

After Action Report

2013 CCC Field Deployment Drill



Cupertino
ARES/RACES

1. Overview

Description: 2013 CCC Field Deployment Drill
Event Date: 26-October-2013
Report Date: 5 January 2014
Activation Number: CUP-13-16T
RACES Event: CUP-13-16T
Control: Cupertino Citizen Corp
Report Revision: 0.4, **DRAFT**
Submitted by: Jim Oberhofer KN6PE

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)."

CCC will follow this requirement for reporting the results and recommendations for this Training Event.

I. Introduction and Background

Terms

ARK: City-owned shipping containers strategically located throughout the city that are stocked with emergency supplies to support a field-based ICS field response; where the public can report disaster related emergencies when they cannot get through to 9-1-1, or 9-1-1 is unable to send resources. Staffed by CCC volunteers.

CARES: Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Services; provides backup and emergency communications to the City.

CAS Cupertino Alert System; automated phone notification system for notifying groups or the community at large of significant events of concern.

CCC: Cupertino Citizen Corps; the Cupertino OES designation for the volunteer pool made up of members from Cupertino ARES, CERT, and MRC.

CERT: Community Emergency Response Team; trained in light search & rescue, disaster medicine, fire suppression, animal care, and Help Desk.

CARES: Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service, ARES/RACES organization supporting the City of Cupertino made up of trained amateur radio operator volunteers organized to assist in public service and emergency communications.

CERT: Community Emergency Response Team; organization of volunteer emergency workers who have received specific training in basic disaster response skills, and who agree to supplement

existing emergency responders in the event of a major disaster.

DPW: Department of Public Works, used in reference to the City of Cupertino

DOC: Department Operations Center; CCC Liaison to the Cupertino EOC Staff.

ICP Incident Command Post; That location at which the primary command functions are executed.

MRC: Medical Reserves Corp; community-based units established by local jurisdictions to meet the public health needs of their communities in times of emergencies.

SUV: Spontaneous Untrained Volunteer, also referred to as *Convergent Volunteers*; an individual that does not understand our response process but shows up and wants to help.

Introduction

The City of Cupertino's disaster preparedness program involves iterative cycles of outreach, planning, capability development, training, exercising, evaluation, and improvement. Successful exercises lead to process improvements. This report is intended to assist the City move toward preparedness proficiency by analyzing exercise results and:

- Identifying strengths to be maintained and built upon.
- Identifying potential areas for further improvement.
- Recommending exercise follow-up actions.

The purpose of this year's exercise was to understand the City's ability to deploy CCC volunteer resources to support an extended field deployment during an emergency and to integrate the three CCC groups. The expected outcome was to identify additional training, planning and supply needs. The CCC response included a full field deployment to test field ICP, Communications, and Medical procedures.

The City of Cupertino authorized the drill under training activation number CUP-13-16T. This report covers the activities undertaken primarily by responding CCC members and the findings from that drill.

ii. Type / Location of Event / Drill / Exercise

Event Type: City of Cupertino, City Volunteer Training Activation
 Event Identifier: CUP-13-16T
 Event Name: 2013 CCC Field Deployment Drill
 Location: City of Cupertino

iii. Description of the Event / Drill / Exercise

Drill Planning

Planning meetings by a group of senior CCC staff members and Ken Erickson was started in mid-August. It was quickly determined in the first few meetings that we wanted to continue with last year's hands-on type of drill but focus on fewer skills. Many meetings were held up to the event date to refine the drill and solve logistics issues. Assignments were given to small groups to focus on specific tasks. It was agreed that an outdoor search and rescue was a good target and we chose Linda Vista Park as the site with a minor earthquake induced landslide as the scenario.

The goals were:

- Spontaneous call-up so as the test the response expected in a real event not automatically triggered by a large earthquake.
- Utilize the CAS system and Cupertino Radio 1670 to call up and instruct volunteers where to report/re-deploy.
- Test a reallocation of resources to a 'hot spot' where volunteers were required.
- Equip and utilize a new mobile trailer to deploy a non-ARK remote ICP.

