6.3 Net Control Station Operator

Any individual can assume the role of Net Control Station (NCS) Operator who has the capability to perform the Net Control Station function effectively. While the minimum requirement is a station with the ability to communicate with most CARES member stations under emergency conditions, member and resource availability may dictate otherwise. In other words, any station activating the net is better than no station.

6.3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Net Control Station (NCS) Operator is responsible for coordinating the efficient use of a communication channel. The NCS will assure that conflicts that arise out of the need to effect multiple communications on the single channel will be resolved on the basis of:

- Priority (FLASH, IMMEDIATE, PRIORITY or ROUTINE)
- Timeliness (oldest message goes first as soon as a recipient is available)

In addition, the NCS operator will serve as the administrative focal point for all operations being conducted on the communication channel. In that capacity, the NCS operator will maintain a time stamped log of all operations conducted on the channel and use that log as a basis for:

- keeping track of all stations present on the channel
- cataloging all outstanding communication requests by priority and timeliness
- assisting the originating and recipient stations in establishing contact for purposes of passing message traffic either on the same communication channel or an alternate channel also under the control of the same Net Control Station (as may be available)
- determining if the communicating stations can hear one another or if a third station may be required to relay the traffic between them
- periodically polling all stations assumed present to determine their status (as the demand for communication time permits)
- noting any unusual conditions that may be affecting the efficiency of communication on the channel

The NCS Operator should not get directly involved in the traffic passing process. NCS may elect to use an assistant (even a non- radio operator) to maintain the time stamped log of communication channel operations (as resources permits).

6.3.2 Increased Readiness Operations

At the discretion of the EC/RO or AEC/DRO, the Cupertino ARES Emergency Net may be activated for information sharing and to perform a preliminary membership availability assessment. The objective of this net operation is to keep CARES members up to date on changes to an imminent emergency situation if known.

When communicating any information, keep to the facts that are available. Avoid spreading rumors or FUD (Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt). Remind CARES members to listen to as commercial stations as sources of information.

If the CARES Emergency Net is activated as part of an Increased Readiness operation:

- Perform the Emergency NCS Procedure, Increased Readiness Operations script.

6.3.3 Response Operations / Activation

On formal declaration of an emergency, the CARES Emergency Net transitions from information sharing to the command net.

- Perform the Emergency NCS Procedure, "Response Operations / Activation" net script
- Transition control to the EC as requested
- Perform "Health and Welfare Checks" per the Emergency NCS Procedure as necessary
- If a drill is in progress, make "Drill Announcements" per the Emergency NCS Procedure

6.3.4 Recovery Operations / Deactivation

On notification from the EC that CARES has been deactivated:

- Release all members and secure the net. Perform the Emergency NCS Procedure, "Recovery Operations / Deactivation" script

