



Communicator



Maui County ARES® and RACES Bulletin
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Saturday, October 1, 2011

Simulated Emergency Test (SET)

A simulated Tsunami triggered by a 9.0 Moment earthquake is the scenario for this year's Hawai'i ARRL Simulated Emergency Test. The simulated destructive waves are expected at 9:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

The SET exercise is scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. and will end at 12:00 noon on Saturday, October 1, 2011. The statewide VHF net will be on the RACES repeater system, 147.02 MHz on Haleakala. HF activity will be on 7.088 kHz LSB. Statewide net control (NCS) will be KH6HPZ at the State Civil Defense Emergency Operating Center. There may also be APRS® (Automatic Packet Reporting System) traffic on 144.39 MHz. A number of SET information bulletins / scenario updates will be transmitted by NCS during the exercise

State RACES Coordinator Ron Hashiro, AH6RH says that "We will take net check-ins, by County. When checking in, please give (a) your location, (b) whether you operating with emergency power, (c) served agencies that you are in contact with during the SET net and (d) whether you're newly licensed since 2007. The information is summarized and reported to ARRL at the conclusion of the exercise".

Local Net

Maui County NCS will be KH6H (tactical call sign Maui EOC). Maui EOC will primarily monitor 147.02 MHz but will be taking local check ins on the MCDA repeater system at about 8:45 a.m., before the start of the statewide net. SET participants can use the MCDA repeater system and or simplex frequencies designated on the Maui simplex plan to pass local traffic. If initial contact is made on 147.02 MHz, be sure to notify net control that you will be moving off frequency to pass your traffic. Moving off the primary net frequency leaves it open for more interisland traffic. Also, notify the NCS when you leave the net. They could have traffic or some assignment for you and find that you are not answering calls from the NCS.

Traffic

Both formal written traffic using ICS form 213 and informal tactical traffic are encouraged. Be sure to begin and end your message traffic with the sentence "This is an exercise message". Use local date and time in 24 hour format, i.e., 9:30 a.m. would be 0930 HST.

See **SET**
On **page 2**

Hurricane Season Heats Up: Review ARES Disaster Principles

Reprinted from the ARRL ARES E-Letter, Aug. 17, 2011

1. Keep the QRM level down.

In a disaster, many of the most crucial stations will be weak in signal strength. It is essential that all other stations remain silent unless they are called upon. If you're not sure you should transmit -- don't. Our amateur bands are very congested. If you want to help, study the situation by listening. Don't transmit unless you are sure you can help by doing so. Don't ever break into a disaster net just to inform the control station you are there if needed.

2. Monitor established disaster frequencies.

Many localities and some geographical areas have established disaster frequencies where someone is always (or nearly always) monitoring for possible calls. When you are not otherwise engaged, it is helpful simply to sit and listen on such frequencies, some of

which are used for general rag-chewing as well as disaster preparedness drilling.

3. Avoid spreading rumors.

During and after a disaster situation, especially on the phone bands, you may hear almost anything. Unfortunately, much misinformation is transmitted. Rumors are started by expansion, deletion, amplification or modification of words, exaggeration or interpretation. All addressed transmissions should be officially authenticated as to their source. These transmissions should be repeated word for word, if at all, and only when specifically authorized. In a disaster emergency situation, with everyone's nerves on edge, it is little short

See **HURRICANE SEASON**
On **page 2**

Communicator

Melvin Fukunaga, KH6H
ARRL District Emergency Coordinator
2011 Kahekili Hwy
Wailuku, HI 96793-9206
kh6h@arrl.net

 <http://twitter.com/MauiARES>

SET

Continued from **page 1**

Here are some message handling tips from ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator Kevin Bogan, AH6QO:

Tactical messages do not go on an ICS-213, but they are mentally formatted and crafted in the same fashion as a written message.

They have the request in the subject line and in the first line of the message, (e.g., “Request debris removal at Punahou and Wilder Streets.”) The Situation Report, SitRep, does not have a request, but names what it is, not just “SitRep”. For example, “SitRep for Hanalei Bridge at 0930 HST.” SitReps are in response to a request for periodic sitreps and are not spontaneously generated by the operator. If you must report a condition, ask yourself why you need to report it. In most cases, you want someone to do something about it. Don’t report a tree down on a street. If it is blocking the road, request debris removal of a downed tree blocking the road.

