



Cochise County  
Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)  
Members' Procedural Guide

January 2017

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#### Manual Changes

Modifications and/or updates to the RACES manual will be brought before the Cochise County RACES Executive Staff for review and approval. The Executive Staff consists of: County RACES Officer (CRO), Deputy RACES Officer (DRO), City Officers (CO), and the RACES Public Information Officer.

Any proposed change to the manual will be presented to the Executive Staff for review. The Executive Staff may choose to accept the change, reject the change, require modification or take no action. Any change to the manual requires a majority vote of the staff. A vote may be taken electronically using email or at a physical meeting of the staff. There must be at least four members of the executive staff present or responding for a vote to take place. Approved modifications will be presented to Cochise County Emergency Services Coordinator for final approval and implementation.

## I. Overview

The primary mission of Cochise County Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) during an emergency and/or disaster is to provide communication services that include the use of portable stations, either as a back up to established communications, or as a fill-in where communications do not normally exist. RACES is an organization of amateur radio operators who volunteer to provide radio communications for State and local governments in times of emergency. Created in 1952 primarily to serve in civil defense emergencies, RACES provides essential communications and warning links to supplement State and local government assets during emergencies.

RACES is a special part of the amateur operation sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). RACES provides emergency communications for civil preparedness purposes only. RACES is conducted by amateurs using their primary station licenses or by existing RACES stations. In the event that the President invokes the War Emergency powers, amateurs officially enrolled in the local civil preparedness group would become limited to certain frequencies, while all other amateur operations would be silenced.

RACES may be activated at the request of any governmental agency in the event of an emergency or disaster, with coordination by Cochise County Office of Emergency Services (OES). An example of a governmental agency may include any City, County or Special District (i.e. Water District, School District, or Community Service Districts) within Cochise County.

RACES works with and provides, as requested, communications services for non-**governmental organizations, such as the American Red Cross, and other local groups**. RACES is available to be of service in various capacities in time of emergency or disaster. RACES in Cochise County includes Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) members sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). The Cochise County RACES/ARES team is the volunteer communications arm of the Cochise County Office of Emergency Services, and the Cochise County Emergency Operations Center.

## II. Authorities

RACES is authorized by the Communications Act of 1934, Section 606, as amended and by Executive Order 12472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions. The RACES is provided for in subpart F of Part 97 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

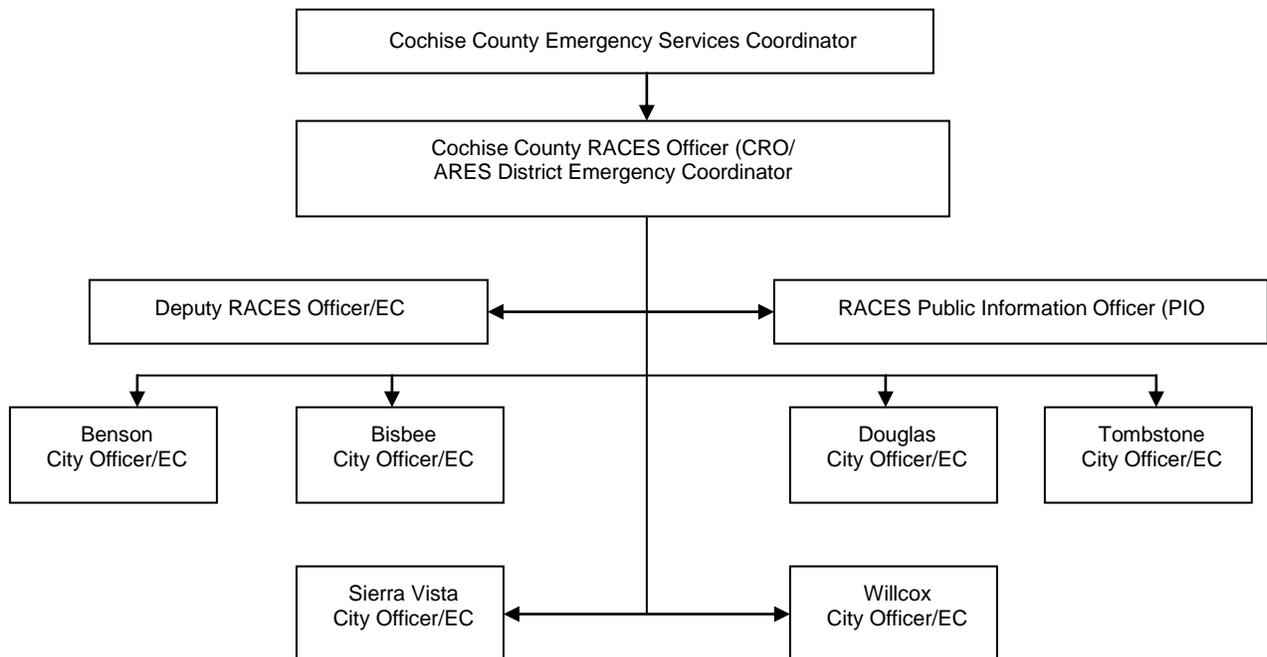
As implemented on the national level, RACES is the responsibility of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In the state of Arizona RACES is the responsibility of the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA). In Cochise County, RACES is the responsibility of the Office of Emergency Services, Emergency Operations Plans for the County of Cochise and/or any of its cities will be the authority for operations.

