

What is a MAC?

A Santa Clara County Mutual Aid Communicator is a trained and experienced amateur radio operator from one community who is ready to help with emergency communications in another community

MAC Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of all MACs is to their own city. MACs must be released by their city before they are available to other cities.

When released by the city, a MAC may be assigned as an emergency communicator outside his/her city. These assignments are always voluntary. A MAC always has the option to refuse an assignment.

MACs are expected to regularly attend training and events to maintain their performance and skill levels according to county standards.

MACs are expected to maintain their communications equipment and Go Kits according to county standards, ready to go.

MACs must not do anything that they consider dangerous, unreasonable, or beyond their training or ability. Personal safety must always be the first consideration.

Typical Assignments

Because a MAC may be deployed to different cities or to the county radio room during drills, public service events or real emergency incidents, no two assignments are exactly alike. But most assignments fall into a few general categories:

Field Communicator

Conduct initial damage surveys. Supply communications for a Red Cross shelter, hospital, Emergency Volunteer Center, fire station, school, CERT team, or other similar situation.

Net Control Operator

Manage the communications flow for any of the various county and city nets.

Packet Operator

Use digital technology to communicate official forms and other complex data that are not convenient to send by voice.

Shadow Communicator

Supply communications for an official at a public event or an emergency incident.

HF Operator

Relay communications outside the county, either directly or through established NTS nets.

Advancement & Recognition

The MAC program offers advanced qualifications and recognition in the following areas:

- Field Communicator
- Net Control Operator
- Packet Operator
- Shadow Communicator
- HF Operator

Several levels of advancement are available and each level entails meeting certain criteria, including:

- Training
- Participation
- Technical and procedural knowledge
- Operator Skill

MACs have several opportunities each year to have their expertise and performance evaluated for advanced qualifications.



How Do I Become a MAC?

You must be active in the local ARES®/RACES group in the community where you live or work.

You must meet certain minimum entrance requirements, including:

- Administrative
- Training
- Equipment
- Participation / experience
- Performance / skill level

You must be recommended by your city Emergency Coordinator. The EC will make the recommendation when he/she believes you possess the experience and maturity to perform according to county standards.

A MAC must be approved by the county's Chief Radio Officer.

Insurance Coverage

A MAC must be registered with the county Disaster Service Worker Program. MACs are covered under California Workman's Compensation Insurance when: a RACES activation is declared, and the MAC is assigned to a task under that activation, and the MAC is properly trained for that task, and the MAC performs according to county standards.

More Information

For more information about the Santa Clara County MAC Program, visit:

<http://www.scc-ares-races.org/mac>

For general information about ARES®/RACES emergency communications in your city, consult your city Emergency Coordinator:

<http://www.scc-ares-races.org/cities.htm>

Santa Clara County

ARES®/RACES

Mutual Aid

Communicator

(MAC)

Program

