



PEMA Directive

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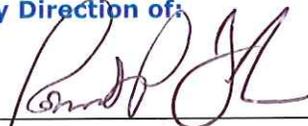
Subject:
Pennsylvania Auxiliary Communications Services Program

Scope:
Commonwealth Agencies (as defined below), Regional Task Forces, County Emergency Management Agencies

Distribution:

- Commonwealth Agency Heads (as defined below)
- Regional Task Forces Chairs
- County Emergency Management Coordinators
- www.pema.state.pa.us

By Direction of:



Robert P. French
Director, PA Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security Advisor

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish the Pennsylvania Auxiliary Communications Services (ACS) Program, which includes the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) as an inherent component of the program, within the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to provide official auxiliary communications in support of established state, county, and local public safety communications systems.

II. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

- A. Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, Title 35 Pa. C.S.A. § 7101-7707, as amended
- B. Counter-terrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act, Title 35 P.S. 2140.101-2140.303 (Act 227 of 2002)
- C. Intrastate Mutual Aid, Pennsylvania Act 93 of 2009
- D. December 20, 2004 Governor's Proclamation Formally Adopting the NIMS
- E. PEMA Directive D2000-1, Official Enrollment of Emergency Management Volunteers
- F. PEMA Directive D2006-1, Official Enrollment of State Emergency Management Volunteers
- G. Pennsylvania Auxiliary Communications Services Standard Operating Guide

Comments and Questions Regarding this Directive Should be Directed to:
[Acting Commonwealth ACS Coordinator, Christopher E. Snyder](#)

- H. PEMA Reserve Communications Corps Standard Operating Procedures (PEMA RCC SOP)
- I. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) - 47 CFR, Part 97, Amateur Radio Service, Subpart E, Providing Emergency Communications § 97.401-97.407
- J. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) - 47 CFR, Part 95, Personal Radio Services
- K. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) - 47 CFR, Part 90, Private Land Mobile Radio Services
- L. National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP), July 2008

III. POLICY

All volunteer emergency communications organizations throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that provide communications support to state, county, and local governments, as well as to regional task forces, shall comply with the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS), National Response Framework (NRF), and related plans and polices. Emergency communications organizations shall coordinate their activities in order to provide essential communications during events or periods of national, state, regional, or local emergency, declared or undeclared, and for all training and exercises thereto requisite.

IV. JURISDICTION

The jurisdiction covered is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

V. DEFINITIONS

The following terms and their definitions will be those utilized throughout the Pennsylvania ACS Program.

- A. **AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR:** This term describes those who have obtained an FCC Amateur Radio Service license; one that precludes its holder from business use of FCC-allotted frequencies or from receiving pecuniary remuneration for service on FCC amateur frequencies.
- B. **AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES (ACS):** A generic name to describe any emergency communications unit, staffed by volunteer communications specialists, which provide public safety communications support to government or a governmental entity, such as a regional task force. An ACS unit will be organized as an "in house" unit of the sponsoring/establishing entity or as an "external" unit, where the sponsoring/establishing entity utilizes a private organization such as Amateur Radio Emergency Service ® (ARES®), club or other organization to provide auxiliary communications support.
- C. **AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS TEAM (ACT):** A specialized response team within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania organized, equipped, and typed to provide auxiliary and emergency communications capabilities.

