Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary

Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOMM) Plan

April 13, 2021

COWLEY COUNTY EMERGENCY AUXILIARY – AUXCOMM PLAN

I. Purpose

The Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary (CCEA) is an organization of dependable volunteers who assist in the protection and preservation of life, limb, and property during times of disaster and emergency. The members of the Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary are highly qualified and trained volunteers from the community who donate their time and skills. Among their many roles, some CCEA volunteers are trained to provide auxiliary communications (AUXCOMM) as needed to assist Cowley County Emergency Management or other public safety organizations. Requests may be made for assistance in accomplishing any of the following:

(1) Communications between key locations or facilities within Cowley County, including but not limited to the County Emergency Operations Center, police and fire departments, hospitals, government offices, and shelters.

(2) Communications between the County Emergency Operations Center and State or regional facilities, including but not limited to the State Emergency Operations Center and other counties.

(3) Support of a Communications Unit (COMU) within the Incident Command System structure of an incident or planned event, including but not limited to roles such as a radio operator or technical specialist.

(4) Support of Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 during an activation of the Cowley County Emergency Operations Center.

(5) Communications or technical assistance to support other emergency management functions as requested by the County Emergency Management Director or designee.

This plan is intended to establish a framework for CCEA volunteers to provide AUXCOMM assistance, and to set a standard for the training and credentialing of communications volunteers.
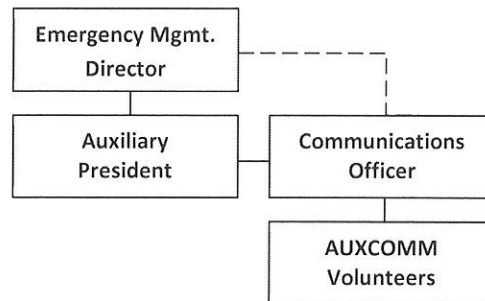
II. Assignments

AUXCOMM support will be requested by the County Emergency Management Director or designee, and individual assignments to complete a request for assistance will be made by the Communications Officer or designee. Whenever practical, existing fixed and mobile equipment owned by volunteers will be utilized. Consideration will be given to relocation of equipment to other locations if the need develops. A fixed amateur radio station has been installed within the County Emergency Operations Center, and additional assets may be provided by Emergency Management as needed and available.

Assignments will likely involve the use of voice and data communications as appropriate. They may also involve the use of or provision of support to other modes and mediums of communication beyond amateur radio. These may include but are not limited to other radio services as well as telephone and internet technology. AUXCOMM volunteers should rely on training and experience to be prepared for as many different communications scenarios as possible. A list of the minimum suggested personal equipment that each volunteer should have is included in Annex D of this plan.

III. Organizational Structure

The Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary is a volunteer organization serving and operating under the authority of Cowley County Emergency Management. The organization provides auxiliary communications (AUXCOMM) volunteers led by the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer reports to the Cowley County Emergency Management Director or designee either directly or through the Auxiliary President.

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              │  Emergency Mgmt.    │ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┐
              │     Director        │             │
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        │     Auxiliary     │─────│   Communications  │
        │     President     │     │      Officer      │
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                                  │     AUXCOMM       │
                                  │    Volunteers     │
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IV. Activation

Volunteer activation will occur only at the request of a County Emergency Management official or designee. Under no circumstances should any volunteer self-activate. Notification of an AUXCOMM activation may be received via text message, phone call, or contact through one of the pre-identified frequencies listed in Annex A of this plan. An official request will include at minimum the nature of the activation, contact information necessary to acknowledge the request and receive further instructions, and the identity of the person initiating the request.

Once a notification is received, unless otherwise instructed a net should be established on the primary frequency, or as appropriate on an alternate or a secondary frequency, and a roll call of available AUXCOMM volunteers should be conducted. After a list of available volunteers is gathered, net control should attempt to contact the County EOC (call sign K0EMA) to relay the available roster and to receive further instructions. While contact with the EOC via amateur radio is the preferred method, other means may be used as appropriate.

The first available AUXCOMM volunteer should lead the completion of whatever task is assigned by the Emergency Management official or designee. This volunteer should continue in this role until such time as the Communications Officer or another volunteer with a higher level of completed training and experience becomes available. At that time, a decision may be made to transfer the leadership role to assure the most effective completion of the task.

Should an event or incident that might warrant activation occur or be imminent, AUXCOMM volunteers should make every effort to monitor at minimum the primary frequency identified in Annex A for further information or an official activation request.

V. Practice Drills and Training

On air AUXCOMM practice drills will be conducted to assure operational readiness of equipment and to train operators. In addition, regular training will be held once a month at a physical location or on

a frequency to be specified by the Communications Officer or designee, or by County Emergency Management officials.

VI.   Training Requirements

The Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary has adopted training requirements which outline the minimum AUXCOMM qualifications required as well as a progressive training program for volunteer development. Volunteers are encouraged to seek out additional training and experience sufficient to advance to the next qualification level. The training requirements and qualification levels are detailed in Annex C of this plan and may be updated or modified by the Communications Officer or County Emergency Management Director or designee as deemed necessary.

