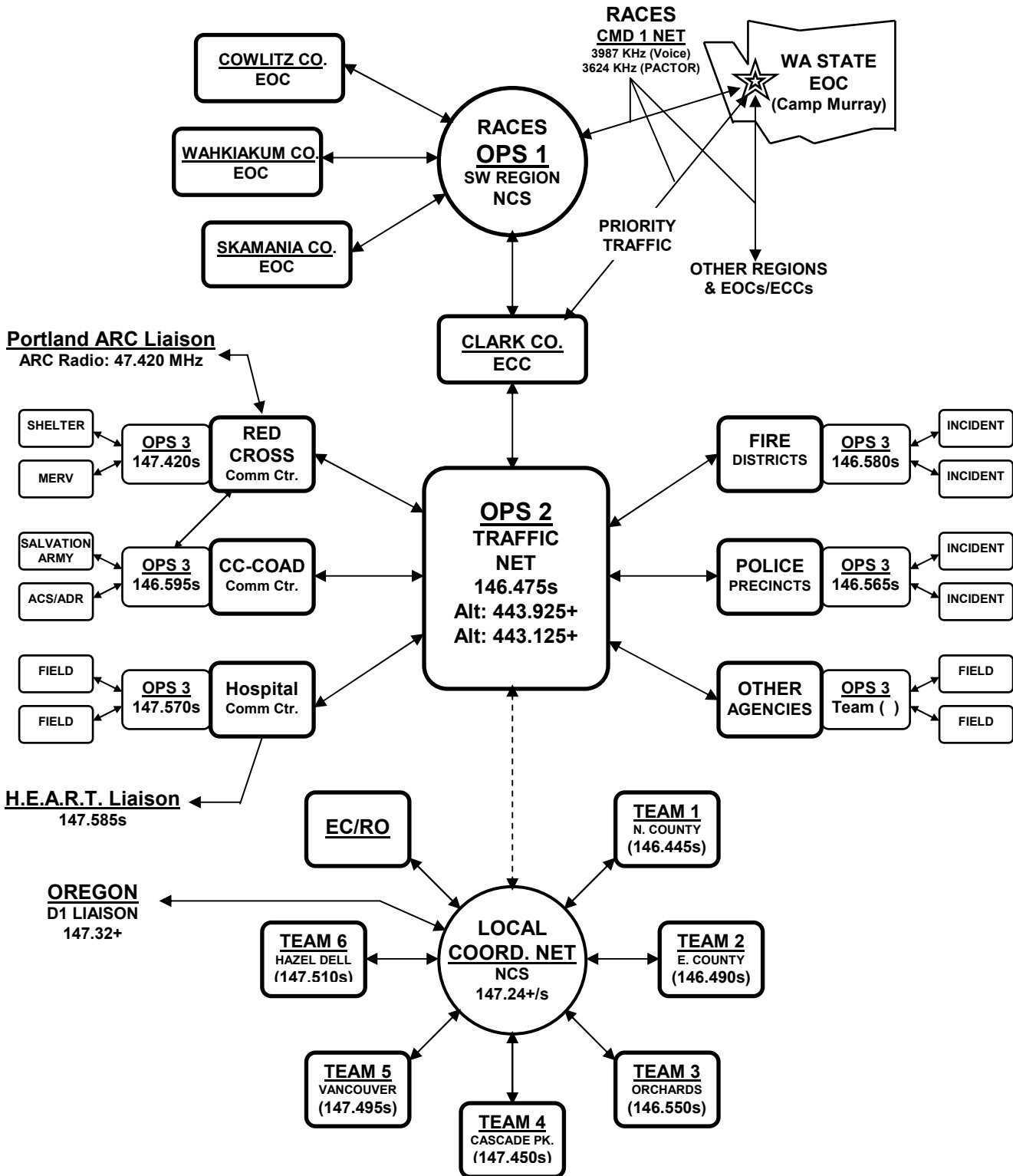
## IV. LOCAL COORDINATION NET OPERATION

At this point, the net now becomes a LOCAL COORDINATION NET. The assigned Net Control Station (NCS) will begin putting together two EMERGENCY OPERATIONS (OPS 2 and OPS 3) TRAFFIC NETS as determined and directed by the EC. Again, see the discussion at the end of this Section 3. Net Control will give consideration to the following:

- a. Explain the nature of the emergency [exercise scenario].
- b. Use of amateur and tactical call signs.
- c. Further check-in of member stations and other stations.
- d. Determine status of individuals and/or teams.
- e. Assignment of individuals and/or teams, as directed by the EC.
- f. Setting up an OPS 2 Net and an OPS 3 Net for emergency traffic.
- g. Securing a station and leaving the net.
- h. Termination of the net.

