

September 18, 2018

## **Emergency Management / Homeland Security Ham Radio Signal Exercise After Action Review**

Director Stephen Mylly

Town of Brooklyn, Emergency Management / Homeland Security

Dear Sir,

After completion of the Brooklyn EM/HS Signal Exercise "HRSIGEX2018", an after action review follows for your review.

The Town of Brooklyn emergency VHF/UHF radios and their associated equipment were tested and operated at the Brooklyn Fairgrounds from 08-23-18 thru 08-26-18. The Fairgrounds was visited by a large population of civilians that included adults and children of all ages. The planned signal exercise had two prongs. One prong was a readiness exercise, and the second prong was a civilian/community interaction with the use of ham radio and ham radio operators at distant sites. The signal exercise was conducted in partnership with the Eastern Connecticut Amateur Radio Association (ECARA) K1MUJ, a non-profit organization dedicated to emergency communications, public service, promotion of Amateur Radio, and the licensing of new Amateur Radio Operators. ECARA is affiliated with the Amateur Radio Relay League. The after action review is as follows:

Under your direction and assistance, a plan, preparation, and execution of a Ham Radio Signal Emergency Communication Net Exercise was conducted. The signal exercise included deployable communication assets available on hand to the Town of Brooklyn, or assets that were procured or acquired on loan from other sources. The planned signal exercise assessed the readiness of the EM/HS staff's ability to plan, coordinate, and deploy self-sustaining emergency communication assets in support of a critical incident event. An inflatable tent was borrowed from ARES Region 4 through Mike Caplet. The tent sheltered the radio and associated communications equipment for operation. ARES Region 4 supplied a small trailer that contained the tent, power cables, tables and chairs, white boards, and heavy duty fans, and cordon barriers. The BEMHS provided staffing to man the exercise and provided laminated topographical maps of Brooklyn, lighting, emergency kits, emergency treatment shelter cots, along with brochures to hand out to the public that were related to safety, emergencies, and other related topics. Mock Radiograms were relayed from the BEMHS tent to ham radio stations using the Town of Brooklyn ham radios. Many families with their guests and children were given a tour of the BEMHS tent and explained the use of the equipment for emergency communications. Approximately one hundred families/groups entered the tent and were pleased with the town's Emergency Management efforts. Parents, children and guests were supervised and allowed to send voice messages on the air to other ham radios operators. Many took the opportunity to take brochures

that could assist them in emergency planning and other wellness related matters. The families, children and guests left with a smile on their face.

The areas that needed improvement were: The need to extend the range of the antenna for the ham radios. The range was limited due the low terrain at the Brooklyn Fairgrounds and at some distant sites which affected ground wave signal propagation. Improvements came be made by erecting the radio antennas at a greater height thus extending the range of the radio signal in an effort to reach more distant stations. A better range quality antenna should also be considered as a future purchase. Communication attempts were made to Ham Radio Operators at distant sites that included, but were not limited to the towns of Killingly, Pomfret, Thompson, Woodstock, Willington, Putnam, Mansfield and Dudley Massachusetts. I also recommend that this exercise should take place on a yearly basis at the Brooklyn Fair. Ideas for improvement will be evaluated through the setup, hands-on operation, and testing of the communications equipment.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliezer Iturrino