



ACS / ARES

Organizational Structure

June 16, 2011

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What is ACS / ARES ?

- ACS / ARES is a volunteer organization of Amateur Radio Operators & Non-Radio Operators which:
- Provides emergency radio communication services to:
 - County,
 - Cities,
 - Law Enforcement,
 - Hospitals,
 - Red Cross,
 - Schools, and
 - Other critical government agencies and organizations
- During:
 - Special community events,
 - Natural disasters, and
 - Other emergencies.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- ACS/ARES operates within the National Incident Management System for all events, emergencies, and disasters.
- The National Incident Management System is a comprehensive, national approach to incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and for all functional disciplines.
- The intent of NIMS is to:
 - Be applicable across the full spectrum of potential incidents and hazard scenarios, regardless of size or complexity.
 - Improve coordination and cooperation between the agencies and organizations responding to a disaster.

NIMS Framework

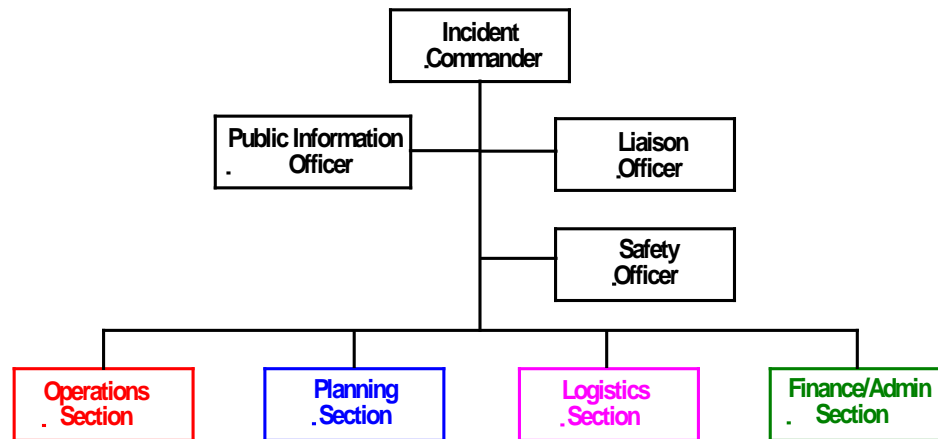
- NIMS provides a framework for interoperability and compatibility by balancing flexibility and standardization.
 - NIMS provides a **flexible** framework that facilitates government and private entities at all levels working together to manage domestic incidents.
 - This flexibility applies to all phases of incident management, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity.
 - NIMS provides a set of **standardized** organizational structures, as well as requirements for processes, procedures, and systems designed to improve interoperability.
 - ACS/ARES is included in this framework.

NIMS Is A Federal Requirement

- All Federal departments and agencies are required to utilize NIMS.
- In addition, States and local organizations must use NIMS to be eligible for Federal emergency preparedness grants.
- As a consequence, all of the agencies and organizations that ACS/ARES serves (law enforcement, hospitals, cities, universities, etc.) utilize NIMS.

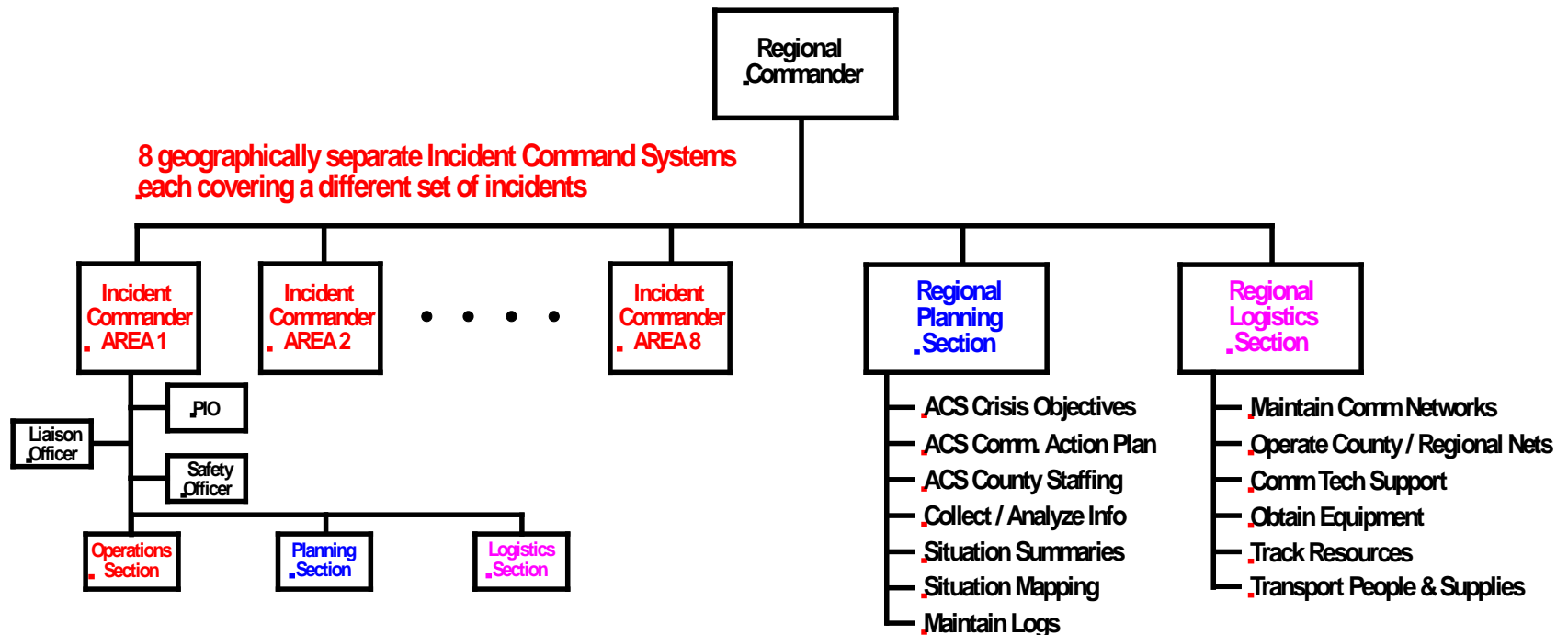
Incident Command System Required

- NIMS requires that responses to all domestic incidents utilize the Incident Command system (ICS).
- ICS is a proven, on-scene, all-hazard incident management system that has become the standard for incident response throughout the United States.
- ICS is used by all government agencies and most other organizations including firefighters, law enforcement, rescuers, hospitals, and schools for handling emergency incidents.



Organizational Structure Above ICS

- NIMS defines a variety of organizational structures that may exist above ICS to handle large scale disasters consisting of many incidents all occurring at the same time over a wide geographical area, an example is shown below.

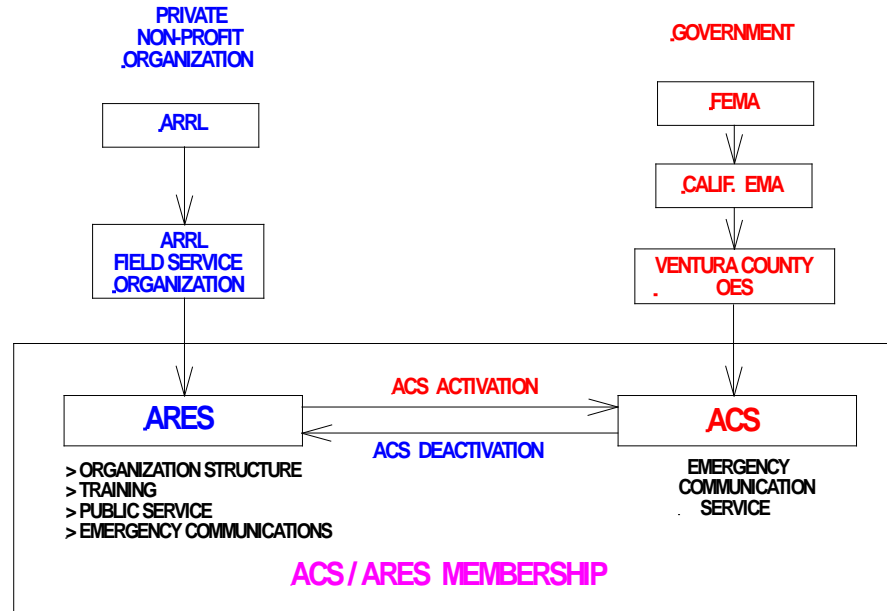


Administrative & Emergency Management

- Organizations involved in emergency response typically have two management structures.
 - An Administrative Management Structure
 - Handles the day to day operations of the organization.
 - Administrative managers maintain their positions for the duration of their terms of office, typically years.
 - An Emergency Management Structure
 - Created to handle a specific disaster.
 - Operates 24 hours a day for the duration of the disaster.
 - Emergency managers, section chiefs, supervisors, etc. change from shift to shift as leadership personnel come on and off duty.
 - The organization is deactivated at the end of the disaster.