Both Tactical and written formal messages are logged by the op-

erator. The gist of the tactical message is written into the station log and copied out if it needs to be passed on to others.

Tactical messages are typically from operator to operator who is reporting on what he/she sees at the current location. For example, Roland reporting from his truck that the Saddle Road is blocked at a certain point is a tactical message; reporting that your station at the War Memorial gym is on station; reporting on VHF that HF 40m band has not opened up for a certain EOC.

If one agency wants a message to go to another agency or to another location of the same agency, then the agency needs to write it on an ICS213 and sign it. If they ask, “Can I just tell you and you write it? You answer, “I will help you write it.” As you can see, it is best to train them beforehand and practice.

Summary

The ARRL Simulated Emergency Test is a nationwide exercise in emergency communications, administered by ARRL Emergency Coordinators.

The SET weekend gives communicators the opportunity to focus on the emergency communications capability within their community while interacting with local nets. SET weekend is held in October, and is announced in QST.

Purpose of SET

To find out the strengths and weaknesses of ARES and NTS, the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and other groups in providing emergency communications.

To provide a public demonstration — to served agencies such as Red Cross, Emergency Management and through the news media — of the value to the public that Amateur Radio provides, particularly in time of need.

To help radio amateurs gain experience in communications using standard procedures and a variety of modes under simulated emergency conditions

HURRICANE SEASON

Continued from **page 1**

of criminal to make a statement on the air without foundation in authenticated fact.

4. Authenticate all messages.

Every message which purports to be of an official nature should be written and signed. Whenever possible, amateurs should avoid initiating disaster or emergency traffic themselves. We do the communicating; the agency officials we serve supply the content of the communications.

5. Strive for efficiency.

Whatever happens in an emergency, you will find hysteria and some amateurs who are activated by the thought that they must be “sleepless heroes.” Instead of operating your own station full time at the expense of your health and efficiency, it is much better to serve a shift at one of the best-located and best-equipped stations. This station will be suitable for the work at hand, and manned by relief

shifts of the best-qualified operators. This reduces interference and secures well-operated stations.

6. Select the mode and band to suit the need.

It is a characteristic of all amateurs to believe that their favorite mode and band is superior to all others. For certain specific purposes and distances, this may be true. However, the merits of a particular band or mode in a communications emergency should be evaluated impartially with a view to the appropriate use of bands and modes. There is, of course, no alternative to using what happens to be available, but there are ways to optimize available communications.

Kalaupapa, Hawaii Is Site of Second ARRL Remote VE Testing

From The ARRL Letter, Sept. 1, 2011

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From the sunny shores of Hawaii's Kalaupapa Peninsula, ARRL Volunteer Examiners gave a remote ARRL VE session on the morning of July 25. Well, at least it was morning in Hawaii, but it was late in the afternoon at ARRL Headquarters. What made this VE session so special that it was only the second VE session to be administered via Internet video feed. The first video VE session — and the first-ever VE session in Antarctica — took place in October 2010. Now there are two new radio amateurs in Hawaii's Kalawao County, just in time for the Hawaii QSO Party, August 27-28.

Not only was this VE session special due to its location, only one VE was at Kalaupapa for the exam. "This is where the Internet video feed came into play," explained ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM. "Joe Speroni, AH0A — who lives in Honolulu but went to the site at his own expense — was at Kalaupapa, but Bev Yuen, AH6NF, and Ray Moody, AH6LT, were in Honolulu and watching on video. We also had three VEs here at ARRL Headquarters watching via video feed: Penny Harts, N1NAG, Steve Ewald, WV1X, and Rose Anne Lawrence, KB1DMW. These three administer many VE sessions each year here at ARRL HQ."

Kalaupapa is an isolated peninsula located on the island of Molokai in the Hawaiian Islands. From 1866-1969, those Hawaiians who were afflicted with leprosy (today called Hansen's disease) were removed from their families and sent to live at Kalaupapa for the rest of their lives, separated from society. Chosen by the Hawaiian Monarchy for its natural barriers to escape — including some of the highest sea cliffs in the world and a coastline with high surf and hazardous ocean currents — the site became a National Historical Park in 1980 with the aim to preserve, protect and interpret more than 200 historic buildings, archeological sites and the incredible stories of the people that lived and died there. Currently, about 90 people — former patients, Department of Health staff and National Park Service staff — live in the settlement of Kalaupapa within the park year round.