- D. **ASSISTING AGENCY:** An agency or organization providing personnel, services, or other resources to the agency with direct responsibility for incident management. (NIMS document)
- E. **CIVIL DEFENSE ORGANIZATION:**
1. (Federal Definition): An organization that conducts all those activities and measures designed or undertaken (1) to minimize the effects upon the civilian population caused, or which would be caused, by an attack upon the United States, or by natural disaster, (2) to deal with the immediate emergency conditions which would be created by any such attack, or natural disaster, and (3) to effectuate emergency repairs to, or the emergency restoration of vital utilities and facilities destroyed or damaged by any such attack or natural disaster. Such term shall include, but shall not be limited to, (i) measures to be taken in preparation for anticipated attack or natural disaster (including the establishment of appropriate organizations, operational plans, and supporting agreements; the recruitment and training of personnel; the conduct of research; the procurement and stockpiling of necessary materials and supplies; the provision of suitable warning systems; the construction or preparation of shelter areas, and control centers; and, when appropriate, the non-military evacuation of civil population); (ii) measures to be taken during attack or natural disaster (including the enforcement of passive defense regulations prescribed by duly established military or civil authorities; the evacuation of personnel to shelter areas; the control of traffic and panic; and the control and use of lighting and civil communications); and (iii) measures to be taken following attack or natural disaster (including activities for firefighting; rescue, emergency medical, health and sanitation services; monitoring for specific hazards of special weapons; unexploded bomb reconnaissance; essential debris clearance; emergency welfare measures; and immediately essential emergency repair or restoration of damaged vital facilities). (44 C.F.R. § 312.2(c))
 2. (Pennsylvania Definition): (a) **ESTABLISHING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION.** Each political subdivision of this Commonwealth is directed and authorized to establish a local emergency management organization in accordance with the plan and program of the PEMA. Each local organization shall have responsibility for emergency management, response, and recovery within the territorial limits of the political subdivision within which it is organized and, in addition, shall conduct such services outside of its jurisdictional limits as may be required under this part. (Title 35)
- F. **COOPERATING AGENCY:** An agency supplying assistance other than direct operational or support functions or resources to the incident management effort. (NIMS document)
- G. **DEDICATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION:** Any entity organized, chartered or incorporated in the Commonwealth or chartered by the Congress of the United States for the primary purpose of providing emergency services. The term shall include volunteer, career and combination organizations. (PA Act 93 of 2008 – Intrastate Mutual Aid)

- H. **DULY ENROLLED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT VOLUNTEER:** A Volunteer who is officially enrolled as emergency management volunteer in accordance with PEMA Directive D2000-1, "Official Enrollment of Emergency Management Volunteers, or PEMA Directive 2006-1, "Official Enrollment of State Emergency Management Volunteers".
- I. **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (EMCOMM):**
1. The means and methods for transmitting and receiving information necessary for successful incident management, when needed and authorized. (National Emergency Communications Plan)
 2. The acronym EMMCOMM comes from EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS. It is a generic term to describe any emergency communications unit staffed by volunteer communications specialists. Today, the term encompasses all of the following: Radio Emergency Assistance Communications Team (REACT), Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN), National Weather Service SKYWARN program, RACES, Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), ACS, radio clubs and/or others as each and every one is considered an EMMCOMM resource, the existence of which are important.
- J. **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION:** An organization established by a political subdivision (county, city, borough, incorporated town or township) of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in accordance with the plan and program of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, which has the responsibility for emergency management and response and recovery within the territorial limits of the political subdivision within which it is. (Title 35)
- K. **EMERGENCY RESPONDER:** An individual in the public or private sector who has special skills, qualification, training, knowledge or experience, whether or not the person possesses a license, certificate, permit or other official recognition for the skills, qualification, training, knowledge or experience. The term includes a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, an emergency medical services worker, a physician, nurse or other public health worker, an emergency management official, a public works worker, a building inspector, an architect, an engineer or other design professional or a person with specialized equipment operations skills or training or with other skills needed to provide aid in an emergency. (PA Act 93 of 2008 – Intrastate Mutual Aid)
- In Pennsylvania, most ACS personnel are considered emergency responders. However, some participant will not be classified as an emergency responder because they will serve in a non-response capacity; such as consultant, maintenance, advisory, or other. (PEMA)
- L. **EMERGENCY SERVICES:** The preparation for and the carrying out of functions, other than functions for which military forces are primarily responsible, to prevent, minimize and provide emergency repair of injury and damage resulting from disasters, together with all other activities necessary or incidental to the preparation for and carrying out those functions. The functions include, without limitation, firefighting services, police services, medical and health services, rescue, engineering, disaster warning services, communications, radiological, shelter, chemical and other special weapons defense, evacuation of persons from stricken areas, emergency welfare

services, emergency transportation, emergency resources management, existing or properly assigned functions of plant protection, temporary restoration of public utility services and other functions related to civilian protection. (Title 35)