- Teach and practice SR skills, transporting victims to a mobile MRC. Victims would be pre-staged dummies and not real people for safety reasons.
- Open a DOC, simulate an open OEC, deploy a mobile communication center at the scene, and deploy the CARES communications trailer near city hall to test information flow.
- Fully staff all the functions of the ICP at the site to train on the information flow and documentation procedures. (Improvement from last year.)
- Use the senior staff members as event proctors to train, observe and monitor the progress testing the less experienced CCC volunteers.

The CCC drill objectives:

1. Activate one or more ARKs with sufficient CERT, MRC, and CARES staffing.
2. Exercise the DOC-to-EOC and DOC-to-Field information handling procedures.
3. Deploy, set up, train, and manage a field ICP to support a Search and Rescue event and Field First Aid Treatment Center.
4. Exercise our ability to move material and resources throughout the city.
5. Exercise emergency voice and packet communications message handling procedures.
6. Manage information using OES documentation procedures and tracking methods.
7. Understand the spontaneous-ness of a CCC response.

Event resources came from the following organizations:

1. CERT: Responsible for setting up and staffing the field ICP as well as facilitating overall event coordination. Thirty (30) CERT members participated in this exercise at different locations and times.
2. MRC: Responsible for setting up and staffing all field medical station. Two MRC members participated in this exercise.
3. Cupertino ARES/RACES: Responsible for staffing the City's Communication Van, net control positions, and field communications teams. Twenty-four (24) CARES members participated in this exercise.

Many of the volunteers were trained and active in two or three disciplines.

Because the event was an earthquake followed by a landslide, the drill was initiated using the Cupertino Alert System.

On receipt of the notification, CERT did the following:

1. Responded to specific ARKS to setup the local ICPs.
2. Established a Field ICP at the landslide site at the direction of the EOC.
3. Organized Search and Rescue team to look for and recover landslide casualties.

On receipt of the notification, CARES did the following:

1. Established the CARE Emergency Net for check-ins and field assignment availability.
2. Deployed Field Responders to the ARKs, and then to the Field ICP
3. Established the continuity of communications to support the SAR teams.

On receipt of the notification, MRC did the following:

1. Responded to specific ARKS to setup the Field treatment centers.
2. Redeployed to the landslide site and established a Field treatment center.
3. Received and processed casualties.

Performance against Objectives:

1. Activate one or more ARKs with sufficient CERT, MRC, and CARES staffing

Results: **NEEDS WORK.** The DeAnza ARK opened with minimal staffing from CERT, MRC, and CARES. The Monta Vista ARK never opened as the minimum number of people to open was never met.

2. Exercise the DOC-to-EOC and DOC-to-Field information handling procedures

Results: **NEEDS WORK**. DOC to Comm Van information handoffs did not work due to technical problems. Some DOC-to-Field messages were passed; replies were delivered; DOC understanding of the remote situation was insufficient to fully assess the performance of the remote teams.

3. Deploy, set up, and manage a field ICP to support a SAR event and Field First Aid Treatment Center.

Results: **NEEDS WORK**. It took longer than planned to get organized to the point where the first SAR team could be sent out. It soon became apparent that we did not have enough CERTs and many of the CERTs present were not trained, or did not remember how to perform some of the basic duties of setting up an ARK (or ICP). Staffing the Event Proctors with experienced people meant staffing ICP positions with less experienced persons resulting in more Just-In-Time training and longer response time. Additionally, Setting up any ARK/ICP requires enough staff to move the equipment and get organized. Most people had never seen the Mobile ARK prior to the event. Most of the people including senior (experienced) staff, did not attend the trainings offered throughout the year on ICP operations.

4. Exercise our ability to move material and resources throughout the city.

Results: **SATISFACTORY**. The ICP trailer worked very well; the configuration of trailer content met the needs of the Field ICP. Field responders were directed to and did converge on the Landslide site.

5. Exercise emergency voice and packet communications message handling procedures.

Results: **SATISFACTORY**. Sufficient staffing to cover all required operating positions. Field team message traffic and status was passed to the ICP, and rolled up to the EOC as appropriate. Limited message volume.

6. Manage information using OES documentation procedures and tracking methods.

Results: **NEEDS WORK**. Inexperience with OES Forms meant more field OJT and longer processing time leading to delays in executing the response. There were also reports of inconsistent use of or missing forms for resource tracking. For ICP documents, trainings and tabletops offered throughout the year were poorly attended, except for the Steering Committee members.

