

“Teamwork, Togetherness and Training”

CONVERGENCE is the term used when onlookers and uninvited helpers “appear out of nowhere” at disasters, accidents, and other emergency events. It is very common and usually adds to an already difficult problem faced by Emergency Management officials, EC’s, DEC’s and Incident Commanders.

APATHY, which means lack of interest, is another common behavior that we must face. If you have been in the Ares/Races emergency communications organization, for even a short amount of time, you probably have heard some ham say something like this: **“I am available for a REAL emergency, but in the meantime don’t bother me with any preparedness or training activities. I already know how to operate a radio.”** The problem with this is, even if they do know proper emergency net operating procedures, they will not be familiar the local and regional emergency plans. They will not know, and will not have had much previous experience working with the regular members of the team. They also may present a public relations headache for an EC, DEC, or SEC. **THE POINT IS THIS; They may be the best fighter pilot in the world, but if they are not familiar with the battle plan they will do more harm than good!!! They may be the best doctor in the world, but if they are not familiar with the patient’s care plan they will do more harm than good!!!** This is not to say that walk on volunteer operators, who have not been through the training and are not members of the Ares/Races local teams can not be utilized. But first we must recognize the order of things, so let’s look at our options. Our **first resource** of volunteers should always be the trained local teams that are registered and equipped. The **second resource** to use is the registered and trained Ares/Races members or a team from a nearby jurisdiction. Our **third resource** is, or can be, the walk on volunteer operator. This, as mentioned earlier, is the phenomena known as “convergence” and is very common during emergencies and disasters. These volunteer operators are usually, but not always, undisciplined and unfamiliar with Ares/Races SOP’s and Emergency Plans, and they often cause more problems than they solve. However, as I said before, this does not mean they cannot be utilized. One reality of emergency communications is that during disasters you will need more trained

operators than you will have. Walk on operators, after they have registered with the local Emergency Management officials, can be utilized in non critical areas such as guides to teams that are not familiar with the local area, or as runners, they can even be used as back ups for the trained members, this could free up some of your trained members who were being used in these non critical areas.

NOW, I am not advocating that you need not be trained, or that if your not trained that you can still volunteer and be used. What I am saying, is that when you became a licensed Amateur Radio Operator you understood that you were bound by the FCC's rules and regulations with respect to Part 97 in which the very first paragraph **[97.1(a)] states; “Recognition and enhancement of the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.”**

This is probably the best known aspect of amateur radio around the world in the eyes of the public. In hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, missing persons, airplane crashes or other accidents and disasters that affect the general population, trained amateur radio emergency communications teams are there providing their skills. I realize that amateur radio is a hobby, but it came with an obligation. If we are going to continue to enjoy the everyday use of our frequency spectrum as we know it today, we must use it wisely, we must train ourselves in the art of emergency communications, the EC's and DEC's need to train their Ares/Races members and thus turn in their monthly reports. Folk's, our frequencies are under attack even as I speak, and unless we protect them we will loose them.

The title of this lesson plan is “Teamwork, Togetherness and Training.” Let's take a look at the definition of each of these three words as they relate to us;

1. **TEAMWORK**: Close co-operation within a group in accomplishing a common aim.
2. **TOGETHERNESS**: In concert; in union; united; with one another; mutually, and without intermission.
3. **TRAINING**: To prepare.

The lack of any of these three words in any given organization can only spell out two words which is FAILURE and CHAOS.

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