- M. INCIDENT: Any event or condition which constitutes an actual or imminent threat to public health and safety, public, or private property or the economic well-being of the community. (Title 35)
- N. INTEROPERABILITY: Ability of emergency responders to communicate among jurisdictions, disciplines, frequency bands, and levels of government as needed and authorized. System operability is required for system interoperability. (National Emergency Communications Plan))
- O. MUTUAL AID: Mutual assistance and sharing of resources among participating political subdivisions in the prevention of, response to and recovery from threats to public health and safety that are beyond the capability of an affected community to respond. (PA Act 93 of 2008 – Intrastate Mutual Aid)
- P. OPERABILITY: Ability of emergency responders to establish and sustain communications in support of mission operations. (National Emergency Communications Plan))
- Q. PRIVATE SECTOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROVIDERS: Businesses and other nongovernmental organizations that provide emergency services in support of major incidents. (National Emergency Communications Plan))
- R. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS: The application of communications systems and technology in carrying out operations by, or in direct support of, public safety agencies, including state and local government, police, fire, highway maintenance, forestry conservation, emergency medical, and special emergency services.
- S. PUBLIC SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS: Communications performed for the benefit of the public, especially by a nonprofit organization. This includes traditional amateur radio public service communications provided during parades, walk-a-thons, and other similar planned events. It also includes Health & Welfare (H&W) message handling such as that performed on behalf of the American Red Cross and Salvation Army. While H&W traffic will be passed during a disaster, these types of messages do not have direct life safety or property protection implications.
- T. RADIO AMATEUR CIVIL EMERGENCY SERVICE (RACES): RACES is a part of the Amateur Radio Service and utilizes this service's radio frequencies in support of official emergency communications. The FCC is the regulatory authority for the non-government radio spectrum that portion of the radio spectrum allocated to civilian use, of which the Amateur Radio Service is a part. The FCC regulates the use of frequencies within the Amateur Radio Service through Part 97 of the FCC Rules and Regulations, which covers both the technological and operational aspects of this service. Part 97 specifically addresses RACES Operations within Sub-part F. All RACES operations within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will be conducted in accordance with sub-part F. In situations not covered by this sub-part, other sub-parts of Part 97 will apply to operations conducted on Amateur Radio frequencies.

The FCC defines RACES as a radio service in support of Civil Defense (Emergency Management) organizations during periods of local, regional, or national civil emergencies. This definition is the basis for RACES organization and operation within the Commonwealth.

- U. RACES STATION: An amateur radio station licensed to a civil defense organization, not to an individual. There are very few RACES stations left in existence. The FCC has not issued a RACES station license since 1982. A personal or club call sign used at an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be a station operating in the RACES, but it does NOT constitute a RACES station. The foregoing must be thoroughly understood when reading FCC regulations that define points of communications.
- V. REGIONAL TASK FORCE (RTF): Pennsylvania is organized into nine RTFs. An RTF is a complement of federal, state, county, and municipal emergency management, health, law enforcement, public safety, and other officials and representatives from volunteer service organizations, private business and industry, hospitals and medical care facilities, and other entities within a multi-county area as determined by the agency that is responsible for conducting counterterrorism planning, training, preparedness, and response activities. (PA Act 227 of 2002)