7 Overview of EOC Operations

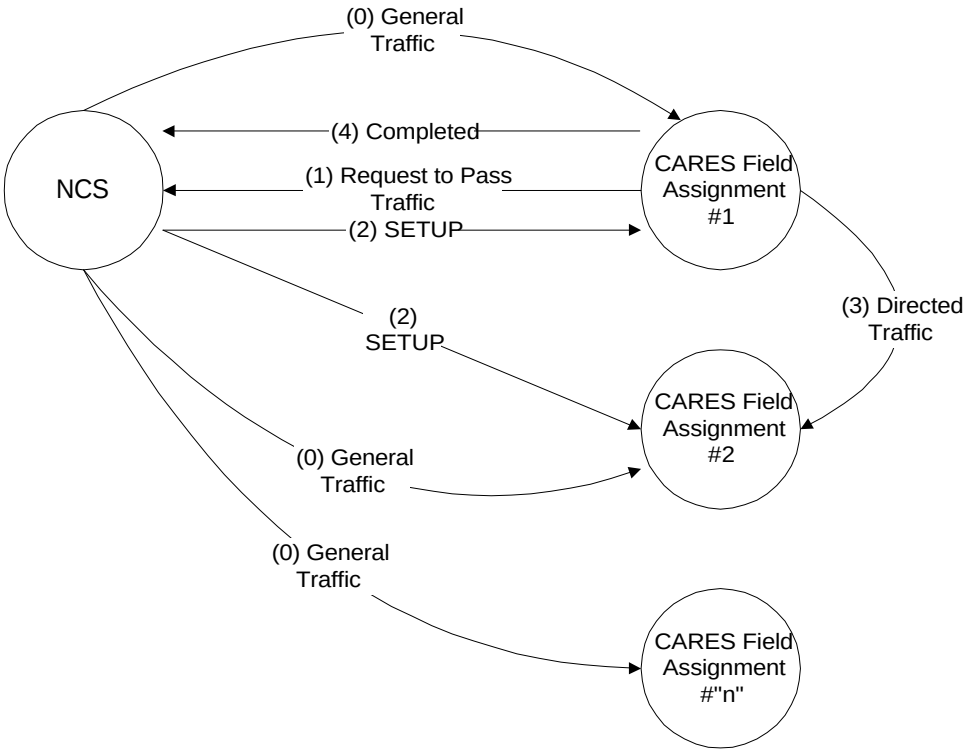

Figure 1: General NCS Model

In general, CARES will operate its emergency net as a directed net. Specifically, the NCS will determine who will use the frequency at a given time, acknowledging those stations first that may have incident related traffic in priority order. Conversations between stations are kept at a minimum, and tactical call signs are assigned to support efficient traffic handling. This net is considered formal in nature, and stations having non-incident related traffic may be asked to move to another frequency.

The typical sequence of events is as follows:

1. One station requests to pass traffic to another station. It makes the request to the NCS
2. NCS sets up the transaction by ensuring the receiving station is available and ready to receive the traffic. It then directs the originating station to send the traffic.
3. The originating station contacts the receiving station and passes the traffic.
4. Once the traffic is passed, the originating station returns control to the NCS.

7.3 Initial Response Scenario

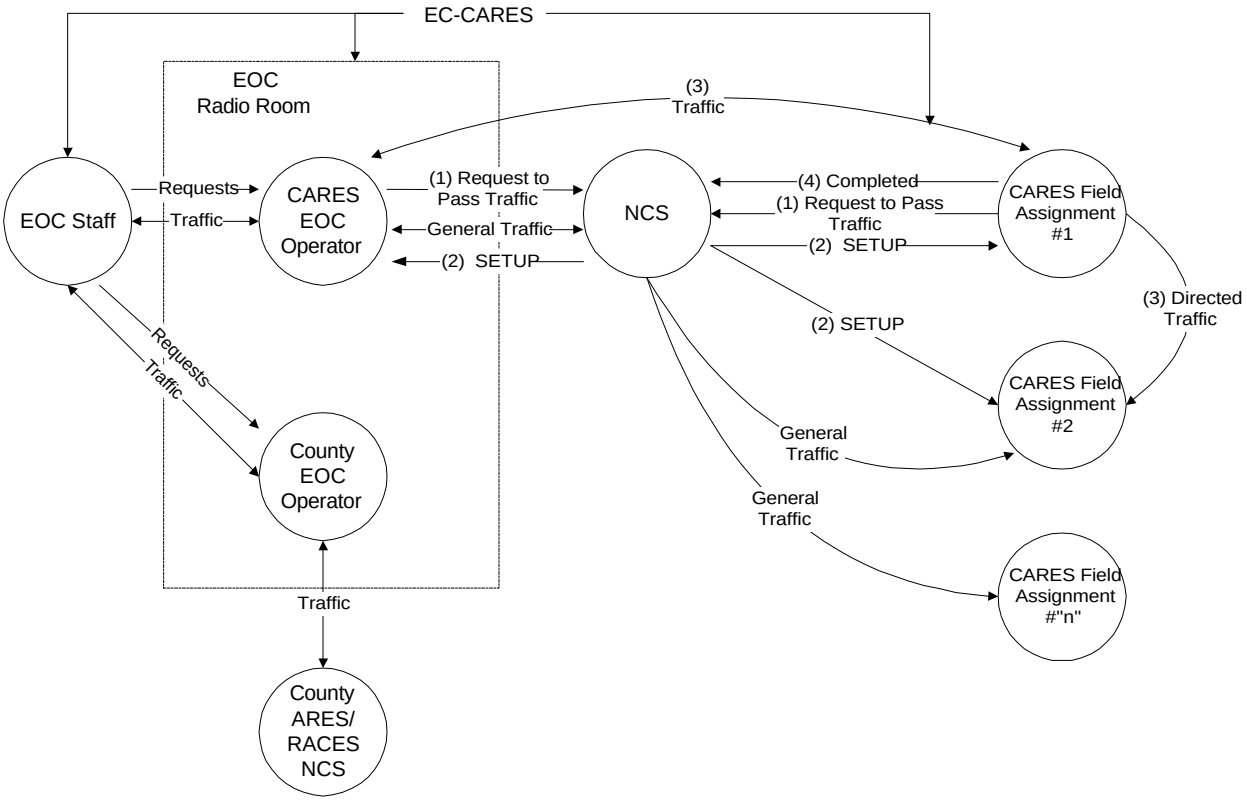

Figure 2: Initial Response Scenario

CARES has initiated Initial response Operations for a self-evident emergency event (Earthquake). The first CARES member on frequency assumes the role of Net Control Station, opens the net, and operates from an initial location (home, mobile, the field, etc). The first CARES member qualified as EC assumes the role of EC. The EOC opens and EOC staffing begins. CARES member participation is initially light but builds as members secure their families and homes, and come on line.

