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Hurricane Amaranth Exercise – After Action Report Summary

1.1 OVERVIEW.

Thank you, Bob. Good evening to the net. Tonight, I'll be giving the net an overview of the activities that took place during last week's hurricane Amaranth exercise.

1.2 OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this exercise was to evaluate the performance of ACS during a simulated hurricane emergency that requires the Pinellas County EOC to be activated, emergency evacuation shelters to be opened, and one or more Incident Communication Centers (ICC) to be deployed. ACS participants were required to obtain communications equipment from the EOC; install, configure, and operate communications equipment at simulated emergency evacuation shelters; emplace, configure, operate, and maintain SatRunner™ CRDs™ and CommandRunner™ CRDs™ at simulated ICCs; perform communication tests with all Pinellas County municipalities using VoIP telephone, 800 MHz P25 radios, and VHF amateur radio circuits; and finally, perform communication checks with the state of Florida EOC using both HF and satellite circuits.

1.3 AFTER ACTION REPORT - SUMMARY

Let me start off by saying that the feedback I received from those participating in the exercise was generally positive and I think by-in-large, everyone had a good time. The exercise was able to successfully evaluate all its planned objectives. The teams assembled at 0800 for an operational briefing at the EOC and then deployed to each simulated destination at 0900. Operational period two wrapped up on schedule and we conducted a hotwash meeting to get feedback from all participants. The hotwash meeting was concluded at 1325, the morning teams were released and those individuals taking part in operational period three broke for lunch. Operational period three started at 1500 and the exercise wrapped by 1730.

We were able to collect a significant number of comments that will be incorporated into the formal after-action report and improvement plan that I hope to brief to everyone at this month's meeting at the EOC. For now, I'll walk the team through the significant events and outcomes of the exercise.

a.   We had twenty-three individuals who participated in the exercise.

    (1)   Nineteen of the twenty-three participants were assigned to the exercise venues. These venues consisted of six simulated emergency evacuation shelters, two Incident Communications Centers, and the EOC radio room. All the exercise venues were located on the Pinellas County Public Safety Complex.

    (2)   Clayton and I served as exercise controllers

    (3)   Two Pinellas County risk management team members participated as safety controllers/evaluators.

b.   One major objective of the exercise was to demonstrate our ability to exchange both formal and informal message traffic. We demonstrated this objective by exchanging **Twenty-nine** messages between the EOC radio room, the emergency evacuation shelters, the ICCs, and the State of Florida EOC.

    (1)   **Twenty-three** messages were exchanged during operational period two.

        (a)   Ten informal messages.

        (b)   Ten formal ICS 213 messages were exchanged using a voice net.

        (c)   Three formal ICS 213 messages passed via Winlink.

    (2)   An additional **Six** messages were exchanged during operational period three.

        (a)   Three formal Winlink ICS 213 messages were sent to the State of Florida EOC. One message was sent via telnet, one using HF

Amateur radio and a Pactor modem, and the third using HF SHARES system and a Pactor modem.

(b)   All three messages sent to the state of Florida EOC were acknowledged. The State of Florida EOC responded with informal Winlink messages sent to the Pinellas County EOC.

c.   Another major objective was to perform connectivity tests with the twenty-nine Pinellas County Municipalities. The ICC teams were able to contact **Twenty** of the **Twenty-nine** Pinellas County municipalities by using VoIP phone and/or the county's 800MHz P25 radio system.

(1)   The ICC teams uncovered several discrepancies in the municipality contact list that the county will work to resolve.

d.   During operational Period Three, 1500 to 1730, the EOC team performed connectivity tests with the State of Florida EOC.

(1)   The team successfully contacted the State of Florida EOC using both the ***MSAT Satellite*** and ***SLER***s systems. As I previously mentioned, we were able to exchange information with the state using three different Winlink modes.

(2)   The team found that the ***EMnet*** satellite system at the State of Florida EOC location was inoperative. The EOC team was able to demonstrate that the Pinellas County site was operational by performing an Echo test with the system tech support team.

(3)   The EOC team successfully deployed the ***Trac-Star*** antenna system on the roof the Public Safety Complex; however, it was unable to acquire the satellite. After contacting the customer support staff, it was determined that several software upgrades were needed to the Pinellas County System and this issue is currently being worked to resolution.

e.   Logistics – All equipment used in the exercise, except for individual hand-held Transceivers, was distributed to the players by Pinellas County and returned without shortfalls after the exercise. That doesn't mean we didn't run into a few problems.

(1)   When unpacking one of the shelter radio kits at a simulated shelter, the shelter team found that the kit was missing a radio power cable. Once notified of the shortfall, a replacement cable was delivered to the impacted shelter.

(2)   Upon arrival at the simulated shelter locations, three shelter teams found that the AC power was inoperative. Once notified of the problem, an electrician was called to repair the problem. The impacted Shelter teams made use of available HTs to continue the mission and exchange traffic with the EOC.

(3)   It's important to note that these were unscripted problems. However, they are the type of real-world problems we are likely to encounter during a deployment. In each case, the shelter teams were able to seamlessly fall back to a casualty mode and continue to perform their missions.

f.   Additional training opportunities

(1)   Message handling for both radiograms and ICS 213 general message forms.

(a)   Prowords, message precedence, and handling instructions.

(b)   Management of traffic within a net structure.

(c)   Incorporate into weekly training nets

(2)   Management of formal logs. ICS 214 site activity logs and ICS 309 communications logs.

1.4   QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

I'd like to pause here for a minute and ask if anyone has a comment or question about tonight's presentation. If you have a comment or question, please provide me with your call sign, slowly, clearly, and phonetically so I don't make a mistake when I respond. And then ask your question or provide me with your comment.

This is WA1RYQ.

[**PAUSING FOR QUESTIONS**]

1.5   CONCLUSION.

That's all I have for this week's training session. I'll conclude with several important points.

a.   No Winlink training this week. I will be sending out a new schedule for Winlink training next Tuesday.

I can be contacted via email at WA1RYQ@arrl.net. My contact information is also available on the Pinellas ACS Web site.

Now with that, I'll turn it back to Net Control.

1.6   QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS.

The following table contains a summary of the comments and questions provided by the membership during the presentation.

No.	Call Sign	Comments	Response
		No Additional Questions or comments	