7. Understand the spontaneous-ness of a CCC response.

Results: **SATISFACTORY**. This could not be any more real than this. Some disciplines were under-staffed while others were well represented. During a real event, the most experienced people would actually take over leadership.

The drill ran for 8 hours.

iv. Chronological Summary of Event / Drill / Exercise

CCC ran this test under activation number CUP-12-09T. The following is a compilation and summary of the activities as reported on ICS-214s that were submitted after the test. All times listed here are in local time. The following is a very high level summary.

Time	Description, Notes, Comments
07:30	Drill Begins, Earthquake event occurs, Hayward Fault, 7.3 magnitude. Objects fall off shelves in Cupertino. CARES Emergency Net was activated.
0750	CARES Field assignments made to staff the ARKs, retrieve the Comm Van.
10:10	Directed all ARKs to stand down. Reassigned field responders to Linda Vista Park
10:15	Staff arriving at the Field ICP
12:00	Packet is set up at Field ICP
12:25	SAR Team BRAVO Deployed
12:45	SAR Team ALPHA Deployed
15:45	Initiated ICP Shut Down
17:00	End the Drill. Begin the Debrief
17:30	End of Debrief.

v. Response at SEMS Levels (as appropriate):

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

1. Responder redeployment may be problematic during an actual event. Many CCC responders intend to walk from their homes to one of the 6 ARK sites, performing a safety assessment along their route. The scenario for this drill required redeploying resources from the ARKs to yet another Field ICP location, not within walking distance. Exercise responders were briefed on this aspect of the drill, essentially creating an “artificiality” requiring responders to use their personal vehicles for the initial part of the response.

During a real event, the time to redeploy resources from one assignment to a new location may be significant, thereby slowing the response.

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.

Public Notifications

1. Radio Cupertino 1670 had several announcements throughout the day on the event.
2. The Cupertino Alert System (CAS) was used throughout the day to keep CCC members informed as to the state of the event. Other than an incorrectly configured CAS call (call time was off by 12 hours), this system worked well.

Communications Systems

1. All CARES frequencies were used as part of this test.
2. The DOC/EOC-to-Comm Van WAN solution did not work due to (i) technical limitations of the WiFi network, (ii) no previous refresher practice on tools, standards, and procedures.
3. The team periodically suffered from a “Stuck Microphone”. While not conclusive, this problem appears to be related to the Yeasu FT-60 and an external microphone connector that comes loose sufficient to short and key the PTT circuit.
4. CARES deployed a cross-band repeater for this event that exceeded expectations. At low power, the repeater kept the Comm Van at the EOC listening in to the tactical details going on in the field.
5. The Communications Plan called for the Resource and Message to operate on the standard CARES TAC-1 and TAC-2 frequencies. An additional 2 meter frequency was borrowed from another city to support the Cross-Band Repeat capability. Due to a quiet carrier on the 2 meter cross-band frequency, a decision was made to put the cross-band 2 meter frequency on TAC-2, thereby merging the City Message net with the Field ICP tactical net. This resulted in confusion in resource accountability (to whom do they report), net management (who is really directing field resources), and message handling (how does messages flow from the tactical site to the EOC).

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

- Field ICP Trailer structure and use
- Cross-Band Repeater; solid coverage on both 2 meter and 440 frequencies.

- Field Searches; teams did learn and had fun.
- Cupertino Radio 1670; good plugs for the event.
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What didn't work / needs improvement

- DOC to Comm Van network connection.
- Several people showed up without an ID or any go-kit.
- Open Mic problem
- Some SAR teams received conflicting instructions from different proctors.
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Observations, Conclusions

- Time to set up a remote ICP.
- Too many drill proctors, not enough participants (REC: let leaders lead).
- One comment was on what appeared to be extensive paperwork holding up an evacuation.
- No clarity on switching hats among CERT, MRC, and CARES.
- Need a system to reassign multiple disciplined CCC members.

Corrective Action Plan



Microsoft Excel
Worksheet

Logs, attachments:

As applicable, include a description of actions taken, assignments, associated costs or budget, timetable for completion or correction, and follow-up responsibility.