The County RACES Officer is appointed by the County Emergency Services Coordinator. RACES is a function of government provided for by local, state, and federal guidelines and is the lead organization involving amateur communications support or response.

### III. Member Requirements

Cochise County RACES will consist of registered volunteers licensed by the FCC in the Amateur Radio Service holding at least a Technician Class license. Only those individuals registered with the County of Cochise, Office of Emergency Services will be considered members of Cochise County RACES. This requirement ensures that volunteers are covered by AZ Worker’s Compensation insurance while engaged in mission support. See Appendix 14 for a copy of the membership application. Members must have a valid AZ driver’s license to drive any county vehicle in the performance of their duties. Applicants are subject to a basic background and drivers license security check. Applicants that have been convicted of a felony may not be accepted for membership. Members filling ARES leadership positions (District Emergency Coordinator (DEC)/ Emergency Coordinator (EC)) must also be members of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). Membership in local radio clubs (Cochise Amateur Radio Association – CARA) is encouraged but not required since they provide the support to the various repeaters used during support of our missions and activities.

### IV. Leadership Organizational Chart



## **V. RACES Activation**

Once RACES is activated by a competent authority, the CRO will begin the notification process using any or all of the tools available: the RACES pager system; the telephone calling tree; or the amateur radio repeaters within the county. You may be asked to fill an immediate need or be placed on stand-by depending on the immediate need. Be prepared. Information will be passed along as it becomes available. It is important that operators monitor the prearranged county nets when RACES activation is pending. A detailed description of the Alert Process and specific assignments can be found in Appendix 1. The primary RACES VHF repeated frequency in the county is 147.02 on Mule Mountain. We use 146.56 as a tactical (simplex) frequency (Please see the frequency lists in Appendix 7 for our county and for additional net information.)

### **A. Local Activation**

If the CRO or his/her deputy perceives the need for a possible RACES activation, the CRO will either place members on alert or initiate an actual activation. Upon alert or activation, the CRO will advise the appropriate City Officer to proceed, as the CRO deems necessary. See Appendix 5 for Incident Number Request procedure. When activated to support Search and Rescue (SAR) missions, the Sheriff's Office SAR coordinator takes care of getting the state assigned incident number.

### **B. Formal Activation**

The CRO, or his/her deputy, will be notified by the Office of Emergency Services (OES), or CCSO Dispatch Center to place members on alert or initiate activation. The CRO will receive the incident and request numbers at the time of contact and proceed as requested.

### **C. Serviced Agencies**

RACES primary served agency is the Cochise County Office of Emergency Services. RACES is available to support all governmental agencies including the County SAR team, as well as non-governmental agencies, such as the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc. RACES is not available to support commercial endeavors, except in the event of a declared emergency or disaster, and then only in a disaster support role.

The served agency may request RACES support through the Office of Emergency Services, CCSO Dispatch Center, or the CRO. If another RACES member receives the request, he/she must notify the City Officer or CRO to contact the Office of Emergency Services – OES Duty Officer and request the Incident Number (See Appendix 5 for incident Number Request procedure).