Ventura County ACS / ARES

TWO ORGANIZATIONS - ONE MEMBERSHIP



ARES = Amateur Radio Emergency Service

- ARES is always active.

ACS = Auxiliary Communications Service

- ACS functions only when activated by Ventura County OES in response to a government declared emergency.
- All ACS operations terminate when OES deactivates ACS at the end of an emergency.

ARRL = American Radio Relay League

FEMA = Federal Emergency Management Agency

EMA = Emergency Management Agency

OES = Office of Emergency Services

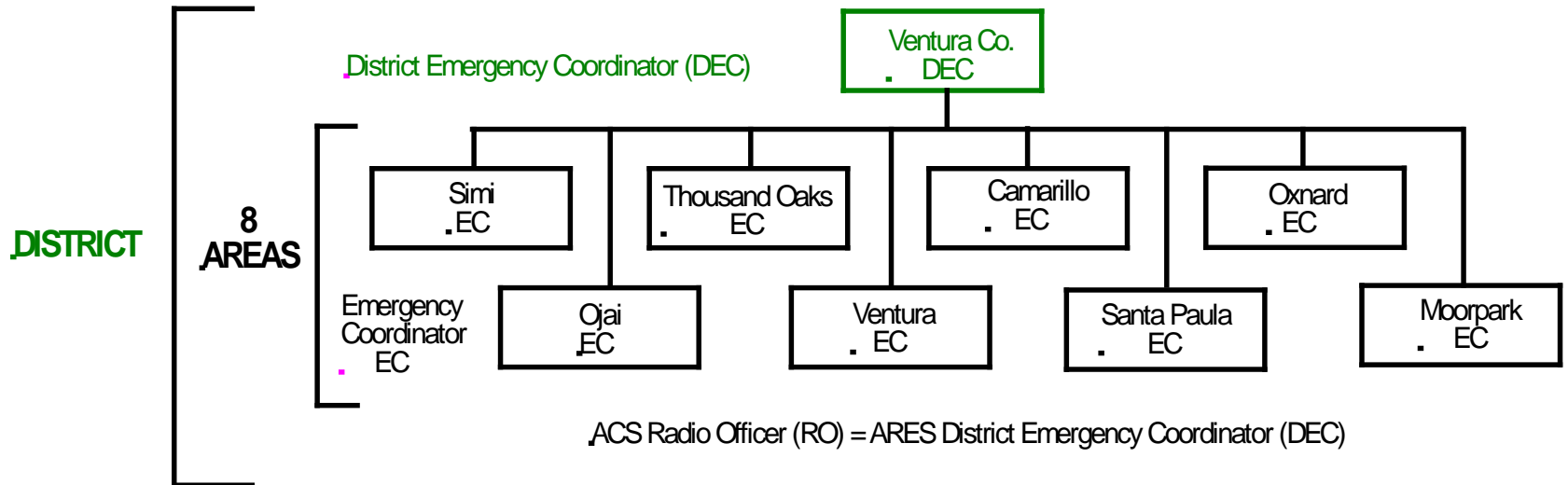
ACS/ARES

Administrative & Emergency Management

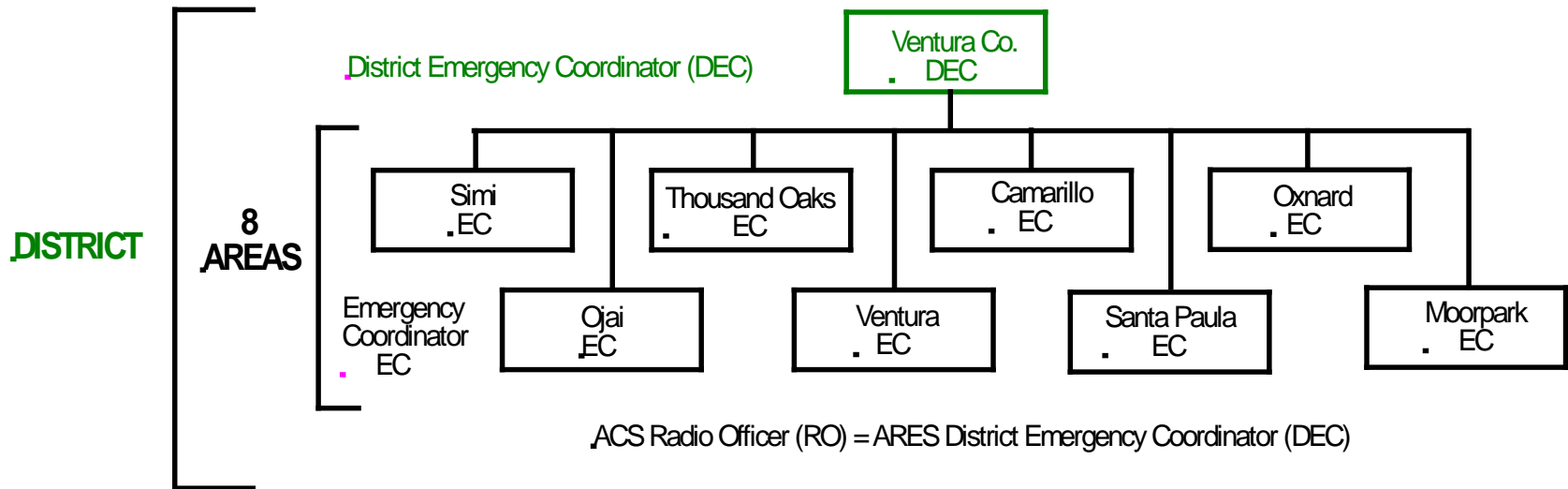
- ACS/ARES, like other emergency response organizations, has both an Administrative and an Emergency Management structure.
- The administrative structure is provided by ARES.
- The emergency management structure consists of the NIMS/ICS model tailored for ACS operations.
- Normally, ACS/ARES operates administratively as ARES.
- When activated by Ventura County Office of Emergencies Services, ACS/ARES switches to the ACS emergency management structure.
- When deactivated, ACS/ARES resumes operations as ARES.
- This presentation covers the ARES administrative organization first, followed by the ACS emergency management structure.