VI. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- A. The Director of PEMA delegates ongoing support for the ACS Program to the Planning and Preparedness Directorate and the ongoing management and implementation of this Directive to the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator, located within that Directorate, who shall:
 - 1. Coordinate the activities of state, regional task force, county, and local ACS programs.
 - 2. Promote the adoption and use of qualified volunteers for ACS units in, and by, county and local governments, regional task forces, and Commonwealth agencies and provide assistance in the establishment of these ACS programs, as necessary.
 - 3. Develop programs, policies, procedures, standard (or model) unit plans, and supporting documents, leading to the participation and use of volunteer specialists, Amateur Radio operators, and others during periods of national, state, or local emergency, declared or undeclared; and for training and familiarization.
 - 4. Serve as a focal point for information relative to auxiliary communications.
 - 5. Disseminate, through periodic reports, information about auxiliary communications efforts and techniques.
 - 6. Serve as a central point to support local efforts and interest in all matters pertaining to auxiliary communications.
 - 7. Act as the commonwealth's primary representative, for auxiliary communications, with the statewide EmComm community.

8. Coordinate with other communications organizations such as the ARES®, the Military Auxiliary Radio Service (MARS), the Civil Air Patrol, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and federal communications programs to support ACS operations.
9. Administer the Duly Enrolled Emergency Management Volunteer programs for all ACS units in the commonwealth.
10. Establish an in-house ACS unit within PEMA. This ACS unit will be called the Reserve Communications Corps (RCC). Through the use of qualified volunteers, the PEMA RCC will:
 - a. Support RCC operations in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), PEMA Area Offices, and as a mutual aid resource to support all government public safety/emergency communications systems in the event of failure, overload, or other problems that might jeopardize their usefulness and purpose, as assigned. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following systems and disciplines: 911, fire, sheriff/police, public works, transportation, aviation, and emergency public information.
 - b. Provide access to FCC Amateur Radio Service frequencies during times of emergency.
 - c. Coordinate with the PEMA Technical Services Office to maintain PEMA RCC communications equipment in an ongoing state of readiness and provide assistance as requested.
 - d. Conduct periodic (weekly, where possible) communications tests.
11. Develop a team of volunteer RCC officers, led by a Commonwealth ACS Officer/PEMA Headquarters RCC Officer, who administers unit-level provisions of the ACS program for the PEMA RCC.

VII. REGIONAL TASK FORCE-LEVEL AND STATE-LEVEL UNITS

A mechanism shall be established for RTFs and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agencies that so desire, to develop their own ACS units.

VIII. MUTUAL AID

Standards shall be established for statewide mutual aid of auxiliary communications volunteers and resources.

IX. TRAINING AND EXERCISES

The Commonwealth ACS Coordinator is responsible for coordinating and assisting in the development and delivery of a training and exercise program for ACS volunteers as follows:

- A. Training
 1. State-Level Training and Certification Program

The Commonwealth ACS Coordinator will:

- a. Establish state-level training nets.
- b. Establish a statewide auxiliary communications volunteer training program to educate the auxiliary communications community. This program may include a combination of classroom training, self-study courses, and seminars to enhance and expand the emergency response capability of auxiliary communications volunteers.
- c. Statewide Certification Programs
 - i. Implement a voluntary auxiliary communications volunteer position qualification program.
 - ii. Implement a voluntary ACT certification program.
 - iii. Implement a voluntary ACS unit certification program.

2. Regional Task Force, County, and Local-Level Training Programs

Each regional task force, county, and local ACS officer shall establish non-conflicting training programs for ACS members within their programs, including training nets.

B. Exercises

Commonwealth, county, and local governments shall include ACS resources when exercising emergency preparedness, as appropriate. This will determine the abilities and limitations of the ACS networks and enable members to develop and practice skills necessary during an actual emergency.

X. ACS UNIT ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. In order to comply with the NIMS policy on the use of common terminology,
 - a. Auxiliary Communications Services or ACS will be the generic term used to refer to all government sponsored volunteer communications programs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, whether the program includes RACES or not and regardless of the name used to identify a specific jurisdiction's program.
 - b. The title of ACS Officer will replace the title of RACES Officer or RO in all jurisdictions.

