
Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Topic: Communications Staff Augmentation

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Date: Thursday, 03-December-2009, 19:30

Event: CARES Monthly Meeting, Orientation Training

Comm Staff Augmentation



Recent Situation

- CARES has a membership of 78, roughly 30% participate regularly
- CERT training has resulted in many new hams and CARES members (CERT Class: “if you want to talk to the EOC, you need a ham radio license”)
- October ‘09 Earthquake City-wide drill uncovered resource risk in terms of CARES members volunteering to staff Ark positions
- 2 of the 5 drill shifts at the Arks were staffed by County MACs

Conclusion:

- In a large bay area-wide event, CARES will not have the trained staff to cover all requested communications positions

Minimal CARES Staffing

Minimal staffing

- Shift Supervisor 1
- Radio Room Operator 1
- Net Control Operator, Message 1
- Net Control Operator, Resource 1
- Field Responders, Arks 6
- **Total** **10**

Does not include...

- Runner (RR to EOC) 1 (could be CERT)
- Fire Stations 0 (assumes Arks will cover)
- Quinlan Shelter 1
- ISA coverage 1 per ISA team
- Shadows... ?
- **Total** **13+**

Staffing

7. constraints at the EOC

Issue:	EOC Staffing constraints
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resorted to the Message NCS and RRO assigned to one person• Inconsistent tracking of traffic requests from the field, missed follow-up, no message queuing
Ideas:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish priorities for staffing
Recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NCS is a priority.• High message traffic periods of an event: NCS and RRO positions covered by 2 different operators.• Low message traffic periods, few field-deployed resources: Ok to combine NCS and RRO; must slow down and enforce both procedures.

Staffing

8. constraints at the Ark

Issue:	Ark Staffing constraints
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missing the IC, no Ops or Logistic volunteers• Ark Comm Team was asked to perform a Logistics task due to limited Ark staff ⁽¹⁾• Some Ark Comm shifts were covered by County MACs
Ideas:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ⁽¹⁾ This is probably realistic• Need confirmation of city volunteer intent during an activation• Need SUV quick-start training
Recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at SUVs; Need SUV quick-start training• Deploy packet as the field “email system” as a voice net alternative

Overview

From SUV discussion of December 2005

Situation in Cupertino

- CARES has 67 licensed amateur radio operators on its roster.
- There are another 230+ ham radio operators in Cupertino. This is a similar situation in other South Bay cities.
- Even if 10% of them (the 230+ Cupertino hams) are still active and know the CARES frequency, that's ~23 operators that potentially could show up and not know our policies, methods, and procedures on which CARES members have been training.

Questions:

- What should CARES do about...
 1. Spontaneous ham volunteers now?
 2. spontaneous ham volunteers who show up on our net during an emergency?



Overview

From SUV discussion of December 2005

What is Spontaneous Volunteer?

- volunteers who are not pre-trained and come forward to help after an emergency or disaster.

Who has a vested interest in this issue?

- Santa Clara County Emergency Managers Association
- Santa Clara County RACES
- City RACES organizations

At the County Level...

Santa Clara County RACES

Background

- County RACES has developed a Procedure titled “Procedure for Using Spontaneous Ham Volunteers During Disasters”
- Hams do not need to be registered as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) to report what they see and experience; however, they cannot be given any assignment until they have been registered as DSWs.

Opportunity

- Use the inherent capabilities of ham radio operators – the ability to report situation information rapidly and professionally from a wide range of locations early in an event.
- Report observations to the city and/or county directly using the Santa Clara County ARES/RACES Resource Net that is put in operation immediately upon occurrence of a major event or disaster.

At the CARES Level...

Plan for CARES

Our Objectives

- Take advantage of additional reports that may be out there.
- Minimize message handling frustration, interference, and operational inefficiencies.

What should we do with SUVs during an emergency?

- Take their report and thank them.
- Do not give them a field assignment.
- If asked what they can do next...
 - Let them know the location and when the closest Regional EVC opens, or if Cupertino opens a city EVC.
 - Do not tell them to go anywhere or do anything (may constitute an assignment).
 - Let them know what is available (makes it their choice for action).

Summary

From SUV discussion of December 2005

Key take-away points...

1. The Plan is not designed to handle the SUV response during the first several hours (or days) or an event.
2. The city assumes all liability for placing, training, and supervising these volunteers.
3. Insurance coverage requires adequate supervision and training for disaster volunteers.
4. There are 230+ ham radio operators (and SUVs candidates) in Cupertino; some will show up and want to help.
5. A SUV should NEVER be given an assignment. We need to first make them "Affiliated".
6. The CARES procedure for managing SUVs is still outstanding.

Recommendations

From SUV discussion of January 2006

1. Train CARES members in techniques for maintaining net discipline, and priority message control with a large number of stations on frequency.
2. Modify NCO scripts to address handling spontaneous volunteers.
3. Directions for initially using spontaneous volunteers (report observations only).
4. Establish a Resource Net – handles un-assigned CARES and unregistered SUVs
5. Quick Training package for SUVs
6. Communications to non-CARES members: Cupertino Scene, mass-mailings, etc.
7. Develop a procedure for SUV intake, training, and registration.
8. Update CARES members on procedural changes.

Staffing

A focus on SUV Quick-start training

Who will need Quick-Start Training (QST)?

- SUVs
- CARES members who have not drilled with us and who want to deploy to the field

What is it? What does it look like?

- The rest of this session to discuss

How do we implement QST?

- Staffing, procedures, etc

What is QST?

Brainstorm topics

1. How do we perform the skills check?
2. What are the topics that a SUV needs to know?
3. How do we present the topics?
4. How much time should we spend?
5. What are the material take-a-ways?