### **D. Mutual Aid Service**

Any Federal Agency (e.g. US Forestry Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM)) or any jurisdiction/agency outside of Cochise County may request RACES activation. However, this call is considered a mutual aid request and therefore must be processed through Cochise County OES. If you receive such a call, it is imperative that you ensure the individual makes the request through Cochise County OES. Any member

responding to or acting on a request for service without prior OES notification and approval does so without coverage from the Arizona Workers Compensation program.

## **VI. Planned Events**

The OES must first approve the RACES participation in any Planned Event requiring use of county resources such as the County Mobile communications Unit (MCU). Follow Appendix 5 for Incident Number Request procedure. Planned public service events (i.e. Bisbee City Coaster Races, Cochise County Cycling Classic) etc.) can be supported under the auspices of ARES and do not require approval of the OES unless specific county resources such as the MCU are being requested.

## **VII. Operations**

A. Typical Activities - RACES activities in the past have included but are not limited to:

- Support of Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Exercises
- Support to Cochise County Fire Chiefs Association Exercises
- Search and Rescue Missions
- Health and welfare evacuations (during Fire Season)
- Damage Assessment communications
- Public service events (Air Show, Coaster Races, Bike Races)
- National Weather Service (NWS) Spotter Program
- Support County Emergency Operations Center Activations

These activities have been direct requests for service, either as a mutual aid resource or as normal operations within County Boundaries. We have also supported a number of missions through county mutual aid agreements and adjacent counties of Graham, Greenlee, Hidalgo (NM), Pima, and Santa Cruz.

B. Typical Operation Assignments may include but are not limited to:

- Fixed station operation (Hospitals/Police Departments)
- Mobile or portable operation (Incident Scene/Staging Areas, SAR Missions)
- Relay in the event of no repeater coverage
- Ride-along mobile operations or function as a shadow to an Emergency Services Responder
- 911 telephone support

C. Net Operation Protocol

Each net operation in support of a mission will be under the supervision and control of an experienced RACES member. Operational RACES nets are directed nets and traffic will be limited to the mission requirements.

No RACES operators will participate in a net, on a frequency band, or in a type of operation outside the class of his/her license unless under the direct supervision of a licensed control operator of the appropriate class of operation being conducted.

RACES operators may be assigned to work on designated County Public Service Band frequencies using provided equipment in the MCU or other FCC type accepted radios. The MCU carries several type-accepted walkie-talkies programmed for specific public service frequencies for use on the scene of an incident. At those times, you are operating under the auspices and the authority of the Cochise County Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Public Service License, not your amateur license. You may be assigned to operate as a “shadow” on the scene using one of these radios. Also review Appendix 1 for specific preassignments and an explanation of the RACES Blue Eagle program.

If you are operating in the MCU or with one of the public service band radios, you will also be operating in a directed net and follow their protocols. Although we do not use the ten codes on the amateur bands, you will be expected to learn and understand the Cochise County Ten-Codes so that you will be able to understand what dispatch may be telling you while operating on one of the sheriff’s frequencies. The Sheriff’s Office Ten-Codes and Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) phonetic alphabet are found in Appendix 14.

#### D. Tactical Callsigns

There are many times during mission operations that it is appropriate to assign a “tactical” callsign to the location you are serving. This generally done to make it clear what assignment you are supporting when you are passing traffic on the air. For example, if we have activated the Blue Eagle network (see Appendix I) and you are assigned to work at the Bisbee Copper Queen Hospital, your tactical callsign might be “Copper Queen”. Does this mean you do not need to use your FCC callsign on amateur frequencies? No. We must still comply with the basic FCC Part 97.119 Station Identification rule that says: “Each amateur station must transmit its assigned call sign on its transmitting channel at the end of each communication, and at least every 10 minutes during a communication, for the purpose of clearly making the source of the transmissions from the station known to those receiving the transmissions. No station may transmit unidentified communications or signals, or transmit as the station call sign, any call sign not authorized to the station.”

For example: “Bisbee EOC, this is Copper Queen, Over”. “Copper Queen, this is Bisbee EOC, go ahead, Over.” Continue the conversation until you are either finished with the exchange of information or ten minutes has gone by (whichever is shorter) and then identify yourself as “This is Copper Queen, KC7WKT, Over.” or “Copper Queen, this is Bisbee EOC, WB7VNF, Out.” One final example is the Bisbee Coaster Race where you have tactical callsigns allocated by position on the down hill races course. Examples might include “Start, Finish, Checkpoint 5, Checkpoint 6, or Checkpoint 10, etc.”