B. Commonwealth ACS units

1. PEMA shall be the official, sponsoring agency for all Commonwealth agencies who desire to establish an ACS program.
2. Commonwealth ACS units shall be named: Reserve Communications Corps (RCC)
3. The Commonwealth ACS Coordinator and the Commonwealth ACS Officer are the designated persons authorized to represent the state-level ACS program with other state agencies; and with federal agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Justice (DOJ), and others. This authority may be delegated to another PEMA RCC officer.
4. Other commonwealth agencies may establish coordinated RCC units subject to, and pursuant to, the provisions of this directive by creating, funding, and operating the ACS program as an Annex to the Commonwealth ACS Strategic Plan.
5. The Commonwealth ACS Officer/PEMA Headquarters RCC Officer is responsible to the Deputy Director for Planning and Preparedness, through the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator; on matters concerning statewide ACS operational planning and maintaining the SEOC RCC radio facility.
6. Alternates to unit RCC Officers' positions will be responsible for assisting the primary officers as required and assuming the primary position's responsibilities in the absence of that officer.
7. The Commonwealth ACS Officer shall be responsible for coordinating overall commonwealth RCC unit operational response activities, under the direction of the SEOC Manager or SEEOC Incident Communications Unit Leader.
8. The Commonwealth ACS Coordinator shall be an employee of PEMA.
9. The Commonwealth ACS Officer and RCC officers shall be volunteers who are recruited and who apply for a position that is currently vacant, or justifiably needed, by the agency they support.
10. PEMA RCC Unit
 - a. Organization of the PEMA RCC Unit is based on the Commonwealth ACS Officer/PEMA HQ RCC Officer and the PEMA Area Office RCC officers for PEMA unit administration and interaction with other commonwealth, county government, and regional task force units.
 - b. The Commonwealth ACS Officer/PEMA HQ RCC Officer and Area Office RCC officers are volunteers who are recruited specifically to fill these positions.
 - c. The PEMA Area Office RCC Officers report to the Commonwealth

ACS Officer for supporting state emergency operations in their respective PEMA Areas. They serve as liaison between the state ACS program and RTF, county and local government ACS programs and radio networks.

11. Other Commonwealth RCC units
 - a. Organization of an RCC unit in other commonwealth agencies is based on the agency RCC Officer for unit administration, operational response, and training responsibilities.
 - b. The agency RCC Officer is the designated person authorized to represent the agency RCC unit with counties; regional task forces; and with Commonwealth agencies, such as PEMA, the Department of Health (DOH) and others. This authority may be delegated to a Deputy RCC Officer.
 - c. A current copy of the RCC Unit's plan shall be forwarded to the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator and maintained on file at PEMA.
- C. Regional Task Force ACS Units (not part of the Commonwealth ACS program)
 1. All RTFs are encouraged to develop regional ACS plans, copies of which shall be forwarded to the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator and maintained on file at PEMA.
 2. All RTFs shall ensure the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator is provided with up-to-date contact information for their RTF ACS Officer or other point-of-contact.
 3. The following applies to RTFs that desire to establish an operational ACS unit at the RTF level.
 - a. The RTF shall establish a process/procedure to ensure that all eligible members are registered RACES operators and authorized to function in that capacity, as needed, as a member of the RTF ACS Unit.
 - b. RTFs may call their ACS program/unit by whatever name they so choose; however, it is recommended they use either Auxiliary Communications Services or Reserve Communications Corps to maintain continuity among ACS programs/units.
 - c. Organization of a RTF ACS Unit is based on the RTF ACS Officer for unit administration, operational response, and training responsibilities.
 - d. The RTF ACS Officer is the designated person authorized to represent the RTF ACS program with other regional task forces, counties and with Commonwealth agencies, such as PEMA, DOH, and others. This authority may be delegated to a Deputy ACS Officer or team leader.
 - e. A current copy of the ACS Unit's plan shall be forwarded to the

Commonwealth ACS Coordinator, through their respective PEMA Area Office, and maintained on file at PEMA.