1. The emergency net will operate as a directed net.
2. The CARES NCS Initial Response Procedures are followed and include taking member checkins, calling for Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) Reports, and directing traffic. Depending on staffing, the NCS may need to take PDA reports.
3. The EC makes initial staffing assignments, including an EOC Operator, making frequency guard assignments, and others as necessary.
4. Once the EOC radio room is opened and an Operator is in place, the NCS passes pending traffic to the EOC.

7.4 Extended Response, High Traffic Scenario

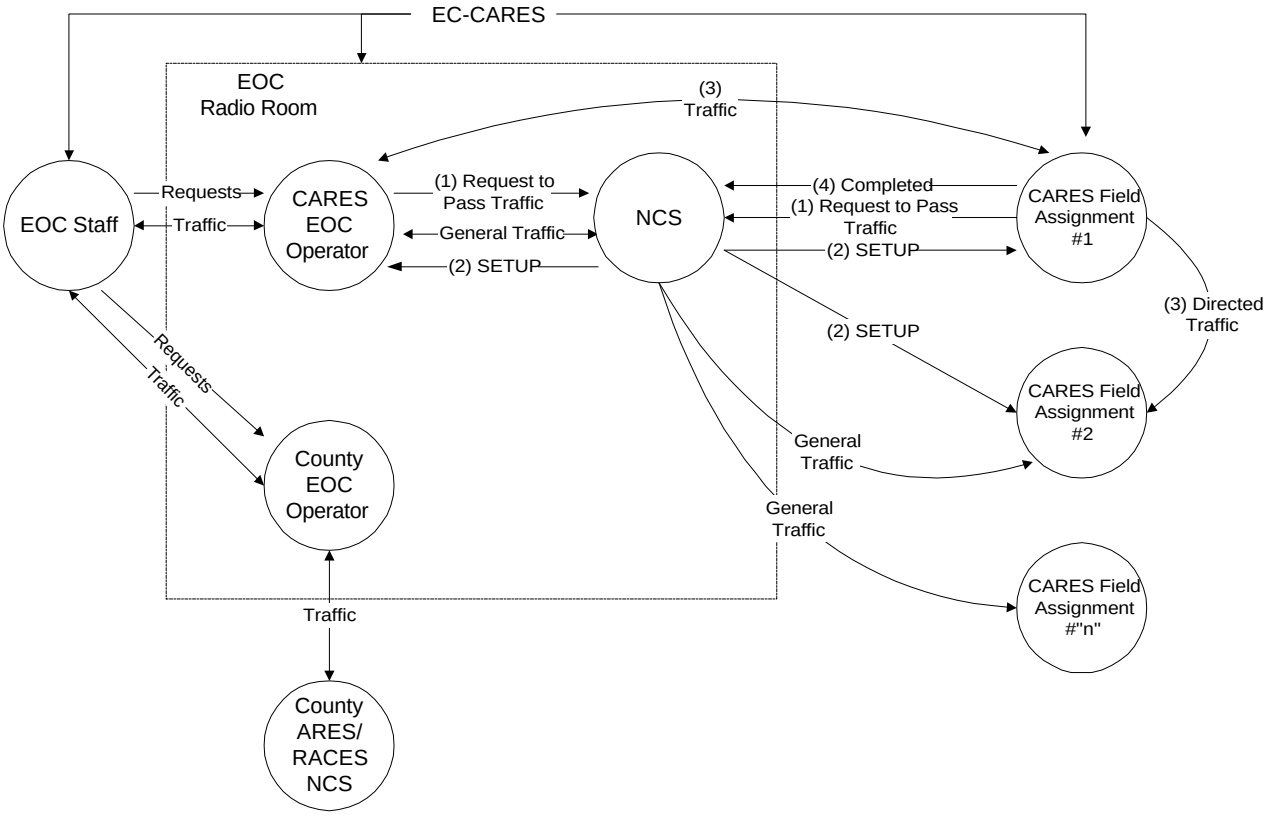

Figure 3: Extended Response, High Traffic Scenario

CARES has moved into an extended response phase of an event. Traffic flow to and from remote CARES members is relatively heavy. The EOC is fully operational, the bulk of CARES members have checked in, CARES members are staffing field assignments, successive CARES shifts are planned, and city and response services are deployed.

