

**After-Action Report
Fourth of July Fireworks 2018**



ARES/RACES

1. Overview

- Description:** Cupertino Fireworks
- Event Date:** July 4, 2018
- Report Date:** July 18, 2018
- Cupertino Event:** CUP-18-27T
- Santa Clara County Event:** XSC-18-04T
- Control:** Cupertino Citizen Corps
- Report Revision:** 1.0
- Submitted By:** Judy Halchin KK6EWQ

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)."

Additionally, CARES will follow this requirement for reporting the results and recommendations for this public service event.

i. Introduction and Background

Terms

- CCC Cupertino Citizens Corps; the City’s umbrella organization for CARES, CERT, and MRC.
- CARES Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service; ARES/RACES organization supporting the City of Cupertino.
- CERT Community Emergency Response Team; trained members who can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.
- DPW Department of Public Works
- MAC Mutual Aid Communicators; volunteers from throughout Santa Clara County who are registered and trained to provide mutual aid support as required.
- MRC Medical Reserve Corp; volunteers who are practicing or and retired physicians, nurses and other health professionals, as well as other citizens interested in health issues, who

are eager to volunteer to address their community's ongoing public health needs and to help their community during large-scale emergency situations.

- NCO/NCS Net Control Operator / Net Control Station; the control function that ensures the efficient passing of messages between stations on the frequency
- RCS Recreation and Community Services; the city department that is sponsoring the event.
- SCCFD Santa Clara County Fire Department
- SCCSO Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office

Introduction

The City of Cupertino (City) requested communications, logistics, and first aid support from Cupertino Citizen Corps during the 2018 Cupertino Fourth of July Fireworks event. To staff the event, Cupertino Office of Emergency Services activated the Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service (CARES), the Cupertino Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and the Cupertino Medical Reserve Corps (MRC).

In each of May and June, a CCC representative attended a planning session conducted by the Cupertino Recreation and Community Services. The June session was held at the event site, Hyde Middle School, and included representatives from RCS, DPW, SCCFD, SCCSO, Hyde Middle School custodial staff, and CCC.

Due to the staffing levels required to fill all required field positions, requests for additional Amateur Radio operators were made to other cities in Santa Clara county by means of the Santa Clara County RACES organization's mutual aid program. In accordance with County RACES policies, these resources operated under activation number XSC-18-04T. All responding volunteers from outside Cupertino also signed in as Cupertino Disaster Service Workers.

On July 4, the City of Cupertino initiated a Citizen Corps Training Activation under the designation CUP-18-27T.

This report covers the activities undertaken by responding volunteers in support of this event.

ii. Type/location of Event / Drill / Exercise

- Event Type: City Activation, RACES Activation
- Event Identifier: CUP-18-27T, XSC-18-04T
- Event Name: Cupertino 4th of July Fireworks
- Location: City of Cupertino

iii. Description of Event / Drill / Exercise

The City of Cupertino sponsored a Fourth of July Fireworks display for city residents. The fireworks were launched from the Hyde Middle School softball field with major viewing locations provided at Creekside Park, Sedgwick Elementary School, and on Miller Avenue. Lighting, music, and first aid stations were provided at each of these three venues.

To maintain the security of the launch site, manage traffic flow, and provide additional viewing space, the following streets were closed to automobile traffic, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

1. Miller Avenue between Phil Lane and Bollinger Road
2. Howard Court
3. Atherwood Avenue between Candlewood Road and Miller Avenue

4. Westbound Phil Lane between Miller Road and Tantau Avenue
5. Finch Avenue between Phil Lane and Calle de Barcelona
6. Stendhal Lane between Shadygrove Drive and Phil Lane
7. Shadygrove Drive between Stendhal Lane and Tantau Avenue
8. Brookgrove Lane between Shadygrove Drive and Willowgrove Lane
9. Ferngrove Drive between Shadygrove Drive and Willowgrove Lane
10. Willowgrove between Hyde Avenue and Ferngrove Drive

Additionally, the following streets were closed to both automobile and pedestrian traffic.