VII.   Rules and Regulations

FCC rules and regulations (specifically 47 CFR § 97) apply to operation in the amateur radio service and therefore apply to volunteers engaged in AUXCOMM activities. Additional FCC rules and regulations apply to other communications services that may occasionally be used by AUXCOMM volunteers, including but not limited to 47 CFR § 90 (Private Land Mobile Radio Service) which governs the use of public safety radio frequencies licensed to Cowley County and other government agencies. Further local rules and policies may be established by the Communications Officer and the Emergency Management Director or designee. Volunteers should make every effort to maintain awareness of and adhere to all applicable rules, regulations, and policies.

When appropriate and authorized by the County Emergency Management Director or designee, AUXCOMM volunteers may operate under Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) rules as outlined in 47 CFR § 97.407. Since emergency communications have priority on all frequencies at any time and other tools such as closed nets may be utilized, the need for RACES operation will likely only be necessary when interacting with other organizations operating strictly under RACES rules.
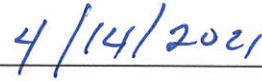
VIII.   Plan Annexes

The following annexes listed below are considered to be part of the Cowley County AUXCOMM plan. They may be revised separately from the base plan as needed.

- *Annex A: AUXCOMM Frequency Assignments*

- *Annex B: Local AUXCOMM Resources*

- *Annex C: Cowley County AUXCOMM Training Requirements and Qualification Levels*

- *Annex D: Suggested Equipment for AUXCOMM Operators*

Signed and adopted by:

Brian Stone (signature)

Brian Stone
Director
Cowley County Emergency Management

Date 4/14/2021

Cameron Groom (signature)

Cameron Groom
President
Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary

Date 4/14/2021

Ron Upton (signature)

Ron Upton
Communications Officer
Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary

Date 6/11/2021

ANNEX A: AUXCOMM FREQUENCY ASSIGNMENTS

The following frequencies have been pre-identified for AUXCOMM use. Operation is not limited solely to these frequencies. However, the listed frequencies are provided for the purpose of standardization and to coordinate their use before an emergency or incident occurs. Frequencies designated as primary are intended to be used first, followed respectively by alternate and secondary frequencies.

A standardized channel naming convention has been developed locally and is adapted in part from the APCO/NPSTC 1.104.2-2017 Standard Channel Nomenclature for Public Safety Interoperability Channels. Channels may also be referred to using their frequency in megahertz as per standard amateur convention.

While all amateur frequencies are shared resources, any infrastructure associated with these frequencies is the property of their respective owners. Use of any listed infrastructure within Cowley County is authorized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Cowley County Emergency Management and each respective owner and is subject to the terms and conditions contained within these documents. Infrastructure is not guaranteed to be operational and available at all times.

Cowley County Frequencies

Channel Name	Receive Frequency	Transmit Frequency	PL Tone	Location	Designation	Notes
UR4025	444.025	449.025	97.4	Winfield	Primary	Emergency Power
VR5190	145.190	144.590	-	Winfield	Alternate	Emergency Power
VR7000	147.000	147.600	97.4	Arkansas City	Alternate	Emergency Power; VoIP
VR7165	147.165	147.765	97.4	Udall	Secondary	VoIP
UR2100	442.100	447.100	97.4	Winfield	Secondary	Emergency Power; VoIP
UR4300	444.300	449.300	97.4	Udall	Secondary	
VS6580	146.580	146.580	-	Countywide	Simplex	
VS7420	147.420	147.420	-	Countywide	Simplex	
US6075	446.075	446.075	-	Countywide	Simplex	
US6500	446.500	446.500	-	Countywide	Simplex	
VS5090	145.090	145.090	-	Countywide	Simplex	Packet Radio; Digi/BBS
VS5030	145.030	145.030	-	Countywide	Simplex	Packet Radio

Regional Frequencies

Channel Name	Receive Frequency	Transmit Frequency	PL Tone	Location	Notes
VR6940	146.940	146.340	103.5	Colwich	Sedgwick County RACES
VR7150	147.150	147.750	103.5	El Dorado	Butler County ARES/Skywarn
VR6970	146.970	146.370	88.5	Ponca City	Ponca City Skywarn
VR6850	146.850	146.250	156.7	Derby	Kan-Okla Intertie System (Regional ARES/Skywarn)
UR7165	443.525	448.525	156.7	Beaumont	Kan-Okla Intertie System (Regional ARES/Skywarn)
UR3100	443.100	448.100	162.2	El Dorado	K-Link System (Regional Skywarn)

State Frequencies

Frequency	Designation	Notes
3920-3940 kHz	Kansas RACES Net (80m)	Primary Net Frequency
7240-7270 kHz	Kansas RACES Net (40m)	Alternate Net Frequency

ANNEX B: LOCAL AUXCOMM RESOURCES

The following are resources that are made available for AUXCOMM use on a regular basis. These may be County assets, or assets owned by other individuals or organizations with access granted via written agreement. This list is not all inclusive; other resources may be available but not listed below.