ACS/ARES

Administrative Management Structure

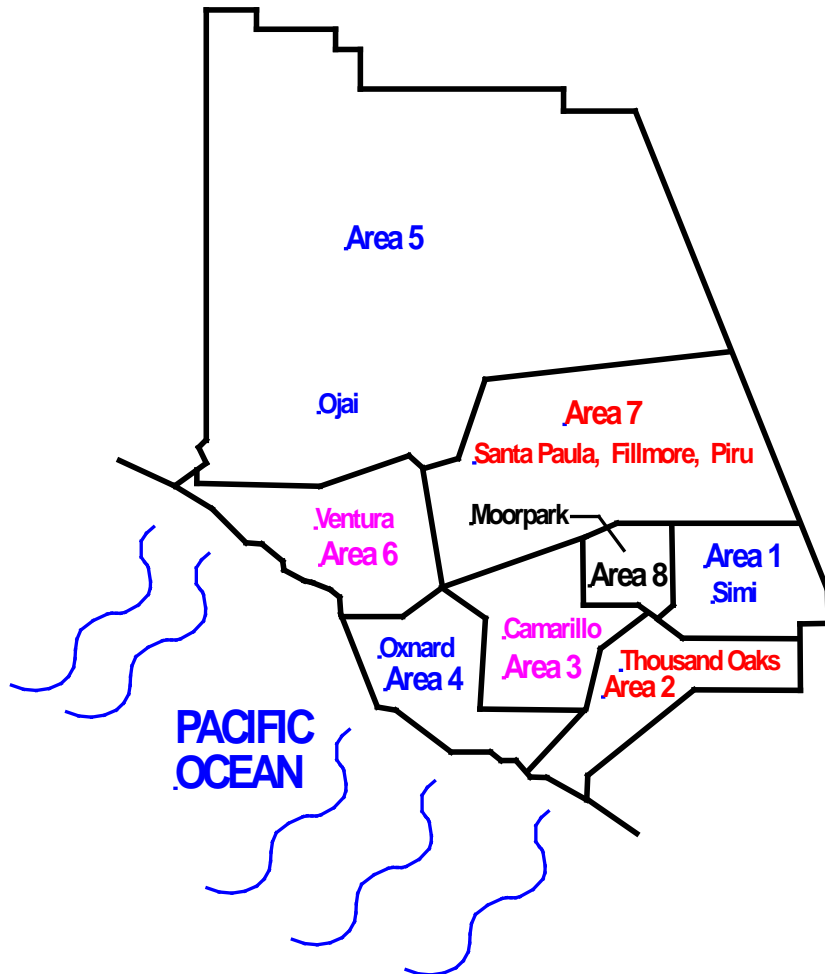


Administrative Areas



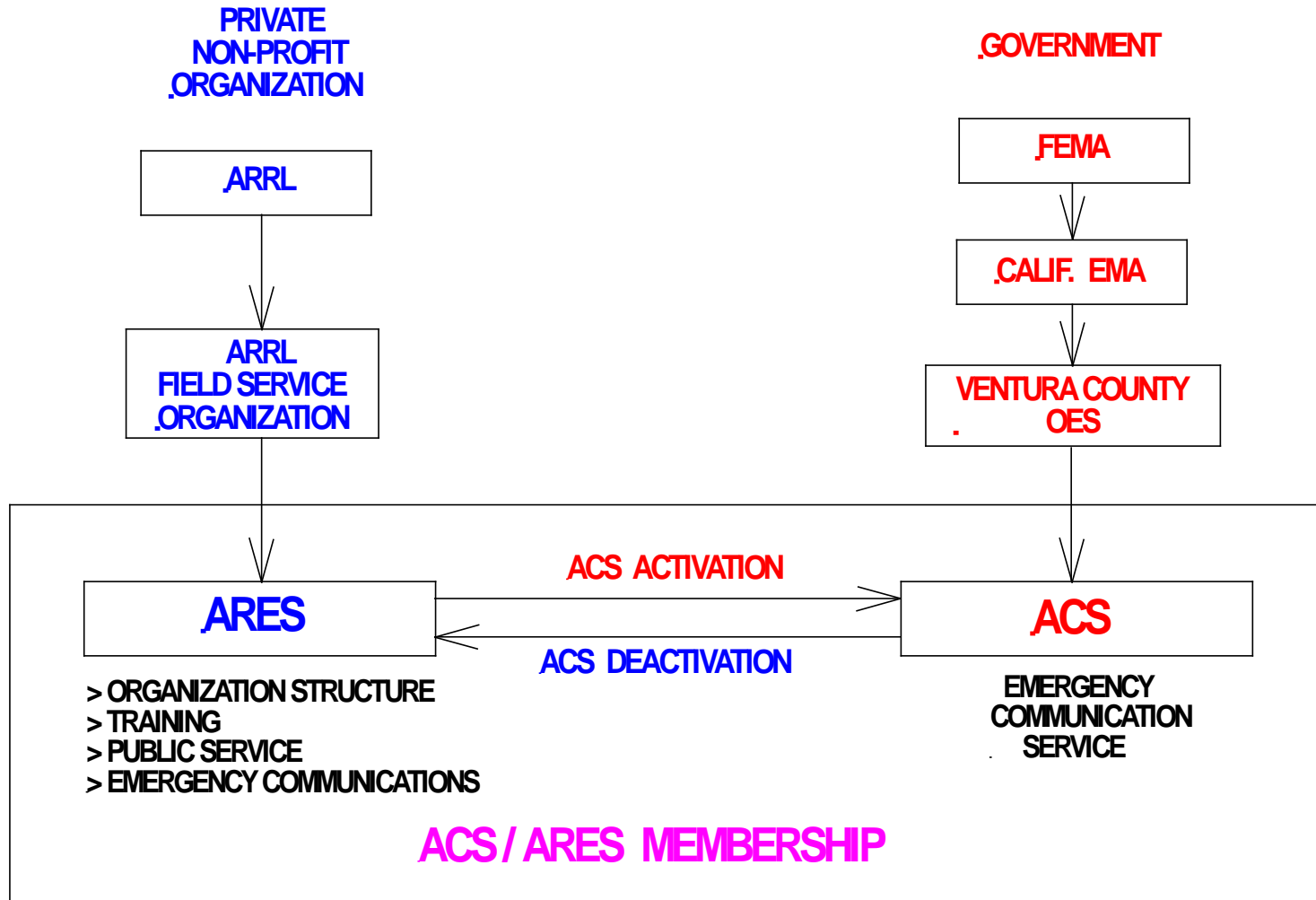
- Ventura County ACS/ARES is divided into 8 Administrative Areas under the direction of the District Emergency Coordinator.
- Each Area has an Emergency Coordinator who is responsible for all ACS/ARES activities within that Area.

Ventura County ACS/ARES Geographical Areas



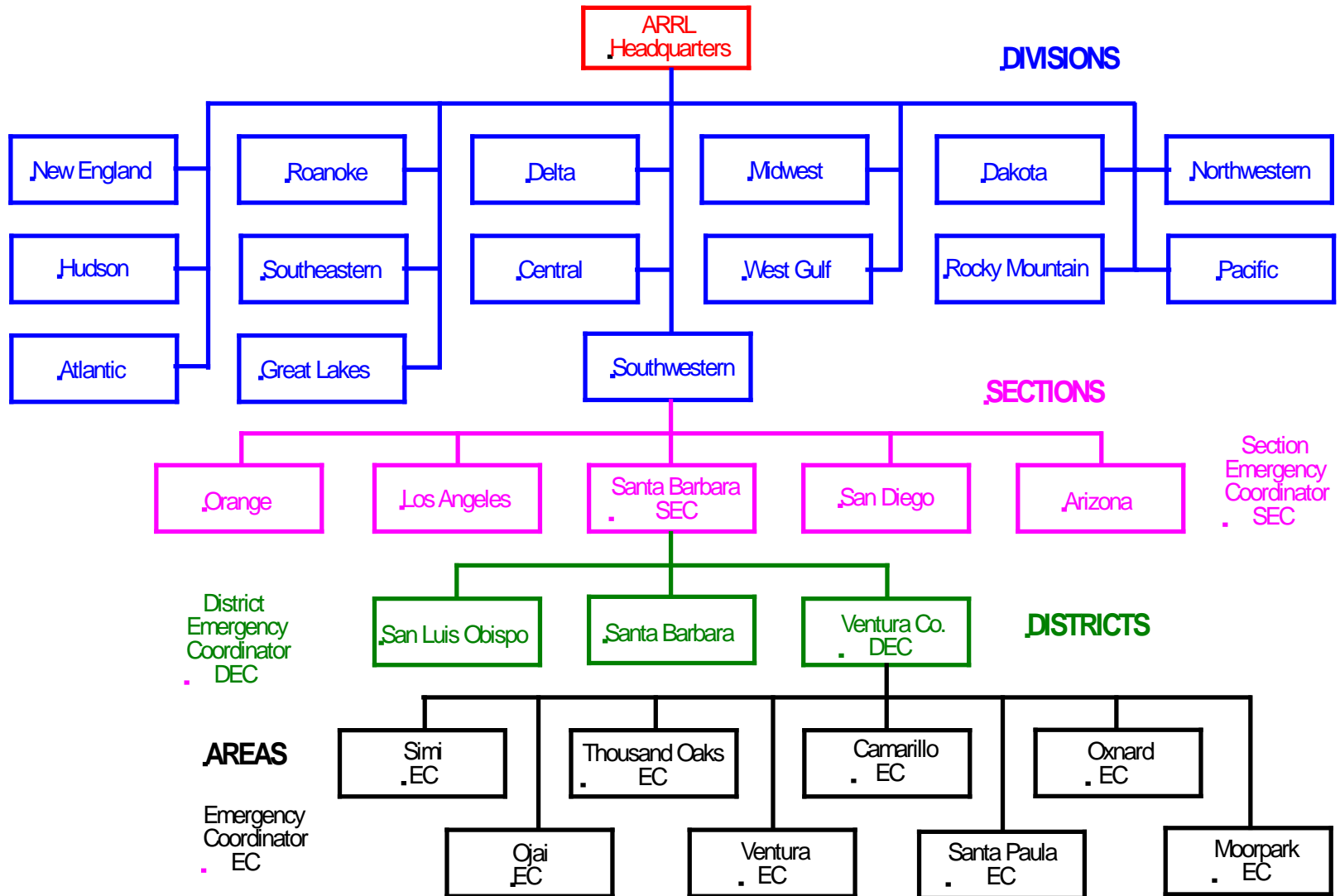
- Each Area is unique and has its own set of emergency communication problems to solve.
 - Each Area has its own Emergency Communications Plan.
 - Each Area has its own set of internal communication networks.
 - There is no one size fits all
- The District Emergency Communications Plan ties together the 8 Areas.

