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## **Event Specific Operations**

### **1.1 OVERVIEW.**

Thank-you Bob and good evening to the net. Tonight, I'll be providing the net with an overview of the severe weather events that could cause ACS to activate, the potential impacts to critical infrastructure we need to plan for, the communication networks that could be activated, and the ACS assets required during a deployment.

#### **1.1.1 Tropical Storms and Hurricanes**

Tropical storms and hurricanes are a frequent occurrence in the western Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico. The time between initial formation of a tropical depression and the potential landfall of a tropical storm or hurricane will normally provide ACS members with several days or even a week of advanced notice that a local activation will occur. For this scenario, ACS activation will progress orderly from Level 4 upwards through Level 3, Level 2, and Level 1 as the storm track and landfall location solidifies.

Depending on the size, projected path, and timing of the storm, emergency managers may order evacuations and open all or a limited number of shelters.

Once activated in support of the storm, the **ACS Tactical-Resource** net will be activated on the W4ACS repeater. Additional local nets that could be activated include the **ACS Shelter net**, the **Winlink Data net**, and the **Local VHF Traffic Net**. The activation of these nets will largely depend on the number of shelter and critical infrastructure locations staffed by ACS.

The state of Florida will likely establish a Command-and-Control net on the **Statewide Amateur Radio Network (SARnet)** and activate the **State of Florida HF Emergency Net**. In all cases, the Pinellas County EOC will perform the role of liaison station for these state of Florida networks.

Members will be deployed to the EOC, all activated shelters, and additional locations as requested by emergency managers.

The ACS RO and the NCS for the Tactical-Resource net will need to assess the potential scope of the emergency to determine the number and type of assets to deploy to each location.

Deployment sites without emergency power will need assets to arrive with one or more sources of back-up power (e.g., batteries, generator, solar). Fortunately, since our evacuation shelters should all have emergency power, the need for back-up power sources should be limited.

Ideally, each deployment location should be staffed by a minimum of two ACS members.

Whenever possible, at least one of the ACS members at each deployment location should be Winlink qualified and be equipped to support the Winlink data net. If the number of Winlink qualified members is limited, the NCS for the Tactical-Resource net should assign Winlink assets to those locations where a high volume of traffic is anticipated (e.g., EOCs, Hospitals, Special Needs shelters, etc.).

Prior to landfall, members can assume that all area VHF/UHF repeater networks and Winlink RMS gateways are fully operational and available to support the activation event. Power, phone, cell, and internet services will also be available at all shelter locations. Members will be able to freely move between home and deployment locations in support of shift change and staff leveling requirements.

However, as landfall approaches, the storm comes ashore, and in the aftermath of the storm, the status of critical infrastructure can change rapidly. The storm may cause local or wide area power, cell service, and internet outages that may last from a few hours to several days.

Movement within the county is likely to be difficult or impossible until debris is cleared from the roadways. Therefore, the go-kits assembled by members should contain, as a minimum, the personal support material (e.g., clothing, medications, sleeping pads, etc.) and communications equipment needed to operate independently for 3 to 5 days.

During and after the storm, the operational availability of local VHF/UHF repeater networks and Winlink RMS gateways may be impacted. The contingency modes documented in the Communications Plan will need to be reviewed and activated as required.

If in the aftermath of the storm, emergency managers establish asset staging areas or incident command posts, the ACS RO may deploy a Command Runner® and/or SatRunner® asset to provide VHF, UHF, HF, and satellite communications links; a local Wi-Fi computer network; and FirstNet® phone service to the deployment site. Only those members trained to transport, emplace, configure, and operate Command Runner® and SatRunner® assets will be deployed to these locations.

### 1.1.2 Non-Tropical Weather Events

Non-tropical weather events include severe thunderstorms, flash floods, tornados, and cold weather emergencies. These severe weather events have the potential to cause significant property damage, serious injuries, and death. ACS and SKYWARN® members should monitor NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) and local news outlets for severe weather warnings. The SKYWARN® net should be activated in accordance with the *Pinellas County ACS SKYWARN® Operations Plan* document.

In the aftermath of a storm, an immediate damage assessment or the potential for flash flooding may cause emergency managers to order an evacuation and/or open a limited number of evacuation shelters. The event may cause localized power, cell, and internet outages. Movement in and around the impacted area may be difficult or impossible.

In the case of a cold weather emergency, emergency managers may open a limited number of warming centers. This type of event may cause localized power outages and brownouts.

Once activated, the **ACS Tactical-Resource** net will be established on the W4ACS repeater. Additional local nets that could be activated include the **ACS Shelter net** and the **Winlink Data net**. The activation of these two nets will largely depend on the number of shelter and critical infrastructure locations staffed by ACS.

Members will be deployed to the EOC, all activated shelters, and additional locations as requested by emergency managers.

**NOTE:** *The W4ACS repeater is the primary repeater system for SKYWARN® operations within Pinellas County. If the ACS RO directs the Net Manager to establish a Tactical-Resource net*

*when a SKYWARN® net is already active on the W4ACS repeater, the NCS for the Tactical-Resource net will notify the SKYWARN® NCS that the SKYWARN® net will be combined with the Tactical-Resource net. Once the two nets are combined, all severe weather and after-action damage reports should be reported to the NCS for the Tactical-Resource net.*

All area VHF/UHF repeater networks and Winlink RMS gateways are assumed to be fully operational and available to support the activation event. Power, phone, cell, and internet services are also assumed to be available at all shelter/ warming center locations. Members can freely move between home and deployment locations in support of shift change and staff leveling requirements. Ideally, each deployment location should be staffed by a minimum of two ACS members. Whenever possible, at least one of the ACS members at each deployment location should be Winlink qualified and be equipped to support the Winlink data net. If the number of Winlink qualified members is limited, the NCS for the ACS Tactical-Resource net should assign Winlink assets to those locations where a high volume of traffic is anticipated (e.g., EOCs, Hospitals, Special Needs shelters, etc.).

## 1.2 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**

## 1.3 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 session is scheduled for this Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 1930 hours local. This will be a mixed voice and data net with the initial voice segment

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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. The next monthly ACS membership meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and will start at 1900 hours local. The meeting will be held at the Pinellas County EOC. Please plan to arrive no later than 1845 so that everyone can be escorted into the building.
3. I strongly encourage everyone to provide comments and suggestions for future training activities. I can be contacted at [WA1RYQ@ARRL.net](mailto:WA1RYQ@ARRL.net). Or you can leave me a note on the Pinellas ACS [groups.io](https://groups.io) web site.

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

1.4 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 Additional Questions or comments</b>	