

Kai a Pele Hawaii ARES® COMEX
Facilitator Guide
(October 1, 2022, Extreme Tsunami Drill)

Introduction:

Zoom Link for help 0830 - 1430, including Hotwash at 1330
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/930165812?pwd=M3NiM0x5aldhdnpMTWxzZXZpbmxSdz09>
Meeting ID: 930 165 812 Passcode: HamTest

Types of message traffic we expect: both Voice & Winlink:

- Check-ins
- Field Situation Report
- HI-Damage Report [**New**]
- HI- Request for Assistance [**New**]
- Safety Message
- Check-out

Facilitator Instructions:

Each participant serving as a facilitator of this COMEX may:

- Attempt to find a station as backup in case you have technical difficulties or an emergency.
- Ask stations to act as a designated relay in areas where you have players out of range.
- Announce the drill introductory message at the defined time. Open voice net, take check-ins.
- Announce alternative frequency and backup NCS. Share information about other frequencies, relay options, and

other helpful details.

- Ask another operator to volunteer to take over your role if you must leave the exercise before the scheduled COMEX end time.
- Do your best to help others be successful in sending traffic and receiving acknowledgement that the message is received.

Message Examples for Facilitators:

- These examples are a guide for volunteers with less experience in facilitating a COMEX. They are not meant to dictate what you must say. Modify your message as you feel is appropriate to your local circumstance. **All ARES leaders are exercise facilitators.** Each of us takes responsibility for making exercises successful in our community.

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Drill Introduction:

(Sample message for broadcast by hubs to open the drill)

- This is (amateur call sign) opening the Makani 'Ino (Drill) COMEX on frequency of operation.
- This COMEX simulates emergency communications during a severe weather event. Operations will continue on this frequency until (state end time). Stations have received simulated messages prior to the beginning of this COMEX, which indicate a time and specific ground truth used as a basis for their transmissions.
- As I open this drill, the ground truth is that an extreme tsunami and flooding has caused a loss of power, telephone service, and internet service island wide.
- This station will relay situational awareness messages based upon the simulated storm events and forward participant messages to the Emergency Operations Center.
- Please refer to your player's guide, timeline checklist and incident action plan for additional information.
- All information regarding this COMEX is posted at hawaii.ares.net. The drill will begin

after I open the net and take check-ins. All stations standby.
<Reset>

Opening a Hub Net:

- This is (amateur call sign) opening the Hawaii ARES SET Tsunami COMEX. This is a directed net. All transmissions are directed to net control, unless given permission to do otherwise. <reset>
- I will take check-ins from the registered participants list. When called, respond with your call sign using ITU phonetics.
- *(Take check-ins and acknowledge each from your list.)*
- *(If your district chooses to accept ad-hoc check-ins, you may add the following paragraph)*
- Stations not registered for this COMEX may check in to this net.

Beginning the COMEX:

- This is (your FCC Callsign) operating under the tactical call sign of (your tactical call.)
- All stations checked in to this net are asked to contact this station and check out before leaving the frequency. Stations may check in at any time before the end of the

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COMEX as needed.

(Skip this next paragraph if you feel that it is not needed for your area)

- Use best practices in EMCOMM including Prowords and Break tags. If you have traffic for the net, transmit your tactical call or the suffix of your amateur call and one or two words, known as break tags, to indicate your purpose. Examples include: Check-in, check-out, Emergency, Priority, or routine traffic.
- **Note:** By this time at least one player should be ready to call with traffic.

Periodic Station Announcement:

- This is (Your tactical Call) standing by for exercise traffic. (Your FCC Call)
- (Every 10 min, even if there is no traffic.)

Initiate Traffic from Stations:

- This is (your tactical callsign) standing by for exercise traffic.
- **Example: Designated Relay Station**
- This is (callsign) operating under the tactical call of “Kea’au Relay” standing by for relay traffic. I will take your voice message traffic on

this frequency and relay it to the EOC via Winlink RMS or HF.

“Kea’au relay” standing by.

(Modify as needed to describe your relay details.)

- **Example: Periodic station ID**
This is Kea’au Relay standing by for exercise traffic. (FCC callsign)

Help players that fail to ID Properly:

- Participant Callsign, Do you have additional traffic for the net?