ARES Organizational Structure



ARES Organization

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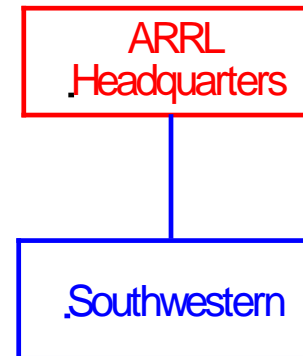
ACS Radio Officer (RO) = ARES District Emergency Coordinator (DEC)

ARES

National and Division Organization

- The American Radio Relay League (ARRL), founded in 1914, is the largest organization of radio amateurs in the United States.
- The ARRL is a not-for-profit organization, governed by a board of directors elected every two years by League members.
- The Southwestern Division (Arizona and Southern California) is represented by an elected Director who is responsible for the:
 - Arizona,
 - San Diego,
 - Orange,
 - Los Angeles, and
 - Santa Barbara Sections.

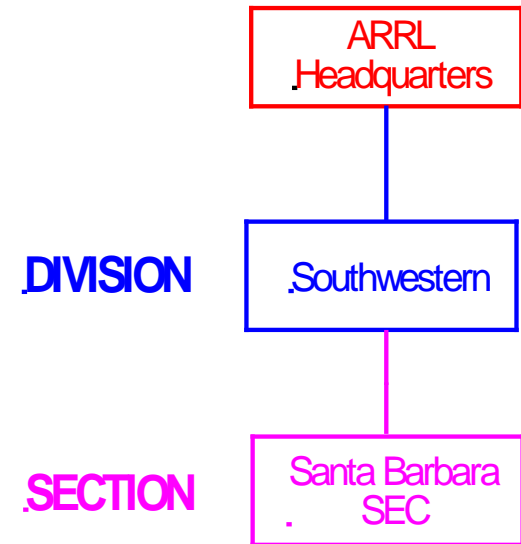
DIVISION



ARES

Section Organization

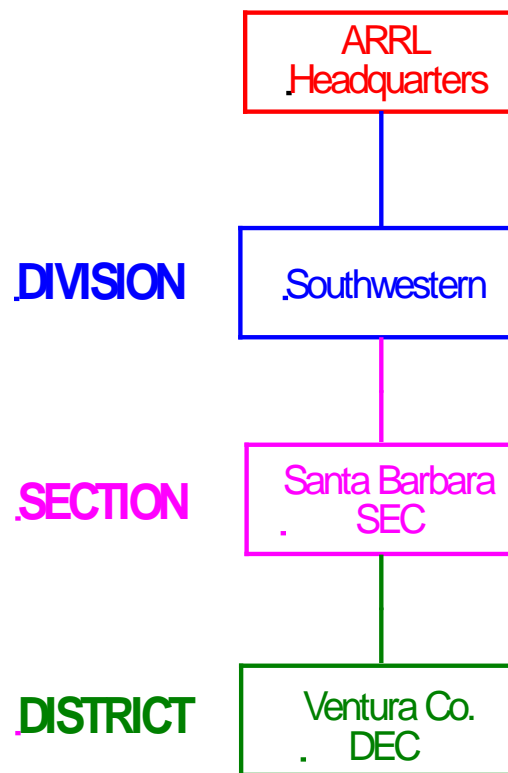
- The Santa Barbara Section is organized in accordance with ARRL guidelines and includes the following counties:
 - San Luis Obispo,
 - Santa Barbara, and
 - Ventura.
- The Section is administered by a Section Manager (SM) who is elected by the Section ARRL membership.
- The Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC):
 - Is appointed by the Section Manager,
 - Supervises ARES activities in the Section, and
 - Reports to the Section Manager.



ARES

District Organization

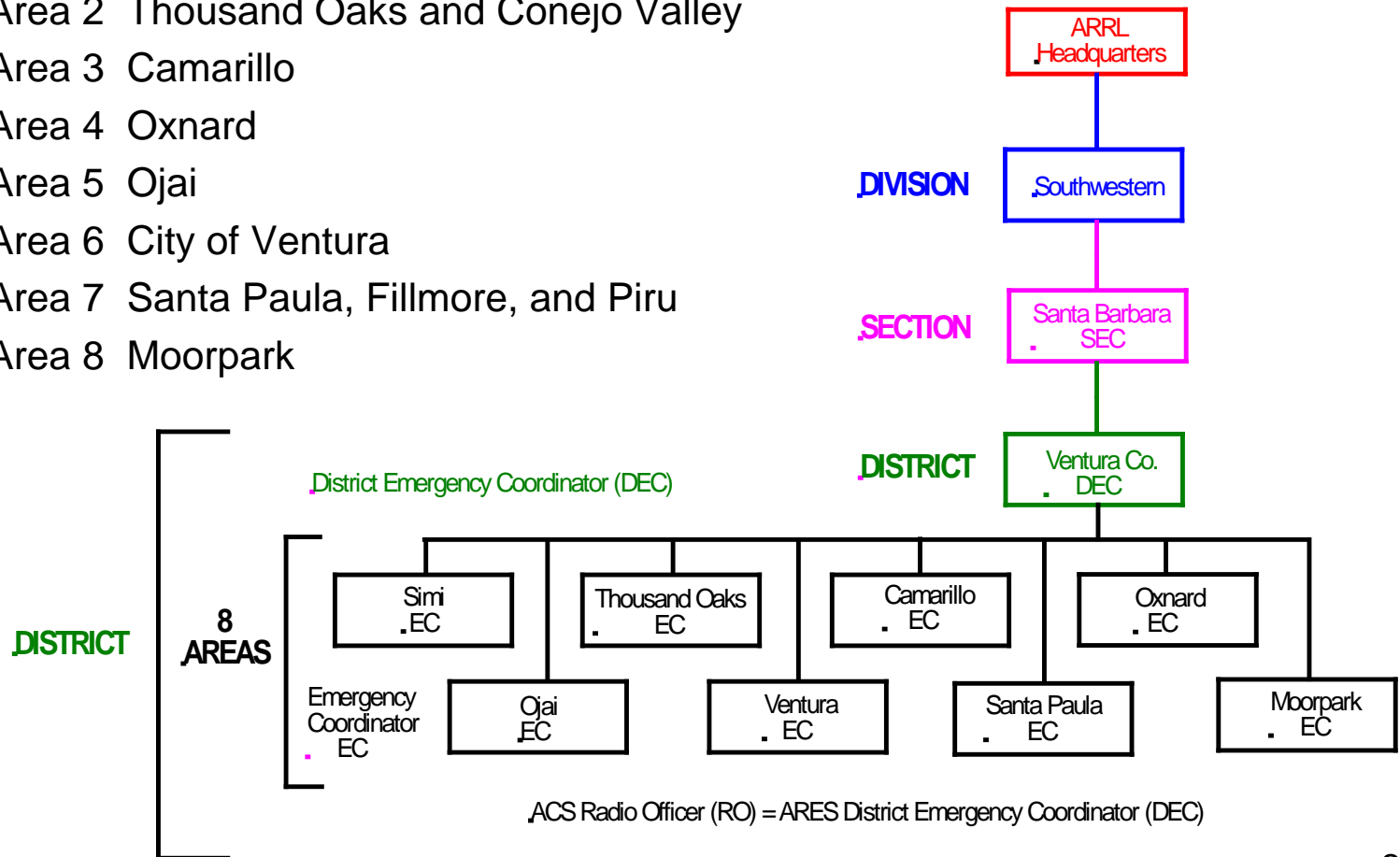
- The Ventura County ARES District provides overall management of ARES activities within Ventura County including:
 - Establishing a working relationship with all Federal, State, County, and private agencies involved in emergency preparedness.
 - Manages and coordinates the organization, training, and emergency preparedness of the ARES Emergency Coordinators (ECs).
 - Creates a District ACS/ARES emergency communications plan.
 - Creates and maintains District emergency communication networks.
 - Coordinates over all District ACS/ARES response during emergencies.
- A District Emergency Coordinators (DEC) is appointed by the SEC.



