

MTV ARES 2021-2022 Newsletter

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Our Mountain View ARES operators continued to train and practice our emergency communication skills in 2021 and 2022 despite pandemic restrictions. Most of our exercises and drills had to be conducted remotely, without the availability of the Radio Room at 1000 Villa. Despite the restrictions, we invested 2947 volunteer hours in 2021 and increased the total to 3292 in 2022 as we were able to do some activities in person. In 2022 we averaged 30 check-ins on the Monday night local net, 20 check-ins on the UHF/220 net, and 9 on the weekly packet net. Several of our members continued county trainings and earned advanced credentials.

We are especially fortunate to have a number of trained packet operators in our city. Packet is an important and preferred way to communicate long messages quickly and accurately. We have 14 active packet operators who check in regularly on weekly practice nets and 8 who have been training on the Monthly Packet Exercise, which includes sending and retrieving messages in a two-way dialog between a field position and a Command Post. Participants get personal feedback on their performance for each task and have done well.

Check-In	ICS-213 Opening status			ICS-213 Interim status update			EOC213RR			HE
	HO	To ICS POS:	Content	HO	To ICS POS:	Content	HO	To ICS POS:	Content	
ID#	R	Operations Xanadu EOC	Y	R	Planning Xanadu EOC	Y	P	Planning Section XNDEOC	Y	R
100M	R	Operations -ICSFrom	Y -ref	R	Planning	Y - fax	P	Planning Section	Y -XDHM	R
207P [3]	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	XNDEOC	Y	R
300M	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning Section	Y	R
020M [4]	R	Operations -ICSFrom	Y -exercise -ref	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning Section	Y	R
715P	R	Operations -ICSTo	Y	R	Planning	Y -ref	P	Planning	Y -exercise	R
312M	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning	Y -exercise	R
303P	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y -exercise	P -subject	Planning Section	Y -exercise	
800M	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning Section	Y	R
3022P	R	Operations	Y -ref	R	Planning	Y - fax	P	Planning Section	Y	R
7105M	R	Operations	Y -ref	R	Planning	Y - fax	P	Planning Section	Y	R
113M [5]	R	Operations	Y -ref	R	Planning	Y -XDHM	P	Planning Section	Y	R
2802P [7]	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning Section	Y -fax [8]	R
134P [6]	R	Operations -ICSFrom	Y -exercise -ref	R	Planning -ICSFrom	Y	P	Planning Section	Y -exercise -fax [9]	R
103P	R	Operations	Y	R [10]	Planning -ICSFrom	Y	P	Planning Section	Y	R
300M [2]	R [2]	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y -XDHM	P	Planning Section	Y -exercise	R
3340P [2][4]	R [2]	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning Section	Y -fax [8]	R
3820P	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning Section	Y	R
3402P	R	Operations	Y	R	Planning	Y	P	Planning Section	Y -fax [9]	R
7201M	R	Operations	Y -ref	R	Planning -ICSFrom	Y	P	Planning Section	Y	R
1274P	R	Operations	Y -ref	R	Planning	Y -fax	P	Planning Section	Y	R

This is a portion of the scorecard from the monthly packet exercise in November. Green is good, yellow marks nits to discuss, and orange is for EOC processing problems. Each participant knows which row shows their results, but others don't know.

Drills and Events in 2021 and 2022

In 2021 we participated in two county/city drills (Feb 20 and May 15) where we practiced using DA (Damage Assessment) summary reports and tested updated DA summary software. We operated from our homes, simulating that we were at a CERT or Radio Room.

In 2020 and 2021 we were fortunate to receive grants from the city of Mountain View to purchase a canopy and equipment for a mobile Command Post. We held a drill July 17, 2021 where we set up the Command Post for the first time (in less than an hour!) and then conducted a communication drill to test the equipment.



AECs set up the canopy for the first time. It has 4 walls and a door and window.



Mike N6IHT, Rick KI6PUR and Phil KF6ZSQ are ready to operate from inside the new Command Post.

We supported the county in the Aug 21, 2021 exercise by sending packet and voice messages to the county EOC, but didn't participate locally.

Pandemic restrictions were still in force at the start of 2022 so we continued to operate remotely, simulating traffic from the field and with a remote station operating as the MTV EOC. We held a credentialed drill Feb 19, 2022 in conjunction with the county. We sent messages from simulated CERTs, with everyone still operating remotely.

Pandemic guidelines loosened enough to allow us to host an Antenna Party April 23rd in the auditorium at 1000 Villa. Guests from other cities joined us to test antennas and radio equipment and meet in person for the first time in many months. We were happy to finally meet new operators whom we only knew as a voice checking in on the Monday night net!



We were finally able to use the Radio Room for a drill in a limited fashion. We joined the county earthquake drill August 27, simulating an earthquake followed by an aftershock. We sent Mike-Mike Earthquake reports from our homes and collected the reports with two operators wearing face masks in the Radio Room.

In September we supported two Public Service Events, where masks were optional and we could work together in the field. The first was the Art and Wine Festival September 10th and 11th, where we volunteered with members of REACT (Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams). The second was the Trailblazer race at Shoreline Park, where we also volunteered with members of REACT. We were happy to participate in person at these events!



Poul KZ6DM with REACT members Linda and Robin in the REACT booth at the Art and Wine Festival.



Ed, Rob and Linda check in with Rick and Poull

Net Control for the Trailblazer Race was located in the soccer field at Microsoft. We transmitted on 440.800 to field operators along the trail in Shoreline Park.

Our last event of 2022 was the City-wide CERT drill on November 5th. Our operators provided voice and packet communications of DA Summaries from eight CERT neighborhoods. Net Control and Scribe/shift supervisor operated from the Radio Room and field operators set up their stations at the eight participating CERT neighborhoods. Our OES Coordinator, Robert Maitland visited the sites to observe operations.



Leslie KK6EKN and Kelly KN6DSE were scribe/shift supervisor and Net Control in the Radio Room during the drill.



Jim WU6K transmits a DA Summary by voice from the Old Mountain View CERT Command Post.



Jeff AJ6XZ used his mobile packet station to send DA summaries from the Cuesta Park CERT.

WHAT NEXT?

Looking forward, we'll be continuing training and practicing communications skills throughout the year. In the early part of 2023 we'll be testing new equipment we purchased through a grant from the city, such as the 32-foot antenna mast and tripod. We'll be conducting a credentialed drill in February and participating in other exercises and events throughout the year. We also hope to resume training classes on local procedures for communications, such as our Ham 101 class for new members. We appreciate the efforts of all our hams to continue trainings and participating in local events.