According to Yuen, there are physical barriers to enter Kalaupapa, as well as entry restrictions. "To get to Kalaupapa, you must either take a mule train or be an expert hiker; entry by sea is restricted," she explained. "The trail down to the peninsula goes down a very steep 1600 foot cliff and the trail is 3.5 miles. If you take a plane from Honolulu to Kalaupapa — a distance of about 60 miles — expect to pay at least \$500 for a round-trip ticket.

While there are modern communication systems (i.e., telephone, high speed Internet), Yuen said that Kalaupapa residents are concerned that there is no backup communications during the frequent power failures: "Having radio amateurs at Kalaupapa would give residents a form of backup communications. This became evident during the recent tsunami following the March 2011 earthquake in Japan. While little damage was done, residents had to be evacuated in the middle of the night to higher ground on the peninsula, and had limited connection with the outside world.

Kalaupapa residents interested in getting their ticket contacted the Civil Defense Amateur Radio Club (CDARC), which provides VE testing on Oahu, and asked the group what they could do to help the peninsula residents. "The OCDARC VE group had read about the ARRL VEC remote testing used for candidates in Antarctica," Yuen said. "While not as remote as Antarctica, the Kalaupapa peninsula is still a logistically and financially challenging trip. It would be difficult for even one VE to travel to the peninsula, but doing so for three VEs is a major burden. They requested and received FCC approval for a remote testing session. With enthusiastic support from the ARRL VEC Manager, Maria Somma, AB1FM, a testing session was set up for several residents who had been studying on their own for the Technician exam. Joe Speroni,

See **KALAUPAPA**

On **page 5**

A short summary of the 2011 HI QSO Party on Kalaupapa

Jim WH6GS and Bev AH6NF

From August 25 to 29, 2011, five Oahu hams visited Kalaupapa peninsula and settlement on Molokai to participate in the 2011 Hawaii QSO Party, activating one of the smallest and rarest counties in the U.S., Kalawao County.

Joe Speroni AH0A, Kimo Chun KH7U, Ron Hashiro AH6RH, Bev Yuen AH6NF, and Jim Yuen WH6GS, all members of the Ko'olau Amateur Radio Club, spent many months planning the trip not only to operate there, but to assist the National Park Service and Department of Health staffs in setting up ham radio emergency communications capability. During the recent tsunami following the earthquake in Japan on March 11, 2011, residents of Kalaupapa had to be evacuated in the middle of the night to higher ground on the peninsula with little connection with the outside world. This sparked the interest in having ham radio as a backup communications plan. Although some residents were hams in the 1940-50s, and possibly into the 1980s, there have been no hams living there in recent years.

Working with the FCC and ARRL, Joe AH0A was able to conduct a remote-VE test session. Three Kalaupapa staff are now newly-licensed ham radio operators: Steve Prokop WH6DTS (General), Lionel Kaawaloa WH6DTZ (Tech) and Rafael Torres WH6DUP (Tech). For the HI QSO Party, we set up on the Paschoal Hall (auditorium) lanai in the center of town with vertical antennas in the open field next to the hall. Antennas, all mounted on collapsible fiberglass poles, were:

- SteppIR, BigIR vertical (10-40 meters)
- 20 meter vertical dipole (home brew)
- All band vertical (10-40 meters)(homebrew by NH7XL)
- Off-center-fed dipole at about 25 feet

Our rigs were:

- Kenwood, TS-480SAT transceiver with an Elecraft KPA500 amp.
- Icom IC-7200 transceiver, running barefoot.
- We kept another Kenwood TS-480 as backup.

Both stations were on the air Friday afternoon, ready for the HI QSO Party at 6:00 p.m. Friday evening, operating multi-multi as KH7Q. 20 meters was open to the mainland, then later to Europe. Forty meters was only marginal. By about 11 PM the bands were slow so we shut down for some rest. But, we were back before dawn on Saturday morning and on

See **HI QSO PARTY**

On **page 5**

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IS CERT THE FUTURE OF ARES?

David Coursey, N5FDL

n5fdl@arrl.net

Here is a statistic I like to toss around, because it explains the future of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, at least in my part of the world. It starts with a question: "What is the largest, best-organized, and best trained Amateur Radio emergency group in San Joaquin County? Is it ARES? RACES? A ham club? No, it is the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in the City of Tracy, the California community of 80,000 where I live.

