Waitukubuli

Amateur Radio Association Inc.

Emergency Communications Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.   The Waitukubuli Amateur Radio Association Inc (WARA) is a registered non-profit non-governmental organization in the Commonwealth of Dominica. It is composed of National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) licensed amateur radio operators some of whom are trained emergency communicators, volunteering their personal time, skill and equipment, to serve in the public interest.

During emergencies WARA will provide emergency telecommunication service to the Commonwealth of Dominica at the community level. Most Amateur Radio operators living in Dominica are eligible for participation with WARA emergency service. This document should be periodically revised as necessary by a committee instituted by the WARA Executive and led by the WARA Emergency Coordinator to reflect current conditions for WARA and Dominica.

1.2.   The WARA functions in this Emergency Communications Plan under the direction of its Emergency Coordinator (EC). The EC is appointed by the executive, and depends upon the support of Amateur Radio Operators.

1.3.   The EC may appoint Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AECs) as needed.

1.4.   The EC and all AECs must be familiar with this plan and have the capacity to activate it when needed. They must also have to capacity to effectively manage a disaster.

1.5.   When activated, the EC or AEC performing the activation will become the Officer In Charge (OIC), or will designate an OIC. The OIC will be the final authority for that emergency incident or public service event.

2. PURPOSE

2.1   The purpose of this plan is to provide a written guide

containing the minimum information needed in an emergency. Each emergency incident is different and flexibility is necessary to provide an adequate response.

2.2   The primary responsibility of the WARA is to furnish emergency communications in the event of a natural or manmade emergency when regular communications fail, become inadequate, or overloaded.

2.3   Periodic instruction, training and drills shall be carried out to ensure readiness to respond quickly in providing effective amateur emergency communications.

2.4   The following is a list of jurisdictions, government and non-profit agencies that will be served, as requested, in an emergency. Other city/town, village or state agencies will be served as requested by Dominica's emergency management organization.

> 2.4.1   Roseau City and Portsmouth Town Councils.
>
> 2.4.2   National Emergency Planning Organization (NEPO)
>
> 2.4.3   The Dominica Red Cross
>
> 2.4.4   Law enforcement, fire department, and emergency medical services
>
> 2.4.5   Hospitals and nursing homes
>
> 2.4.6   Village councils
>
> 2.4.7   Disaster preparedness/management committees

2.5   WARA may provide communications support at public events conducted by non-profit organizations in non-emergency situations.

3. PLAN ACTIVATION

3.1   Any member of WARA who becomes aware that a communications emergency exists, should contact the EC or an Assis-

tant EC, then monitor the primary net frequency of(444.700) (+) (103.5) for activity. Backup frequencies are:

VOICE VHF /UHF

430.100 simplex 103.5 tone Mt. Espagnol cross band repeater (Portsmouth)

447.725 simplex 103.5 tone Mt. Canot cross band repeater (Bellevue Chopin)

DIGITAL RMS PACKET NODES

145.050 MHz

Echolink Repeaters

LOCAL HF CONTACT FREQUENCIES

Daytime – 7.171MHz Times 7:00am - 6:00pm

Night time - 3.800 MHz 6:00pm - 7:00am

REGIONAL HF CONTACT FREQUENCIES

Caribbean Emergency & Weather Net 3.815 6:30 AM and PM

3.2   WARA members are prohibited from going to the site of any emergency incident unless authorized to do so by Net Control. Net Control will only authorize operators to go to the site of an emergency incident if the appropriate served agency requests WARA's help at that site. The request, requester name, title, served agency, and time should be documented in the net log.

NOTE: Currently mobile units may stage near the affected area, as needed. Our current staging area for all emergencies is the WARA's club house.

3.3   The EC or Assistant EC shall be notified by telephone or other methods including amateur radio. A courier may also be used if needed.

3.4　In any emergency in which Amateur Radio is requested to serve, Amateur Radio operators may be alerted by any emergency management coordinator, Red Cross, or government official notifying the EC or Assistant EC. When AECs are notified, they will periodically attempt to contact the EC until successful. The EC or AEC who activates will become the Officer In Charge (OIC). The OIC will document the name, title, and served agency of the requester.

3.5　The OIC will be in charge of all operations during any emergency activation. He/she will be the top WARA emergency authority for the event. All participants will take direction from him/her. The OIC may change during the event at the discretion of the OIC or EC.