ARES

Area Organization

- The Ventura County ARES District is divided into eight local Areas:
 - Area 1 Simi
 - Area 2 Thousand Oaks and Conejo Valley
 - Area 3 Camarillo
 - Area 4 Oxnard
 - Area 5 Ojai
 - Area 6 City of Ventura
 - Area 7 Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru
 - Area 8 Moorpark

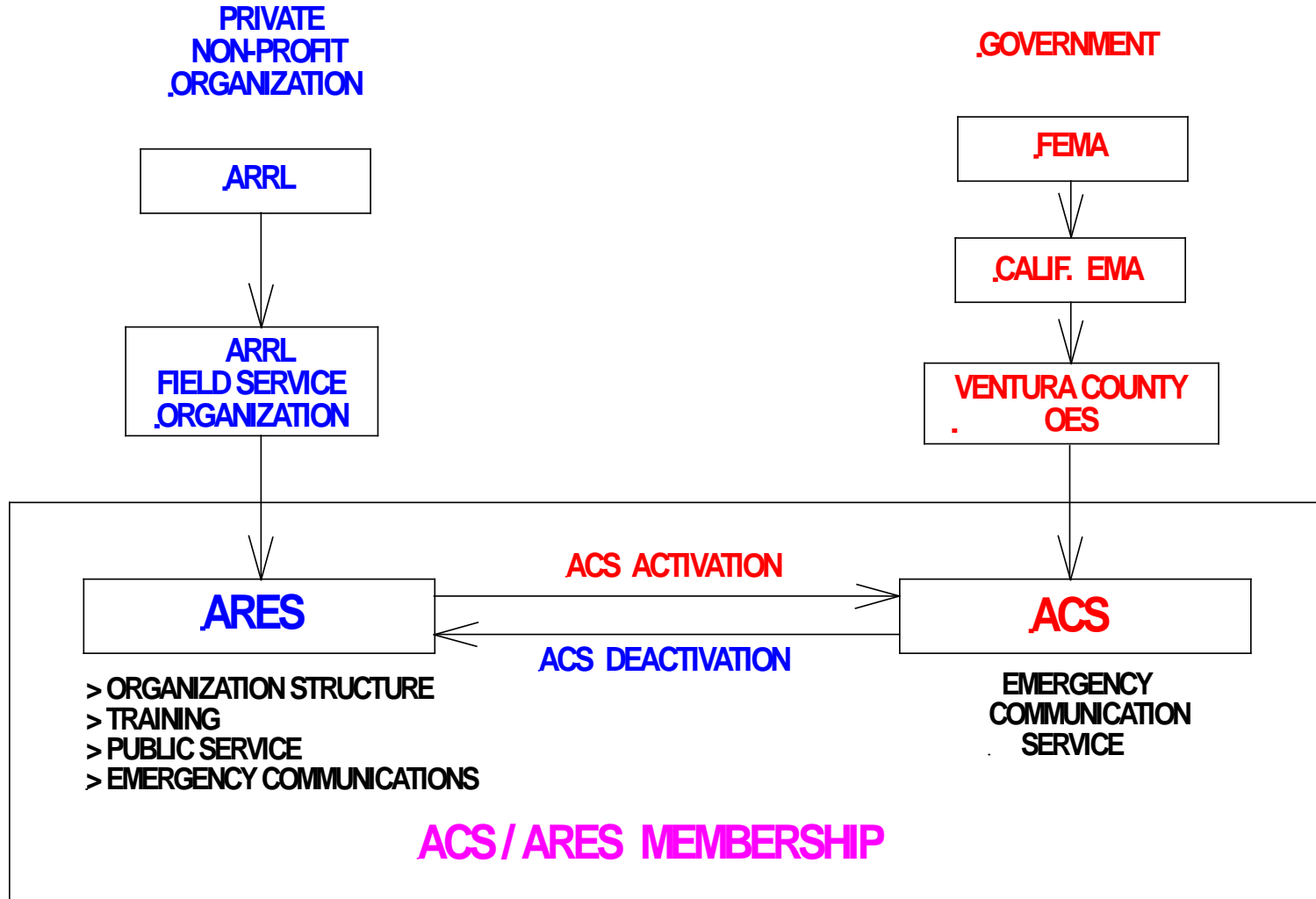


ARES

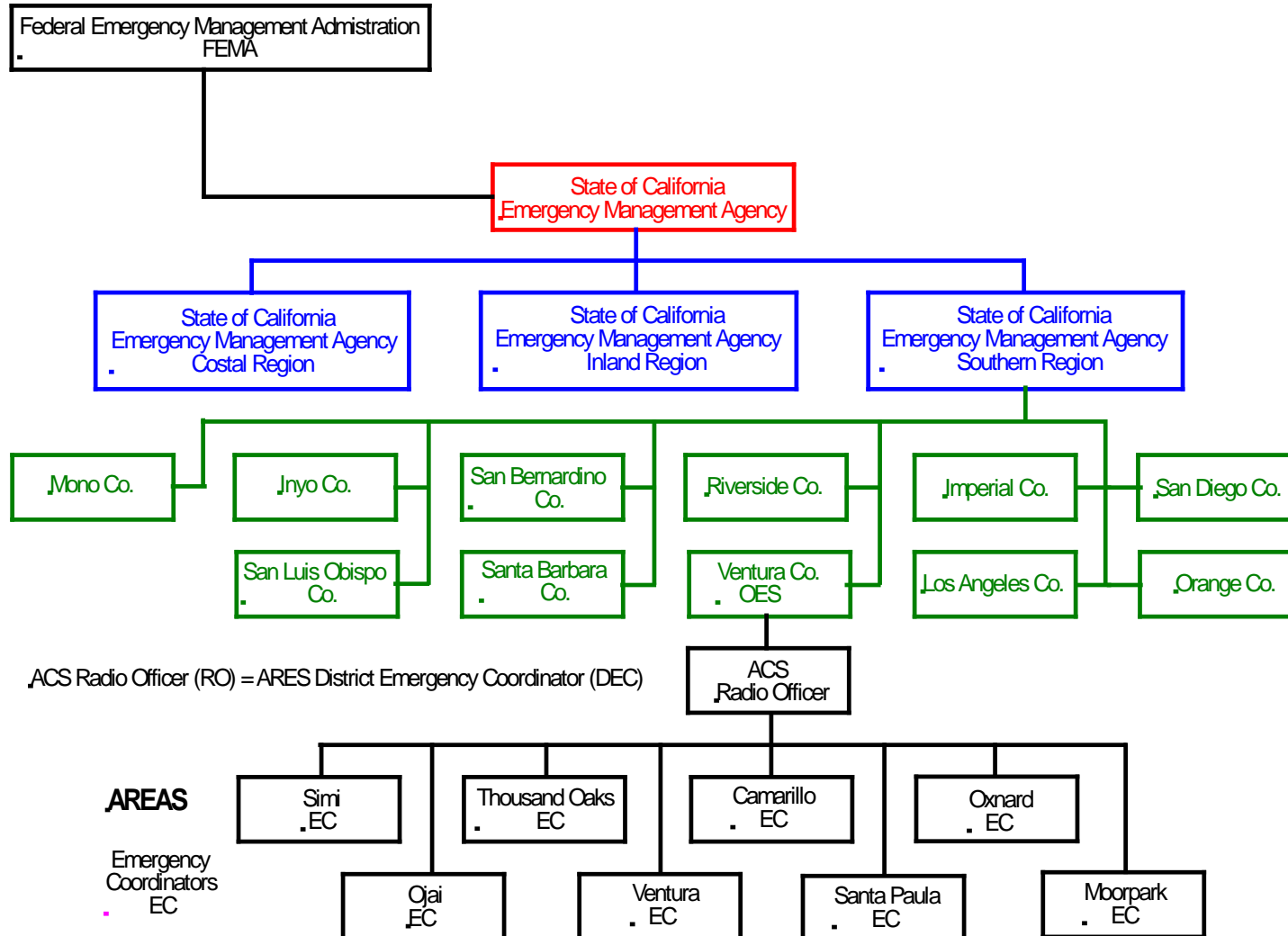
Area Organization continued

- Each Area manages ARES activities within its local Area including:
 - Establish a working relationship with Area governmental, private, and volunteer organizations which might need ACS/ARES services.
 - Maintaining an ACS/ARES Area Emergency Communications Plan
 - Maintaining emergency communication networks that serve the needs of governmental, private, and volunteer agencies in the local Area.
 - Recruiting local ACS/ARES members.
 - Managing and coordinating the organization, training, and emergency preparedness of local ACS/ARES members.
 - In times of disaster, evaluating the communications needs of the local Area and responding quickly to those needs.
- An Emergency Coordinators (ECs) is appointed for each Area by the SEC at the recommendation of the DEC.
- An EC supervises all ACS/ARES activities within his/her local Area.

ACS Emergency Management



ACS Organizational Structure



California EMA Regions



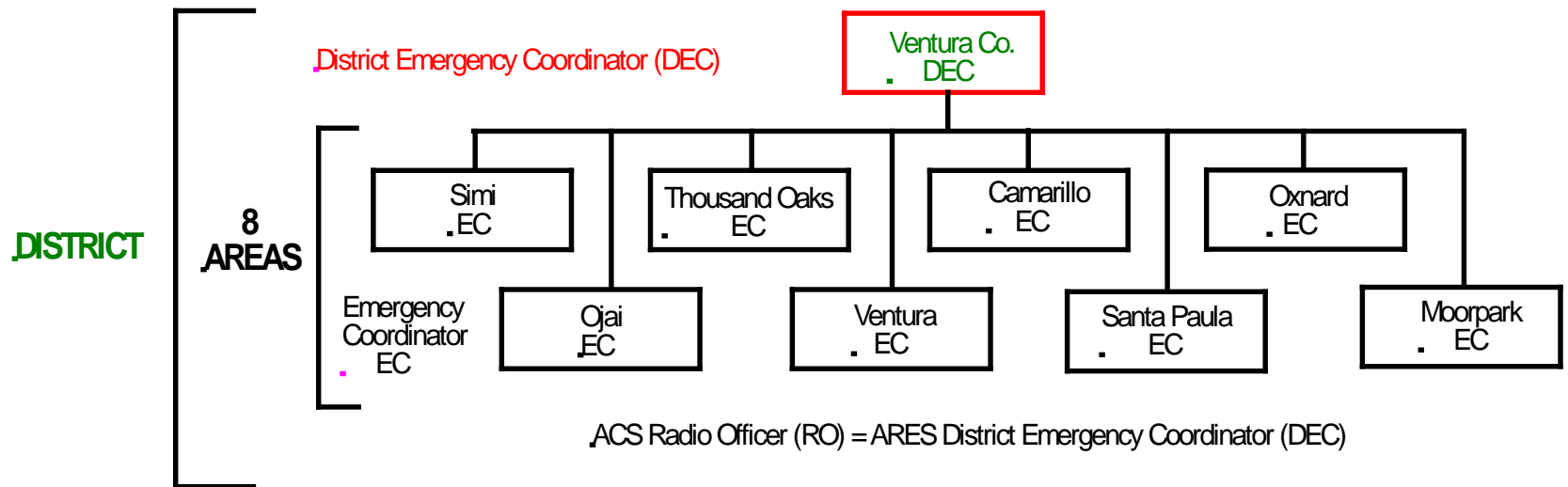
- California Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is responsible for coordinating emergency preparedness and disaster response throughout the state.
- California is divided administratively into 3 Regions:

Southern Region

- The Southern Region is composed of 11 counties including Ventura County
- Ventura County ACS operates under the direction of the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services OES.
- Ventura County ACS utilizes the ARES administrative structure.



District Emergency Coordinator / Radio Officer



District Emergency Coordinator / Radio Officer

- ARES District Emergency Coordinator (DEC)
 - The ARES District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) is appointed by the Santa Barbara Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC).
 - The DEC supervises ARES activities within the Ventura County District.
 - The DEC must be a full ARRL member with at least a Technician class license and must be registered as an ACS (Disaster Service Worker) member.
- ACS Radio Officer
 - The Ventura County ACS Radio Officer is appointed by the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services (OES).
 - The Radio Officer supervises ACS activities within Ventura County.
 - OES usually follows the ARES recommendation and appoints the District Emergency Coordinator as the Ventura County ACS Radio Officer.