1. The EC directs all CARES activities.
2. The EOC Operator position is staffed.
3. The CARES NCS may be co-located at the EOC radio room (or general vicinity) with the EOC Operator to support more coordinated communications flow.
4. The EC reviews staffing plans, updates assignments, and coordinates CARES resources with the EOC staff.

7.5 Extended Response, Low Traffic Scenario

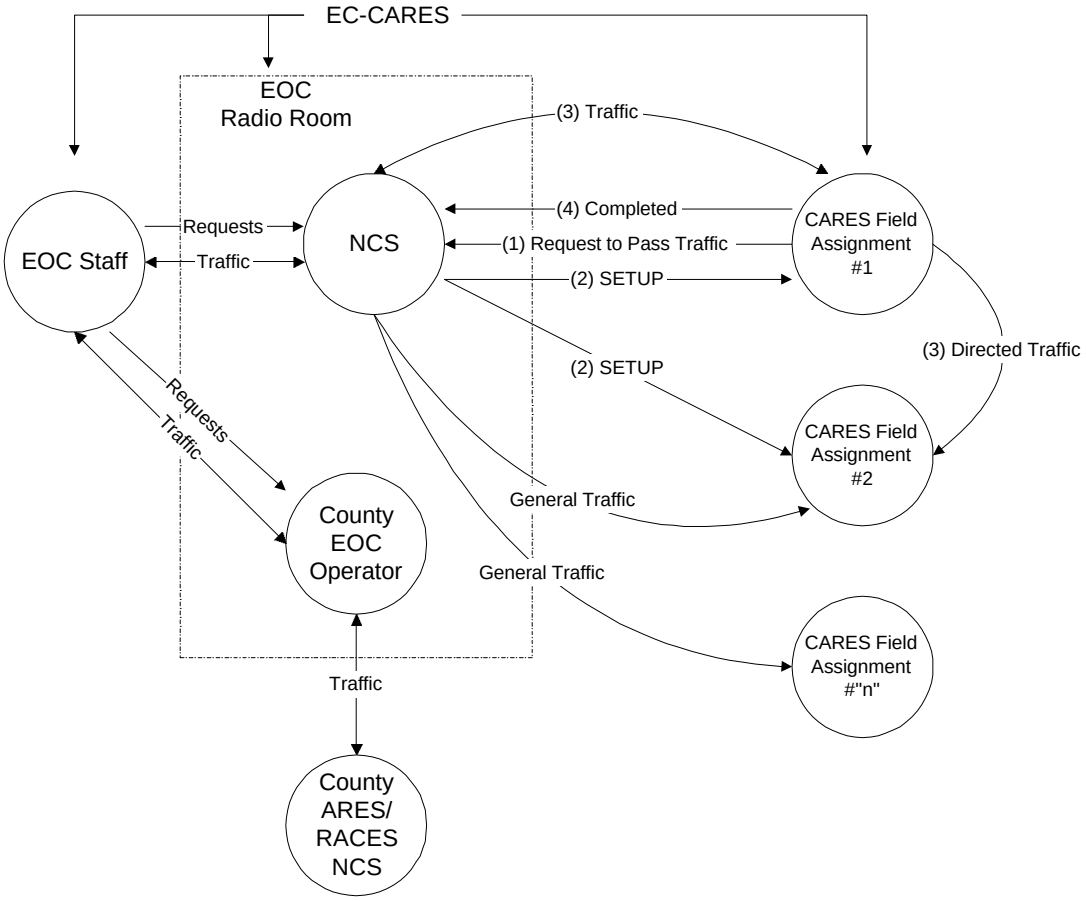

Figure 4: Extended Response, High Traffic Scenario

CARES is still in an extended response phase of an event. Traffic flow to and from remote CARES members is relatively light. The EOC is fully operational, off-shift CARES members have checked out of the net and filling shift assignments, and city and response services are moving into recovery mode.

1. The EC directs all CARES activities.
2. The NCS assumes an additional role of EOC Operator.
3. If the NCS is assigned to a station not at the EOC Radio Room, then an EOC Operator is still required to staff the EOC.
4. The EC reviews staffing plans and coordinates CARES resources with the EOC staff.