

Iowa ARES Meeting
Saturday March 4, 2006
Marshalltown, Iowa

9am Jim Snapp, SEC opened the meeting with a few remarks about the agenda for the day. Introductions followed.

NIMS and Amateur Radio

Standardize training for the first responder community and fluid situations ARRL and FEMA offer courses to help us with our training.

KC0OX, Ron Breitwisch, DEC gave a presentation of NIMS and related courses. This presentation can be found at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/iowaares/files/>. (Access to this list is limited to Iowa SEC, DEC's and EC's.) Emergency management responders, support and volunteers should be compliant by September 30, 2006. As volunteers, you should have these courses, but are not required. They are strongly recommending these courses be taken.

FEMA guidelines are starting to emerge regarding NIMS training. There is much confusion in Amateur Radio, so talk to local agencies you serve. They need to be comfortable with us. The courses most recommended for all Amateur Radio operators to take are the NIMS IS-700, Introduction to Incident Command System IS-100, and Single Resource and Action Incident IS-200. Each of these courses takes about three hours to complete and are offered online at no cost. With having your volunteers trained in these courses, the programs in your areas are favorable to getting tax dollars for your programs.

The next step is to evaluate every NIMS requirement for application to amateur radio. Recognizing that amateur radio function under the NIMS and what is applicable to us. Incident Commander. Public Information Officer and Structure are all part of what we need to know about the NIMS.

Minimal Disruption, always use common terminology. Manageable span of Control, using multi Nets and Frequencies when necessary. Resource management has volunteers check in, track assignments, and have a check out procedure in place.

Integrate communication plans. Pre-establish frequencies to be used and antennas and equipment needed to do the job.

Establishment of transfer of command, be accountable, and deployment of volunteers. Be Invited!

Information and intelligence management, be familiar with the agencies you are working with and the forms to pass messages. Always refer any media inquires to the Public Information Officer. We never talk to the media; it's the fastest way for us to be shown the door. Stress this point to all operators!

Liaison Officer, amateur radio is usually under the Logistics section, but it may cross to the Liaison Officer.

Emergency Operation Plan, the amateur radio operators should be in the plan. It's up to us to make the right people aware of what we can offer in the way of communication.

Procedures-Overview

Preference Plan

Corrective action and Mitigation Plans

Categorizing Resources, Who has what and what is the best way for us to send information to the other party involved?

Incident communication, use plain language! No Codes. There are exceptions, send message exactly as given to you. Q signals are all right, if they are not misinterpreted by anyone. Radiogram numbers are acceptable, if everyone has a copy of them. When using plain language, be careful. What does the term mean in different regions of the country?

Networks are a great way to notify volunteers. Be sure to have more than one way to activate your network.

Technology used by the agencies you are working with. Are you able to use the right system for the job? Packet. APRS, Echo Link and Winlink 2000, are some of the ways we may be able to pass information. We need to know ahead of time which way the agency we are serving want their information passed along.

Training recommendations of amateur radio: ask around to see what other sections are doing. Check to see what is federally mandated and if it is going to be followed in other areas. Not all states or counties are going with Federal standards. Some states are requiring the ARRL level one training.

Training and exercises: ask what is appropriate training recommendation. All amateur radio participants are recommended to take the ARRL EC-001, FEMA IS 700(NIMS), and IS-100 (Intro to ICS) courses. Amateur radio operators should interface directly with the served agencies. Courses recommended for this are ARRL EC-002; FEMA IS-200(Basic ICS). Emergency Coordinators, and those developing amateur radio plans and procedures should have ARRL EC-003; FEMA IS 800(National Response Plan Info).

Group Discussion

To encourage radio operators to take the recommended training, the Phrase "Strongly Encourage" may help. Relating the training to a disaster that may happen in your area may help.

EC's should keep track of who is trained in what courses and make this information known to the officials making emergency plans.

Participating in public service activities and EMCOMM events are different.

Emergency management through the county resources is directly connected to grant monies. You should be on the same page and know what is going on in your area.

Share training for ARES by area, not by counties.

A log of messages passed should be kept for a paper trail. This will eliminate any finger pointing later on.

