

RGV AUXCOMM

Rio Grande Valley Amateur Radio Auxiliary Communications

Emergency Operations Plan

2026 Edition

Operational Purpose

A practical reference for volunteer auxiliary communications in support of local, regional, and state partners during emergencies, disasters, public-service events, and communications-readiness activities.

Organization	RGV Auxcomm
Effective	2026
Primary Net	Thursdays, 1930 hours, Rio Link Repeater System
Primary Contact Roles	Public Information Officer; Chief Public Safety Liaison; Director of Operations and Training



Quick Reference

Area	Primary Information	Notes
Primary Net	Thursdays at 1930 hours	Rio Link Repeater System
Primary Repeater	145.230 MHz Rio Link, Pharr	Negative offset, PL 114.8
Common Tactical Simplex	146.520 MHz simplex	Valley-wide tactical frequency
Digital	Winlink preferred for formal written traffic	ICS-213, resource requests, situation reports
Core Standard	No self-deployment	Deploy only when/where requested or assigned
Operating Culture	Professionalism, teamwork, local trust	Service before ego

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Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline roles, responsibilities, and procedures for Amateur Radio communications in support of local, regional, and state agencies during emergencies, disasters, public-service events, and communications-readiness activities.

Scope

Applies to RGV Auxcomm operations and mutual-support activities involving surrounding South Texas counties when requested. Provides guidelines for activation, coordination, and management of Amateur Radio communications resources, and serves as a reference for local government officials, served agencies, public-service partners, and Amateur Radio operators.

Authority

RGV Auxcomm operates as a volunteer auxiliary communications group supporting public safety, emergency management, and served-agency communications needs. RGV Auxcomm follows applicable Incident Command System principles, emergency communications best practices, and professional standards for organized volunteer communications support.

Mission Statement

The RGV Auxcomm mission is to provide reliable, disciplined, volunteer-based Amateur Radio communications in support of local governments, public safety agencies, emergency management partners, and public-service organizations.

RGV Auxcomm seeks to enhance public safety and community resilience through organized communications capability, operational readiness, technical competence, and strong interpersonal coordination with served agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities

Public Information Officer

Preparing public announcements, flyers, website updates, and social media content. Coordinating public messages with RGV Auxcomm leadership before release. Helping document nets, exercises, events, and training activities. Supporting recruitment and public education about RGV Auxcomm's mission. Protecting sensitive operational, agency, and member information. Maintaining a professional public image for RGV Auxcomm.

Chief Public Safety Liaison

Serves as the primary relationship and coordination lead with public safety, emergency management, and served-agency partners. Maintains communication with local public safety and emergency management officials; supports agency coordination before, during, and after incidents or exercises; helps ensure RGV Auxcomm activities remain aligned with public safety needs; supports liaison work with EOCs, public safety agencies, and local response partners; and represents RGV Auxcomm professionally in public safety and served-agency settings.

Director of Operations and Training

Oversees operational readiness, training, drills, net procedures, and communications-readiness development. Coordinates regular nets, exercises, and practical communications training; develops and maintains operational procedures; supports operator readiness in voice, digital, message handling, and ICS-compatible procedures; coordinates emergency communications, public-service communications, and net control training; and maintains emphasis on technical capability and soft skills.

Team Members and Volunteer Operators

Register capabilities, equipment, availability, and specialized training; maintain readiness through participation in nets, drills, and exercises; deploy only when requested or assigned through proper RGV Auxcomm coordination; follow net control during directed nets; maintain professional conduct with served agencies, public safety personnel, and the public; and use clear, concise, accurate, and disciplined communications.

Activation and Deployment

Activation Authority

Primary activation responsibility lies with RGV Auxcomm leadership, including the Chief Public Safety Liaison, Director of Operations and Training, or their designated representatives. Activation may occur upon request from local, regional, or state emergency management, public safety, or served-agency partners.

Activation Triggers

- Official request from local, regional, or state emergency management.
- Severe weather alerts, including hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, or other hazardous weather.
- Man-made incidents, including major accidents, communications failures, hazardous material incidents, or infrastructure disruptions.
- Public-service events requiring organized auxiliary communications support.
- Training exercises, drills, or readiness checks.