Figure 3-1 on the next page is a diagram of the basic emergency communications network which will be set up, including a Local Coordination Net and two operations nets - OPS 2 and OPS 3 Traffic Nets. All functions will not necessarily be used in a particular emergency/disaster [exercise]. Notice that Figure 3-1 also shows a portion of the state/regional RACES CMD 1 and OPS 1 network. Refer to the State RACES Plan in Appendix E for further information. Specific frequencies and tactical call signs are listed in the respective ARES/RACES plans and in Appendix C. As mentioned previously, a packet network may also be established per Section 4B.

**FIGURE 3-1**



### A. EXAMPLE: Net Control Explains the Nature of the Emergency

NCS:

"ALL STATIONS... THIS IS NET CONTROL FOR THE (EARTHQUAKE) EMERGENCY [EXERCISE] NET. THIS EMERGENCY [EXERCISE] INVOLVES (AN EARTHQUAKE REPORTED TO BE A MAGNITUDE OF SIX POINT FIVE, CENTERED EIGHT MILES NORTHEAST OF CLACKAMAS WITH EXTENSIVE DAMAGE REPORTED IN THE GREATER PORTLAND AREA, INCLUDING CLARK COUNTY). [REPEAT... THIS IS AN EXERCISE... THERE IS NO CURRENT EMERGENCY.]

THIS IS A DIRECTED NET... KA7RSZ, NET CONTROL... OUT".

*Note: "This is a directed net" means that the net control station is in charge. The general rule is that all stations must request permission of Net Control to make a contact. This control is essential so that the frequency is available for coordination of the mission [exercise]. Note that the OPS 2 Traffic Net is not a directed net.*

### B. Use of Amateur and Tactical Call Signs

A tactical call sign is a pseudo call sign which describes a location, agency or function and remains the same throughout the emergency [exercise] and, if possible, from one emergency [exercise] to the next. For example, the tactical call sign for the Southwest Washington Medical Center (old St. Joseph Hospital) is "MED CENTER". Tactical call signs for temporary stations, such as a shelter, will be made up at the time of the individual or team assignments- for example, "PRAIRIE HIGH SHELTER". All operating positions at a station will use the same tactical call sign. The amateur call sign is that of the individual operator and, in all cases, will be given at the end of an exchange and once every ten minute period during an exchange, per FCC regulations. Note that individual operator call signs will be used on local message forms where "Radio Operator" is indicated. Tactical call signs will be used on local message forms where "Radio Location" is indicated.

### C. Further Check-ins

Net Control will periodically ask for further check-ins to the net. Later on in the operation, NC may no longer ask for further check-ins. If this is the case and you are checking in for the first time or checking back into the net, simply state:

"NET CONTROL... THIS IS *KILO BRAVO SEVEN FOXTROT NOVEMBER DELTA* WISHING TO CHECK (BACK) IN... OVER"

Net control will then acknowledge you.

### D. Determining Individual and/or Team Status

Soon after the NCS has assumed control of the net, a determination of individual and/or team status is made. If teams are used, each team should be assembling at their prearranged staging location. The status reports will be monitored by the EC who will then determine assignments based on the needs of the various agencies to be served. These needs are determined and prioritized by the manager of the Department of Emergency Services. The following is an example for a team status report:

#### **EXAMPLE: Determining Team Status**

NCS:

"EMERGENCY COORDINATOR... THIS IS NET CONTROL... ARE YOU READY TO MONITOR THE TEAM STATUS REPORTS?... OVER".

Emergency Coordinator response:

"GO AHEAD... *KILO SEVEN CHARLIE LIMA LIMA*... OUT".

NCS:

"TEAM (ONE)... THIS IS NET CONTROL... OVER".

Team (one) response:

"THIS IS TEAM (ONE)... OVER".

NCS:

"THIS IS NET CONTROL... PLEASE REPORT YOUR PRESENT TEAM LOCATION, WHICH MEMBERS HAVE ARRIVED, AND YOUR TEAM CAPABILITIES REGARDING HF, VHF, UHF, AND PACKET... OVER".

Team (one):

"THIS IS TEAM (ONE)... *(the team leader responds to NC query)*... OVER".