None attached.

End of Report.

Survey Summary

Was the CAS message received in a timely manner?

- Too many messages
- except for the 5am message
- Very timely, except for the one at 5:00am. :-)
- Besides the 5am wake up call..lol
- Even the 5am one.

Were you able to tune into 1670AM Cupertino's radio station for updates?

- Did not as I was using my HT
- Did not listen to 1670
- Didn't try
- I was assigned to monitor KCBS on a different frequency. It was not clear to me what to look for and if I needed to report any announcements. Clearer Instructions are needed.
- Did not try. Not applicable
- did not try
- Didn't attempt
- Didn't try.

How was it reporting to Monta Vista or De Anza ARK?

- Did not report to these ARKS
- very few people. Setup procedures took a while

How was it checking into the CARES Resource Net?

- The person managing the check-in was focused on CARES members who were reporting for duty under CARES and not CARES members who were working non-CARES positions.

How was it to be deployed to Linda Vista Park?

- Too much wasted time
- Unaware that that was part of the drill, it felt disjointed and confusing.
- Getting there was confusing
- The message we received at first on the CARES resource net was a little unclear as to whether only CERTs or CERTs and all CARES people were supposed to go to Linda Vista.

How was setting up the Command Post at Linda Vista Park?

- Did not participate in setting up
- It seemed to take an incredibly long time to get things set up and get the S&R going--a lot of time wasted standing around without clear direction or purpose.
- Nobody seemed to be in charge for about 1.5 hours.

How was signing in at Linda Vista Command Post?

- easy enough though as above, difficult to know what to do after signing in.
- Uncoordinated, I signed in two times on different forms.

How was receiving a job or team assignment at Linda Vista command post?

- By the time assignments were handed out, I had to leave as I had committed to half a day
- As soon as I realized there would be an MRC component, it was easy to set that up! Otherwise job/team assignments felt disorganized
- Teams were formed very late, about 2 hours after arrival.
- 2-3 hours went by before any teams went out. Some people had to leave before the assignments began
- Seemed to take a long time to get on with the search and rescue. Lots of paperwork.

How was working in the Linda Vista Command Post?

- Was there for a long time with no assignment
- Challenging at times, boring at others. In other words, pretty realistic.

How was it performing the search in Linda Vista Park?

- Did not participate as I left
- was at MRC post
- Team leaders did not know how to perform a search. Suggestions from the proctors were needed to get the search going as expected. Search had to be stopped because we did not have enough forms with us. The utilization of the CARES communication person was not clear to the search team lead.

How was it performing a rescue in Linda Vista Park?

- Same as above
- Again, everything took too long: Forming teams, the execution of the search, paperwork was holding up deployment.

How was the interaction between CARES, CERT and MRC?

- Room for improvement
- Once some scenarios were set up and under way, interaction between S&R and MRC seemed okay. It took a while for someone to notice that MRC needed one of the CARES people.

- Unclear and not defined. The communication resource should be used as a way to initiate action at the base that supports the deployed team with additional resources or information.
- Needs more practice. More of these drills. Then we can get teams together faster and do the search and rescue faster.

How was the overall CERT execution and experience?

- Could be better
- Not as good as last year's, from my part of both. It would have been helpful to have those in charge be more explicit as people signed in
- More training needed particularly on leadership tasks to get things going in faster and a more coordinated fashion.

How was the overall CARES execution and experience?

- Well organized, setup a functioning network in a short period of time. Unfortunately this resource was underutilized because it seemed that capabilities are not understood in the context of the exercise.

How was the overall MRC execution and experience?

- Can't comment as I was not there the whole day
- Given that the S&R started quite late, so that we had very few patients before "lunch break", it felt okay. Would have liked to have more patients/practice both patient care and communication
- Unenthusiastic

How was the overall learning experience?

- Good experience getting on the air - but too much wasted time
- I liked the overall mission set up and plan. I learned new things as to an outside operation. We all seemed to learn and benefit from the experience
- Learned that more training is needed and hope that in a real emergency people act more decisively and focus on the important tasks. Paperwork is not one of them.
- The observers, especially Julia Kinst, were very helpful at giving instructions and pointers/reviews. I remembered quite a bit and had forgotten quite a bit as well. It was good to participate and exercise my knowledge & training. I feel comfortable that I could help (not quite lead) when needed.