#### E. Net Frequencies

The primary RACES VHF frequency used in Cochise County is 147.02 (PL 162.2). Other net operation frequencies are found in Appendix 7 to this manual.

## **VIII. Uniform Regulations**

Cochise County RACES members are encouraged to meet the following uniform regulations for all events - planned events or mission called incidents - for which a Cochise County incident number has been obtained. All uniform apparel should be clean and present a neat and professional appearance. When wearing the uniform items, you are identifying yourself with the Cochise County RACES team so wearing these items for general casual wear is discouraged. Casual attire may be worn for training events and meetings.

### **A. RACES ID Card**

The RACES Photo ID Card is to be attached by a suitable clip to the front of the shirt, preferably to the right breast shirt pocket or attached by chain/cord around the neck. In all cases, it should be worn so that it is easily visible. It has become increasingly important during the global war on terrorism to be clearly identifiable to the emergency responder team and law enforcement as to who belongs on the scene and who does not. If you are not easily identified as one of the responders, you may be asked to leave the scene. If you are ever challenged, explain who you are and why you are there and your role in the response effort. Also explain that you were requested to respond to provide communications or other support. If you are still asked to leave, identify the person making the decision and leave. There may be appropriate reasons that you are being asked to leave, either from a safety or security standpoint. Becoming argumentative or combative will not endear you to the response community. Report the incident to the City Officer or the County RACES Officer to work out the problem later. It is important that we do not allow ourselves to become offended during situations like this and become part of the problem as opposed to being part of the solution.

### **B. Uniform Shirt/Vest and Appropriate Patches**

RACES/ARES uniform shirts may be either the gold RACES T-Shirt or a tan/khaki shirt with appropriate identifying patches/logos. The T-Shirt should be Harvest Gold or Tan with the RACES/ARES silk-screen Logo on the back and on the left front breast. In lieu of the silk-screen printed or sewn logo, a 3" RACES Eagle patch may be sewn in the same location. The tan/khaki shirt (long or short sleeve) will have the Cochise County 3" RACES patch sewn on the left shoulder and an optional matching color nametape over the right breast pocket. No other patches/emblems except for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service patch (ARRL Diamond – sewn above the left pocket) may be worn. In lieu of a RACES shirt, a vest in bright orange or lime green with the RACES logo on the left breast may be worn. This is particularly handy when assigned to a traffic detail where high visibility is needed. For night operations and general safety, it is also recommended that reflective tape be attached to your vest. A RACES/ARES polo shirt may be worn in lieu of the Uniform shirt during club or public service events. SAR Team members who are RACES team members may also wear the Cochise County SAR insignia on the left breast of the shirt. See Appendix 15 (Equipment) for a list of vendors where patches, vests or hats may be purchased.

### C. Trousers

Trousers should be full length and be of a solid, dark blue, black, or tan/khaki color. For field operations a utility fabric such as "denim" is also recommended. We operate in many brushy locations so shorts or cutoffs are discouraged for field operations.

### D. Protective Outer Garment – Weather

Outer garments (jackets/sweatshirt/raingear) should be of a solid gold/yellow or khaki /tan color. The RACES patch should be sewn on the left shoulder or left breast. No other patches/emblems except for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service patch (ARRL Diamond – sewn above the right pocket) may be worn. The vest, mentioned earlier, may also be worn over other outer garments as needed for identification if you do not have other suitable gear.

### E. Footgear

Shoes or boots appropriate for your assignment and weather.

### F. Headgear

A gold or tan ball cap with the a RACES logo or other amateur radio cap displaying your call sign on the front will be sufficient for most missions or activities. Hard hats may be required for some incident scenes. That determination will be made by the incident commander to meet OSHA safety regulations applicable to the incident scene.

### G. Planned Sanctioned RACES/ARES "non-incident" Events

The RACES uniform (i.e. clothing with patches) should be worn at all planned events, special events, and meetings sanctioned by RACES. Your RACES ID Card may suffice for casual meetings where a RACES presence is appropriate. If you request an incident number and are representing RACES at a mission or incident site you must wear the ID card and should be wearing the uniform as described above. It is recognized that you may not always have your uniform or hat with you, but you will be expected to have your ID card.

