Georgia Amateur Radio Emergency Service
Simulated Emergency Training – October 5, 2024

Overview

"All incidents start locally."

Most incidents, whether they are emergencies, natural disasters, or other types of events, do indeed start at a local level. This is why local preparedness and response plans are so crucial. Communities that are well-prepared can often manage incidents more effectively and mitigate their impacts.

Local incident response planning is crucial for effectively managing emergencies and minimizing their impact on communities. Here are some key aspects:

1. **Preparation**: This involves creating a detailed Incident Response Plan (IRP) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and procedures for responding to various types of incidents. Training staff and conducting regular drills are essential to ensure everyone knows their role[1].
2. **Coordination**: Effective incident response requires coordination with local law enforcement, emergency services, hospitals and other relevant agencies and organizations. Establishing relationships and communication channels with these entities before an incident occurs is vital[1].
3. **Communication**: Clear communication is critical during an incident. This includes internal communication within the response team and external communication with the public and media. Having pre-prepared statements and a communication plan can help manage information flow[1].
4. **Incident Action Plans (IAPs)**: These are specific plans developed for incidents, detailing the operational period objectives, resources, and assignments. IAPs are dynamic and should be updated as the situation evolves[2].
5. **Review and Improvement**: After an incident, it's important to review the response and identify areas for improvement. This can involve conducting a post-incident analysis and updating the IRP based on lessons learned[1].

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Training Scenario

The theme of the major incident is a **Cyber Event** affecting the following services:

Emergency Operations Center Communications
County and City Law Enforcement Communications
Fire Services Communications
Health Services
Local Phone Services (most phone service today is digital network traffic)
Cell Phone Services
Internet Services
Electrical Grid
Water Resources

Planning by Local ARES Groups

Local groups should plan activities relevant to your location and available resources with the expectation of possible requests for information or support from the State level. The requests may include entities needing support who were able to get messages to officials outside of the area because all local communications resources are down until ARES operators can be deployed to the location.

The planning process should include the creation of the appropriate ICS forms starting with the ICS 201.

ARES State Level Activities

- **HF voice net**
  - Check-in session
  - Announce request for information about local situation.
- **Winlink Check-in, Check-out**, and other potential Winlink traffic
  - Advise participants to check for messages regularly.
  - Send requests for updates on status of specific situations using the list of stations submitting the Check-in form.
  - All stations that successfully send a Check-in form should send a Check-out form at the end of the exercise.
- **Fldigi broadcast message traffic**
  - Request for updates on status of local situation.
  - Recipients reply and provide the requested information.

- **Emergency Notification System** messages (system access provided by GA Hospital Assn) *Note: if you have not signed up to participate in the messaging system, please contact your leadership team for information.
    - Create templates for messages to be sent during exercise.
    - Use templates to send messages to groups/individuals (to be determined)
- **GA ARES Website Updates**
    - Notify all members to check the GA ARES website starting Friday night before the exercise.
    - Create event notifications requiring action by local operators.
    - Schedule notifications to appear on the website at specific times.
    - Encourage operators to use different modes to submit requested reports.
- **Microsoft Teams Meeting**
    - Coordinate among net control operators for HF voice, Winlink traffic, and Fldigi traffic.
    - Keep all parties updated on the flow of activity. Measure volume of traffic and adjust activities to keep the challenge within achievable limits without excessive overload on local stations.
    - Groups included in meeting: HF net control stations, Winlink net control stations, Fldigi net control stations, all backup stations.
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See the activity grid for net time schedules. (Schedule provided later.)

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Exercise Goals

- **Identify ALL traffic as exercise activity!**
- Effective response to local incident support request(s).
- Successful message traffic with GA ARES groups in adjoining counties and/or other counties in the group's District. Adjoining county traffic may not be in the same District for some counties.
- Effectively pass voice and digital traffic using VHF/UHF repeaters. Use as many repeater systems as possible.
- Effectively pass VHF/UHF simplex voice and digital traffic.
- If possible, try to send message traffic using 10m band.
- Winlink Check-in, Winlink Check-out with State net.
- After successfully sending Winlink Check-in, check for messages on a regular basis. You may receive support requests.
- Receive and respond to State level Fldigi broadcast messages.
  Log all exercise activity using ICS 214.
- Deploy to a location and send/receive voice/digital traffic to simulate response to a support request.

After the Exercise

- Provide feedback about the exercise as requested by DEC/EC leadership team.
- Complete survey form sent by State Leadership Team (Notes during the event will be important!)
- Provide additional follow-up feedback if requested.