Equipment located at the Cowley County EOC in Winfield, Kansas

Yaesu FT-8800 VHF/UHF Transceiver [2m/70cm]

VHF Packet Transceiver and Kantronics KPC-3+ TNC

Kenwood TS-480 SAT HF Transceiver [160m-6m]

Portable "Go Box" consisting of the following:
- UHF and 800MHz Public safety radios [for County and State radio systems]
- Yaesu FT-8800 VHF/UHF Transceiver [2m/70cm]

Portable UHF Public Safety Repeater [programmed for use on County CL EM 3 channel]

Equipment provided by the Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary

VHF Packet Digipeater and Bulletin Board System near Winfield, Kansas [145.090(R/T)]

Equipment authorized for use by the Cowley County Amateur Radio Club

VHF Repeater located near Winfield, Kansas [145.190(R)/144.590(T)]

VHF Repeater located near Arkansas City, Kansas [147.000(R)/147.600(T), PL 97.4]

UHF Repeater located near Winfield, Kansas [444.025(R)/449.025(T), PL 97.4]

Equipment authorized for use by other local Amateur Radio operators

VHF Repeater located near Udall, Kansas [147.165(R)/147.765(T), PL 97.4]
Owner: Randy Storey (KD0HNA)

UHF Repeater located in Winfield, Kansas [442.100(R)/447.100(T), PL 97.4]
Owner: John Stradal (N5API)

UHF Repeater located near Udall, Kansas [444.300(R)/449.300(T), PL 97.4]
Owner: Randy Storey (KD0HNA)

ANNEX C: AUXCOMM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATION LEVELS

In an attempt to provide uniform training and to quantify the skill set and implied ability of an individual operator to perform an assignment, a system of credentialing was devised by several entities within the State of Kansas. The credentialing standard for amateur radio operators developed and used within the Kansas City Metro area was adopted with some variation by the State of Kansas in 2012. It has been used as a guideline for developing the minimum training requirements for AUXCOMM credentialing within Cowley County.

The requirements listed within this annex outline the minimum qualifications required and establish a progressive training program for AUXCOMM volunteers in the Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary. Volunteers are encouraged to seek out additional training and experience sufficient to advance to the next qualification level whenever possible.

As new training courses become available or as needs change, the training requirements for each credentialing level may be modified at the discretion of the Communications Officer and the Emergency Management Director or designee. If such a modification occurs, a volunteer will be expected to meet the new requirements within six months in order to retain credentialing at his or her current level.

Auxiliary Communicator (AUXC) Type IV (minimum requirement)

All minimum Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary membership requirements plus the following:
- All EOC Support requirements (listed in CCEA Volunteer Training Requirements document)
- Technician Class License (or higher)
- EM Communications Equipment Orientation (CCEM provided)

Auxiliary Communicator (AUXC) Type III

All of Auxiliary Communicator Type IV plus the following:
- IS-200 Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response
- IS-800 National Response Framework, An Introduction
- DHS/OEC-approved Auxiliary Communications Course (or CCEM provided equivalent)
- Act as Net Control for an amateur radio net at least once

Auxiliary Communicator (AUXC) Type II

All of Auxiliary Communicator Type III plus the following:
- General Class License (or higher)
- Operating proficiency as a Net Control
- Proficiency in one mode other than voice (i.e., digital, code, RTTY, ATV, etc.)
- IS-120 An Introduction to Exercises
- IS-139 Exercise Design and Development
- IS-230 Fundamentals of Emergency Management
- IS-235 Emergency Planning
- IS-288 The Role of Voluntary Agencies in Emergency Management

Auxiliary Communicator (AUXC) Type I

All of Auxiliary Communicator Type II plus the following:
- Hold (or have previously held) a leadership role within a volunteer group. This can be a board position like President, or an appointment like Field Day Coordinator, Training Officer, etc.
- Have a demonstrated ability to lead and direct groups of radio operators, demonstrated by either coordinating public service events, or creation and execution of live radio training or exercises.
- IS-240 Leadership & Influence
- IS-241 Decision Making & Problem Solving
- IS-242 Effective Communications
- IS-244 Developing and Managing Volunteers
- Completed DHS/OEC Auxiliary Communicator Position Task Book

ANNEX D: SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT FOR AUXCOMM OPERATORS

Recommended minimum personal equipment for AUXCOMM volunteers:

VHF/UHF portable and mobile transceivers capable of operation on all pre-identified repeater and simplex frequencies

Antennas appropriate for fixed, mobile, or portable operations

Alternative means of supplying operating power to equipment (battery, generator, etc.)

Spare fuses, connectors, patch cables, wire, etc. for emergency equipment repair

Inclement weather gear, first-aid kit, reflective vest, etc. for field operations.

Copies of basic forms likely to be used, including ICS 205, 205a, 213, 214, 217, and 309

Reference materials including the following:
- List of local frequencies (Form 217A or equivalent)
- Auxiliary and EM staff contact information
- Copies of the NIFOG, AUXFOG, KS-FOG, and ERG (hard copies provided by CCEM when available)