These are a few of the ideas discussed to help get operators the training needed to meet Federal standards.

Equipment Purchased with HLS Grant money. Presented by Ernie Martin, WA0UU.

Ernie stated, he started the grant process four years ago. Never give up was his battle cry. The Presidential Point of Light Award was very influential in helping open doors to obtain the

grant monies needed to put the project together. Paul Harvey's, comments on the Tri-State amateur radio project, was a great endorsement. If you have any question e-mail leewalt@powerbank.net. A video from Tower Solutions was presented showing the tower with generator that is specially built for amateur radio. Now Ernie is in the process of trying to obtain a grant for the purchase of a truck that can pull the tower unit to where it's needed. He's got an application in at the Agriculture Department for the truck grant.

Group discussion of ARES items.

Concern- How do you control a person who wants to run situations like they were run in the past. You need to explain that the rules have been changed since 9-11 and Homeland Security came into being. Some people can hurt us in the community rather than help us.

You, as EC's need to be active with your local police, fire department, and emergency planners.

Just get people to know you and what ARES can do for them.

Have key people in areas.

Get people involved in bigger picture?

ARES planning meeting and EC's from other counties in joint meeting.

Peer pressure should be all you need to take care of policing problems that come up.

The problem of lack of active Hams and competent operators was discussed but no answer found.

Attend other meetings to trade ideas and training.

Leadership has to push points.

Relationships with local agencies are one of the most important items you can do.

Know what manpower and equipment is available on a moment notice.

We need to be neighborly. Working county to county, or city to city will benefit everyone. This will help when you are short of operators to do the job; you will be able to pull in more operators from other counties.

To recruit more ARES members, use the tie between licensing classes and your organization.

Net Control Procedures was presented by Terry Lindsley KS0L and Paul Blain WB0GXD

The web site for the information presented is www.pottcoares.org. ARES net control manual and forms of all kinds are on the web site to be downloaded and used as you choose to. Sharing training with other counties and referring a city and surrounding areas, as the Metro was helpful in getting more operators involved.

Nets and why preambles should be used. The preamble gives an official name to the net and backup repeaters that can be used, primary and secondary. Net manager's job is to arrange schedules for formal and informal nets.

Break Tags that are commonly used are Answer, Question, Info, Priority, Medical, Emergency, and then your call.

In the preamble to nets, try to vary it to keep interest up. For example ask a question or invite comments on a certain subject.

Try to keep a log sheet just to have a paper trail, in case the need arises.

Weather nets also use break tags such as tornado, hail, flooding and then your call sign.

I would recommend you log on the web site above for the full presentation Terry and Paul gave us.

NIMS training and Iowa ARES plan presentation were given by Jim Snapp NA0R.

The Iowa ARES plan was e-mailed to all the EC's before the meeting. This document is just a framework to work from and if you would like to see something added or deleted, just let Jim know. Any ideas are encouraged and welcome.

Training requirements of each level of EC's was discussed and the consensus was DEC should have ARRL 1,2 and 3 courses along with the FEMA IS700, IS100, and IS200. Each EC should have ARRL 1 and 2 courses along with FEMA IS700, IS100, and IS200. Assistant EC's should have ARRL 1 course and IS700, IS100 and IS200, one year to complete the rest of courses an EC would be required to have. General ARES members should have ARRL 1 and FEMA IS700 and IS100. If general ARES members don't have any training, they might not be placed in a position of responsibility. It was also stated that local Emergency Management/Homeland Security requirements could vary.

RACES is not a dead issue yet, but with FEMA in such disarray, amateur radio is on hold. Iowa plan is on hold also.

Final comments, there was an inquiry on how to interface radio into ICN. Anyone's help would be appreciated. There is a lack of new operators and we need to get amateur radio out into the community to spark some interest in young people. Ask yourselves, What have I done to get new radio operators? Things to try: Set up station in public areas, pass Mother's Day and Father's Day traffic, advertise amateur radio in some form in your community, 4-H project, Girl and Boy Scouts.

The second year for this meeting, the attendance is down a little. Most people want the meeting to be annual, so have set second Saturday in March for the next meeting. March 10, 2007.

Respectfully submitted by Roxie Miller KC0LLB