Tracy CERT, operated by the fire department, requires its volunteer team leaders to be licensed amateurs, capable of providing longer-distance communication when their teams are in the field. Individual CERT members who are not hams use short-distance Family Radio Service (FRS) radio to communicate with their leaders. Of the 45 responder-qualified members of Tracy CERT, more than two-dozen have become licensed amateurs, most through a series of one-day "HamCram" licensing events.

We follow the HamCram with training to get the new hams familiar with their radios, our frequency plan and net operation. (We have standardized on Yaesu FT-270, FT-60 and the discontinued VX-170 handheld transceivers.) No other group in our county has as many members that are as broadly trained. Almost all of the CERT hams are also ARES members. Since CERT is their primary affiliation, that's how I count them.

Every CERT member is required to participate in at least 24 hours of CERT training, attend meetings and training sessions at least occasionally. All members have basic Incident Command System (ICS) training and have been fingerprinted and passed background checks. Each member is also a State of California registered Disaster Service Worker.

Tracy is not the only city in our county with hams in its CERT program. In neighboring Manteca, the police department CERT group has several hams. We are in the process of training perhaps a dozen more. The fire department has its own group with a half-dozen ham members with some overlapping with CERT membership.

How is this the future?

People get into CERT because they are interested in preparedness for their families and neighborhoods. Many have a strong "do-gooder" instinct looking for an outlet. CERT activities require communication. Whether day-to-day training, community events or an actual emergency, CERT members need to talk with one another, CERT leadership and their sponsoring agencies.

While some CERT groups have access to public safety radio systems, those don't offer the flexibility and "When All Else Fails" capability that Amateur Radio does. Members also don't get public safety radios to take home. I "sell" Amateur Radio to CERT members as a valuable tool for helping their community and CERT team that also happens to be a fun and interesting hobby if they choose to head in that direction.

The Role of the HamCram

Once sold, the CERT member needs a quick and easy way to get licensed and radio-trained enough to perform their CERT missions using ham gear. Enter the HamCram, a one-day cram session – reading the question pools and answers repeatedly – that ends with the Technician exam.

I always – and only half-jokingly – warn attendees that they are likely to know less about radio when they leave the HamCram than when they arrived. Still, we have a 90 percent success rate, which makes it easy to build a cadre of hams within a CERT organization.

We follow up with training in how to use a radio and lots of ham propaganda to try to make these new HamCram hams more interested in the hobby. Probably 15 percent take the bait, and the other 85 percent have at least received a good introduction to the capabilities of Amateur Radio. Some of our CERT members are upgrading and starting to get onto HF.

Why ARES Needs CERT

One of the problems many ARES groups and clubs face is the graying of Amateur Radio. Our average age is somewhere in the mid-60s, meaning many hams aren't the active public servants they used to be. The pool of traditional "I am really interested in radio" young hams seems to have mostly dried up, our hobby replaced by the Internet and video games in the lives of people both young and old.

Our CERT members tend toward soccer moms and their husbands more than retirees. They are already signed-up for CERT activities, so getting some of them involved in non-CERT ARES activities is not much of a stretch.

Thus, Tracy CERT has created a pool of licensed operators who can respond either as CERT-trained ARES members or as ARES-trained CERT members, depending on the mission. The Tracy ARES group includes both CERT and non-CERT members, who work together in training and response operations.

Our non-CERT hams provide advanced ARES and communications capabilities that support CERT leadership and their members in the field. This works out quite well and without the friction that sometimes occurs in other locations. Does this mean CERT is taking over ARES, or vice versa? Hardly.

While our memberships overlap, each side has core members who think of themselves primarily as either a ham or a CERT member. They have their meetings, we have ours, and sometimes we meet together. Members of one can attend the other group's training.

This works out quite well, in no small part because Tracy CERT and the Tracy Amateur Radio Club are both young organizations that grew up side-by-side. More established organizations might have to work harder to make ARES and CERT behave as the sister organizations they should be.

See **CERT**
On **page 5**

KALAUPAPA

Continued from **page 3**

AH0A, travelled to Kalaupapa to be the one needed VE on-site.”

