



TRAINED VOLUNTEER
RADIO OPERATORS
PREPARED TO PROVIDE
COMMUNICATIONS IN AN
EMERGENCY

www.igs.net/~gamble/index.htm

GENERAL MEETING

All members and anyone interested
in joining EMRG

DATE: Saturday Oct. 3, 1998

TIME: 9:00AM to 12:00PM
(It will start at 9:00 & end at 12:00)

LOCATION: 111 Lisgar St.; Ottawa
RMO Building;
Champlain Room

COFFEE: Starting at 8:45

AGENDA ITEMS:

- EMRG Review
- What's Next
- ARES Review
- November exercise
- Weekly Nets -Status

NETS

Monday Nights 8:00 (Part of the
Capital City FM Net, As Required)
Repeater: 146.940 - (VE2CRA)

The simplex net is not operating, is
anyone interested in this net?

INTRODUCTION

This issue of the news letter is dedicated to reviewing EMRG, the EMRG - RMOC relationship and how we can improve EMRG.

The June EMRG meeting had a small, but enthusiastic group. Some identified areas that need improvement, while others questioned the value of EMRG and its continued existence at all.

Please take the time to read through this newsletter and determine your view. If at all possible, I hope you can be at the next meeting, but if not, please feel free to call me, send an email or send your comments through a friend.

EMRG is a team effort, and we need to work as a team to succeed!

Peter Gamble (VE3BQP)
Team Leader -EMRG
523-4572 gamble@igs.net

What Is EMRG?

MEMBERS

The Emergency Measures Radio Group (EMRG) is made up of Federally licensed radio operators, located in the Ottawa-Carleton region, who have made a commitment to volunteer their time & equipment in the event of an emergency. EMRG members are either licensed Amateur Radio operators, or members of the licensed XM49 Emergency Radio Squadron.

GROUP STATUS

EMRG is not a club, is not incorporated, owns no equipment and has no money. EMRG acts as the interface between the Amateur radio community in Ottawa-Carleton and the Emergency Measures Unit (EMU) of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa Carleton (RMOC). It is through EMRG that the EMU would contact local amateurs for assistance in an emergency.

When EMRG started, there were two national amateur groups and several amateur radio clubs in the area. For this reason, EMRG was started as a non-partisan group which had no direct affiliations to any club or national amateur radio group.

CONTROL & LEADERSHIP

EMRG is independent of the RMOC and is treated by the Region as any other volunteer group, such as the Red Cross. The control of EMRG resides with the EMRG Management team and the EMRG members.

The EMRG management team is made up of the Team Leader, Operations Coordinator, Membership Coordinator and the Training Coordinator.



GUIDING DOCUMENT

EMRG does not have a constitution. The guiding document for EMRG is the EMRG Communications Plan. This document contains the information regarding who from the RMOC can request EMRG, what role EMRG will play in an emergency and how EMRG will operate (such as which frequencies to use, message format, equipment available and suggested equipment setups).

The RMOC also has a similar Communications Plan. One component in the RMOC plan is EMRG as a communications resource. The RMOC plan describes when and how to request EMRG assistance. It is the EMRG communications plan that describes how that assistance will be provided.

The communications plans must be reviewed regularly to ensure they are current.

RMOC - EMRG AGREEMENT

The RMOC and EMRG have a signed agreement which outlines the reasons for the RMOC to call on EMRG and the capabilities that EMRG is expected to supply.

Prepare an emergency kit before winter. Some items to include are:

- a small first aid kit
- local maps, copy of your license
- string, rope and tape
- paper, pens/pencils
- AM/FM radio, flashlight
- anything else you think would help

LIABILITY

EMRG is not registered in any way and has no umbrella insurance policy for members during exercises or training. When EMRG members are participating in an official emergency, the RMOC is responsible and you are eligible for workers compensation. This is set out under Ontario law.

If EMRG were assisting a municipality outside of the RMOC, then that municipality would be responsible during its state of emergency.

Personal equipment is not covered by a municipality, even during an emergency such as the ice storm. If your radio or car is damaged, it would be claimed under your personal insurance.

EMRG

Opportunities For The Future

During the last EMRG meeting, in June, there was a mixed view of the future of Amateur radio emergency communications in our region.

Some continue to feel that the RMOC is not interested in using Amateur radio and see the ice storm as proof of this.

Other members believe that the RMOC does want to work with EMRG and that EMRG still has a purpose

and an important role to play within the Ottawa-Carleton Region.

The ultimate future of EMRG is up to all of us as members. There are areas that need to be improved and this can only be accomplished with better leadership and more membership involvement. As team leader, I am committed to improving my abilities in managing and motivating us as a group. As members, we are each responsible for our own commitment.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS

Communications for local events such as walkathons, ski races, soccer tournaments etc. is provided by the local amateur radio clubs. To date, EMRG has not been involved in these events because most clubs have a history of working with specific events and the clubs draw from the same pool of local amateurs to provide the communications.

One option for EMRG to be more active, would be to provide communications for 1 or 2 significant events per year. Public service communications provides an excellent opportunity for EMRG members to work together, test their equipment and develop new ideas for better communication in the future.

Providing communications for public events would require involvement & commitment from each of us as members.

Will you be ready for this winter?

EMRG IMPROVEMENTS

As mentioned earlier, there are several areas that need work. Some were identified as a result of the ice storm and others are from member comments made at the June Meeting.

Organizational Improvements

1. Create a telephone call-out list.
EMRG has a membership list, but it has not been organized enough to provide a telephone call-out list
2. Create an up-to-date EMRG Communications Plan. The present plan is out-of-date and does not reflect the current EMRG-RMOC model.

Promotional Activities

Develop a promotional plan for EMRG (what to say & how to deliver it). Promote EMRG to:

- the public (available for use as required)
- the RMOC (Council, police, EMU material)
- Municipalities in the Region (EMU coordinator, council, fire)
- local amateur radio (local clubs)

Membership Activities

EMRG needs to become an organization where things are happening and where its members are active participants. This is one of the responsibilities of the team leader to develop opportunities and motivate the membership and of the membership to participate. Some areas that need work, which means volunteers are required, are:

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- training for all amateurs interested in emergency communications (for example Message Handling and Net Control)
- technical seminars, presentations on topics of interest, construction parties (antennas, filters etc.)
- exercises -both EMRG only and in conjunction with other agencies.

Coordination Activities

Going forward, EMRG needs to develop contacts with neighboring amateur emergency groups. The purpose of this would be to ensure that there is a working relationship between groups with possible sharing of information such as contact names and areas covered, equipment available. The goal is to work together for mutual improvement.

What do you think? What other suggestions do you have? What level of support are you willing to commit?

EMRG Fall Exercise November 98

Test your skill, meet some friends, learn something new and have some fun.

More information at the meeting!