March 22, 2021 LeeCARES Net Training:
PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

Presented by Jason Korb, KI5ABB

This is KI5ABB. Tonight's training is on Public Service Events

We have been discussing the use public service events as training for emergency communication. Public service events, such as walk and bike-a-thons, road races, marathons, and parades have a great deal in common with emergency communication, but a few differences as well.

Similarities to Emcomm:
• Both often use the same radio equipment, similar network designs, and use various modes.
• Both may require occasional or prolonged contact with fire, police, or medical agencies.
• Pre-planning may involve more than one agency, especially if communications may need to be relayed to and from public safety agencies.
• Often uses similar tactical net operations.
• Technical challenges may be similar as the event occurs in "real time," and problems must be solved as they happen. Not everything is predictable.
• Emcomm go kits usually have everything needed for public service operations.

Differences from Emcomm:
• Public service events are scheduled - emergencies are not.
• Public service does not require activation by an emergency management agency.
• Does not use an "activation system" and related deployment plans.
• Public service events involve only a single served agency in most cases. Many emergencies involve serving several different agencies.
• Personnel can be recruited, confirmed, and scheduled in advance.
• Network designs can be planned and tested in advance.
• Logistical problems can be solved before the event.
• Operator IDs and security checks are not usually required except for large events.
• Formal messages are seldom needed.
• No need to interface with long distance traffic nets (NTS).

For individual radio operators, it is a good time to test portable and mobile equipment, as well as hone operating skills in the net environment. Simple events are a good place to allow a trainee NC to run the net.

Volunteer Identification
Volunteer communicators should be readily identifiable, usually by some piece of clothing. Hats, T-shirts, and vests are commonly used. This will allow event officials to find you when needed and provides the additional benefit of exposure to the public. Vehicles can be identified with magnetic signs such as those for ARES available from the ARRL and others.

Special Training Sessions
Certain public service events are so large and complex that volunteers must be recruited from a wide area. This may mean that the sponsoring group will not know many of them, or the level of training and expertise they bring. In this case, the sponsoring Emcomm group may offer one or more event-specific training sessions. The Boston and New York Marathons are two well-known events where this is done each year.

Types of Events and Their Unique Requirements
Parades: Parades can vary in size and complexity. Small parades can be rather relaxed events; the largest parades can rival major disasters in the level of effort required.
1. *Operations:* Often need to show up ahead of parade time to assist in the organization of the parade. Multiple fixed or mobile operating locations are likely. In an area with tall buildings or hills, or if the parade route is longer than one mile, use high-powered mobile rather than hand-held radios. Long routes in difficult areas may require repeaters

to provide end-to-end coverage. Some mobile stations or bicycles may be needed, and some operators may need to ride in or on floats. Operators may need to "shadow" key parade officials. Stations may be dismissed or moved to another location once the end of the parade passes their location.

2. *Messages:* Nearly all the traffic is tactical and informal in nature. There is often a need to relay changes in the parade line-up (participating or non-participating parade units, order of the parade) from the starting position to all review stands announcing the parade units, traffic and crowd problems, and medical emergencies. It is helpful to have an EMT with an ambulance dispatch radio at the communication command post for expediting the response to medical emergencies.

3. *Logistics:* Operators should be self-contained for food and water needs if possible, to reduce the need to leave your assigned post. Restrooms may be accessible at restaurants and other establishments along the parade route. The organizers may place portable toilet facilities along the route and in the mustering area.

Marathons, Fun Runs, Bike-a-thons:
Like parades, although the course and event duration can be longer.

1. *Operations:* May require more fixed stations with higher-powered base or mobile radios. Roving stations may be needed to monitor the entire course, and their locations tracked. Roving stations may be in either personal or event vehicles, such as busses, trucks, vans, or ambulances. Longer routes may require a repeater, or multiple nets with liaison stations. The last competitor can be tracked so that the NC knows when each station can be closed.

2. *Messages:* Communications are usually between aid station or checkpoint staff, and the start and finish line officials. The first several competitors are often tracked, and their progress relayed to event officials. Re-supply deliveries for aid stations are coordinated. Calls are made for event vehicles to pick up exhausted or injured participants. Ambulances may be called for more serious injuries. Additional or replacement volunteers may be requested and dispatched as needed.

3. *Logistics:* Some stations may need to operate in unfamiliar vehicles, requiring magnetic mount antennas and special power connections. Aid stations are usually spaced throughout the course offering water, first aid and transportation. Portable toilet facilities may or may not be available.

Car Road Rallies, Endurance Races:
These events can have exceptionally long courses, sometimes stretching for hundreds of miles.

1. *Operations:* Multiple repeaters and nets are often required, and HF operations on 75m and 40m may be required.

2. *Messages:* Participants may be tracked, and their positions reported to the start and finish lines, and to participants support crews. Missing participants may need to be located, supplies and repair parts arranged for, tow trucks and ambulances requested.

3. *Logistics:* Some operators may need to be fully self-sufficient, especially about food, water, and toilet facilities. Some stations may need to operate in unfamiliar vehicles, requiring magnetic mount antennas and special power connections. Backup and renewable power sources may be needed for long-term use at isolated checkpoints.

Sporting events, Block Parties and Community Gatherings

1. *Operations:* Usually have a higher percentage of pedestrian mobile stations deployed to observe and assist the crowd.

2. *Messages:* Traffic is usually routed to and from the communications command post and to outside agencies as needed.

3. *Logistics:* Most of these events will have adequate access to food water and toilet facilities, and power for operating radios and charging batteries.

These events would allow us to practice for emergencies and have the experience to act quickly when called upon.

This concludes tonight's training. This KI5ABB. Back to Net Control.