## **IX. Suggested Equipment**

You will find a list of equipment that should serve the RACES operator in a variety of assignments in Appendix 15. This appendix identifies, personal, radio and administrative supplies.

## **X. General Guidelines**

### **A. Procedures**

Before responding to any emergency callout, make sure that you and your family are safe and cared for. Check in to the primary repeater or simplex frequency. If the repeater is down or out of service, use the output frequency of the repeater as the simplex frequency of choice. If you are the first on the air, you should become the initial net control. Make sure that you gather the names, locations, and call signs of stations that check in.

In some cases you will be asked to stand-by on the frequency, as operators may not be needed immediately. Be sure to continue to monitor the frequency until the net is shut down, or you are sure that there will be no further need for operators.

### **B. Demeanor**

When you are called to serve, make sure that you present yourself in an organized, professional manner. You should be dressed appropriately as outlined in Uniform Regulations. Clothing should be clean and neat.

### **C. Expectations of All RACES Operators**

- You must be willing to commit time at inconvenient hours and occasions.
- The RACES members' participation is expected to participate in the twice-monthly Training Nets and periodic training drills. This will aid in the development of needed skills and knowledge.
- You must be available to attend and participate in at least two events / meetings a year. Try to attend all training classes offered. Check into your local nets on a regular basis. Participate in drills, public service events, and actual incidents
- You must demonstrate the ability to perform with a high standard of customer service, professional conduct and civil responsibility.
- Listen more than you speak. Become familiar with how your served agency operates.
- Check to see if your radio traffic is interfering with nearby conversation. You should always use headphones unless you are in an area by yourself.
- Remember that you are required to think on your feet, but you are not a maker of policy.
- Be prepared to facilitate communication, whether it is on a cell-phone, fax machine, public service or amateur radio. It is important that you know how to operate your equipment and keep it in good order.
- Present yourself as a positive, capable resource. Prepare to be a leader.

### **D. Discipline**

It is the intent of this policy to clearly explain the procedures regarding the organization's position on disciplinary action. It is important for all RACES members to know and abide by the policies and procedures stated in this manual. Failure to follow these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## E. Improper Conduct

If it is determined that a member is involved in improper conduct or behavior, discipline may be appropriate. Examples of "improper conduct or behavior" include, but ~~not-are~~ is not limited to:

### Criminal conduct

- Inappropriate use of RACES Identification Cards or misstatement of official position.
- False statements
- Stealing

### Inappropriate Conduct

- Insubordination
- Inappropriate or abusive language on the radio or in person.
- Self-Dispatching to incidents without proper notification or request.
- Actual or perceived conflict of interest. When in doubt, ask.
- Any other violation of policies/procedures set forth by this procedural manual.

## F. Complaints

When a non-ranking RACES member receives a complaint about a member or the organization, it is important for that individual to forward the allegation onto his/her City Officer, or acting supervisor. The CO will then make contact with the County RACES Officer. This may be achieved in writing/email/telephonically. The RACES Officer, in consultation with the designated County OES Representative, will thoroughly examine the facts. If a determination is made that the allegation is factually true, it will be the responsibility of the RACES Officer, in consultation with the County OES Representative to determine what disciplinary action or procedural change is necessary.

Disciplinary options include:

- Remedial training
- Verbal Counseling
- Written Warning
- Suspension
- Dismissal

## G. Appeals

Any RACES member facing a disciplinary action will be provided the opportunity to explain his or her side of the story. Any RACES member who has been notified that they will be suspended or dismissed may, within 10 (ten) days of written notification of the disciplinary action, file an appeal with the RACES Executive Staff. The appeal must be in writing and clearly state the reasons for the appeal and/or mitigating circumstances. The County RACES Officer will conduct an investigation of the circumstances leading up to the disciplinary action. Such investigation may include interviews, written statements, and review of all reports and documents. The appeal may be referred to the County Emergency Services Coordinator in cases where dismissal from the program is being considered. The County Emergency Services Coordinator may uphold or modify the discipline as deemed appropriate. The decision of the County Emergency Services Coordinator is final.