

Radio Relay International 2018 Q1 Emergency Exercise

Background:

Effective with the calendar year 2018, Radio Relay International will be conducting a series of emergency exercises. These will be conducted in the form of an exercise cycle beginning with basic drills and transitioning to the occasional full-scale exercises in cooperation with served agencies.

The purpose of these exercises is to further develop and enhance the national messaging layer. Each drill will have a unique purpose. Some will exercise a specific mode or method of communications. Others may emphasize a specific emergency management function, such as situational awareness reporting, welfare traffic management or the like. Ultimately, the goal will be to develop the building blocks of public service communications, ultimately culminating in the periodic exercise of an effective national messaging layer, which offers a *diverse* range of capabilities systematically harmonized to ensure effective response to any communications emergency.

First Quarter 2018: Field Deployment Exercise - CW

Date: April 21, 2018

Time: 1600Z to 1900Z

Purpose:

This exercise is designed to develop the capacity of volunteers to deploy survivable, portable stations to the field and establish effective, traffic-quality circuits with an emphasis on battery operation, low power consumption and renewable energy resources. This exercise combines fun, comradery, and a meaningful test of EMCOMM capabilities simulating a catastrophic disruption of commercial telecommunications common carrier resources.

Who may participate:

The exercise is open to all licensed radio amateurs. Some familiarity with radiogram format and basic transmission procedures is recommended. Please transmit at a speed that is consistent with your ability to copy CW. Information about radiogram format and basic procedures can be found in the Radio Relay International training manual TR-001 available at:

<http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/RRI-Training-Manual-TR-001-2017-Draft-for-Distribution.pdf>

One may also want to review the companion power point slides and the RRI Field Manual at:

<http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/RRI-Introductory-Training-2018.pdf>

<http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/RRI-Traffic-Operations-Manual-2017-FINAL.pdf>

Exercise Requirements:

1. Participants shall not use gasoline generators. All communications must be conducted using battery power. Renewable sources of energy should be included in the form of solar panels or other renewable energy technologies if available, however, this is not mandatory.
2. Participants shall originate a minimum of one radiogram message providing the following information:
 - a. Geodetic coordinates in decimal degrees.
 - b. Maximum RF power output used to establish communications
 - c. Number of individuals assisting with deployment
 - d. Club or EMCOMM organization affiliation (if applicable).
3. Radiogram format is required for all messages.
 - a. Precedence should be “Test Priority” (abbreviated TP”).
 - b. Place of origin should be nearest city and state.
 - c. Date and time of origin should reflect the time at which the message was drafted and presented for transmission.
 - d. Address shall be: “RRI NECC MARION IL 62959”
 - e. Signature should include the first and last name of originator.

A sample radiogram might be:

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3 TP K8QMN 9 LANSING MI 1343Z APR 21
RRI NECC
MARION IL 62959
<BT>
LOCATION 43<R>446N 83<R>982W MAXIMUM POWER
5 WATTS 3 PARTICIPANTS
<BT>
STEVE JOHANSON K8CBS
INGHAM COUNTY ARES
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Frequency and calling procedures:

When practical, traffic should be concentrated at the top and bottom of the hour, although it may be originated at any time during the exercise operation. RRI Inter-Area Traffic Net (IATN) operators will monitor the following frequencies for message traffic:

7115 KHz
10115 KHz
14115 KHz

IATN operators will periodically announce their presence on frequency as follows:

QSX RRI de [CALL SIGN] K

Please try to select/call the station that offers the strongest signal to increase the odds of establishing a successful circuit and traffic exchange.

Any station holding traffic may announce his presence on frequency to expedite the origination of his radiogram(s). Be certain to ensure the frequency is clear before calling. There are two procedures for doing this:

1. The least disruptive is to transmit the Morse letter “C:” di-dit dit If an operator responds accordingly, you should standby until he clears his traffic.
2. An alternate method is to simply transmit the standard “QRL?” If an operator responds with “QRL,” please standby until he clears the existing traffic exchange.

When announcing your presence on frequency, please do so as follows:

RRI RRI de [CALL SIGN] QTC 1 TP K

This exercise is open to relatively inexperienced operators. If you require a slower exchange, please do not hesitate to ask the receiving operator to slow down using “QRS.”

Local EMCOMM organizations are at liberty to expand the exercise to a “gateway” configuration. For example, a local VHF SSB network might be established to test highly efficient simplex methods. A key station could then collect several radiograms and transfer them to the IATN circuits.

Propagation and Contest Interference:

Most weekends are now shared with multiple contests. Those deploying to the field are encouraged to be operational on at least two of the three assigned frequencies in case interference proves problematic. WARC bands, such as 30-meters may prove a useful option in the event contest activities prove problematic.

After the exercise:

Upon successfully clearing your message traffic, you may secure your portable station. However, some may want to monitor for a time to observe procedures and assess the performance of the network. Please retain a copy of any radiograms as originated and mail them to RRI for use in the evaluation phase of the exercise. In other words, your original radiogram will be compared against the copy received by the National Emergency Communications Coordinator to calculate network performance and accuracy. Please mail your copy(s) to:

Radio Relay International
PO Box 192
Buchanan, MI. 49107

You may also scan the radiogram(s) for transmission via e-mail to:

info@radio-relay.org

Participants are invited to send after-action reports, photographs of their field equipment, antenna configurations and other comments of interest to the above addresses for inclusion in a future issue of the “QNI Newsletter.”

RSVP Required:

If you plan to participate in the exercise, please RSVP by no later than February 15, 2018 the above e-mail address. RSVP is essential to determine interest level before allocating volunteer resources.

Advance Preparation:

Those planning to participate may want to monitor a CW traffic net for a time in advance of the exercise to become familiar with transmission procedures and radiogram format.