4. MOBILIZATION

4.1　The OIC or designee will first notify WARA's members by activating the net or telephone.

4.2　If required to accomplish necessary staffing for the emergency, the OIC, or designee, will transmit on any of WARA's repeater or monitoring frequencies, advising all stations of the emergency activation. Internet e-mail, cell phone messaging, social media or other normal means of communication may also be used if available.

4.3　Upon notification that a communications emergency exists, members of the Waitukubuli Amateur Radio Association will listen to the frequency and will only check in if they have urgent information or when the Net Control Station (NCS) asks for check-ins on the WARA's Emergency Net. Stations will maintain radio silence, unless they have business with the net.

4.4　The highest staffing priority in any emergency incident will be given first to those amateurs registered as emergency communicators with WARA. Second priority will be amateur radio operators trained in emergency communications but not registered with WARA. Third priority will be to amateur radio operators

not associated with WARA or trained in emergency communication. Assignments will be given to minimize the travel distance.

5. DUTIES OF NET CONTROL AND DEPLOYED STATIONS

5.1 OPENING NETS

The WARA Emergency Net will be activated by the Net Control Station, upon instructions from the OIC. Based upon the facts, stations will be fully advised as to the nature of the emergency. Net Control will establish and announce backup frequencies and a backup Net Control station. As appropriate, Net Control will periodically announce that a net is in progress, give brief summaries, and remind users of backup frequencies and backup Net Control, etc.

5.1.1   A minimum of one directed net is required, the Operations Net, and it is conducted on the primary repeater frequency, if it is operational. If it is not operating move to the secondary repeaters or primary simplex frequency (see 3.1).

5.1.2   If necessary, as determined by the incident OIC, additional directed nets may be activated on alternate frequencies (see 3.1) or any available VHF simplex frequencies(144.90-145.10, 146.40-146.58, 147.42-147.57 MHz):

- resource or logistics – identify and assign stations and equipment

- administration net – coordinate activities of all other nets

- medical net – coordinate first aid or other medical responders, including ambulances

- traffic net – coordinate movement of formal written messages.

5.1.3   Liaison stations to Caribbean Emergency and Weather Net may be required. This net normally operate on the

following frequencies:

Day: (7.162) night: (3.815)

5.2 CHECK-IN STATIONS

Stations will be checked in from their home stations, mobiles, and portable stations. After they check in, all stations shall stand-by on an assigned frequency for further instructions. An inventory list will be made of operators and their equipment for possible assignment.

5.3   Mobile and portable stations will be dispatched as needed either to a "staging" location or directly to the incident site as determined by the OIC. OIC must notify NCS of which agency official(by name and title) requested our deployment. This is done in case any deployed units encounter a restricted access situation or other challenges. The exact location of each deployed station will be maintained by the NCS.

5.4   Each incident site will have a designated team of two or more Amateur Radio operators who will coordinate amateur communication at their specific deployment site.

5.4.1   Be prepared to be refused entry to the area. Do not attempt to enter the area unless specifically approved to do so by the supervisor. Do not represent yourself as a Red Cross (or other agency) worker unless you are specifically on Red Cross (or other agency) business. Be courteous! If you are denied entry, notify Net Control and wait for further instructions.

5.4.2   Upon arrival at the incident site, identify yourself to the location's supervisor. Make sure any relief operators are also introduced, and ask the location supervisor to do the same.

5.4.3   Upon entry to the site, set up your equipment and get on the air as quickly as possible. Try to locate near the "action" but stay out of other's way. Start a chronological log of operations, recording all messages and other events affecting communications and/or station operation. Check into the Operations Net, or oth-

er net as instructed.

5.4.4   Do not divulge information nor express opinions to any individual, particularly the media. Refer all questions to the site's public information officer.

5.5   If any requested action involves unacceptable risk, the person should NOT take the action. Upon refusal, the person should notify the net control station that he/she will not be performing the requested action, along with a brief statement of their risk assessment.

6. OPERATIONS

6.1 MESSAGES

6.1.1 Formal Messages: Formal messages are those that are written in a standard format. All messages that request material or services, which may require payment or replacement, must be formal messages.

Message Forms: All formal messages must be written in standard IARU format, unless otherwise directed by the served agency. It is strongly encouraged to restrict messages to25 words or less, particularly if the message will be relayed multiple times or sent out of the area. Messages over 25 words are much less likely to reach their destination quickly. Operators receiving messages from officials should encourage the officials to produce messages in 25 words or less to ensure prompt and reliable delivery. The served agency representative can create his/her printed message on the Message Forms provided by the radio operator for that purpose.

