After Action Report
July 2009 SVECS Drill

Cupertino
ARES/RACES

1. Overview

Description:	Santa Clara County RACES Communications Drill
Event Date:	18 Jul 2009
Report Date:	3 August 2009
CARES Event:	CUP-09-27T
RACES Event:	CUP-09-27T
Control:	Cupertino ARES/RACES
Report Revision:	1.1, **FINAL**
Submitted by:	Mark Laubach, K6FJC, Cupertino ARES/RACES

Requirements for Reporting

Completing an After Action Report is part of the required SEMS reporting process. The Emergency Services Act, Section 8607 (f) mandates that the Office of Emergency Services (OES) in cooperation with involved state and local agencies complete an After Action Report within 120 days after each declared disaster. Section 2450 (a) of the SEMS Regulations states that, "Any city, city and county, or county declaring a local emergency for which the governor proclaims a state of emergency, and any state agency responding to that emergency shall complete and transmit an after action report to OES within ninety (90) days of the close of the incident period as specified in the California Code of Regulations, section 2900(j)."

CARES will follow this requirement for reporting the results and recommendations for this Training Event.

i. Introduction and Background

Terms

CARES: Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service, ARES/RACES organization supporting the City of Cupertino.

NCO: Net Control Operator, may be indicated by M-NCO (Message Net) or R-NCO (Resource Net)

SVECS   Silicon Valley Emergency Communications System, Santa Clara County association of Ham Radio operators who support the county with emergency communications.

Introduction

CARES participated in the in the 18 Jul 2009 Santa Clara County RACES Communications Drill. The purpose was to engage Cupertino CARES members in participating in the country drill as well as support the needs of the county drill exercises.

The purpose of the drill was to respond to County OES directions and exercises that were not known before the drill commenced. There was limited information made available prior to the drill however it was understood that the primary city EOC/Communications Room was not to be used.

This report covers the activities undertaken by responding CARES members during this event and the subsequent findings.

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ii. Type / Location of Event / Drill / Exercise

Event Type: CARES participating in Santa Clara County OES RACES drill

Event Identifier: CUP-09-27T

Event Name: Quarterly SCC Drill on 18 Jul 2009

Location: Exterior to Cupertino City Hall

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iii. Description of Event / Drill / Exercise
The following CARES objectives were developed for this exercise:
1. Test preparedness to engage in county RACES communications when City EOC was not accessible
2. Follow drill instructions and exercise the County communication net concepts and procedures
3. Use standard ICS and/or Cupertino OES documentation

All 3 objectives were in play, with the results described below.

Event resources came from the following organizations:
1. Cupertino ARES/RACES: Responsible for setting up and staffing "alternate EOC communications room support" for County RACES communications, five (5) CARES members participated:
    > Mark K6FJC
    > Bill KD6TQJ
    > Andy AA1Q
    > Phil WA2KDX
    > Fari KF6UVS
2. Communication equipment came from CARES members
3. Forms and other logistic support came from CARES members

Once the drill was initiated, CARES planned response to participate with the County's exercise scenario(s). As the pre-drill information was sparse (deliberately?), a plausible drill scenario was discussed: there was an county-wide event of significant proportion and CARES members were unable to enter the Cupertino City Hall and to set up operation for city net and county communications operation; e.g. a significant earthquake requiring City Hall building safety inspection and approval for entering. What impromptu setup and procedures could be put in place immediately?

The drill was initiated, CARES participated in the county communications with the immediate instructions of "leave your main city EOC and set up at your alternate EOC". CARES did the following:

1. Established a simulated parking lot setup of a "tailgate communications room" for support of CARES and Cupertino EOC communications (we had set this up prior to the start of the event).
2. Established a Cupertino resource net radio on Cup Tac1, using HT.
3. Established a County Message Net radio , using mobile transceiver.
4. Established a County Resource Net radio, user mobile transceiver and alternate HT.
5. Established a County Command Net radio, using HT.
6. Did not establish a packet communication system (did not have the equipment).
7. Participated in County drill message exchanges on the Message Net and one message on the Command Net
8. Registered CARES member arrivals at the temporary location
9. Appreciated delivery of homemade strawberry milkshake smoothie by KF6UVS

Performance against Objectives:
1. Alternate EOC Setup

With the limited pre-event information regarding using an alternate EOC for the drill, Mark Laubach (K6FJC) had prepared by stocking his vehicle with a mobile remote base setup and printing a number of

forms. Mark met up with Bill Klein (KD6TQJ), AEC outside city hall at 13:30. A location was selected that permitted vehicle access, was in the shade, and did not block other traffic. The second and third parking spaces on Rodriquez, just east of Torre were used. Mark's vehicle radio was used for the County Resource Net, a portable mobile rig with battery was used on the tailgate for the County Message net (see photographs, *Section x. References*). Handheld transceivers were used for the other communication channels.

NOTE: a "tailgate communications room" setup was selected for ease of use on the hot temperature day for just CARES use; however a canopy table and chairs, tripod and antenna mast were available in the vehicle.

