

What's The Difference?

□ Radio Operator

- ❖ Classroom-based learning system alone cannot create proficiency-based volunteer emergency communicators.
- ❖ ***Classroom training IS NOT an indicator of the ability to perform a task!***

Just “listen in” ...

- The next time a “major incident” breaks in your area, just listen in...
 - ❖ ...to ANY “first” responder frequency.
 - ❖ ...to the pace of communications.
 - ❖ ...to the professionalism of the radio transmissions.
 - ❖ ...to the calmness of their voices (despite the increased communications tempo).

What Do You Hear?

- ❑ Share a common body of knowledge
- ❑ Only “essential” information transmitted
- ❑ Tactical callsigns = resource identity
 - ❖ P4228, ANA E10, CARE AMB
- ❑ Field units provide “eyes” and “ears” descriptions of situation / environment
- ❑ Only assigned units respond to incident

The Current “Face” of EmComm

- Volunteer communications
 - ❖ Does not use ICS-based organizational or operational structures
 - ❖ Has not established “standards” for all radio operators and organizations within and among the operational area (OA)
 - ❖ Has not created a standardized ERD of OA-based volunteer equipment resources
 - ❖ Cannot identify the “closest available resources” (of all available in the OA)

What’s The Difference?

- Amateur (“Ham”) Radio Operator
 - ❖ Qualification based on:
 - Obtaining FCC amateur radio license
 - Passing an agency background investigation
 - Taking agency oath (in some states) as an emergency worker for state disability insurance
 - ❖ NO performance-based learning, NO “objective evaluations” (just get a license”, buy a radio, and become a member).

What’s The Difference?

- How does an emergency “volunteer” responder communicator...
 - ... “prepare for” disaster?
 - ... “respond to” disaster?
 - ... “recover from” disaster?
- ❖ ***Classroom training **IS NOT** an indicator of the ability to perform a task!***

What’s The Difference?

- ZR Communications Specialist
 - ❖ Qualification based on real performance, measured “on the job” using “objective evaluations” based on documented tasks, standards and objectives.
 - ❖ Completion of Position Task Book (PTB)
 - ❖ Standardized knowledge, training and experience

What’s The Difference?

- Have-Know-Do...
 - ❖ What does/will a ZR specialist “have”...
 - ❖ What does/will a ZR specialist “know”...
 - ❖ What does/will a ZR specialist “do”...
- ...before and during a mobilization incident?

What’s The Difference?

- “Have”
 - ❖ Knowledge of critical infrastructure (CI) facilities in “home unit”
 - ❖ Knowledge of “home unit” emergency plans
 - ❖ Operational familiarity with procedures, protocols and forms related to notification, activation & mobilization (organizational autonomy)

What’s The Difference?

- “Have”
 - ❖ Position items in “go” bag or kit
 - ❖ Personal items in “go” bag or kit
 - ❖ Radio “support” / maintenance items in “go” bag or kit
 - ❖ Checklist of position, personal and radio support items in “go” kit or bag

What’s The Difference?

- “Have”
 - ❖ Emergency contact list(s)
 - ❖ List of organizational frequencies and those of neighboring organizations
 - ❖ Incident information from intelligence-gathering activities conducted prior to mobilization

What’s The Difference?

- “Know”
 - ❖ Organizational policies regarding notification, activation and mobilization
 - ❖ Operational familiarity with “home unit” EOC capability
 - ❖ Working familiarity with other organizational members
 - ❖ Designated “home unit” staging areas

What’s The Difference?

- “Know”
 - ❖ “Common denominator” standards that apply to all emergency communicators, regardless of organizational affiliation or geographical location
 - ❖ Organizational (and OA-based) Minimal Acceptable Performance Standards (MAPS)

What’s The Difference?

□ “Know”

- ❖ Operational knowledge gained from ongoing education program
- ❖ “Home unit” EOC activities and procedures
- ❖ Expectations of volunteer coordinator
- ❖ Areas within “home unit” with compromised communications capability
- ❖ Standardized position codes (P-codes)
- ❖ Standardized equipment codes (E-codes)

What’s The Difference?

□ “Know”

- ❖ Why use of checklists is critical both to preparedness and deployment readiness:
 - Identify items you “need” to have
 - Identify items you “want” to have
 - Identify items you don’t want to forget
 - Help mitigate potentially embarrassing situations or scenarios

What’s The Difference?

□ “Do”

- ❖ Have all required forms in “go” kit
- ❖ Have all qualification information (aka: training records)
- ❖ Use the radio as a tool to advertise their professionalism as a volunteer
- ❖ Conduct multiple reviews of “go” bag or kit checklist items

What’s The Difference?

□ “Do”

- ❖ Have “up-to-date” (current) **resource** (both equipment and position) **status** (RESTAT) information available
- ❖ Updated copy of their organizational (and/or OA-based) ERD

What’s The Difference?