- D. County and local government ACS Units (county, city, borough, incorporated town, township) (not part of the Commonwealth ACS program)
1. For good management reasons, PEMA does not generally advocate new ACS Units in jurisdictions below the county-level, unless they have a population over 500,000.
 2. The official sponsoring agency for local ACS programs shall be the jurisdiction's emergency management organization.
 3. County and local governments may call their ACS program/unit by whatever name they so choose; however' it is recommended they use either Auxiliary Communications Services or Reserve Communications Corps to maintain continuity among ACS programs/units. RACES should be used by those county and local governments that desire to restrict unit operations to the Amateur Radio frequencies, to distinguish them from those units that desire to conduct operations beyond the use of only the Amateur Radio frequencies by its members.
 4. Organization of a county or local ACS program is based on the county or local ACS Officer for unit administration, operational response, and training responsibilities.
 5. County and local emergency management agencies shall ensure the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator is provided with up-to-date contact information for the respective ACS Officers.
 6. The county or local ACS Officer is the designated person authorized to represent the county/municipality ACS program with other localities within a county, from the county to their RTF, and with Commonwealth agencies, such as PEMA, DOH and others. The authority may be delegated to a Deputy ACS Officer or team leader.
 7. A current copy of the ACS Unit's plan shall be forwarded to the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator, through their respective county (for local units), RTF, and PEMA Area Office to be maintained on file at PEMA.
- E. No one level of ACS Officer shall have more authority than another level of ACS Officer, such as a County ACS Officer over a City ACS Officer, or a Commonwealth ACS Officer over a County ACS Officer. Each ACS Officer serves the one government by which he/she is appointed. Each has the responsibility and authority only for that specific jurisdiction (state, RTF, county, or municipality). These three levels of government, plus the RTF, interact and coordinate their activities based on mutual aid and cooperation, NOT authority.

XI. ACS PROGRAM MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- A. All ACS Programs (These requirements apply to all levels of ACS programs):

1. Members must hold, or obtain within one year of becoming a member, the appropriate license, certification, or other authorization for the frequencies on which they are expected to operate. A copy of an applicant's current/valid license must be included as a permanent part of the members file and maintained by the sponsoring entity.
2. All applicants for membership in ACS programs must complete an application and other documents required by the ACS program to which they are applying.
3. In addition to meeting all other membership requirements, acceptance into an ACS program is at the discretion of the ACS Officer and emergency management official for that program.
4. All ACS members shall meet appropriate NIMS/ICS training requirements, within one year of becoming a member, for their expected/assigned operational roles in accordance with the NIMS: Five-Year Training Plan published by the National Integration Center (NIC), Incident Management Systems Integration (IMSI) Division, or succeeding requirements.
5. All ACS members are expected to establish and maintain a Go Kit. Go Kits, at a minimum, shall include those items necessary to support an individual's personal needs, as well as those of their expected/assigned duties for a minimum of 72 hours.
6. The FCC requires that persons who may be the control operator of a RACES station or of an amateur radio station transmitting in RACES be certified by the emergency management organization as being registered with that organization. The Emergency Management Coordinator for the Jurisdiction Having Authority (JHA) or the PEMA Director is the certifying official for their respective programs. In critical circumstances, the authority to certify individuals temporarily in the RACES is granted to the ACS Officer of the JHA. Pennsylvania shall use the Duly Enrolled Emergency Management Volunteer Program to administer RACES personnel certification for all programs as follows:
 - a. County/local programs: PEMA Directive D2000-1, Official Enrollment of Emergency Management Volunteers.
 - b. PEMA and other Commonwealth agency units: PEMA Directive D2006-1, Official Enrollment of State Emergency Management Volunteers.
 - c. RTF programs: Each RTF shall develop a process/procedure for ensuring that all members of an RTF ACS Unit are Duly Enrolled Emergency Management Volunteers.
 - d. Copies of Duly Enrolled Volunteer rosters for state-level ACS Units shall be forwarded to the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator, on a yearly basis, who will maintain them on file.
 - e. Duly Enrolled Volunteer rosters for local, county, and RTF programs are maintained at the county-level or RTF-level, as appropriate and

copies forwarded to the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator upon request.