Notification Methods

- Phone calls.
- Group text messages.
- Email alerts.
- Winlink or other digital messaging.
- Radio announcements.
- RGV Auxcomm net announcements.

RGV Auxcomm Net

The RGV Auxcomm Net is held every Thursday at 1930 hours on the Rio Link Repeater System to maintain contact, readiness, and operator discipline.

Deployment Guidelines

- Operators report only to assigned locations.
- Operators should arrive with appropriate equipment, identification, and personal supplies.
- Operators assigned to EOCs, shelters, command posts, field locations, or public-service events must follow site rules and agency instructions.
- Operators should maintain logs of assigned activity and communications.
- Formal written traffic should use ICS-213, radiogram, Winlink, or other approved message formats as appropriate.

Emergency Communication Standards

Standard	Requirement
Radio Discipline	During emergencies or exercises, RGV Auxcomm may operate as a directed net. Operators must follow Net Control Station instructions.
Plain Language	Use plain language whenever possible. Avoid unnecessary codes, jargon, or ambiguous phrasing.
Message Accuracy	Accuracy is more important than speed.
Professional Conduct	Operators must remain calm, respectful, and concise.
Message Formats	Use ICS forms, Winlink forms, ARRL radiograms, or other approved formats when formal written traffic is required.
Standard Phonetics	Use the ITU Phonetic Alphabet to minimize confusion and ensure clarity.

Precedence Levels

Precedence	Use
Emergency	Life-or-death or immediate threat to safety.
Priority	Time-sensitive operational messages.
Welfare	Health and safety inquiries or status messages.
Routine	Non-urgent updates or administrative traffic.

Training and Drills

Regular Nets

RGV Auxcomm conducts weekly nets for practice, updates, operator accountability, and procedural readiness.

Net	Day	Time	System
RGV Auxcomm Net	Thursdays	1930 hours	Rio Link Repeater System

Simulated Exercises

- Hurricanes.
- Flooding.
- Tornadoes.
- Power outages.
- Communications failures.
- Shelter communications.
- EOC support.
- Public-service events.

Cross-Training

Voice net operations	Net control
Tactical callsigns	Simplex operations
Repeater operations	Winlink
DMR	ICS-213 message handling
ICS-214 activity logging	Emergency power
Field deployment	

Soft Skills

RGV Auxcomm recognizes that effective auxiliary communications requires more than technical skill. Operators should develop calm under pressure, clear communication, listening discipline, team coordination, respect for chain of command, patience with non-radio personnel, professional public-facing conduct, accurate message relay, situational awareness, and adaptability.

Public Service Agencies and Served Agencies

RGV Auxcomm may support the following agencies and partners when requested:

City and county emergency management offices	Texas State Operations Center
Texas Department of Public Safety	Offices of Emergency Preparedness
American Red Cross	Salvation Army
Fire and EMS departments	Law enforcement agencies
Hospitals and medical facilities	Universities and colleges

Public-service event organizers	Community response partners
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Relationship Building

RGV Auxcomm leadership and operators should maintain ongoing communication with local agencies and served-agency partners. Written agreements, memoranda of understanding, informal coordination, and regular relationship maintenance may help clarify expectations and improve operational effectiveness.

Frequency and Mode Assignments

Primary Repeater and Simplex Frequencies

Frequency	System / Site	Offset	Tone / Notes
146.520 MHz	Simplex	-	Common Valley-wide tactical frequency
145.230 MHz	Rio Link, Pharr	Negative	PL 114.8
146.720 MHz	Rio Link, Weslaco	Negative	PL 114.8
145.390 MHz	Rio Link, Harlingen	Negative	PL 114.8
147.180 MHz	Rio Link, La Feria	Positive	PL 114.8
146.960 MHz	Rio Link, Olmito	Negative	PL 114.8

Alternate or Backup Repeaters: Star Link System

Frequency	System / Site	Offset	Tone / Notes
146.700 MHz	Star Link, Bluetown	Negative	Backup
147.040 MHz	Star Link, Brownsville	Positive	Backup
146.760 MHz	Star Link, Pharr	Negative	Backup
147.100 MHz	Star Link	Positive	As needed
147.120 MHz	Star Link, Port Isabel	Positive	Backup