□ “Do”

- ❖ Automatically initiate SAL activities and operations over radio frequencies
- ❖ Participate in – or conduct – RNCS.
- ❖ Cooperate with RNCS to collect “status & availability” information quickly and accurately
- ❖ Stand ready to assume NCS duties

What’s The Difference?

□ “Do”

- ❖ Participate in – or conduct – RNCS.
- ❖ Create resource status (RESTAT) report
- ❖ Conduct VSI prior to departing from originating location
- ❖ Participate in – or conduct – TNCS.
- ❖ Implement standardized incident priorities:
 - Safety, Monitor, Confirm

The Current “Status” of EmComm

- ❑ Is based on the “vision” of the current volunteer coordinator of the organization supporting local agency/department
- ❑ When that individual leaves or changes, the “whole thing” may change, based on the “new” volunteer coordinator
- ❑ Many volunteer coordinators do not know exactly what “emcomm” is supposed to do
 - ❖ Coordinator may **NOT** be licensed amateur

The Current “Status” of EmComm

- ❑ Has not established an operational area exercise design team (EDT) comprised of volunteer communicators
- ❑ Document the same mistakes year-after-year in after action reports
- ❑ No implementation of After-Action Report /Improvement Plans (AAR/IP)

The Current “Status” of EmComm

- Has no requirements regarding:
 - ❖ Defensive driving mandates
 - ❖ Vehicle safety inspections (VSI)
 - ❖ Exercises simulating real disaster-like conditions
 - ❖ Seldom (if ever) solicit or include “non-members – or SUV (convergent volunteers)
 - ❖ Seldom (if ever) include cross-OA training opportunities

The Current “Status” of EmComm

- Emergency managers have a full array of technologically-advanced and innovative vendor products providing easy, quick connectivity, vendor emergency support, and (many have) build-in redundancy
- *Why should they rely on volunteers who are getting grey, growing bald, & may not even be available?*

The New “Face” of EmComm

- Operational area-based standards need to be developed for all emcomm volunteers:
 - ❖ Standardized equipment codes (E-codes)
 - Create an OA Category “Z” Radio Emergency Resource Directory (OA/ZRERD)
 - ERD can identify “closest available” resource
 - ❖ Standardized position codes (P-codes)
 - ❖ Standardized Activation Levels (SAL)
 - ❖ OA-based Exercise Design Team (OAEDT)

The New “Face” of EmComm

- Implement an specialized version of the Incident Command System specifically for volunteer emergency communicators
- Standardized position codes (P-codes)
- Proficiency-based training and qualifications for each P-code position because each has:
 - ❖ Position Description Guide for each P-code
 - ❖ Position Task Book for each P-code
 - ❖ Position Check List for each P-code

The New “Face” of EmComm

- ❑ Conduct “tactical nets” on simplex to identify ERD resources that are committed, available and “out for maintenance”
- ❑ Conduct “transit nets” to monitor progress of those who have departed but not yet arrived at their designated assignment
- ❑ Conduct “command nets” on repeaters to share information regarding organizational readiness, scheduled construction projects and other situations impacting travel / traffic

The New “Face” of EmComm

- Conduct “training nets” to feature specific information enhancing operator proficiency, knowledge or awareness
- Conduct “proficiency nets” featuring aspects of past training, reviewing materials, using “question & answer” sessions to query knowledge, awareness and recall

The New “Face” of EmComm

- ❑ Identify equipment resources using standardized equipment codes (E-codes)
- ❑ Use standardized E-codes to create an OA-based emergency resource directory (ERD) for category “Z” resources
- ❑ Initiate and conduct “resource” nets to update availability of “critical” volunteer equipment resources

The New “Face” of EmComm

- ❑ Conduct “query” or “Q&A” nets and have participants provide answers to specific questions (scripted in advance), and then to explain why that answer was given
- ❑ Conduct “development” nets (similar to a “radio based” table top exercise.

Category “Z” Radio Specialists

- Standardized documentation
 - ❖ Position Description Guide (PDG)
 - ❖ Position Task Book (PTB)
(performance-based learning system)
 - ❖ Position Check List (PCL)
 - ❖ Position Job Aid (PJA)
- Standardized courses
 - ❖ V-C-N Academy (performance-based)
 - ❖ Documented position pre-requisites

Expectations of a “Specialist”

- Concept of “EmComm” needs to change
 - ❖ Many professionals view emergency communicators as being “Untrained” and “Undisciplined”
 - ❖ Have had “BAD” past experiences with volunteers / volunteer communicators
 - ❖ Need to offer a **comprehensive** program of structured training and development with a requirement to demonstrate an ability to perform based on MAPS
 - ❖ Why submit to a background check if only to attend meetings?

Always Remember...

*How You Perform Is
How You Will Be
Remembered*

THANK YOU

- ❑ This slide ends this course.
- ❑ If you have questions, first contact your organization’s “qualification specialist” (“ZR5Q”) position or training officer.
- ❑ If no ZR5Q or equivalent exists, contact V-C-N.org Academy via e-mail.