

Amateur Radio Staffing and Policies for Red Cross or other NGOs

Santa Clara County ARES/RACES

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The Silicon Valley Red Cross is a served agency in Santa Clara County. They may, like any other city or agency, request mutual aid assistance from Santa Clara County ARES/RACES.

If the request is for operators at the Red Cross headquarters HAMs, if available, will be dispatched and will operated as directed by Red Cross personnel on site using the equipment at the Red Cross.

If the request is to staff an ERV or other vehicle the HAMs would likely have to supply all their own equipment and operate as directed by the Red Cross personnel in charge.

When the assignment is for a shelter and that shelter is located within a city, then that city will be contacted by Santa Clara County ARES/RACES to determine if a HAM is available for the assignment. If one is available they will be dispatched to that location if not then mutual aid will be used. In all cases communications will be directed by the person in charge of the shelter, the shelter manager.

If the Shelter is set up and operated by the city or other NGO then that HAM will direct their communications as instructed by the city or NGO. If the shelter is set up by or operated by the Red Cross personnel then the first choice would be to have two HAMs there one to talk to the local city and one to talk to the Red Cross EOC. The shelter manager will be the one to direct communication and release information. If there are not enough HAMs available to place two at the shelter then the next best would be one HAM with two radios one to monitor and talk to the city and one to monitor and talk to the Red Cross. One packet station can handle all packet traffic because messages will rout as addressed. The least acceptable would be one HAM with one radio and a schedule to monitor one of the frequencies and then to check in on the other at specific intervals.

No matter who is operating the shelter communications with both the local jurisdiction as well as Red Cross, other NGOs etc. will be necessary. The city will be the ones to take care of security and other issues and will want to know things like capacities and occupancies so they can make their plans. The Red Cross will want information and will supply some of the logistical items, food, cots, etc. The HAMs assigned will need to be flexible and able to provide the communications needed by all parties. There may be cases where a HAM was directed to send a message to one party and a request for the same information comes in from another, that request should be directed to the shelter manager before it is released. The job of the HAM in a shelter is to provide communication path(s) and only to pass the specific information that they are instructed to pass and then only to those they specifically directed to send it to. Just like any assignment no information is released to anyone without specific approval from those in charge. At no time should any personal information be transmitted by voice.