

Public Service Events 13 September 2021

With the Black Bridge Festival coming up in Dime Box next month, I thought we could look at some points that can help us in our first official Public Service Event. This will be shortened to PSE.

Public Service Events are excellent training for an emergency situation. Without hopefully, the emergency. Both Public Service and Emergencies have many things in common.

In both situations we will be using the same equipment as in our radios, antennas, etc. With practice at being stationary, mobile, and portable.

Technical challenges can be the same for both types of events. But not so emergency critical if a problem comes up here. We can practice sorting them faster for when it needs done faster.

Both will have unexpected and non-predictable things happen during them. Again practice in the PSE may not be life or death but it will be good practice for when the life and death emergency happens. You will already have done whatever and know what to do.

Both can deal with the same groups of served agencies such as the fire department, police, and medical.

Both can have use of the same organizational structure and a good chance to practice following it.

But then both can also have differences.

PSEs are scheduled and not sudden surprises. So there is time to get set up and know what you need to do before you go out.

With a PSE we do not need to wait to be activated as we would need to in an emergency situation. We can go ahead and work the event without prior authorization.

One advantage to training for the emergency, is that with a PSE you may only deal with one agency. This can be good practice before dealing with several at once.

There is an advantage to a PSE that you can recruit and schedule your workers ahead of time and have things in order before arriving. We can test ahead of time what we are planning to do and then see if it needs changed.

A PSE is a set of certain things are going to happen and one can sort logistical issues ahead of time as you go through what all will be needed. There shouldn't be too many, if any surprises.

Also at this time one will not be dealing with formal messages or long distance traffic nets. It will be all local.

When we arrive there are some things that will help out with our visibility.

We need to be easily identified by ourselves and the community. We need to wear our uniforms and have our IDs. If you have a vest and/or ARES hat that can make you stand out in the crowd. It is easier to say, "You need to speak to the person in the bright yellow vest that says ARES on the back." than to try and describe the person. We should have our LeeCARES vehicle magnets on our vehicles so people can also easily recognize the name and associate it to us. This will also help officials know which vehicles are ours as well.

It will be good to arrive well ahead of the crowd and know the lay of the land and where we need to set up a stationary radio and where would be best for mobile operators to be. Need to be sure where the First Aid station is and have a radio with them.

We need to be self contained. That means have our own food and water and not depend on what may or may not be available. If someone needs to be stationary, they do not need to have the problem with things that should be already with them. Consider all possible things one may need ahead of time and

have it in your go-bag with you. Check out all restrooms that are available and where the nearest are to you for when necessary.

Make sure your radio is fully charged and in tip top condition. Also have extra batteries with you. Speak slowly and clearly when transmitting. This can eliminate wasted time in repeating a message. If you need to leave your area or take a break be sure to check in with Net Control first and then back in when you return.

This can also be a chance to practice your powers of observation. You may be walking about for some time. What do you see? What is happening? Could there be a problem? Don't wait for something dangerous to happen, but you can be the gentle touch to keep it from happening. You may be stopped and asked questions. Have simple answers ready so that you aren't hindered from what you are suppose to be doing.

There are many more things we could come up for this but this is a start. So get ready for an exercise helping out a group and putting our radio skills to the test. Be ready to impress and show a group of people what we can do to help them. That we are here for them.