UHF Networks and Digital Frequencies

Frequency	System / Site	Offset	Tone / Notes
440.600 MHz	Rio Link Hub	Positive	PL 82.5
444.200 MHz	Rio Link, W5YP	Positive	PL 114.8
444.275 MHz	Star Link	Positive	PL 114.8
446.000 MHz	Simplex	-	UHF simplex
145.010 MHz	Winlink	-	Digital
145.770 MHz	Winlink	-	Digital
443.825 MHz	DMR	-	Color Code 1, BrandMeister, South Texas TG 31482

Weather Monitoring

Frequency	System / Site	Offset	Tone / Notes
162.400 MHz	NOAA Weather Radio	-	Weather monitoring
162.550 MHz	NOAA Weather Radio	-	Weather monitoring

Digital Communications

Winlink remains the preferred digital platform for formal written traffic, including ICS-213 forms, resource requests, situation reports, and other written emergency communications.

Operator Expectations

- Maintain familiarity with Winlink Express or equivalent software.
- Participate in regular digital training.
- Test station capability before emergency activation.
- Maintain current forms and templates.
- Practice sending and receiving formal traffic.

DMR may be used on South Texas Talk Group 31482 for voice coordination at the discretion of RGV Auxcomm leadership or Net Control.

Operational Procedures

Net Control Station

The designated Net Control Station manages check-ins, traffic handling, station assignments, directed net discipline, and operational flow.

- Open and close nets clearly.
- Maintain a station list.
- Track assigned stations.
- Prioritize emergency and priority traffic.
- Keep transmissions concise.
- Maintain calm control of the net.

Incident and Activity Logs

Operators should maintain appropriate logs, including date, time, station of origin, station receiving, message summary, assignment, actions taken, relays, or follow-up needed. ICS-214 may be used for activity logging.

Formal Messages

Formal messages should use ICS-213, ARRL Radiogram, Winlink forms, or other approved formats. All formal messages should identify the originator or authorized representative.

Message Handling

- Messages should be copied accurately.
- Read-backs should be used when needed.
- Critical information should be confirmed.
- Operators should avoid adding interpretation, assumptions, or commentary to formal traffic.

Deactivation

RGV Auxcomm leadership or Net Control announces net deactivation once the incident, exercise, or assignment is resolved or communications support is no longer required. A final roll call may be performed to ensure accountability.

Contact Information

Contact details for RGV Auxcomm Hidalgo County team members and local emergency management officials are maintained by RGV Auxcomm leadership and updated as needed.

Name / Call Sign	Role	Organization
K5UEZ Eddie Olivarez	Public Information Officer	RGV Auxcomm
KF5KYL Rene Lopez	Chief Public Safety Liaison	RGV Auxcomm
N5MGC John Cain	Director of Operations and Training	RGV Auxcomm

Email and phone information is available to RGV Auxcomm members on request.

Appendices

Appendix A: Standard ITU Phonetic Alphabet

Letter	Word	Letter	Word	Letter	Word
A	ALPHA	B	BRAVO	C	CHARLIE
D	DELTA	E	ECHO	F	FOXTROT
G	GOLF	H	HOTEL	I	INDIA
J	JULIETT	K	KILO	L	LIMA
M	MIKE	N	NOVEMBER	O	OSCAR
P	PAPA	Q	QUEBEC	R	ROMEO
S	SIERRA	T	TANGO	U	UNIFORM
V	VICTOR	W	WHISKEY	X	X-RAY
Y	YANKEE	Z	ZULU		

Plan Maintenance and Revisions

This plan is reviewed and revised annually or as needed. Revisions will be coordinated by RGV Auxcomm leadership in consultation with team members, public safety partners, emergency management contacts, and served-agency representatives as appropriate.

All volunteers are encouraged to provide feedback for continuous improvement.

End of RGV Auxcomm Hidalgo County Emergency Operations Plan, 2026 Edition