

The 2002 Retrospect

During 2002, CARES ran its weekly nets as usual, held its monthly training meetings as usual, coordinated communications drills as usual, and participated in community events as usual.

However, with the tragedy of September 11th still fresh in our minds, we started the year with a sense of anxiety that prompted us to take a hard look at our response readiness and what we should do to improve our effectiveness on behalf of the City of Cupertino.

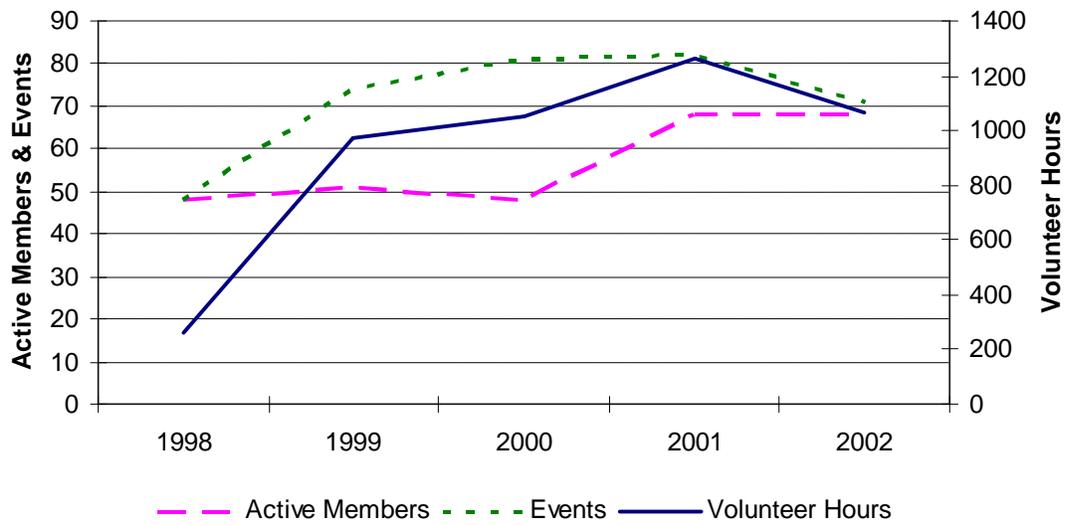
CARES entered 2002 with three objectives: focus on Response Effectiveness, address Training Qualifications, and further explore Community Service opportunities. Here's how we did.

- ***Response Effectiveness:*** CARES operationalized several procedures, methods, and other information into Version 3.0 of the Cupertino ARES Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). New topics included Emergency Net Logistics, a standard frequency channel line-up, adoption of the Anderson PowerPole power connector, and finalizing specific operational management forms. CARES also completed defining and incorporating a set of checklists into the SOP. These checklists cover tasks and operations not regularly performed, but would need to be executed quickly and effectively when required.
- ***Training Qualifications:*** We completed the development and roll out of our Training and Certification Program. This program describes how CARES will conduct the training operations required to build member skill proficiency required to support our mission. With its first release in September 2002, the initial focus of this program was on the Field Responder Certification for all interested members. Other positions that require certification include Net Control Station Operator, EOC Radio Room Operator, and Emergency Shift Supervisor.
- ***Community Service:*** CARES participated in the 2002 ARRL Field Day and the Cupertino Art & Wine Festival, with both venues featuring staffed information booths. Additionally, CARES teamed up with Cupertino CERT (Community Emergency Readiness Training) volunteers during the

City's Oktoberfest Event to provide functional communications support for CERT's First Aid mission. Because of a very positive experience from that partnership, we hope to repeat this model in future events.

Participation

CARES membership was up 8% year over year; we retired 7 members from the roster while adding 13 new members. Cupertino's CERT program continues to be a good source of members who learn the value of communications needed to support their neighborhood.



Several of these new members are also affiliated with the Monta Vista High School Emergency Response Team (MVERT). With support from Cupertino's Office of Emergency Services (OES), these enthusiastic new members are working with their school to build awareness of emergency preparedness and help support the school in the event of a disaster. We are happy to have them as CARES members.