Guidance for hub stations:

- **Suggestion:** Before the COMEX, ask a player to give the first message following your opening message.
- If you have many voice players using your hub, it is helpful to have a 2nd operator who takes traffic or transmits to EOC.
- Listen for, record, and relay bulletins to your spoke stations when received from the EOC.
- Provide/relay band condition reports to other (HF) operators.
- Assist field stations (spokes) in pushing their messages forward to the EOC by available options specified in the ICS-204 & 205 for

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your Branch or Division.

- Relay confirmation of message receipt from EOC/ACS to spokes if possible. (Refer to the relay section for guidance on logs, and message ID or ticket IDs.)
- Message priority guides which traffic you pass first. 1) Life/Safety, 2) Priority, 3) Routine.
- If players cannot be copied, suggest relay stations/frequencies.
- If no traffic, announce your station every 10 minutes: (see sample)
- Be efficient: Use pro-words and remind stations to use break tags as needed.
- Control your net. Help players follow FCC regulations. Player's need to speak their FCC amateur call at the end of transmission, within the 10-minute window.
- At the end of the exercise:
 - Remind participants of Hot wash, thank your "players."
 - Close your net.
- Turn in all ICS-214 and ICS-309 logs to your District DECs. Participate in Hot wash at 13:30 HST.

● Enjoy the COMEX!

Notes for EOCs:

In addition to the facilitator instructions above, EOC operators would:

- Take voice traffic via HF/VHF/UHF. (Use multiple operators as needed.)
- If using a Winlink Gateway mode, initiate a session at least every 10 minutes. This could be done by another operator who works the digital station, possibly at a nearby location if needed.
- If operating in Winlink P2P mode make sure your listening station remains on frequency as much as possible. Check the in-box regularly.
- We encourage EOC to EOC Communications tests on HF, either via voice SSB or P2P Winlink prior to the COMEX, and every hour during the COMEX.
- Respond to acknowledge incoming message traffic.
- If you are able to run the drill with someone qualified to use a County

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dispatch or another electronic records system in a test mode, record the applicable “ticket ID” and include it in the confirmation reply.

- If your reply goes back via a hub or relay, be sure there is a way the hub or relay can recognize which message you are responding to. ***The originating station’s amateur call and message number should be listed at the beginning of the Winlink subject line.***
- When a message is received via hub or relay, you may need to direct your confirmation of receipt (reply) back via the same path or mode it was received.
- Realize what an important service the staff at an EOC and ACS are providing to us all!

These suggestions are meant only as a helpful guide. Please work with a COMEX planning team member in your County, or other ARES leaders, so we can adapt to your needs.

Guidance for Relay Stations:

All Relay Stations:

- Check in to your EOC/ACS net via any mode you are able to based on options listed on the ICS-205.
 - You may use the Winlink check-in form if operating in that mode to check directly into the EOC.
 - Include what band, frequency, & mode you intend to monitor and details on how you intend to monitor and relay traffic to and from the EOC/ACS.
 - Example: WH6XYZ monitoring 40 meter voice on 7.080 MHz USB. Will also monitor and relay to EOC via Winlink Gateway stations.
- Check into the nearest hub station and inform them that you will be acting as relay. If you will be listening on VHF during the COMEX, the hub station may want to offload voice traffic to your station if the hub becomes busy, provided that you have a communication pathway available to the EOC/ACS.

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VHF/UHF Relay stations Options:

- Listen to voice frequency(ies) for any station having trouble reaching or communicating with their local hub and/or EOC/ACS or anyone calling your station.
- Make contact with that station and offer to act as a relay.
- Let your partners know how your relay works. (Example: WH6XYZ available to relay to EOC via 40 meter Winlink P2P)
- Help stations by prompting them for the information they need to give you to complete the relay process as needed.
- Examples: What form are you using? (or) at completion of message, ask: Would you like the message read back?
- As a relay, you are often the more experienced operator. Use best practices, set an example: (Use Pro-words, break tags, and phonetics as needed)
- If you have more than one message coming in at the same time, or another comes before you complete the relay of the previous, handle them in order of priority. 1) Health and Safety, 2) Priority, 3) Routine.
- You may operate as a VHF to VHF, VHF to HF, or VHF/HF to Winlink, or other combinations as needed depending on your equipment and capability.
- Use your best judgment to determine the best way of handling any relay situation.
- Log all traffic on the manual ICS-309.
 - Record the time received.
 - **From:** Call sign, message number.
 - **To:** Destination Station, and the outgoing message number. (Last 4 digits of Winlink ID)
 - **Message:** Log the message form type (ICS-213, ACS-SitRep, etc.) or the subject.
- Log any notable non-message activities. Activities described may include notable occurrences or events such as task assignments, task completions, injuries, difficulties encountered, etc.