NCS:

"THIS IS NET CONTROL... ROGER. PLEASE ADVISE NET CONTROL OF ANY CHANGES... *KILO ALPHA SEVEN ROMEO SIERRA ZULU*... OUT".

Team (one):

"THIS IS TEAM (ONE)... ROGER... *NOVEMBER WHISKEY SEVEN LIMA*... OUT".

***Net Control will continue polling each individual and/or team, as above, until all have reported. Note that the tactical call sign of teams, at this point, is the word "TEAM" and the team number.***

### E. Assignment of Individuals and/or Teams

The EC will make individual assignments. These may be on a team basis or on an individual basis, depending upon circumstances. An example of a team assignment follows:

#### **EXAMPLE: Individual Team Assignment**

Emergency Coordinator:

"NET CONTROL... THIS IS EC...OVER".

Net Control:

"THIS IS NET CONTROL... OVER".

EC:

"THIS IS EC... REQUEST PERMISSION TO CONTACT TEAM (ONE)...  
OVER".

NC:

"THIS IS NET CONTROL... GO AHEAD AND CALL TEAM (ONE)...  
OUT".

EC:

"TEAM (ONE)... THIS IS EC... OVER".

Team (one):

"THIS IS TEAM (ONE)... OVER".

EC:

"TEAM (ONE)... THIS IS EC... SEND AT LEAST TWO OPERATORS TO  
FIRE DISTRICT ELEVEN HEADQUARTERS AT DOLLARS CORNER  
AND REPORT TO THE FIRE CHIEF. SET UP TWO OPERATING  
POSITIONS, ONE ON NET CONTROL AND ONE ON ONE FORTY-  
SEVEN POINT FOUR FOUR SIMPLEX... REPEAT, ONE FORTY-SEVEN  
POINT FOUR FOUR SIMPLEX. YOUR TACTICAL CALL SIGN WILL  
BE **DOLLARS CORNER**... REPORT TO NET CONTROL WHEN YOU  
ARE ON THE AIR... OVER".

Team (one):

"THIS IS TEAM (ONE)... ROGER... *NOVEMBER WHISKEY SEVEN  
LIMA*... OUT".

EC:

"THIS IS EC... *KILO SEVEN CHARLIE LIMA LIMA*... OUT".

**Note:** *The Emergency Coordinator will continue making individual and/or team assignments as necessary, always communicating through net control.*

### F. Setting Up an OPS 2 Net and an OPS 3 Net for Emergency Traffic

Once individual and/or team assignments are made and are on location, radio equipment is set up. Each station in the network needs at least two operating positions; one to monitor the Coordination Net, and the other to monitor the OPS 2 or OPS 3 Traffic Net (see Figure 3-1). Other operating positions at a particular station may be required, such as HF, UHF, and/or packet. Refer to Section 5 of this manual on "Setting Up an Emergency Station".

- Traffic handling procedures and the use of message forms are discussed in Section 4 of this manual.

During the duration of the emergency [exercise], relief operators will be assigned upon request, or according to a schedule. This will be done on the Local Coordination Net.

### G. Securing a Station and Leaving the Net

At the end of an emergency [exercise], or when it is no longer needed, net control will give permission for a station to be secured. When a station must be temporarily secured, the station operator must request permission of net control. If it is determined that the station should not be secured, then a relief operator will be assigned. If possible, advance notice should be given to net control so that a relief operator can arrive before the securing operator leaves.

#### **EXAMPLE: Station requests to be temporarily secured**

Dollars Corner:

"NET CONTROL... THIS IS DOLLARS CORNER... OVER".

Net Control:

"DOLLARS CORNER... THIS IS NET CONTROL... OVER".

Dollars Corner:

"THIS IS DOLLARS CORNER... REQUESTING PERMISSION TO SECURE THIS STATION FROM THIRTEEN HUNDRED HOURS UNTIL FIFTEEN HUNDRED HOURS, THIS DATE... OVER".

NC:

"THIS IS NET CONTROL... PERMISSION IS GRANTED TO SECURE DOLLARS CORNER FOR TWO HOURS BEGINNING AT THIRTEEN HUNDRED HOURS, THIS DATE. PLEASE CHECK IN WHEN YOU RETURN... *KILO ALPHA SEVEN ROMEO SIERRA ZULU*... OUT".

Dollars Corner:

"THIS IS DOLLARS CORNER... ROGER.. *NOVEMBER WHISKEY SEVEN LIMA*... OUT".