District Emergency Coordinator / Radio Officer Duties

- Serves as the ACS/ARES representative to Ventura County OES
 - Establishes a viable working relationship with all Federal, State, County, government, volunteer, and private organizations operating within the District which might need the services of ACS during emergencies.
 - Attends meetings with County OES and the above agencies and organizations relating to emergency preparedness.
 - Has an understanding of the role of all vital governmental, private, and volunteer organizations that could be involved during an emergency.
- Serves as the Ventura County District ARES representative to the ARES Santa Barbara Section

District Emergency Coordinator / Radio Officer Duties (continued)

- **During an Emergency:**
 - Activates ACS under direction of Ventura County OES.
 - Implements the ACS Emergency Management System.
 - Serving as the ACS County Communications Officer in accordance with the ACS Emergency Management System.
 - Works with the 8 Areas to ensure that the emergency communication needs of all vital governmental, private, and volunteer organizations are being met.
 - Coordinates mutual aid assistance between the 8 Areas.
 - Coordinates mutual aid with adjoining ARES Districts when necessary.
 - The District Emergency Coordinator / Radio Officer assumes authority and responsibility for emergency communications response and performance of ACS/ARES personnel County wide.

District Emergency Coordinator / Radio Officer Duties (continued)

- Establishes and maintains a District Emergency Communications Plan that serves the needs of governmental, private, and volunteer organizations throughout the County, and incorporates the emergency communications plans of the 8 Areas.
- Establishes, maintains, and periodically tests District emergency communication networks that:
 - Serve the emergency communication needs of District governmental, private, and volunteer agencies.
 - Interconnects the emergency communication networks in the 8 Areas.
- Holds regularly scheduled ACS/ARES District leadership meetings.
- Holds regularly scheduled ACS/ARES District membership meetings.

District Emergency Coordinator / Radio Officer Duties (continued)

- Coordinates the documenting and reporting of all ACS/ARES activities in the District.
- Establishes and maintains a database of all ACS/ARES members within the District.
- Recommends Emergency Coordinator (EC) appointments to SEC.
- Coordinates the organization, training, and emergency preparedness of the Area Emergency Coordinators in the District.
- Provides county wide membership training as requested by Area ECs
- Acts as backup emergency coordinator for a local Area without an EC.

