



# CARES

Cupertino  
Amateur Radio Emergency Services



## CARES Drill CD-9901 Report

01/18/00

### Summary

This report covers the results of the January CARES Drill on the Preliminary Damage Assessment Procedure. Twenty-four CARES members participated in one of two drills and the associated CARES Emergency Nets held on January 23 and 24. CARES member feedback was both positive and constructive. Additional drills are anticipated throughout 1999 to address other CARES operational response scenarios.

### Overview

The objective of CARES Drill was to test the Preliminary Damage Assessment Procedure. This was a field drill that employed Amateur Radio to pass simulated emergency traffic among CARES members. This drill also followed up to the Preliminary Damage Assessment Procedure Orientation training session held during the January 7, 1999 membership meeting.

The drill was run twice to accommodate the availability of the CARES membership over two days. Forty-five members received the drill notification and scenario information by U.S. Mail.

### Event Specifics

Event Time	Activation No.	Num. Participants
Saturday, January 23 at 9:00 a.m	CD-9901A	14
Sunday January 24 at 4:00 p.m.	CD-9901B	12 (6 were returns from the 1 <sup>st</sup> drill)

### Drill Set-up

The following support material was developed and used to support the drill scenario.

1. General Situation Description. This information was sent to all prospective drill participants

An earthquake, measuring 6.9 on the Richter Scale, occurred 5 minutes ago on the San Andreas Fault, just south of Ben Lomond. Moderate aftershocks continue, the most recent one just occurred a few seconds ago.

Using your portable radio, you have heard local radio stations reporting damage throughout the South Bay Area. Bookcases have fallen over. Windows are broken. Some chimneys have collapsed. Some home have shifted off their foundations. Many transportation routes, from overpasses to train tracks, have sustained damage.

Injuries are being reported throughout the area: many minor injuries, some serious injuries, and no deaths reported.

Utility systems have been severely impacted. Electricity, telephones, gas, water, and sewer are not working in many areas.

Public Safety agencies are reporting more calls than they are able to handle.

2. Personal Situation Description. Five versions of this information were developed to offer variety in the reports and were arbitrarily distributed to the prospective drill participants.

3. Simulated City Notification Message. This text was read on activation of the Emergency Net as outlined in Section 7.4 or the CARES SOP.

The communications services of CARES have been requested by Steve Dowling, Logistics Section Chief on behalf of the City of Cupertino Director of Emergency Services.

There has been an earthquake in the south Bay Area with an estimated magnitude of 7.0. Casual observations made by the Cupertino EOC staff included some Damage in the City and surrounding communities.

Cares has been activated by the City with Activation No: CD-9901A.

CARES has been asked to provide assistance where ever possible.

End of City Message.

## **Drill Execution**

Both Drills were begun on time and included the following activities:

1. Drill initiation
2. Net activation
3. Member check-ins
4. Report of simulated Preliminary Damage Assessment
5. Securing the Drill
6. On-radio critique of the drill
7. Securing the Net

Both drills took approximately 30 minutes to execute (steps 1 through 5 above). The on-line critique took 30 minutes and 20 minutes for the Saturday and Sunday drills respectively. When possible, general conclusions reached and improvements identified during the Saturday Drill were applied to the Sunday drill.

## **Results of Critique**

Immediately following each drill, an on-radio critique of the drill was held. Each participant was polled for his/her comments on (i) what went right, (ii) what went wrong, and (iii) what needs to be improved. The following is a combined summary of feedback from the drill's participants. Duplicate comments are listed only once and are indicated as such.

1. COMMENT: Overall, good drill. Several members stated it was a good experience; others said it was good to be holding drills again.
  - RESPONSE: As the Training Plan continues to develop, CARES members can expect to be holding regular drills. The number and frequency of future drills and exercises need to be determined.
  - RECOMMENDATION: none.
2. COMMENT: Method for performing check-ins. Members were asked to check in to the NCS. Is there a different method for managing check-ins?
  - RESPONSE: A Roll Call process was considered, but may not be efficient given the size of the organization (78), the availability of members to participate, and the current level of participation. Other ARES groups expressed similar concerns.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Monitor, no further action planned.