1. Disney Lane between Miller Avenue and Stendhal Lane
2. Stendhal Lane between Disney Lane and Shadygrove Drive
3. Hyde Avenue between Shadygrove Drive and Bollinger Road

Forty volunteers assisted with crowd safety at the three viewing venues, staffed five street barricades and one parking lot, and maintained communications within these locations and between these locations and the SCCSO's command post. They also provided and staffed three first aid stations for the public. Forty volunteers participated, including Cupertino ARES/RACES, CERT, and MRC, and ARES/RACES volunteers from other cities in Santa Clara County.

This report concerns the responsibilities and actions of these volunteers.

Volunteer organization objectives:

1. Track all volunteers using ICS 211 forms and t-cards, and track radio operators travelling to and from the event on the Resource Net using our standard procedures.
2. Operate a network of FRS and amateur radios, using our standard procedures, to enable communications between all volunteers and the SCCSO's command post.
3. Evaluate and treat people requesting help at first aid stations for minor injuries or health problems.
4. Report problems and emergency situations promptly to RCS venue leads or SCCSO command post, as specified by those agencies.
5. Assist SCCSO with crowd movement on Miller Avenue, and with other situations as may be requested during the event.

Performance against objectives:

1. Track all volunteers using ICS 211 forms and t-cards, and track radio operators travelling to and from the event on the Resource Net using our standard procedures.

Results: **NEEDS IMPROVEMENT.** All volunteers signed in and out on ICS 200's, and T-cards were filled out for all volunteers. The incoming Resource Net was operated from the event and the outgoing from the home of the Net Controller. Both ran smoothly. However, 14 of 26 radio operators who should have used the Resource Net did not do so.

2. Operate a network of FRS and amateur radios, using our standard procedures, to enable communications between all volunteers and the SCCSO's command post.

Results: **SATISFACTORY.** Almost all radio communications were efficient and followed standard procedures. Cell phones were used in a couple of cases to check on and assist an operator not responding because of technical problems with a radio.

3. Evaluate and treat people requesting help at first aid stations for minor injuries or health problems.

Results: **SATISFACTORY**. All first aid stations were staffed continuously by trained personnel during the event. One member of the public requested assistance and was treated for a minor knee injury.

4. Report problems and emergency situations promptly to RCS venue leads or SCCSO command post, as specified by those agencies.

Results: **SATISFACTORY**. There were no 911-level emergency situations. A situation with a parent and child who had misplaced each other at one of the venues was handled promptly and correctly according to procedures, and the two were re-united in less than five minutes. Other, less serious, issues were handled in accordance with our procedures.

5. Assist SCCSO with crowd movement on Miller Avenue, and with other situations as may be requested during the event.

Results: **SATISFACTORY**. Reports from volunteers on Miller Avenue indicated that the significant congestion that had been reported in 2017 did not occur this year due to volunteer efforts to urge people to move to the North end of the venue. There was some minor congestion shortly before 21:30, and some confusion among volunteers about whether the public could walk long the emergency lane, but neither caused significant problems. Issues at street barricades were resolved via radio communications between the volunteer barricade staff and the SCCSO's command post. As requested by the SCCSO, all volunteers at barricades kept the barricades in place at the end of the event until the SCCSO gave the word to open them, despite conflicting instructions from Public Works.

6. Record significant actions, events, and communications on the appropriate ICS forms.

Results: **SATISFACTORY**. Net Control logs were maintained and completed correctly. 16 of 26 radio operators completed an ICS 214, and many also completed an ICS 309 (others logged occasional traffic on the 214). Almost all these forms were completed correctly, and all included appropriate entries. While 10 operators did not turn in any forms, it's not clear how many failed to complete a form and how many failed to turn it in. In either case, we need to work on that aspect.

iv. Chronological Summary of Event / Drill / Exercise

The following is a high-level summary of the event as reported on ICS-214's and ICS-309's that were submitted.