Two residents took the Technician exam and both passed. “On Monday, July 25 at 3 PM, we gathered in the ARRL VEC office to start the video conference exam session,” Somma explained. “Testing was in the Superintendent’s office, with the candidate’s computer logged onto the ARRL VEC examination website. Six ARRL Volunteer Examiners observed the session. Three different interactive online Tech exams were available, so tests could be randomly assigned. The results were reported to the candidates within a few minutes of electronic submission to the ARRL VEC and VE team.”

Moody, the Hawaii VE team manager who petitioned the FCC to hold the Kalaupapa test, participated from Honolulu. He was pleased with the result and how well ARRL remote testing software performed and said he hopes that the process can be applied to other isolated areas of Hawaii in the future. Yuen, the other VE participating from Honolulu, thought the process went well and the software worked flawlessly. “The emotions of those setting up this VE testing ranged from elation to despair as we confronted — and solved — a myriad of small problems that surfaced over the last couple of months,” she said. “We are so grateful for the support of the ARRL, especially Maria.” The Oahu team also expressed their thanks and appreciation for the technical expertise provided by Jim Yuen, WH6GS.

Speroni, Moody and Yuen said they were pleased to know that Kalaupapa finally has ham radio operators who will be available when their normal communications go down. “There are plans for a permanent station at Kalaupapa,” Yuen said. “You will be hearing ham radio operations from the county very soon. A small group of Oahu hams will be going to Kalaupapa to activate Kalawao County for the Hawaii QSO Party the last weekend of August, providing a rare contact for county hunters. While there, they will be assisting the new Technician licensees, and helping them to get on the air.”

HI QSO PARTY

Continued from **page 3**

20 meters for the morning opening to Europe and the US mainland. Fifteen meters opened later in the morning/afternoon, but there was not much on 10 meters. We worked both SSB and CW during the day from our main station with the amp. The second station running barefoot was less effective. We encouraged residents to visit our stations and to see what ham radio was all about. A couple of them even operated. Thanks to those who were calling us for being patient with these inexperienced operators. We always had someone there to explain what the operators were doing. And, each of our stations had 2 headphones and external speakers to accommodate guests. One of the residents who had not been on the radio for more than 40 years took the mic and was delighted to again be on the air after so many years. We finished with more than 850 QSOs, contacting 47 US states and 42 countries as well as all continents except Antarctica. We were on 15, 20 and 40 meters, and a little 10 meters, mostly SSB, but also CW. We took time to attend church services at historic Siloama church, spent a few hours fishing and walked around the town to take a few photos. On Monday, we installed 2 UHF/VHF radios in vehicles, checked connectivity with repeaters on other islands and worked with the new hams there to get them on the air and familiar with their new equipment. Although our total number of QSOs was lower than we would have liked, we were pleased with our overall results. We left with plans to come back to assist the residents with more ham radio training and to activate Kalawao County again soon. Hopefully, it will not be long before we get back. We are grateful to the staff of the Kalaupapa National Historical Park and the State of Hawaii, Dept of Health for their assistance and hospitality. Without their support, this trip would not have been possible. Also, thanks to the residents of Kalaupapa for their warm welcome. We also thank numerous KARC members and others who provided equipment, advice and assistance to the group.

QSL via KH7Q or AH6NF (QSL manager for KH7Q).

CERT

Continued from **page 4**

Key Points

CERT organizations can provide the new blood that many ARES groups and ham clubs need. CERT members may be younger than the general Amateur population and come with a predisposition toward active community service. Amateur Radio provides communications that CERT needs. ARES can provide training, technology and communications leadership to CERT groups.

HamCrams are key to getting CERT members licensed easily and quickly, but must be followed by ongoing communications training. Having standardized radios, all programmed alike, makes it easier for ARES to support CERT members and their communications needs.

CERT and ARES working closely together expands the capabilities of both groups. While CERT is not a traditional entry to Amateur Radio, CERT members are naturals for carrying out our

public service commitment to the FCC and the American people. This article is intended to introduce you to the possibilities of CERT and ARES working closely together. Your situation will surely be different from mine.

Still, Amateur Radio and CERT each have something the other needs — people and communications — so it’s worth the effort to make the relationship work.

David Coursey, N5FDL, is Emergency Coordinator of San Joaquin County (CA) ARES, leader of the Tracy ARC, and a member of Tracy CERT. Visit his blog at n5fdl.com. His e-mail address is n5fdl@arrl.net.

Additional information on organizing a HamCram can be found at www.n5fdl.com/hamcram.