3. COMMENT: Some members could not hear Phar Lap Neighborhood.
  - RESPONSE: In general, for any given NCS station, it must be assumed there will be at least one station that cannot effectively communicate with the NCS due to geography, terrain, or equipment. The use of RELAYS must be employed.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Define and practice the process of performing RELAYS.
4. COMMENT: Reporting PDA data. Suggestion was to add a check field on the Field PDA sheet to indicate the state of telephone and electric service (ON or OFF). This will help build a profile of field monitored utility services throughout Cupertino.
  - RESPONSE: Agree.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Modify the Field PDA Data collection sheet to include a neighborhood state of electrical, water, and telephone service.
5. COMMENT: Reporting Priorities. When reporting PDA data, there was no differentiation in priority given to stations with Immediate Life Threatening reports (fire, critical injuries, gas leaks) compared to stations with non-life-threatening reports. Four other member stations reiterated this comment.
  - RESPONSE: Agree.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Modify the NCS PDA data collection process to poll stations with IMMEDIATE Life Threatening reports first. These reports should only contain the Immediate Life Threatening content. Once complete, all stations with PRIORITY (non-life threatening) reports can be polled for their reports. Stations that previously gave IMMEDIATE (life threatening) reports should now deliver the balance of their PDA reports.
    - Also, modify or adapt the NCS PDA data collection forms to provide more room for detailed information related to Immediate Life Threatening reports.
    - Also, modify the Field PDA data collection forms to provide more room for detailed information related to Immediate Life Threatening reports.
    - Also, reiterate the Traffic Priority classifications for passing traffic (FLASH, IMMEDIATE, PRIORITY, and ROUTINE).
6. COMMENT: Reporting Location. All members were asked to and provided their location in terms of neighborhood or street and cross-street. One member also included his Map Coordinates. This additional information may further enhance the final Situation Report delivered to the EOC.
  - RESPONSE: Agreed.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Modify the Field PDA Data collection sheet to include a field for CARES Map Coordinates.
    - Modify the NCS PDA data collection sheet to include a field for reporting CARES Map Coordinates.
7. COMMENT: Leveraging organized neighborhood reporting. Organized Cupertino neighborhoods have implemented processes and methods for performing their own PDA. Existing reporting methods may already exist. Because there is no citywide standard for neighborhood reporting, it could be assumed all methods are different. Need to rationalize these existing data collection processes and categories with the CARES PDA data information requirement.
  - RESPONSE: CARES advocates avoiding redundant data collection at all levels of the community response whenever possible.
  - RECOMMENDATION: When CARES settles on their data collection form (serves the City's Situation Reporting requirement), review the city requirements and CARES data collection process and information needs with each organized neighborhood.
    - Also, encourage neighborhoods to develop a mapping between their processes and forms and the CARES information needs.
8. COMMENT: Relays: extends on the comments #3 above. Two CARES members acted as relay stations for a station not heard by the NCS.
  - RESPONSE: See Response for #2 above.
  - RECOMMENDATION: See Recommendation for #2.

9. COMMENT: Situation Reporting vs. Response Reporting, request/replies for help. In some instances, critical life-threatening events were in progress (fire, gas leak, injury, etc) and reported. For these reported situations, will there be a reply through the CARES net on the disposition of the report? What will the City do with the information it receives?
- RESPONSE: CARES needs to resolve this with the City. CARES was requested to provide Situation Reporting to the City. However, the role of the City is unclear with regard to Response Reporting (ie: notifying County Fire of a CARES-reported fire situation). Closing the loop with the reporting station is important. Setting correct expectations with the reporting CARES station is paramount in supporting the community.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Formally address with the city what the EOC will do with a notification of an IMMEDIATE Life Threatening situation if 911 is non-operational.
    - Also, invite County Comm to a CARES meeting to address how they would respond, handle calls if 911 is down, points of leverage with CARES.
    - Also, determine if there is a role for CARES to directly interact with County Fire or other service providers for these situations.
    - Also, determine, set the expectation of the CARES membership as to what type of feedback they can expect if they report an IMMEDIATE Life Threatening situation.
10. COMMENT: Communication Protocol. Methods, terminology, and content levels were inconsistent between member station transmissions with NCS.
- RESPONSE: While this drill was not focused on traffic handling procedures, it did point out an opportunity to address this area in the future.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Schedule Traffic Handling procedures as a topic for a future CARES training event.
11. COMMENT: Time format notification. While it wasn't an issue with the Saturday AM drill, it was observed during the Sunday PM drill. What is the time identification format CARES will use... 12-hour time with stated AM and PM, or 24-hour time?
- RESPONSE: None.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Determine the best identification scheme for time references.
12. COMMENT: Available information to support the drill: Not all members attended the last CARES membership meeting. They did not receive the CARES SOP or participate in the PDA Orientation training session. As a result, the drill notification sheets did not provide the complete context needed to fully participate in the drill.
- RESPONSE: CARE members who attended the January 1999 meeting received the SOP and the PDA Orientation. Because less than half of the registered CARES members have been active in CARES activities and because of the cost to reproduce the CARE SOP, a general distribution of the SOP could not be funded. The SOP will be distributed to CARES members attending meetings or requesting a copy from the EC.
  - RECOMMENDATION: CARES members interested in receiving a copy of the SOP should contact Jim Oberhofer directly.
13. COMMENT: Neighborhood teams with more than one CARES member. In one instance, two CARES members in the same neighborhood organization delivered a PDA report. While this was fine for the drill, it did point out the need for Neighborhood teams to identify a single CARES member station interface to the CARES NCS.
- RESPONSE: None.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Request Marie to address with neighborhood teams. CARES to help with this as needed.
14. COMMENT: Reported Injuries. For IMMEDIATE Life Threatening reports, medical teams will require more detailed information to determine the type of response required.
- RESPONSE: None.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Need to identify the medical services group who would receive this information and what information they will need to assess if an immediate response is required.

15. COMMENT: CARES response effort sustainability. While this drill was focusing on PDA reporting, it did raise the question as to how well can CARES members execute a sustained operation.
- RESPONSE: Most CARES members have HTs. It is unclear to what extent back-up mechanisms have been put in place by individuals to support an extended response in the field.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Schedule training session on Extended Response tools, equipment, etc.
    - Also, need to look at the possibility of defining a role for a CARES Response Logistics Coordinator to support an extended response.
16. COMMENT: Extended Response CARES Shift Staffing Level. It is unclear what the actual CARES response positions are in the event CARES is requested to execute an extended response operation.
- RESPONSE: Response positions include operators, runners, resource planners, logistics, etc.
  - RECOMMENDATION: Begin resource-planning discussions to determine staffing requirements for different emergency response scenarios.
    - Also, need to look at the possibility of defining a role for a CARES Response Resource Coordinator to support an extended response.

END OF REPORT