### H. Termination of the net

At the conclusion of the emergency [exercise], net control gives permission for each station to secure and gives a "thank you" to all stations for participating and to Clark County Amateur Radio Club for use of their repeater. A reminder should be given to all stations to retain copies of messages and notes for further use.

#### **EXAMPLE: Termination of the net**

Net Control:

"ALL STATIONS THIS NET... THIS IS NET CONTROL FOR THE (EARTHQUAKE) EMERGENCY [EXERCISE] NET. ALL STATIONS HAVE PERMISSION TO SECURE AT THIS TIME. I WISH TO THANK ALL OPERATORS WHO PARTICIPATED AND CLARK COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB FOR THE USE OF THEIR REPEATER. ALL OPERATORS... PLEASE REMEMBER TO RETAIN COPIES OF MESSAGES AND NOTES.

THIS IS *KILO ALPHA SEVEN ROMEO SIERRA ZULU* RETURNING THIS FREQUENCY TO NORMAL USE... OUT".

- **On the following pages is a discussion of the structure and nature of the various nets referred to in this section.**

### A Discussion of the ARES/RACES Emergency Net Organization in Clark County

Referring to Figure 3-1 (repeated on the next page for your convenience), notice that during a RACES operation, the State ECC communicates with Regional Net Control Stations via a Command Net (CMD 1). Clark County is the regional NCS for the Southwest Region which is made up of Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Skamania, and Clark counties. Communications among these counties is via an Operations Net (OPS 1). Priority traffic may be communicated directly to/from a county via the CMD 1 Net to/from the State ECC. Discussion of the various RACES nets is found in the State RACES Plan in Appendix E of this manual. Be sure to review this document.

At the local level, two other Operations Nets come into play (OPS 2 and OPS 3), both for RACES and/or ARES operations. Clark County ARES/RACES also uses a Coordination Net at the local level. Following is a discussion of these three local nets:

**Local Coordination Net:** This net is the outgrowth of a Preliminary Information Net and an Initial Call-out and Check-in Net. It is a **directed net** and is for the purpose of doing all of the necessary coordination of amateur resources during an emergency [exercise] situation. Traffic on this net is for amateur internal operations and is usually of an informal nature, but may be in written form if required. Care should be taken that "agency traffic" is **not** handled on this net, except in extreme situations when the OPS 2 or OPS 3 Traffic Nets cannot be used.

The Emergency Coordinator uses this net to direct and assign resources initially and on an on-going basis.

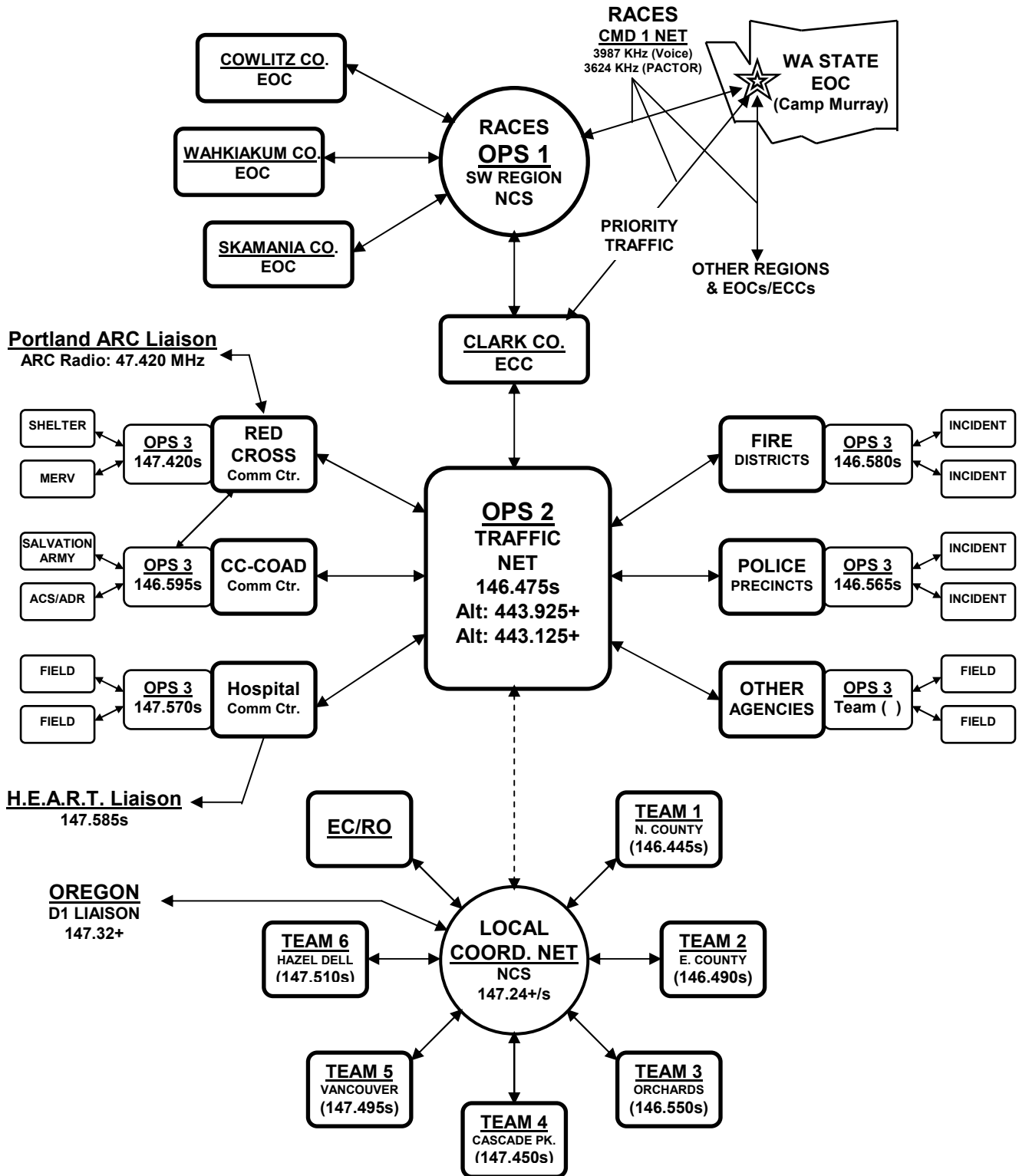
The Packet Coordinator may use this net, as well as an assigned simplex frequency, for coordinating the Packet Network operations.

