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## **Management of Communication Resources**

### **1.1 OVERVIEW.**

Thank-you Steve. Good evening, to the net. Tonight, I'll be discussing the management of communication resources prior to and during an activation event. Previously we've talked about some ICS forms, in particular the ICS 201 and ICS 204.

### **1.2 OVERVIEW**

Pinellas County ACS uses two forms to manage the communication resources and frequencies prior to and during an activation event. The first is the ICS 217A Communications Availability Worksheet and the second is the ICS 205 Communications plan. Tonight, I'll be discussing the ICS 217A.

### **1.3 ICS 217A COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCE AVAILABILITY WORKSHEET**

The purpose of the ICS 217A is to identify all the amateur radio repeaters, digipeaters, Winlink RMS Gateways, and simplex frequencies accessible and available for use by Pinellas County during an activation event. It is the master list of all the resources that could potentially be used. It is not a list of the resources that will be used.

Prior to an activation event, the ACS Leadership team will use this master list of resources to build a communications plan that is appropriate and meets the needs of the specific event. For example, a public service event like a 10k run may only require a single repeater and a single simplex frequency to meet the communication needs of the event. While a major weather event may require multiple VHF/UHF repeaters, back-up repeaters, and HF networks.

The ICS 217A used by the Pinellas County ACS is located within appendix F of the PACS Emergency Communications Plan and Standard Operating Procedures Document. This document is located on the PACS Website.

An individual worksheet has been created for each RF band and Function. So, when you review Appendix F, you will find individual worksheets for VHF Repeaters, UHF Repeaters, Winlink RMS Gateways, APRS Digipeaters, HF and VHF simplex frequencies; and the repeater frequencies for all West Central Florida County EOCs.

Each worksheet contains all the information needed to establish and maintain communications using the identified repeater, RMS gateway, or simplex frequency. The form has a frequency band and description field that is common to all the entries on the form and nine fields that uniquely describe each communication resource.

So, first I'll describe the two common fields that are located at the top of the form.

- a. **Frequency Band:** The frequency band (e.g., 80-Meters, 40-Meters, 6-meters, 2-Meters, 70 cm, VHF, UHF, 700 MHz, or 800 MHz, etc.)
- b. **Description:** This field contains a description of the information entered on the worksheet (e.g., UHF Repeater Systems Accessible from Pinellas County).

As mentioned previously, there are nine fields that describe each communications resource.

- a. **Channel Configuration:** This field contains a general description/purpose of the channel (e.g., Repeater, Linked-Repeater, Simplex, Simplex-Mobile Only, Simplex-Base/Mobile, etc.).
- b. **Channel Name/Trunked Radio System Talk Group:** The commonly used name for the channel. When the entry identifies a repeater, the repeater call sign will be entered into this field. When the entry corresponds to a simplex frequency, the intended purpose of the frequency will be entered (e.g., PACS Plan B).
- c. **Eligible Users:** Who is permitted to use the channel. In most cases, this entry will be listed as Amateur; however, I have included at least one GMRS repeater in the set of worksheets. So, in that case, it would list GMRS.

The next set of fields detail the technical elements of the entry. The first of these entries detail the receive frequency and bandwidth.

- d. **RX Freq N or W:** This field contains the receive frequency as the mobile or portable radio would be programmed. The bandwidth is listed as either (N) for narrow, or (W) for wide. Except for digital modes, this entry will almost always indicate wide.
- e. **RX Tone/NAC:** Depending on the type of resource being described, this field can contain several different types of information. The receive Continuous Tone Coded Squelch System (CTCSS) subaudible tone, Digital Coded Squelch (DCS), Network Access Code (NAC), Radio Access Code (RAN), or Color Code (CC) for the receive frequency as the mobile or portable radio would be programmed. If no tone/code is required, the field will indicate that the radio should simply use a Carrier Squelch (CSQ).

This information is also repeated for the transmit function of the entry.

- f. **TX Freq N or Wide:** There is an entry for transmit frequency and bandwidth. The transmit frequency as the mobile or portable radio would be programmed. The bandwidth is listed as narrow or wide.
- g. **TX Tone/NAC:** The transmit CTCSS subaudible tone, DCS, NAC, RAN, or CC for the transmit frequency. If no tone or code is required, Enter CSQ.

The final two fields are *operating mode* and *remarks*.

- h. **Mode:** The mode field will have a single letter entry: “**A**” for analog operation, “**D**” for digital operation or “**M**” for Mixed mode operation (e.g., Analog and Fusion).
- i. **Remarks:** This field can contain any additional information that might be beneficial to the leadership team during planning activities. Examples include repeater location, modes of operation (e.g., D-Star, NXDN, P25, Fusion, DMR), or a dedicated purpose such as PACS Shelter Net.

Now as you can imagine, maintaining a master list of communications resources for the county can be a bit of a challenge. Repeaters come and go or change modes of operation. Web sites

are not always kept up to date with the latest information. So, it's important for everyone to review the current ICS 217A that's contained in the communications plan. If you see an error or a missing resource, please send me a note so that we can correct the entry. The worst time to find out we have an error is when we're rushing to generate a communications plan to support an emergency activation.

#### 1.4 QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

I'd like to pause here for a minute and ask if anyone has a comment or question about tonight's presentation. If you have a comment or question, please provide me with your call sign, slowly, clearly, and phonetically so I don't make a mistake when I respond. And then ask your question or provide me with your comment.

This is WA1RYQ.

#### **ACTION - PAUSING FOR QUESTIONS**

#### 1.5 CONCLUSION.

That's all I have for this week's training session. Let me conclude with a couple of reminders.

1. The next Winlink Training net is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, at 1930 hours local. This will be a mixed voice and data net with the voice segment taking place on the W4ACS repeater.

A Winlink bulletin describing the planned net activities will be sent to all registered Winlink net participants prior to the net. A copy of the bulletin and detailed instructions for creating the planned messages exchanged during the net will also be posted on the Pinellas ACS Website.

2. I strongly encourage everyone who has not done so to login to the Groups.io website and become a member of the Pinellas County ACS group. It's probably the easiest way

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to post messages and exchange information with other members of Pinellas ACS. There is also a link to this group on the Pinellas ACS website's home page.

3. As always if you have any comments or training suggestions, I can be contacted at [WA1RYQ@ARRL.net](mailto:WA1RYQ@ARRL.net). Or you can post a message on the PinCo ACS Groups.io website.

Now with that, I'll turn it back to Net Control.

1.6 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS.

The following table contains a summary of the comments and questions provided by the membership during the presentation.

No.	Call Sign	Comments	Response
		<b>No More Questions or comments</b>	

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COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCE AVAILABILITY WORKSHEET						Frequency Band		Description	
Channel Configuration	Channel Name/Trunked Radio System Talk group	Eligible Users	RX Freq N or W	RX Tone/NAC	TX Freq N or W	Tx Tone/NAC	Mode A, D or M	Remarks	

The convention calls for frequency lists to show four digits after the decimal place, followed by either an “N” or a “W”, depending on whether the frequency is narrow or wide band. Mode refers to either “A” or “D” indicating analog or digital (e.g., Project 25) or “M” indicating mixed mode. All channels are shown as if programmed in a control station, mobile or portable radio. Repeater and base stations must be programmed with the Rx and Tx reversed.