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## Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Topic: 2010 City-Wide Drill Debrief

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Event: Cupertino ARES meeting, Orientation Training

# 2010 City-wide Drill Debrief



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# Topics

- Drill Recap
- Communications Feedback
- Next steps

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# Drill Key Objectives

- Emergency Response Training for Cupertino Citizen Corps (CCC).
- Emergency Response Coordination between CCC, EOC, and City of Cupertino Leadership.
- Promote Emergency Preparedness for Cupertino Residents.

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# Drill Key Requirements

- Realistic scenarios with measurable results.
- Volunteers must get satisfaction out of the work and results achieved (have fun).
- Integration of the various Emergency Response functions:
  - CERT
  - MRC
  - CARES
  - Block Leaders & SUVs (need cheat-sheets)
  - ARKs
  - City of Cupertino Officials (EOC)

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# Drill Contents

- Activation of CCC, including reporting to their respective ARKs with high-level damage assessment of their neighborhood and of their route to the ARK.
- Activation of EOC with City leader(s) and GIS Coordinator.
- Information flow between ARKs and EOC.
- Citywide High-Level Assessment (HLA) carried out from each ARK.
- ARK “X” assistance to ARK “Y”.
- MRC scenarios (work with Fari to design).
- Community preparedness awareness.

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# Activation & Reporting

- Upon activation CCCs, and SUVs:
  - Survey his/her home and neighborhood for damage or casualties (making pertinent notes in Form COES 105; CARES members report results to EOC).
  - Walk, bike, or drive to his/her ARK, assessing damage along the way making pertinent notes in Form xyz (Action: need to define form to be used).
  - Report to his/her ARK using established process (check-in, ARK activation, etc.)

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# ARK-to-EOC Communication

- Once the ARK has achieved “operational” status:
  - IC makes sure those reporting to the ARK provide their assessment information to the P&I section.
  - P&I section prepares summary of collected assessment information for transmission to the EOC through the CARES section.
  - ARK stands by for instructions from the EOC.

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# EOC-to-ARK Communication

- EOC sends a request to each ARK to begin a High-Level Damage Assessment (HLA).
- ARK IC, P&I, and Ops leaders plan and execute the HLA using the methodology documented from the August 25th exercise.
- Once HLA is completed, ARK records (P&I) and reports the findings to the EOC via the established CARES methodology.



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# Feedback themes

## Asked questions on...

1. What worked
2. What can use improvement
3. Your assignment

## Key Comm Themes on...

1. PSA
2. Message Handling
3. Ark operations
4. EOC Radio Room
5. In General

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# Feedback, what worked

What Comm Team members said...

- *“Coordination between CERT and CARES worked well.”*
- *“Setup, greeting people, showing off the Ark.”*
- *“Pilot of SUV jump-start training.”*
- *“Tac 2 (Message Net) had good coverage throughout the city.”*
- *“Net operations, check-in process, switching between 2 nets.”*
- *“Resource and message net operations.”*
- *“Packet messages passed from 3 Arks, packet message auto-logging.”*
- *“Quick resolution of radio room equipment problem.”*
- *“Overall, a great drill, walked away with a few things I can apply.”*

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# Feedback, improvement opportunities

What Comm Team members said...

- Preliminary Safety Assessment Procedures
  1. PSA forms
  2. PSA message passing
    - Plenty of comments on...
      1. Message forms
      2. Message passing
- Ark operations
  1. Data collection forms
  2. Packet operations procedures
- EOC Radio Room
  1. Forms
  2. Radio problems
  3. maps



Cupertino  
ARES/RACES

# Preliminary Safety Assessment

## 1. Forms and message passing

<b>Issue:</b>	Overall PSA process – forms, use, messaging
<b>Description:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some members did not have a PSA form with them.</li><li>• Some forms were not the current version.</li><li>• The Radio Room did not have the latest PSA roll-up form.</li><li>• Some unfamiliarity with how to pass the PSA message</li><li>• Some confusion with the County PSA form</li></ul>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CARES practices this process annually, usually in January</li><li>• CERT elected to use the CARES PSA Form for their activities; this is now a common form across the City</li><li>• All forms are located here... <a href="http://www.cupertinoares.org/ccc/forms/">http://www.cupertinoares.org/ccc/forms/</a></li><li>• Is this an area that requires more practice than what we do today?</li></ul>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	1. Clarification between County and City PSA forms

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# Message Handling

## 2. Message Passing

<b>Issue:</b>	Passing a Message took longer than anticipated
<b>Description:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Too much “back-and-forth” in exchanging the message.</li><li>• Provided on-air message handling instructions and coaching to some neighborhood participants (ie: 5 words per segment, etc), took time away from message net operations</li><li>• It was difficult for the participating neighborhoods to break into the net to pass their traffic</li></ul>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recently, CARES has relied on CERT drill for its field communications drills. As a result, there is less message traffic and more “sit around and wait” for a message opportunity</li><li>• Seven Springs Ark held an AM training session for 3 responders before letting them loose on an independent field assignment.</li><li>• Do we have enough comms-only message exercise time?</li><li>• How do we engage the neighborhoods?</li></ul>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Expectation setting of Ark teams originating messages on what they can expect... (Ken)  Message origination training for Ark teams

