

BDPNN Meeting Minutes
13 Aug 2011
Radio Drill

From Lynn Zummo: First of all, a big, giant, sloppy thank you to Bruce Carleton for putting together and administering today's successful radio drill. He, along with input by Pam Grossman and Sandy Miarecki, came up with the overall program and scenarios, paring them down for understanding by all. Big thanks also go to Glen, Jordan and Bill from NALCO for coming down, helping out and offering great suggestions for improvements. We could not have done it without group of you.

Thanks also to everyone who participated. 22 folks showed up, plus the four NALCOs and Norine, Charlotte and me. It was a good turnout and a group size that was manageable for the first of these drills.

For those of you who were not able to attend, this is what you missed:

Pretty much everyone arrived on time, which made this drill go even smoother. After brief intros, Bruce led us through some basic instruction on the radios and a sample scenario was played out to show folks what to expect.

He then had everyone break into seven groups (teams) of three -- with one designated IC, one Fire, one Rescue/Medical.

Armed with a radio, a set channel and tone/sub-channel for their team (according to team number, i.e. Team 3 had their radio set to channel 3, tone 6) and a scenario sheet, the groups broke apart with enough room between them as to not hear another from their team.

The teams ran through their scenarios with varying degrees of success, but mostly good. Issues: there were some problems with the radios themselves (for example, a few radios were not working properly and had to be changed out, a few channels were bleeding over into others, and we learned that the new radios that were delivered with the most recent cache distribution from the City do not allow for tones/sub-channels), some user error, and a few environmental issues (the wind kicked up and made it difficult for some folks to be heard).

After just about all of the groups finished up, we brought everyone back together to debrief (and some radio protocol was gone over) and ask questions. The overall feeling, based on feedback, is that this was an excellent practice and we should definitely do it again.

The suggestion was also made for neighborhood groups to do their own NET (radio check-in) routinely, say monthly, to practice. Try it outside, inside, and on the geographic boundaries of the group to see if there are spots that won't be reached.

Additionally, several people mentioned that they were going home and immediately try to communicate via radio with others from their group. For those of you who did it, how did it go? Let us know.

After disbanding, the NALCO folks and Norine, Charlotte and I debriefed and talked about how we thought it went and made suggestions on both improvements and how to handle future drills such as this one. The suggestion was made that maybe we can take this into the field and, if a neighborhood group is willing to host a drill, we go to them and provide the pros/exercise materials, and invite Network/CERT folks to attend as well. We will be exploring that option.