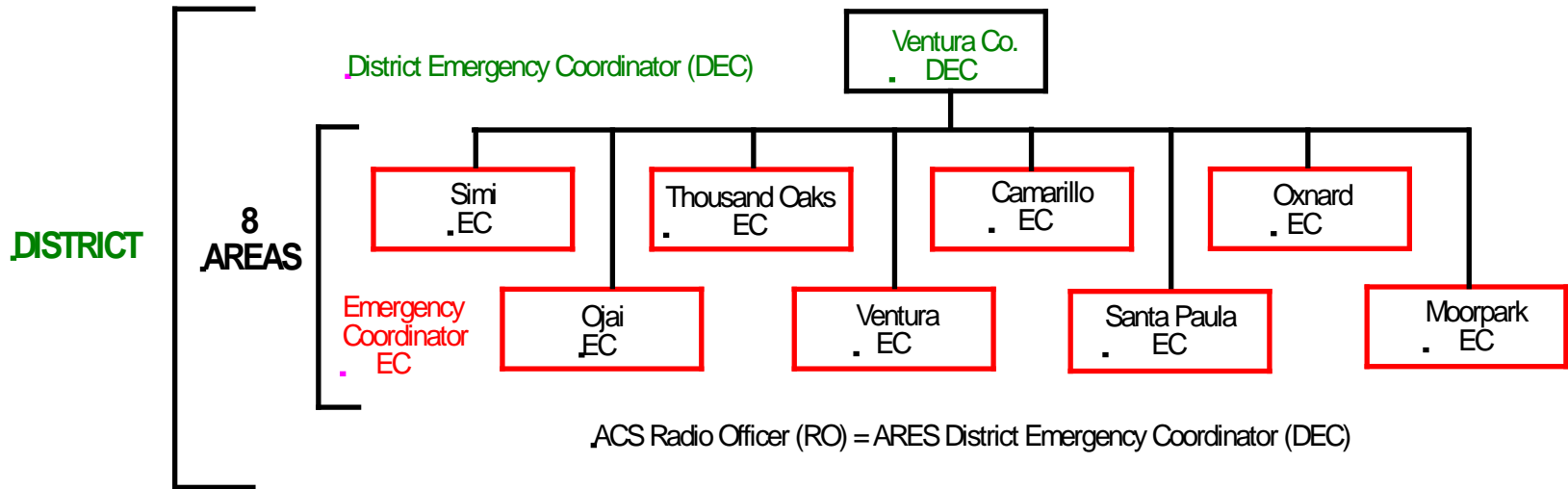
Deputy District Emergency Coordinator

- The Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) will appoint one or more Deputy District Emergency Coordinators (DDECs) at the recommendation of the DEC.
- The DDEC will assist the District Emergency Coordinator in performing the DEC duties.
- The DDEC will perform all the District Emergency Coordinator duties and will have all of the DEC authority
 - In the absence of the DEC.
 - In the event the DEC is unable to server.
- The DDEC must be a full ARRL member with at least a Technician class license, and must be registered as an ACS (Disaster Service Worker) member.

District Assistant Emergency Coordinator

- The DEC will appoint District Assistant Emergency Coordinators (DAECs) for specific duties within the District.
- DAECs are not in the chain of command.
- DAECs will be appointed on an as-needed basis.
- A DAEC must be a full ARRL member with at least a Technician class license, and must be registered as an ACS (Disaster Service Worker) member.

Area Emergency Coordinator



Area Emergency Coordinator

- Area Emergency Coordinators (ECs) are appointed by the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) at the recommendation of the DEC.
- An EC supervises ACS/ARES activities within his/her local Area.
- The EC must be a full ARRL member with at least a Technician class license, and must be registered as an ACS (Disaster Service Worker) member.

Emergency Coordinator Selection

- It is important to select Emergency Coordinators (ECs) that possess the knowledge and training necessary to fulfill the requirements of the position.
- In order to do this, each candidate for Area EC shall serve as an Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) for a minimum of one year prior to becoming an EC.
- However, if that is not possible, the EC candidate will assume the EC responsibilities but with the title of AEC.

Emergency Coordinator Selection continued

- If, after the year's term, the candidate meets all the requirements listed below, and is deemed capable by the DEC, the DEC will recommend to the Section Emergency Coordinator that the candidate be appointment to the EC position.
- Requirements for EC candidates during the trial period:
 - Must have at least a Technician class license.
 - Must maintain membership in ARRL.
 - Must be registered as an ACS (Disaster Service Worker) member.
 - Attend the District meetings.
 - Participate in at least one training activity.
 - Have completed Incident Command System (ICS) training.
 - Demonstrated leadership skills and initiative.

Area Emergency Coordinator (EC) Duties

- Promote ACS/ARES as a voluntary, non-commercial, emergency communications service for the benefit of the public.
- Establish a working relationship with all governmental, private, and volunteer organizations in the local Area which might need the services of ACS/ARES.
- Establish and maintain an ACS/ARES Area Emergency Communications Plan that will serve the needs of governmental, private, and volunteer organizations in the local area.
- Establish and maintain emergency communication networks that will serve the needs of governmental, private, and volunteer organizations in the local Area, operate the networks on a regular basis, and periodically test those networks with realistic drills.
- When activated during an emergency, implement the ACS Incident Command System (ICS) within his/her local Area.
- The EC assumes authority and responsibility for the emergency response and performance by ACS/ARES personnel in his/her local Area.

Emergency Coordinator Duties (continued)

- Attend District meetings and pass information to the local members.
- Hold regularly scheduled meetings of all ACS/ARES members within the local Area to discuss local emergency communication plans, training, and exchange emergency preparedness ideas.
- Recruit local ACS/ARES members.
- Manage and coordinate the organization, training, and emergency preparedness of local ACS/ARES members.
- Establish and maintain records of all ACS/ARES members and activities in the local Area and provide this information to the District database coordinator.
- Appoint local Area Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AECs) and Team Leaders to assist in performing the duties required of the EC.