# Ark Operations

## 3. Information Management

<b>Issue:</b>	Local HLA information management and efficiencies
<b>Description:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CARES members sensed or saw forms confusion – individual data collection, Ark data roll-up, EOC expectations</li><li>• Unclear what forms to fill in and what information to pass</li><li>• Data passing process was not previously tested and confirmed</li></ul>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EOC did not know what to do with some incoming information – color code was apparently unexpected (?)</li><li>• The general type of information needed to pass is best to go by Packet, not voice.</li></ul>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	

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# Ark Operations

## 4. Radio Operations – Packet

<b>Issue:</b>	Voice, Packet
<b>Description:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No operational Packet procedures in place – what to send, what format, how often to check for messages, etc</li><li>• Not all Arks has packet available during the drill</li><li>• Overall CARES capability and familiarity with Packet</li><li>• No antenna at the Larson Ark site</li><li>• Antenna instructions did not include put-away decisions</li></ul>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working with the City for packet kit funding</li></ul>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	

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# EOC Operations

## 5. Radio Room

<b>Issue:</b>	Various
<b>Description:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• County Fire Interference on Tac 1</li><li>• Missing message forms in the radio room</li></ul>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan is in place to move the Radio Cupertino AM Radio transmitter to a location away from City Hall</li></ul>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	



# Staffing

## 6. Constraints

<b>Issue:</b>	Staffing constraints
<b>Description:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Field Responder coverage</li><li>• Enough resources to staff EOC and Field position, multiple shifts</li></ul>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do we have sufficient coverage to sustain our required staffing level? Minimally requires 10 per shift... (1-SS, 2-NCO, 1-RRO, 6-Ark)</li><li>• Ham radio operators, CARES members too, covering ICS positions</li><li>• Look at other communications options – packet?</li><li>• CARES member intent...</li></ul>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	

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# Key take-away's

## Summary

- **Staffing** – Unclear as to our ability to cover the staffing requirements of an Ark-based response
- **Training** – We have the sessions; need to reinforce training with...
- **Practice** – not enough message passing, other CARES process practice
- **Packet** – Packet is a viable alternative for passing some (or all?) formal ark message traffic; need to operationalize
- **PSA process** – Forms, message passing

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# Staffing: CARES “Response” options

## Summary

### 1. CARES Certified Responder

- Members pursue or have received a CARES qualification
- Would accept a field assignment from the City
- Would act as the assignment's lead responder.
- May also start off in an organized neighborhood and, when it is secure, state their availability for a field assignment.
- DSW required.

### 2. CARES Volunteer Responder

- No CARES Certification, but intend to respond during activation
- Would accept a field assignment from the City.
- May also start off in an organized neighborhood and, when it is secure, state their availability for a field assignment.
- DSW required.

### 3. CARES Neighborhood Affiliated Volunteer

- Members that will respond to an organized neighborhood and use Amateur Radio to exchange information with the City.
- Would not receive a field assignment from the City.
- DSW required.

### 4. CARES Home Volunteer

- Members who choose to support CARES from home
- Perform a local Preliminary Damage Assessment about what they see.
- They would not receive a field assignment from the City.
- DSW not required.

### 0. No response category declared

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# Training: Focus on the mission

## Summary

### Topics

1. Damage Assessment and START
2. Preliminary Safety Assessment
3. Infrastructure Safety Assessment
4. Resource Net, Message Net, Message Passing
5. Ark Operations
6. Packet Operations
7. City Hazards
8. Equipment Readiness (GoKits, Batteries, Antennas, Radios)
9. Open topic

### Approach

1. Leverage the *Field Communications Operations Handbook* wherever possible.

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# Practice: Increasing PTT(push to talk) time

## Summary

**Objective:** provide more opportunities for CARES members to practice message handling

### Today

1. Annual PSA drill
2. May Field
3. June Emergency Field Comm Drill (Field Day)
4. Oct City Drill
5. County EOC Comm Drills

### Proposed

1. Quarterly Comms-only drills
  1. PSA Drill
  2. ISA Drill
  3. Comms Only
  4. Comms Only
2. Field Comm Simulations (new members, refreshers)
3. NCS Simulations (refreshers)
4. June Emergency Field Comm Drill (Field Day)
5. October City Drill

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# Packet: build greater proficiency

## Summary

- Continue to work with the City on funding a standard packet capability – (Radio, TNC, P/S, PC, Printer)
- More hands-on packet training
  - Structured sessions
  - Regular message exchanges from *home*
- Work with CERT and City on packet messaging
  - Requirements
  - Format

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# Next Steps

- Reconfirm our members response intent
- Develop the training calendar for the next 12 months
  - Meetings
  - Practice Sessions
  - Drills
- Use and refine the Field Comm Op Manual
- Others?