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- After the message reaches the EOC, relay acknowledgement of receipt back to the originating station if possible.

HF Relay Operations:

- You may have to change to the defined alternate, contingency, or emergency frequencies on the ICS-205.
- If it becomes necessary to move off of the frequency you've been operating on, attempt to inform other stations you've been in contact with as to where you intend to move to.
- **Frequency Agility:** You may temporarily move to other bands and frequencies if necessary. First, confirm with the other station that they are able to operate on the proposed band and frequency.
- As needed, update Hub/NCS of band conditions. Check into the net with your call sign or tactical call using the pro-word "Relay Info"

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Guidance for Winlink:

Oahu Only: VHF traffic HAM Wilderness protocol - Sending in the blind.

If OAHU EOC has positive voice control to speak to stations we will use voice coordination. This might be via HF or Simplex or Repeaters (For exercises/drills we are simulating the repeaters are down).

If there is a part of the island that we can not speak too..... the EOC winlink operator will pause and leave the frequency open. This is so a distant station can use a Digipeater or TWO to reach the EOC.

IF you hear VARA TRAFFIC or VOICE PLEASE Wait

Wilderness Protocol is broken down in a hour

Distant Station

NORTH EOC: 1-10 -5 Min - OAHU EOC
WINDWARD EOC: 15-20 -5 Min - OAHU EOC
SOUTH EOC: 30-40 -5 Min - OAHU EOC
LEEWARD EOC: 45-50 -5 Min - OAHU EOC

(-5 Min - EOC This can be a buffer or if the EOC needs to send out a message to a station they may use this time)

All islands: If receiving traffic via voice:

- Many find it works best to write the message on a paper form as it is received. (Instead of typing it in.)
- Use the ICS-309 to log the time received, from, & to information. In the "Message" column write the form number or subject.
- Ask stations to slow down, say again, stand by, etc. as needed. NCS maintains control of the frequency. Relays may move to another frequency as needed.
- Enter/submit the message into Winlink via the appropriate form. (If a form is used.) **Do not check the "Request Message Receipt" Checkbox.**
- **Enter Originating station's call sign and message number of the originating station at the beginning of the Winlink subject line.** This assures that it appears on the automatically generated Winlink ICS-309 as well as on the reply from the EOC.
- Check that the frequency is clear and Initiate a session. If you are operating as part of a combination voice/data Winlink net, wait until

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instructed to transmit.

Quebec Four.

After completing the Winlink session:

- Make sure the message(s) are no longer in your outbox.
- Check your sent items and note the time completed, message destination and the last 4 digits of the Winlink message ID or the EOC “Ticket ID” if provided. Log it on your manual ICS-309 form to the right of the Form number or subject.
- Watch for message confirmations coming into your in-box, each time you initiate a session.

As message confirmation(s) show up:

- Contact the originating station and provide acknowledgement to the spoke. (Provide the last 4 digits of Winlink ID or EOC “Ticket ID” as applicable to your County.)
- Match the originating station’s call sign and message number on the manual ICS-309 log and write in the time the acknowledgement was made.
- **Example:** WH6CCL, your message number 1 was acknowledged by the EOC at 1035. Message ID Mixed Group Charlie-Sierra-

Why Record Message ID or Ticket ID
Relay Confirmation this way?

- This method helps us easily see that message acknowledgements have been relayed back to the originating station.
- This allows the exercise evaluation team the ability to easily see when messages and confirmations were completed.
- The message ID or Ticket ID is now on the spoke station’s ICS-309, assuring the originating station that the message was indeed received by a person at the EOC.
- This process does not mean that the EOC will be able to dispatch a response, it only demonstrates that the Amateur Radio Operators confirm that the EOC received it.
- Winlink assures that the transmission of the message was accurate by including a checksum value in the transmission, and automatically re-transmitting portions if an error occurs.
- It is up to the operator to double-check that the message was entered properly before

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initiating the session to send it.

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