

After Action Report (Abbreviated) 2024 Q1 Quarterly Exercise

Overview

Description:	2024 Q1 Quarterly Exercise
Event Type:	Cupertino ARES Exercise
Event Name	Stevens Volcano
Activation No:	CUP-24-0224T
Managing Entity:	Cupertino ARES
Event Date:	24 February 2024
Report Date:	28 February 2024
Report Revision:	1.0, DRAFT
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Requirements for Reporting¹

Completing an After-Action Report is part of the required California SEMS reporting process. The Emergency Services Act, Section 8607 (f) mandates that the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) in cooperation with involved state and local agencies complete an After-Action Report within 120 days after each declared disaster. Title 19 § 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 OEM within ninety (90) days of the close of the incident period as specified" in the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, s2900(q)." Additionally, "Section 2450 (b) The after-action report shall, at a minimum, be a review of response actions taken, application of SEMS, suggested modifications to SEMS, necessary modifications to plans and procedures, identified training needs, and recovery activities to date."

Introduction

The purpose of an After-Action Report (AAR) is to analyze the management and response to an incident, event, or exercise by identifying our operational strengths to be maintained and promoted, as well as the areas for improvement.

This AAR is on the Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service (CARES) activities in support of the Santa Clara County (SCCo) RACES quarterly exercise. This report is submitted to the CARES organization and Cupertino OEM as a record of our findings, planned follow-up actions, and recommendations to the city.

Summary

SCCo RACES hosts quarterly exercises as a means to (i) promote jurisdiction EMCOMM activities, (ii) provide opportunities to pass SCCo RACES-structured messages, (iii) allow cities to operate on the County Nets, and (iv) give SCCo responders a chance to operate from the county's point of view. CARES used this exercise to give trained members an opportunity to practice passing SCCo RACES-specific

¹ <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/operations/planning-preparedness-prevention/planning-preparedness/after-action-corrective-action-reporting/>

messages and operate on the County Nets. CARES also used this exercise as a checkout of Comm 469 systems and functions.

Objectives

The following objectives were defined:

1. Perform an operational checkout of all Comm 469 systems.
Measures:
 - i. all radio communications systems pertinent for this exercise were used.
 - ii. all electrical, mechanical, and pneumatic systems were activated and used.
 - iii. all computer network components were tested and confirmed operational.
2. Exercise message-passing with County EOC on all radio nets.
Measures:
 1. informal messages were passed on the SCCo RACES Command net.
 2. third party messages were passed on the SCCo RACES Message and Packet net per the standard County message protocol.

Resources

CARES staffed Comm 469 with four responders for the 3-hour exercise. Additionally, while not directly part of the Cupertino exercise, 3 CARES members operated various positions at the County EOC.

Observations

Comments were solicited from the Comm 469 responders on our experience. Additionally, comments were received from the 3 CARES members operating at the County EOC. A summary of their feedback follows.

What worked:

1. CUP-24-0224T was a very well-planned simulated exercise with all three stations in C469 busy.
2. Staff rotations worked and was appreciated.
3. It was great that [CARES] exercised the Command net... it helped uncover a Command Net radio problem.
4. We were able to pass a sizable number of messages and it reinforces proper procedures
5. County EOC observation: I believe that Cupertino was the most active city on the nets this morning.

What didn't work, needs improvement:

6. Using the laptop as the packet computer was acceptable but not as smooth as using the large screen monitor and mouse.
7. How (priority) and where to tell County EOC of an immediate packet message in their in-tray. (Answer from SCCo RACES: Use the Command Net first.)
8. The Kantronics TNC battery died since the last time it was used.
9. Could use a message basket/slot/folder for each position to store Sent messages
10. PC Server subsequently failed to power on, discovered during the February Monthly Preventive Maintenance.

What should we do different next time:

11. Develop list of packet operational hints; submit to SCCo Packet Class.
12. Test the message and bulletin handoff once received.

13. To cover all 3 county operating positions, it took a lot of space in the van. Revisit how we allocate operating positions for City and County Net activities, including using outside space.

Corrective Actions

1. Replace the Comm 469 network server.
2. Replace the Kantronics TNC memory battery.
3. Acquire new or use a repurposed mouse, keyboard, and local monitor with the Packet PC.
4. Revisit how we allocate operating position space for City and County Net activities. Consider identifying and moving some net operations outside.
5. Create work order to add Recessed D-Ding tie-down anchors for *Gen-Turi* (CUP-23-39T).

End of Report