B. Commonwealth ACS Program:

1. General Requirements

The following requirements shall only apply to Commonwealth ACS Program membership. RTF, county, and local ACS programs are encouraged to adopt them as well.

- a. All members must be at least 18 years of age. Minors who desire to participate may do so under a junior volunteer program, if one is established.
- b. Members must possess a valid driver's license, in good standing.
- c. Members must be physically able and hold the appropriate credentials to perform all tasks associated with their expected/assigned duties. There cannot be any physical or mental handicaps, limitations, or conditions that would preclude the ability of an individual to safely perform any required tasks.*

* Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities shall be made to enable these volunteers to participate and to learn and develop confidence, individual preparedness, independence, and adequate operating skills in order to function during times of emergency and aspire to higher levels of participation.

- d. Members must complete all required training and any required periodic refresher training.
- e. Members should be prepared to respond on short notice.
- f. Members must be capable of improvising and functioning for long hours under adverse and stressful conditions.
- g. Members must understand and adhere to the ICS, safe working practices, and procedures.
- h. Members must become familiar with, and adhere to, all applicable policies and procedures of their sponsoring agency.
- i. Members are not restricted from maintaining membership in, or holding leadership positions in, other auxiliary/emergency communications organizations (ARES®, REACT, RACES, etc), with the following exceptions:
 1. Members holding RCC Unit leadership positions (RCC Officer, Deputy RCC Officer, etc). Members holding RCC leadership positions must maintain their responsibilities to the RCC Unit as a priority over those of other organizations.

1. Members who hold leadership positions within other organizations (ARES®, local club, CAP, MARS, etc) are expected to perform any and all duties assigned by the RCC Officer. The leadership position they hold outside of the ACS Unit does not convey upon them any authority or privileges within the ACS Unit.
- j. Members must return all unit related equipment, property, and identification cards upon resignation or termination, or at the request of the unit RCC Officer or Commonwealth ACS Coordinator.
2. Commonwealth RCC Unit members will be classified as follows:
 - a. Active Members: Those who participate in the program on an ongoing and regular basis. These members will typically be considered core personnel. These members are issued identification cards and are expected to report to their assignments as quickly as possible.
 - b. Auxiliary Members: All other members. These members typically participate in unit activities on an infrequent or irregular basis. These members are not issued identification cards but will be listed on the unit roster.
 - c. Assisting Agency Personnel:
 1. A Commonwealth RCC Unit may need or desire to utilize the support of personnel in addition to, or in place of, "in-house" unit members. These support personnel are not members of the RCC Unit, but of the external organization (assisting agency), that provides support to the RCC Unit.
 2. Support personnel provided by an assisting agency must meet minimum NIMS/ICS and any other additional requirements as identified by the RCC Unit being supported, for participation in that unit's activities.
 3. Assisting Agency personnel are not typically issued identification cards, but are listed on a separate roster provided by the external organization.

XII. CIVIL LIABILITY AND COMPENSATION FOR ACCIDENTAL INJURY OR DEATH

A. Immunity from civil liability

Section 7704 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code states that neither; the Commonwealth nor any political subdivision thereof; nor other agencies; nor, except in cases of willful misconduct, the agents, employees or representatives of any of them engaged in any emergency services activities; nor, except in cases of willful misconduct or gross negligence, any individual or other person under contract with them to provide equipment or work on a cost basis to be used in disaster relief; nor, except in cases of willful misconduct or gross negligence, any person, firm, corporation, or an agent or employee of any of them engaged in disaster

services activities, while complying with or attempting to comply with this part or any rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this part shall be liable for the death of or any injury to persons or loss or damage to property as a result of that activity.

