

EPA Section-wide Simulated Emergency Test (SET)

Date May 20 - Friday: 2000-2400L
 May 21 - Saturday: 0600-1200L

Scope *ARRL Eastern Pennsylvania Section (EPA) County ARES Units*

- Objectives
1. Evaluate ARES turn out / participation in a simulated communications emergency
 2. Evaluate preparedness of county ARES units to operate on emergency power
 3. Evaluate effectiveness of county units to pass VHF / UHF message traffic to EC/DEC
 4. Evaluate effectiveness of county units to pass HF traffic on emergency power to command post (SEC / SM)
 5. Evaluate ability of county ARES units to pass VHF UHF message traffic via digital mode

Exercise Design

Time Duration: 10 - 12 hours

Scenario: Severe Spring nor'easter affecting eastern Pennsylvania with heavy winds causing widespread power outages requiring shelter operations. EMAs activate ARES units in most EPA counties.

Exercise will have competitive overtones with points awarded to promote participation and foster unit pride.

Exercise design is intended to maximize participation by breaking over a combination of week days and weekend (Friday / Saturday) and include periods in both AM and PM. This schedule should encourage greater participation without committing volunteers for an entire weekend.

Evaluation Criteria

1. 100 point scale to determine overall effectiveness.
2. Points assignment
 - A. Participation: 1 point per ARES member, 5 points per deployed station at a site designated by county EC (maximum = 30 points).
 - B. Emergency Power: 5 points per station operating on emergency power (maximum = 20 points).
 - C. VHF / UHF Message Traffic Handling: 5 points per ICS-213 message passed to county EC or DEC (maximum = 20 points).
 - D. HF Message Traffic Handling: 10 points per HF message passed to EPA SM in Northern Sector or SEC in Southern Sector (maximum = 10 points).
 - E. Digital VHF / UHF Traffic Handling: 5 points per ICS-213 message passed to EC or DEC via digital mode (maximum = 20 points).

Participation Guidelines

1. County ECs should determine if their units will actively deploy to a simulated shelter, firehouse or other designated site or operate from a home station. An ARES member operating from a home station = 1 point. A member deployed to a designated site = 6 points (5 for deploying and 1 for each member).
2. Each member operating from a home station or deployed to a designated site must use emergency power (battery, generator, etc.) to receive the 5-point power bonus.
3. VHF / UHF Traffic Handling must involve using an ICS-213 message form. The content of the message should simulate traffic that would be passed from a site, such as a shelter, to a recipient at a county 911 center or served agency (Red Cross, etc.).
4. HF Traffic Handling should include passing a simple message, such as level of participation or location of deployed station. 10 points will be awarded for passing the HF traffic to either the SM in the northern sector or the SEC in the southern sector. HF traffic will be handled on the EPA Emergency Phone and Traffic Net frequency, 3.917 MHz, on the following schedule:

Friday - May 20: 2000, 2100, 2200, 2300, 2400 Local Time

Saturday - May 21: 0600, 0700, 0800, 0900, 1000, 1100, 1200 Local Time

5. Digital VHF / UHF Traffic Handling should involve the use of a commonly used digital mode, such as packet / Winlink to pass a message in an ICS-213 format to either an EC or DEC. Other digital modes may be used, but emphasis should be on Winlink for interoperability.
6. Suggested traffic subject is a shelter status message including the following data:
 - a. County
 - b. Shelter Name
 - c. Number of Shelter Residents
 - d. Number of Meals Required for next 48 Hours
 - e. Shelter Manager or Radio Operator Name / Call sign

Debriefing

At the conclusion of the exercise, an analysis will be conducted to determine the overall preparedness of ARES units and to identify areas of needed improvement. Findings will be disseminated to county units.