15:39 Inbound Resource Net opened
 16:15-17:00 Barbeque dinner served
 16:20 SCCSO briefing
 16:44 Inbound Resource Net closed
 17:04 Volunteer briefing
 17:44 Message Net opened, volunteers began travelling to their assignments
 18:24 All volunteers were checked in at their assignments
 20:30-20:35 Lost child incident at Creekside Park
 21:30 Fireworks began
 21:54 Fireworks ended
 21:57 Hyde Parking volunteers returned to staff the check-out table
 22:00 Outbound Resource Net opened
 22:15 First volunteers were released from their assignments
 22:33 Fire Marshall gave the all clear; all street barricades to be opened
 23:34 Last volunteers signed out on ICS-211
 00:10 Outbound Resource Net closed

v. Response at SEMS Levels (as appropriate):

Include a summary, conclusions, the field response, and other local, operational area, regional, state or federal response.

Cupertino ARES submitted a mutual aid request to Santa Clara County RACES, requesting Field Operators and Net Control Operators. This was accompanied by an entry on the County RACES website where individuals could register for these positions and for Event Staff and MAC Evaluator. The request was granted under the activation number XSC-18-04T. 14 radio operators responded to the request by registering, and 13 of those took part in the event. These included 6 Cupertino ARES members, 2 operators from San Jose, and 1 from each of Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Loma Prieta, and Santa Clara.

vi. Interacting Systems, Agencies, and Programs:

Include mutual aid systems (law enforcement, fire/rescue, medical, etc.); cooperating entities (utilities, American Red Cross, Sheriff's Office, City Departments, etc.); telecommunications and media interactions.

Cupertino Department of Recreation and Community Services

A combination of full-time and seasonal staff members had primary responsibility for the event, including planning, financing, coordination, venue setups (lights and music), and advertising. At each viewing venue, they had a Venue Lead as well as additional personnel assisting with crowd safety.

Cupertino Office of Emergency Services (OES)

OES Citizen Corps Coordinator, Ken Erickson, supported the event as an advisor to the Cupertino Citizen Corps staff and as Event Logistics and authorized activation of volunteers under event number CUP-18-27T.

Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff's Office was in charge of area security and overall public safety. Officers staffed street barricades and viewing venues, and patrolled on foot and bicycle. Captain Urena served as Incident Commander for the SCCSO, working from a command post in the Hyde Middle School gymnasium. The SCCSO also provided a barbeque dinner for their officers, RCS, and the volunteers.

Santa Clara County Fire District

An SCCFD Fire Marshall was on site at Hyde School from mid-morning until about 11:00 p.m. An Engine Company was positioned adjacent to the launch site, on Hyde Avenue, from about 9:00 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. Together, they were responsible for fireworks safety.

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 conclusions and recommendations.

What worked

1) Logistics delivered supplies for Creekside on July 3, putting them inside the building. On July 4, shortly before Miller was closed at 6:00 pm, he dropped off the trailer of supplies at Sedgewick, then drove the truck with the Miller supplies to Miller and left it there. This freed up the driver to come to Hyde gym to assist, knowing that all the supplies were secure.

2) Having check-in/out outside the gym helped cut down on congestion and noise inside the gym. This was important at check-out because the SCCSO 's command post was still active inside the gym. Also,

the location used last year, just inside the door, was taken by the serving tables for the dinner this year. However, the wind was a problem at check-in. It's not clear which is the better choice.

3) Using Comm 469 for the net control station worked well. It was comfortable and quiet, with the music from Miller hardly discernible. It also helped solve last year's noise problem in the gym.

4) Having a volunteer liaison in the SCCSO command post worked quite well. Placing Comm 469 adjacent to the gym door, with the SCCSO command center immediately inside the door, put the volunteer lead and liaison close enough to make face-to-face communications easy. Communications were quick, easy, and reliable. The SCCSO were also pleased with the arrangement.

5) Overall, the relationship and coordination between the SCCSO and the volunteers was tighter and seemed friendlier this year. One example of this was that Sgt. Brown made us welcome at his briefing, and he spoke at our briefing.