Would you like to share anything else that worked or could be improved upon?

- CERT could be more efficient
- Needed better leader interaction, too much time to get started in drill missions. No clear leadership or direction as to duties. Paperwork a mess to get done
- Based on feedback and ideas at after-action meeting, we should compartmentalize discrete training modules. People wanting S&R experience could show up and as soon as we had a team of 4, send them out with a proctor. No hold ups for the ICP to get its act together. The S&R piece could be a 2 to 3 hour stint, and then the volunteer would be free to go home or become involved in another module. Weekends are precious and we may be losing people unwilling to give up an entire day for training.
- A clearer command structure should support a more effective coordination amongst the different resources and lead to faster deployment. The right people at the right place at the right time.
- Just-in-time-training was excellent. The signage could use hole-punch in 4 corners giving the option of tie-wrap or tying to tent vs only velcro.
- The amount of time from when a substantial number of CERTs arrive on scene and when the first S&R team is deployed is troubling. I think we need to explore ways to shorten that interval.
- During this exercise I wasn't signed in as a CERT, but I believe I observed something that I've experienced myself in other CERT exercises, which is that the CERT coaches can sometimes feel suffocating to the trainees. This most often happens when there are several coaches present, coaching the same activity. The sense of suffocation has two causes. First, that we get conflicting instructions from different coaches. This happens fairly frequently, most often during cribbing practice but also during S&R and other activities. Second, I feel like I learn the most when I'm allowed to make decisions myself and then get feedback about those decisions. Some of the coaches are good at this style of coaching, but quite a lot jump in and tell you how to do everything without waiting to see how much you already know. I don't think people learn very

much that way. We need a chance to test our skills, not just to be lectured. An example of a well-coached exercise was the S&R drill in the City Hall basement in August. I learned quite a lot from that drill because it was well planned and well coached.

- The lack of CERTs who came out for the exercise was disappointing. Having recently joined CARES myself, I'm finding the tiered certifications of CARES to be a great incentive to stay involved. This system makes it clear that I'll be able to continue to learn more skills over a long period of time, and it gives me a clear direction about how to proceed with improving my skills. By contrast, when I finished the initial CERT course and looked at the training offered over the next year, I saw new information in courses on how to set up and run the ICP, but otherwise everything was pretty much just refreshers of the various units covered in the initial course. I think that can give the appearance that the initial course teaches you most of what you need to know so there's little to be gained by continuing to stay closely involved with the CERT organization. A system that allows for multiple levels of certification might give members an understanding that there's always more to learn and a good reason to stay active. The sense of achievement in earning certifications can also be a strong incentive to stay active.
- Radio reception was really great with addition of cross and repeater. Teach more people how to set that up.

If you weren't able to participate would you mind sharing?

- I had a really busy week and decided to sleep in on Saturday and not participate. If the event had started later, I might have been involved. I considered coming later in the day but heard of all the frustrations happening between CERT and CARES and decided to stay and home and not have to deal with frustrations. I monitored the net for a bit as well.
- Workload does not permit at this time.
- There were too many thing happenings that weekend. I was too busy.
- I had my L knee replaced on 10/17/13.
- We had an out of town trip planned for that weekend. I tried to get neighbors interested in covering our neighborhood. No one would do it. Did get the 2 cell phone messages at 5 AM. on Saturday.
- Too many activities for the kids and my husband had to go out of town on business.
- I would definitely have participated were it not for our family medical situation that weekend. Neither my husband nor I were home when the 5AM message came in. He returned home later in the morning and listened to the messages. When I called him later in the day he relayed the message that the exercise had apparently ended. Based on that, I decided to stay with family through rest of the day instead of joining the exercise that afternoon. I thought it was odd that the exercise had ended early, but was really preoccupied with other things. Not until the next day when I listened to and erased all of the messages did I figure out what had happened. Oh well -- there's always next year :-)
- I had a morning service appointment with Xfiniti -- they finally arrived after 5pm (NOT pleased with them -- did get a \$20 credit.....)
- I had prior plans, but the multiple messages at odd hours prevented my family and I from enjoying our day.