

## Simulated Emergency Test:

There is going to be a major SET operation at the Radford Army Ammunition Plant on August 7th and we have been invited to be part of this exercise. All the other agencies have informed their organizations about the planned date so I didn't want our group to not have the same information and opportunity for planning.

The American Red Cross, local police, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, US Army, local mental health organizations, other state and Federal agencies, etc will be participating. This event is going to focus on some type of terrorist event. Please inform your ECs to have their units to keep that date open to respond. It looks like this will require a large number of ARES members region wide. Please be discreet in sharing this information.

One of the reasons that we were invited is that the security people at the plant had read of our recent work in Tazewell and Russell Counties and were impressed. Woody and I will be participating in a "Table Top Exercise" on July 27th and we will have more details following that date.

Any person entering the facility will need a photo I.D., no cameras, no cell phones that can take photos, no firearms. There are areas of the facility that you cannot enter with matches or lighters or anything that would create a spark.

My feeling is that non-Health & Welfare communications via Amateur Radio Emergency Service may be very light due to all the agencies involved and the need to have something in the exercise for each interest group. An actual event of this nature would create a situation of complete shutdown of cell phone and hard wired service due to a huge influx of calls and the high demand, if the scenario is played out this way then there would be a heavy requirement for our services. In 9/11 one of the greatest problems was lack of communications.

In light of this, and in order to give all interested ARES members an opportunity to participate, I would suggest the opening of our amateur radio stations at the following locations, American Red Cross in Roanoke, Montgomery County, Carroll, Grayson and Wythe etc. Activation of EOCs at Salem, Vinton, Roanoke, the Town of Christiansburg if that facility is available in time and Pulaski County etc. If you are interested in setting communications at your local Red Cross or EOC let me know. We will be supporting New River Valley Community Services with stations at both Pulaski, and Blacksburg as well as their field operations (shadows). We should have a net control away from the scene with operators and stations to support a "talk-in" and operations. We also need a Comm Station on site to handle the traffic generated to and from the scene. We will need a number of operators on site and others nearby that can shift from Health and Welfare nets and quickly move unto the plant property or other areas to assist with communications with first responders.

Here are the givens; we will be supporting the New River Valley Community Services with whatever communications needs they require. Woody and I are going to a "Tabletop Exercise" on May 27th and will have a better understanding of this need. The bigger end of our activation is not this support and we need to get preparations underway **NOW** for our general response.

I have talked with Joseph Zagrapan, Antiterrorism Officer for the RAAP, last week. We will need to have a station at the Incident Command Post to assist with the overall communications needs of the operation as it unfolds. We know that there will be a mock terrorist attack and there will be 15 people killed with a number of injuries. He has ask that I prepare a large number of (H&W) messages for "fictitious workers" to be sent to "fictitious family members" over an 80 mile radius surrounding the plant. This 80 mile distance covers the area that workers commute to RAAP. The H&W is a lower priority than traffic to support the relief response. So, if communications is needed for the site, Health and Welfare is put on hold until the other traffic can be cleared. Health and Welfare coming out of the disaster has priority over incoming health and welfare. This is a sample Health & Welfare, FROM: Joe Fictitious, To Mary Fictitious, I AM SAFE AND WILL PHONE HOME AS SOON AS I AM OUTSIDE THE RAAP. SIGNED JOE.

There also be traffic that will request information on logistical support, such as "how many cots and blankets do you have at the Roanoke Red Cross", "We need 30 additional trained search and rescue workers" "We require all the search and rescue dogs that you have available". None of these items would be delivered in a four hour exercise but this would help in testing our ability in handling high volumes of traffic and would give ARES members experience in working together and with neighboring units. **The amount of traffic passed in this four hour exercise will be far greater than what was passed in the 9 days at the Tazewell/Russell County deployment.**

For at least the next week, I'm going to be very busy preparing these messages for this event. Woody, you and Bernie will need to get started right away in recruiting a commitment from ARES members to assist in this exercise. You will also need to line up agencies that will allow operations from their facilities. You especially will want to set up at locations that

have installed Amateur Stations as part of their communications system, there are several of these in the Roanoke Valley. The Red Cross chapter that covers Carroll, Grayson and Wythe County has made a decision to participate but will need someone to man the station. The Twin County E-911 Center will also be set up and running a station for the exercise.

I checked repeaters from the administration building parking lot at the RAAP again today. The results are as follows;

147.180 + with a tone of 103.5 on Peaks Knob is best  
146.865 + with a tone of 110.9 on Bald Knob/Mt Lake second best with a little pager noise on the output.  
146.985 - with no tone required on Poor Mtn. 3rd best (all receivers are now working)  
146.745 - with a tone of 107.2 on Poor Mtn.  
146.895 - with a tone of 103.5 on Big Walker Mountain  
146.715 - with no tone required on Bushy Mountain near Blacksburg  
146.775 - with a tone of 107.2 on Sand Mountain near Wythville  
146.50 Simplex

We will need repeater coverage for "Health & Welfare" to the east of the plant. This could be provided by either the 146.985, 146.745 or the 146.865 this would cover Montgomery, Floyd, Roanoke Craig, Botetourt, Franklin, Henry and Patrick Counties. For Health & Welfare to the West (Wythe Pulaski, Carroll, Grayson Wythe, Bland, Merceer County WV) Giles, Bland, Tazewell, Russell and Smyth Counties, 146.895 repeater would be the key. We can also pass traffic into Richmond via the 147.330 repeater. The best repeater for covering the area around the plant would be the 147.18 Peak Knob repeater. I will be setting up pages on the Region website with forms and information to assist in this exercise. The region site is [www.w4ghs.org/ARESWEST.html](http://www.w4ghs.org/ARESWEST.html) then click on the button that is label RAAP SET (Yellow Button). Go and print out forms that you will need to support yourself or your unit in this operation.

Send me an e-mail at [w4ghs@arrl.net](mailto:w4ghs@arrl.net) if you plan to assist. I will forward this to Woody and Bernie to let them know of your planned participation. Just state, I will be there for the SET. ECs if you are coming to the site with people send that information to me and I will forward it. If you plan to setup at a Red Cross or EOC or other agency in you area, e-mail the information on that operation and I will begin to generate traffic that will be sent to your remote stations with H & W and request for support items or people. Most of the messages will have an ARL number so you will need to print the form off the SET FILES page so you will know the text that these numbers represent.

At the present time I have confirmation on the following operations;

Red Cross, Carroll, Grayson, Galax & Wythe per Edna Shore  
Red Cross Roanoke as per Woody  
E-911 Center Twin Counties (Carroll & Grayson) per Eddie Hines

I can't tell you how important this operation is at this point but it will be a defining moment in taking VA ARES to another level for a number of reasons. This will be a well-planned and executed operation and we need each of you to be a part of this success story.

Our DEC's for District 13 & 14 will be handling setting the operation up. District 12 and 15 are also welcome to be a part of the exercise if they chose to be, just let me know. If you have questions contact me.

73

Glen Sage, W4GHS  
ARES West Region Coordinator