Liaison with Oregon ARES/RACES District 1 may be conducted on this net, as well as on their coordination net.

**OPS 2 Traffic Net:** As quoted from the State RACES Plan (Appendix E of this manual); "...*the OPS 2 network provides emergency back-up communications between the county EOC, respective local jurisdictions (cities), and county agencies/districts/command posts (i.e. Sheriff, fire department/district, 9-1-1 Center, public works department, staging areas/base camps, incident command post, and other government offices).*" Since Clark County uses the dual organization of ARES/RACES, the OPS 2 Net also provides ARES back-up communications for public and private service agencies such as Red Cross, Salvation Army, Adventist Disaster Response, and other VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) members between their headquarters and their representatives at the County ECC.

This net is **not** a directed net (there is no Net Control to act as a switchboard). This structure is used at the specific request of the County Department of Emergency Services to improve the speed of handling official traffic. In those rare instances when a "traffic cop" is required, the ECC will provide that function.

**FIGURE 3-1**



Traffic on this net is usually formal and in written form, using designated message forms and procedures (see Section 4 of this manual). Informal third-party verbal communications between officials may be used when necessary to expedite priority traffic. Traffic on this net may, or may

not, be handled on a different frequency from that of the Local Coordination Net and the OPS 3 Net, depending on the complexity of the incident [exercise].

**OPS 3 Traffic Net:** Again, quoting from the State RACES Plan, "...*the OPS 3 network provides emergency back-up communications between county agencies/districts/command posts and city EOC's and their respective units/elements that are in the field supporting emergency/disaster operations.*" As with the OPS 2 Net, the OPS 3 Net also provides ARES back-up communications for the same public and private service agencies and their field units. An example would be between Red Cross Chapter headquarters and their shelter locations.

The individual OPS 3 Nets may, or may not, be directed nets depending upon the requirements of the served agency. If directed, the net control will usually be at the headquarters location.

Traffic on the OPS 3 Nets may, or may not, be in the formal written form depending on the requirements of the served agency. **It is important to follow the agencies' protocol regarding message forms and routing of traffic, etc.**

As is in the case of the other nets, traffic on the OPS 3 Nets may, or may not be handled on different frequencies from the OPS 2 and Local Coordination Nets.

**It should be emphasized again, that . . .**

- **Traffic for coordinating amateur resources needs to be kept on the Local Coordination Net,**
- **And "agency traffic" is to be kept on the OPS 2 or OPS 3 Nets.**

