**CARES Technical Committee**

**Frequency List Policy**

**Frequency List Maintenance for CARES Member Radios**

# Background

In order to have a consistent channel list of available frequencies for CARES members available the CARES Technical Committee started released a standard plan named the Brown Plan in 2021. This plan was developed by searching for all amateur radio frequencies that were in use for emergency response that were assigned in the Clackamas County.

A channel naming convention, aka ALIAS, was constructed, so there was consistency in the channel naming as well as the actual channel numbering.

It was anticipated that the plan would change as more frequencies were found in use, changes to frequencies were required, and formal addition of dedicated digital message channels.

# Document Creation Process

The master document for changes is an Excel “master” Workbook (.xls file) with different frequency “bands” stored in separate tabs (“worksheets”). Each “band” worksheet is laid out to be displayed as a FEMA ICS-217A “Communications Resource Availability Worksheet” document. All other derivatives are created from this master Workbook file.

When we are ready to publish, we will create the required files and distribute.

Currently, here is what we supply on the CARES Website—

* A .pdf copy of the ICS-217A form for each “band” worksheet in the master Workbook
  + Used to make printed copies of the ICS-217A forms… to keep in go bags, in cars, and at your base station
* .csv (comma separated values) files derived from each master Workbook “band” worksheet, to use primarily with the CHIRP radio-programming utility program
  + These are generated by utility programs developed by Andrew, N1ACW, to convert any “band” worksheet in the master Workbook to a .csv file.
  + downloaded .csv files can be ‘imported’ into CHIRP
  + Operators can open these .csv files with any spreadsheet program and manipulate, combine bands, and make custom versions for various radios
* The .csv file for filling in the “VHF and UHF FREQUENCIES” table on the CARES website “FREQUENCY-NET INFORMATION” page. This .csv file is generated from the “2M & 440 band” worksheet of the master Workbook.
* Storage
  + The current and prior versions of the master Workbook, derivative files, and file-conversion utility programs, are maintained in a GitHub online repository, for version control purposes. The master Workbook is saved in .xls format, to maximize compatibility with “work-alike” spreadsheet programs other than Excel.
* Change-log / Development History
  + The GIT “Commit History” facility is used to maintain a record of the changes made to the master Workbook .xls file, as well as the history of different versions of the derivative files generated from the master Workbook file
* The Frequency List subgroup can have access to our GitHub site
* Anyone with access to the GitHub site can make changes to the master Excel file
  + Older versions are always kept.

# Release Process

* The Technical Committee will make a decision as a group that the pending release is ready to go
  + The plan will be sent in PDF sent showing proposed changes to the CARES Staff for review. If changes are recommended and accepted, those changes will be sent around again for review
  + Once approved by that CARES Staff group, it will be sent to the EC for final approval
  + Once approval is received by the EC, the files will be converted to all the required derivatives and placed on the Website

# Plan Releases

* Update release—Updates are considered not critical, but the changes are worth noting, such as an added frequency or a PL added to a frequency we do not use very much. These updates can be issued at any time, likely a couple of times per year.
* Full or Critical release—Usually annually. These are considered critical. A change may be to a frequency that CARES member use frequently or there is a numbering sequency change. A critical update will likely require an “active date” announcement to all members to make sure everyone has their radios updated by a certain date.
* The Website will always have the latest updates available in all the derivatives discussed in this document