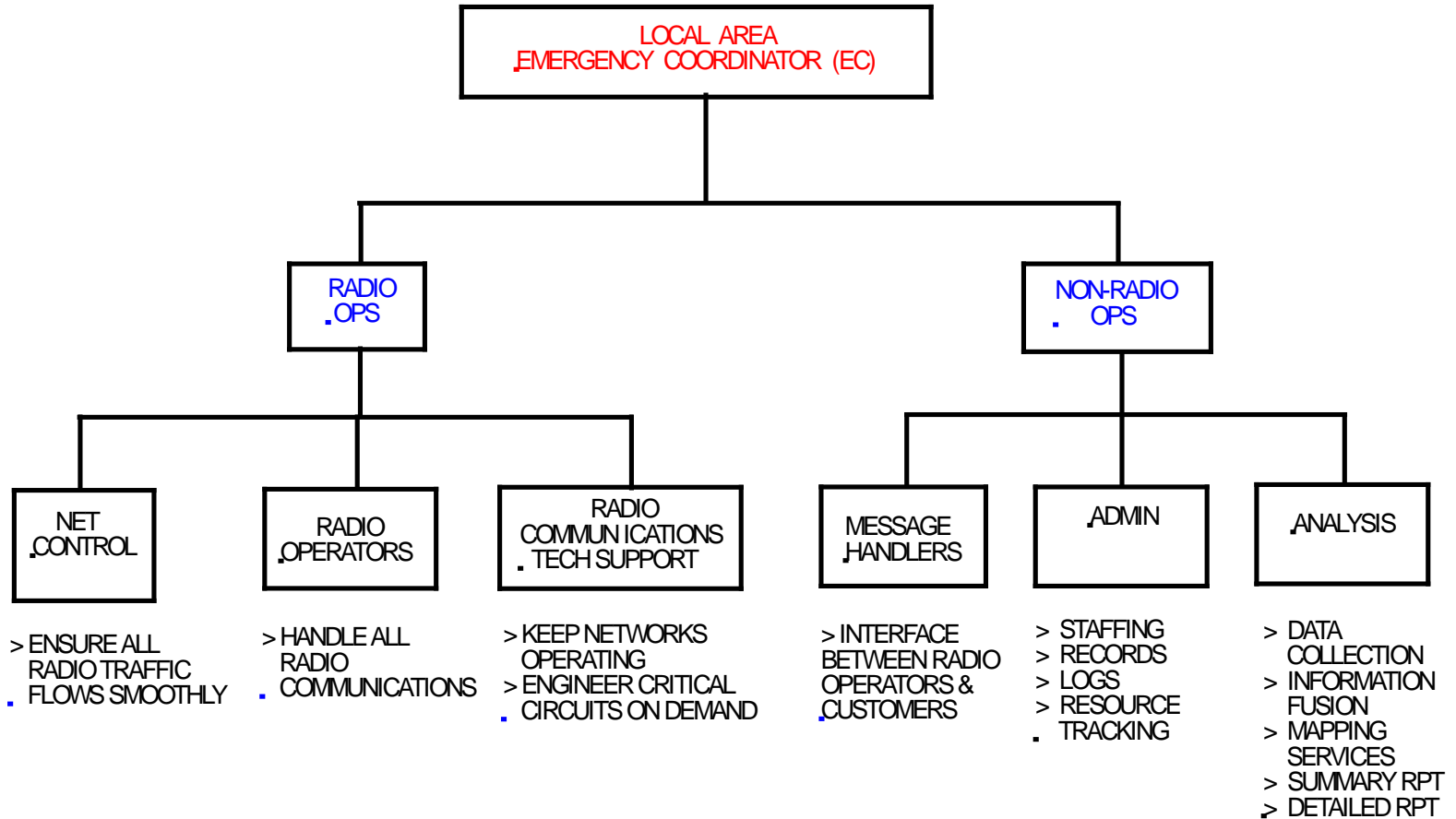
Assistant Emergency Coordinator

- An EC will appoint one or more Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AECs).
- The AECs will assist the Emergency Coordinator in performing the designated EC duties.
- Each AEC should assume that he/she is in training to assume an EC position should the need arise.
- The EC, or the District Emergency Coordinator in the absence of the EC, shall designate one of the Area AECs to perform all the Emergency Coordinator duties and have all the authority of the EC
 - In the absence of the EC.
 - In the event the EC is unable to server.
- AECs must be full ARRL members with at least Technician class licenses, and must be registered as an ACS (Disaster Service Worker) member.

Team Leaders

- ECs will appoint Team Leaders as needed to perform specific duties within the local Area.
- Typical Team Leader Positions may include but are not limited to:
 - Administration Team Leader
 - Staffing Team Leader
 - Training Team Leader
 - Facilities Team Leader
 - Technical Team Leader
 - Packet Team Leader
 - Computer Systems Team Leader
- Team leaders must be registered as an ACS (Disaster Service Worker) member.

ACS/ARES Members



ACS/ARES Members

- ACS/ARES members consist of:
 - Licensed amateur radio operators, and
 - Non-radio operators
- ACS/ARES members perform a wide assortment of communication tasks which are critically needed during an emergency, including:
 - Handling a wide variety of voice and data communications traffic.
 - Keeping networks operating smoothly with message traffic delivered in a timely manner in accordance with existing priorities.
 - Engineering critical circuits on demand.
 - Interfacing with a wide variety of customers, agencies, organizations.
 - Collecting and analyzing critical emergency related information.
 - Creating summary and detailed situation reports for customers.
 - Managing staffing needs.
 - Record keeping

ACS/ARES Members continued

- The only requirements for Ventura County ARES membership is a desire to serve the community as a radio communications volunteer.
- **ACS membership requires:**
 - Completing an applications form.
 - Signing a County Loyalty Oath/Affirmation.
 - Completing a Personal History questionnaire.
 - Undergoing a background check performed by the Ventura County Sheriff's Department.
 - Finger printing and photo ID picture.
- **When we are activated by the Office of Emergency Services**
 - **ACS members may be assigned to sensitive locations and behind police lines.**
 - **ARES members are restricted to non-sensitive locations.**

ACS/ARES Members continued

- Members are encouraged to maintain membership in both ARES and ACS.
 - This allows us to operate as ARES in certain situations without OES activating ACS. These situations include:
 - All membership meetings
 - Nearly all training activities
 - All public service events
 - In the event that ACS is activated, the shift from ARES to ACS activities flows smoothly
 - ACS and ARES operations are identical except that under ACS activation we report directly to the Office of Emergency Services.
 - Remember, ACS exists only when we are activated by OES.
 - At all other times, we are an ARES organization.

Extreme Trust

- It is absolutely amazing the extreme trust that law enforcement and public safety officials place in us as ACS members.
 - We have had ACS members operating our radios with Secret Service agents on one side and FBI agents on the other side operating their radios. We had the middle (priority) radio position.
 - We have been allow to continue monitoring our nets when extremely sensitive discussions were being conducted 10 feet away.
 - We have unlimited access to very sensitive facilities.
 - We routinely operate behind police lines
- **This extreme trust comes at a price.**
 - Perspective ACS members are required to go through a background check conducted by the Ventura County Sheriff's Department and to be finger printed.
 - The procedure for becoming an ACS member is outline in the following pages.

ACS Membership Process

- All perspective ACS members, including both amateur radio operators and non-radio operators, must:
 - Submit an application to the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services (OES) to become a Disaster Service Worker in the Communications Class in accordance with Section 3100(et seq.) of the California Government code.
 - The application forms are obtained from your local EC.
 - You must complete the applications form, sign a County Loyalty Oath/Affirmation, and submit the form to your EC for his signature.
 - You must also complete a Personal History questionnaire and seal it in an envelop provided to you by your EC.
 - Your EC will submit your completed application form and sealed Personal History questionnaire to OES for you.

ACS Membership Process continued

- Upon receiving your application forms, the Ventura County Sheriff's Department will perform a background check on the information that you provided.
- Your acceptance as a Disaster Service Worker (ACS member) is entirely at the discretion of the Sheriff's Department.
 - The DEC and ECs have no voice in this decision.
- If an applicant is rejected by the Sheriff's Department:
 - There is no reason given by the Sheriff's Department for the rejection.
 - There is no recourse.
 - If the Sheriff's Department says no, then it is no.
 - This is hard, but it is also the reason that extreme trust is put in ACS members.
- The good news is that the vast majority of ACS applicants are accepted.

ACS Membership Process continued

- After successful completion of your background check, OES will schedule you for finger prints and take a photo ID picture of you.
- Shortly there after you will be issued an OES Disaster Service Worker picture ID badge and ACS ID number.
- Your EC will deliver the badge to you.
- The badge is issued for a term of 2 years.

ACS Membership Renewal Process

- At the end of 2 years you must request a renewal through your EC.
- Renewals are subject to EC review and recommendation for continued service.
- Your EC will normally remind you when your renewal date is near.
- Renewal consist of completing an updated personal information sheet for OES indicating any change in address, telephone, etc.
 - Depending on their policy at the time, OES may require you to come in for a new photo ID picture.
- Upon renewal, you will receive a new ACS Disaster Service Work badge from your EC.
 - You must turn in your old badge to your EC.
 - You will retain your ACS ID number.
 - Your new badge is good for an other 2 years.

Creating a Professional Image

- If we want to provide critical emergency communication services during a disaster, we first must be accepted by law enforcement and public safety officials dealing with the incident.
- Police and other first responders tend to be very cautious and skeptical concerning those who are not members of the public safety professions.
 - This posture is based primarily on experiences in which well intended but overzealous volunteers have jeopardized efforts in emergencies.
 - The police have generally had their fill of groupies and hangers on.
 - Promising more than we can deliver is not good.
 - There is an abundance of people during a crisis who, if given an opportunity to assist in an official capacity, will quickly overstep the limits of their authority and responsibility. As a result, they make an already dangerous situation even more so.

Creating a Professional Image (continued)

- To be accepted by public safety professionals we must:
 - Establish a track record of competent performance in important activities.
 - Demonstrate that we are organized, know what we are doing, disciplined, and reliable.
 - A sloppy appearance does not promote confidence.
 - Arriving on scene with a handheld in each fist and two more clipped to our belts, all squawking at once, raises an immediate red flag.
 - Laughing and joking around when we are suppose to be handling critical sensitive radio traffic does not promote confidence.
- Our emergency communication services will be accepted only if we conduct ourselves in the same professional manner demanded by public safety officials of their own people.