6) Volunteer venue leads introducing themselves to the RCS venue leads seemed to help establish good working relationships between the leads.

7) Maps handed out to volunteers (one showing all volunteer positions, the other from the city web page advertising the fireworks) were helpful in answering the public's questions, especially for people not from Cupertino.

8) The volunteers at barricades did a good job of following their instructions to remove the barricades only when given permission by the SCCSO and to ignore conflicting instructions from Public Works.

9) As with last year, having one or more CARES members as part of the fireworks crew ensured that we received a timely notification of the all-clear. We'd been told that the notification would come to the command post through the RCS lead, but there weren't any RCS people at the command post.

10) Having the volunteers who worked at Hyde parking staff return to the gym when the fireworks show ended to staff the check-out table worked well. It helped avoid the need for special check-in/out staff.

What didn't work / needs improvement

1) Comm 469's long extension cord was missing. (See recommendation A)

2) An antenna broke off Comm 469's mast. There's a low tree on Southbound DeAnza that can't reasonably be avoided on the way to Bollinger. (See recommendation B)

3) Having check-in outdoors caused problems with wind.

4) Last-minute additions to the check-in process made it difficult, despite the addition of a last-minute second person to help. The additions were collecting DSW forms, making sure everyone who needed to turn in a DSW form did so, and handing out feedback forms. (See recommendation C)

5) There was some misunderstanding by Miller volunteers about the allowable use of the emergency lane by the public. (See recommendation D)

6) Volunteers didn't have detailed information about which barricades could be moved for one-way and/or local traffic. This led to delays for the public while the volunteers requested that information. (See recommendation D)

7) Some of the radio operators were not aware that formal message passing done by MAC evaluatees should be treated as lower priority traffic, so they did not realize they could interrupt it with event traffic. (See recommendation E)

8) The AED from one venue was not returned in person by the venue lead and was left sitting unattended on the bleachers in the gym for 30 minutes or so. This happened because the Volunteer Lead wasn't aware of the AEDs or their handling requirements until the event was underway, and, as a result, the information wasn't conveyed adequately to the venue leads. (See recommendation F)

Recommendations for Future Events

A) Develop a check-in/out process for Comm 469 equipment, or label equipment as belonging to Comm 469.

B) Remove mast antennas before travelling, at least to this location.

C) Resolve the question about whether the city DSW registration is actually needed for public service events.

D) Try to ensure that the volunteer lead is invited to all the RCS planning meetings so that we have all the relevant details about barricades, street closures, and the emergency lane on Miller. If we don't get all these details at the meetings, ask the SCCSO for them before the event. Convey the relevant details to the appropriate volunteers.

E) Include in the volunteer briefing that drill traffic is lower priority than event traffic and can be interrupted if necessary.

F) Provide a written briefing to the venue leads ahead of time, and have it proofread for completeness by the volunteer coordinator and other volunteers more experienced with this event.

G) It would avoid some frustration to make sure the volunteers at barricades understand why many of the barricades can't be removed after the show event if that wouldn't cause any traffic flow problems at that location. The reason is that some roads can't be opened until the Fire Marshal has given the all clear.

H) We need more training for radio operators that they are all expected to complete and turn in an ICS 214 form, even for public service events. We should have the person staffing the check-out process remind everyone to turn in all their paperwork. This should be done at the gym and at each of the venues.

I) Continue using the logistics procedure described above in (What Worked item 1).

J) The leadership structure of the volunteers at any of the three viewing venues is that the venue volunteers report to their venue lead, who relays issues to the RCS lead in person (or cell phone) or reports to the volunteer lead and command post via radio. This does not match the structure of the radio communications. The volunteers at a venue report via radio to the venue lead. This traffic is local to the venue for the FRS radios. However, for the amateur radio operators, they must get permission from the event Net Control to speak directly with the venue lead and the conversation is heard by the entire event net. This works well enough because the traffic is relatively sparse, but it has been suggested that we think about doing this some other way that doesn't put local venue traffic on the broader event net.