CARES members logged 1065 hours of volunteer hours. While this was 15% fewer hours than last year, it tracked closely to 13% fewer events (an event is: checking into a radio net, attending a meeting, responding to a drill, activation, or community event, or supporting an organized neighborhood).

It is also worth noting that the 2002 volunteer hours were only 1% off the 2000 level, thereby further attributing the 2001 spike to membership commitment and willingness to serve during the events of 9/11.

Preparation

Our training activities continued to re-enforce the fundamental knowledge and skills that all members are required to have for any emergency response, regardless of the cause.

Training: To understand hazards that could naturally or accidentally occur in Cupertino, CARES hosted presentations from the Union Pacific Railroad and the California Department of Forestry. Presentations

were also made on Message Handling, Operating in an Open Net, radio checks, and operating procedures.

Additionally, we began to look at man-made and technological disasters.

CARES members heard from the Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) CA-6 stationed in the San Francisco Bay Area. This was an excellent presentation on how DMAT uses amateur radio and prepares for an urban disaster response. We also received an introduction to the types of terrorist threats that potentially we could encounter.

Drills: In 2002, CARES was re-aligned under the Planning/Intelligence Section of the City of Cupertino's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) organization structure. Instead of acting as a logistical support service

(when previously aligned to the Logistics Section), CARES has been assigned a roll in Information Gathering. To this end, we continued to refine and practice our Preliminary Damage Assessment procedures, thereby acknowledging that we are potentially the first source of city-wide status and information in the event of a wide-area disaster.

CARES also participated in several City and County drills, including the City's Decontamination Drill. This drill allowed the Santa Clara County Fire Department to practice their Decon procedures on

Orientation Training Sessions in 2002

- *Union Pacific Railroad and Emergency Preparedness*
- *Message Handling*
- *DMAT CA-6*
- *Member Radio Check*
- *City Communications Plan Review*
- *Message Handling; Field Day Preparation*
- *Introduction to CARES SOP 3.0, Training/Cert Plan*
- *Message Handling; Open Nets*
- *Types of Terrorist Threats*
- *California Department of Forestry*

Drills and Exercises in 2002

- *CUP-02-01T; County Drill*
- *CUP-02-02T; Preliminary Damage Assessment*
- *CUP-02-03T; Message Handling Drill*
- *CUP-02-04T; Emergency Field Communications Drill*
- *CUP-02-05E; Cupertino Art & Wine Festival*
- *CUP-02-06T; Decon Drill with County Fire*
- *CUP-02-07T; Oktoberfest functional response*
- *CUP-02-08T; City EOC Drill; "Terror 2002"*
- *CUP-02-09T; Open Net Drill*

simulated casualties. These casualties were then triaged and processed at the City's local Medical Center.

Served Agencies

CARES completed and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cupertino Sanitary District (CuSD). Because of new, strict California standards for accidental discharge, CuSD sees the partnership with CARES as valuable and a key resource during an emergency. While still being refined, our role would be to provide additional communications and observer support at critical CuSD facilities. We are pleased to be of service to the Cupertino Sanitary District.

The 2003 Plan

The plan for 2003 is to focus on the fundamentals:

Training and Qualifications. With preparedness being the primary operational state in which we operate, CARES will continue to maintain a high level of preparedness on the part of its members through Orientation Sessions and drills that align with our mission. Additionally, we will work on completing the first round of member certifications in all required areas.

Tighter alignment with the City. From CARES point of view, the relationship we have with the City of Cupertino is excellent. We will work with the Cupertino OES on identifying additional response needs that the City deems to be critical to which CARES could be assigned.

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CARES snapshot – 2002

Established 1986

Volunteers 86 registered Amateur Radio operators who live or work in Cupertino.

Volunteer Hours 1065

Served Agencies City of Cupertino, Santa Clara County Fire Department, Cupertino Sanitary District

Mission The mission of Cupertino ARES is to maintain and train Amateur Radio volunteers capable of providing professional emergency communications, increasing the City's emergency response effectiveness, and speeding the recovery effort.

Modes VHF voice, UHF voice, ATV, Packet

Purpose The primary responsibility of CARES is to provide communications in the event of a disaster, when regular communications fail or are inadequate. These communications are to reduce the loss of life and property, and help the city and the community with logistics, health, and welfare traffic.

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