The setup worked well and met all voice communication objectives and requirements for the drill.

NOTE: The CARES SOP is from 2002 and does not enumerate the current list of County Nets, frequency setups, and repeater calls signs – it has an old list. Mark's (K6FJC) HT was programmed with SCC channels was able to determine the Message Net setup information.

2. Follow drill instructions and exercise County Nets:

All drill instructions were followed. Ten (10) messages were processed on the Message Net, one (1) message was passed on the Command Net. The drill at first seemed to expect that all cities would have packet capabilities at the alternate site. County was informed of non-packet capability.

All Message Net messages were recorded on separate message forms using SCCo ICS Form 213 (6/28.07).

Initially the Message Net was being used to communicate the drill exercises. At a later point in the drill, a message was asked to be passed on the Command Net. County has to be asked for the frequency setup for the Command Net.

NOTE: near the end of drill, instructions were given to send a City Scan form via packet. County was informed of the lack of a city scan form (was in the EOC with the packet terminal, both inaccessible) and asked for advice to skip or improvise. County asked to improvise.

3. Use standard ICS and/or Cupertino OES documentation

Appropriate forms were used.

NOTE: Sufficient forms were available. Mark (K6FJC) has prepared the evening before and anticipated most forms needs.

NOTE: A City Scan form or other PacForms were not available (except the country message form).

The drill lasted about 2 hours. No real debrief was necessary as discussions relating to performance and preparation where held during the drill.

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iv. Chronological Summary of Event / Drill / Exercise
All events took place on Saturday, 18 July 2009. All times listed here are in local time. This summary is a compilation of submitted ICS-214s, net control logs, and other logs.

Time	Description, Notes, Comments
13:33	K6FJC – Mark Laubach – sign in – assignment Message Net
13:33	KD6TQJ – Bill Klein – sign in – assignment Shift Supervisor
13:33	AA1Q – Andy Huang – sign in – assignment photographer
14:00	Drill commencement on Resource Net announcement

Time	Description, Notes, Comments
14:10	Received "exit normal EOC setup" directive message (CUP-001)
14:15	Received "Send digital photo to Larry by Email" (CUP-002)
14:41	Received "Send activation number" (CUP-003)
14:45	Advised county of non-packet capability on Message Net
14:52	Received "Notify SCC OES of when packet-ready" (CUP-004)
15:05	WA2KDX – Phil Harris – sign in
15:23	Received "Use Command Net to inform freqs used" (CUP-005)
15:24	Received "Fill out and send City Scan via Packet (CUP-006)
15:31	Asked for Command Net setup
15:32	County notification of "break", "continue" message passing
15:35	County notification on Command Net of freq coverage
15:42	Sent simulated City Scan to SCC (CUP-007)
15:45	KFJ6UVW – Fari Aberg – sign in
15:49	Received "Debrief will be held 20:30 on 21 July" (CUP-008)
15:56	Received "Send participants call signs via packet" (CUP-009)
16:00	Sent call signs of participants (CUP-010)
16:01	Drill closed announcement on Message Net

v. Response at SEMS Levels (as appropriate):
Include a summary, conclusions, the field response, and other local, operational area, regional, state or federal response.

Not required for this event.

vi. Interacting Systems, Agencies, and Programs:
Include mutual aid systems (law enforcement, fire/rescue, medical, etc.); cooperating entities (utilities, American Red Cross, Sheriffs Office, City Departments, etc.); telecommunications and media interactions.

Communications Systems. The CARES TAC-1 frequency was monitored. All other radio activity was on the County Frequencies.

vii. Improvements, Conclusions, Recommendations:
As applicable, include a description of actions taken, assignments, associated costs or budget, timetable for completion or correction, and follow-up responsibility.

The following is a summary of the key Improvements, Conclusions, and Recommendations.

What worked?
- Alternate site setup "tailgate communications room" with sufficient equipment
- Adequate staff to cover operator needs
- Had most forms.
- Fari's cold strawberry smoothies

What didn't work / needs improvement?
- Only five CARES members participated, not that the scenario could have used more, but having more "check in" on Tac 1 would have been nice
- Lack of Packet capability. Issue? Should Cupertino decide it needs "parking lot packet", then equipment needs to be available in times of inaccessible city hall facilities
- Could have used more preparedness information from County for the drill. Even something minimal like: "There will be a county-wide event. Establish local and country communications support before your City EOC becomes available for use. Expect to handle a reasonable message traffic load."

- Not all forms were available on paper. Should there be an off-site stock or should all AEC's carry all forms in a kit, or?
- Mark Laubach arrived prepared. If Mark can't be at the next one, how can setup still be accomplished with adequate coverage

Recommendation
- CARES develop plans for Mobile station coverage.
- Continue to look for means to support field packet within CARES.
- CARES members should periodically retrieve and print the latest County Frequency List (http://www.scc-ares-races.org/freqs/freq-05.htm) for their Go-Kits.

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viii. Training Needs

None

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ix. Recovery Activities (as applicable)

None

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x. References: Maps, charts, training materials, etc.

End of Report.