Message Precedence: The operator must assign the message an IARU PRECEDENCE. This PRECEDENCE will be used on all messages. Any operator receiving messages should check the precedence of messages received for EMERGENCY precedence messages. Anyone giving messages to an operator should check the messages and inform the operator if any of the messages are

of EMERGENCY precedence. The person passing the messages should be sure the receiving operator acknowledges this precedence.

Requester name: All FORMAL MESSAGES require the PRINTED NAME, TITLE, SERVED AGENCY and SITE of the requester. All requests to send emergency operators to a location require PRINTED NAME, TITLE, SERVED AGENCY and SITE of the requester. These requests should be written down in the net log.

MESSAGES RECEIVED REQUESTING MATERIALS OR SERVICES, WHICH MAY LATER REQUIRE PAYMENT or REPAYMENT OF FUNDS WILL NOT BE TRANSMITTED UNTIL THEY CONTAIN THE PRINTED NAME, TITLE, SERVED AGENCY AND SITE OF THE REQUESTER.

Save Messages: All operators must save a copy of all formal messages.

6.1.2 Tactical Messages - Tactical emergency messages, such as FIRE, POLICE or Life-or-Death situations do NOT require numbers. These are the highest priority messages. Get the attention of the NCS between transmissions by giving your tactical call sign and saying "emergency traffic." Example: "Shelter Two emergency traffic." When accepting such messages for transmission, require only the following information:

A. To (Example: Fire Department)

B. What (Example: Fire truck needed ASAP)

C. Why (Example: Structure fire)

D. Where (Example: Salisbury High School)

E. Who (Mike Dangleben, manager, shelter two)

6.2 TRANSMITTING

Stations must not transmit unless invited to do so by the

Net Control (NCS).

6.2.1 Exceptions:

A. Stations with tactical emergency traffic.

B. As designated in the standard operating procedure for Amateur Radio.

6.2.2 Keep transmissions short and to the point. All stations, including net control, should leave frequent gaps in their transmissions for emergency traffic. Long enough for someone to recognize the gap and announce "emergency traffic."

6.3 COMMUNICATIONS METHODS

Operators should use the most efficient method available to transmit their message. If available and appropriate, use the telephone, cell phone, internet, NBEMS, packet, foot, automobile, etc. The more traffic passed off the air, the more available ham radio is for traffic to and from locations without alternate means of communications.

7. DEMOBILIZATION

7.1   The OIC shall be the final authority for demobilization following an emergency incident or net.

7.2   Stations shall keep Net Control informed when they have been released from any assignments. They shall report the Name and Title of the person releasing them, and the served agency name to Net Control.

7.3   Net Control will enter the message details in the net log.

7.4   Released stations should identify their availability for additional assignments and continue to monitor the assigned frequency.

7.5   At the soonest date after each mobilization, the operators

involved shall meet with the EC and AECs for an After-Action Review.

8. TRAINING, TESTS AND ALERTS

8.1   An annual test will be conducted in June of each year. Periodic exercises will be conducted in cooperation with local emergency management coordinators.

8.2   A training net will be held for the WARA emergency group beginning at 8pm on the second Saturday of each month on the local repeater (444.700)(+) tone(103.5) , or other designated frequency as necessary.

8.3   At the discretion of the EC, WARA will sponsor an unannounced activation at least once a year, and will participate in national emergency training events when possible.

8.4   A Standard Operating Procedure, detailing emergency response procedures and actions in support of this plan, shall be written.

8.5   The Waitukubuli Amateur Radio Association Inc. Emergency Communications Plan and the Standard Operating Procedure shall be reviewed during February of each year to keep this plan current and viable.

9. DEFINITIONS

WARA - Waitukubuli Amateur Radio Association Inc.

NTRC - National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission.

EC - Emergency Coordinator.

AEC - Assistant Emergency Coordinator.

NCS - Net Control Station.

Emergency – any immediate threat to life or property.

Incident – any communications emergency that occurs without notice.

Officer In Charge (OIC) – Waitukubuli Amateur Radio Association Inc's official responsible for all operations when the organization is activated for an incident or public service event.

Public Service Event – a pre-planned activity for a non-profit organization, used to provide training and experience for WARA members. Examples include a parade , bike race, hike and fun run.