- B. Compensation for accidental injury or death
1. Section 7706 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code states that all duly enrolled emergency management volunteers, and such other volunteers as the agency shall by regulation qualify, who are not eligible to receive benefits under the Workers' Compensation Laws shall be entitled, except during a state of war or period of armed conflict within the continental limits of the United States, to certain specified benefits relating to accidental injuries or death sustained while actually engaged in emergency management activities and services or in or enroute to and from emergency management tests, drills, exercises or operations authorized by the PEMA and carried out in accordance with rules and orders promulgated and adopted by the agency.
 2. For the purposes of compensation for accidental injuries or death, all ACS volunteers who are Duly Enrolled Emergency Management Volunteers in accordance with PEMA Directive D2006-1, notwithstanding paragraph IV.A, are considered to be "volunteer members" of the Commonwealth agency with which they are actively involved in emergency management training, testing or other emergency management activities.

XIII. PLANS, STANDARD OPERATING GUIDES AND SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

The state ACS Strategic Plan, ACS Standard Operating Guide (SOG) and support documents shall be written as non-conflicting supplements to all applicable FCC and NTIA rules and regulations and the State Emergency Operations Plan. RTF, county, and local government ACS plans, SOGs, and supporting document shall be written as non-conflicting supplements to the state ACS Strategic Plan and ACS SOG.

XIV. COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS

- A. There shall be established a standing workgroup whose purpose will be to provide coordination between, and among, volunteer emergency communications groups and organizations within the commonwealth, with membership in the group being made up of organizations, not individuals.

Coordination actions in which the workgroup may engage include the following volunteer emergency communications areas:

1. Identification of member organization primary role(s).
2. Equipment standardization.
3. Training standardization.
4. Frequency coordination.

5. Coordination of communications modes for interoperability.
 6. Coordination of SOGs.
 7. Public relations.
 8. Sponsor or assist member organizations in sponsoring conventions, seminars, training sessions, or related events.
 9. Act as the common point of contact in matters involving volunteer emergency communications individuals, clubs, or organizations that are involved in provide emergency communications operations.
- B. No other standing committees or workgroups will be used for the Pennsylvania ACS Program itself. Major projects or subjects that significantly affect the Pennsylvania ACS Program will be reviewed by, and recommendations made through, an ad-hoc committee. The Commonwealth ACS Coordinator will designate specific individuals having specialized knowledge of the subject concerned to form ad-hoc committees. Once the review of the subject is complete and a recommendation is made by the committee, and accepted as complete, the ad-hoc committee will automatically be disbanded. One individual of the committee will be designated as chairperson and will be responsible for the committee's actions. Recommendations made by the committee will be in writing and submitted to the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator. Final approval of all committee recommendations rests with the Commonwealth ACS Coordinator.

XV. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of PEMA that every person involved with one of its emergency management responses, in any way whatsoever, shall have an experience completely free of any type of harassment or discrimination based on any reason including, but not limited to, that person's race, national origin, religion, age, gender (sex), gender identity or sexual orientation. The PEMA policy in this regard is one of "zero tolerance" for any harassment or discrimination.

XVI. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. This Directive becomes effective upon the adoption by the Director of PEMA.
- B. If any portion of the Directive is held invalid by judicial or administrative ruling, such ruling shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Directive.

XVII. RESCISSION

This Directive shall remain in effect until superseded or rescinded.

State Agencies: Office of Administration
Department of Agriculture
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Department of Corrections
Department of Environmental Protection
Department of General Services
Department of Health
Department of Military & Veterans Affairs
Pennsylvania State Police
Public Utility Commission
Department of Public Welfare
Department of Transportation
Fish and Boat Commission
Game Commission
Turnpike Commission
Capital Police
Port of Pittsburg Commission
Philadelphia Regional Port Authority

Carbon Copy: Office of the Director
Office of the State Fire Commissioner
Deputy Director for Administration
Deputy Director for Operations
Deputy Director for Planning and Preparedness
Chief Counsel's Office
Legislative Affairs Office
Bureau / Office Directors

