



Simulated Emergency Test
Saturday, 3 November 2018
Preliminary After Action Report
Prepared by Michael Sabal, KB3GJT

I. Activation Summary

A passenger train heading south collided with a freight train on the wrong track at Langhorne station in Pennel, resulting in mass casualties. Public service communications channels are overloaded, as are cell phone towers. BCARES was called in to provide communications coverage at the Bucks EOC, the south side of Langhorne Station, Cairn University where a treatment tent was set up, and St. Mary's Hospital in Newtown. This is a DRILL.

II. Summary of Local Communications Objectives

1. Evaluate our activation and response.
2. Evaluate our ability to send/receive image data.
3. Evaluate our ability to send/receive spreadsheet data.
4. Evaluate our ability to coordinate field teams under chaotic conditions.

III. Highlights of Success

1. Though participation was limited, we were able to conduct the exercise with essential stations covered.
2. We were able to relay an image from Pennel south to St. Mary's, and from St. Mary's to EOC.
3. Though there were some equipment failures, we were able to adapt and complete the scenario.
4. Coordination of activity took us off script fairly quickly; but deployment took less than an hour, and we were able to adapt to changing weather and scenario conditions with a minimum of interruption.
5. Simplex operation between Cairn and EOC was available on 146.400 at 60W power with a magmount whip.

IV. Suggestions for Improvement

1. We could not pass the spreadsheet in XLSX or ZIP format because of issues using acoustic coupling with high speed fldigi modes. We could have send a text CSV, but felt that test was unnecessary.
2. K3FKW melted his cigarette adapter trying to send the image at greater than 25W.
3. The county netbooks are 10 years old with out of date software. The battery life, however, is still strong.
4. In a similar communications scenario, the use of home stations to relay traffic either via public infrastructure or higher power simplex will be vital to success.

V. Action Points

1. Purchase SignalLinks (Yaesu FT-8800 connection) for each of the 3 county field kits.
2. Purchase power inverters or PowerPole adapters to allow laptops to be plugged into 12V emergency power sources.
3. Conduct training on using fldigi to send image and file messages.
4. Conduct training on using EasyPAL for better quality images.
5. Conduct training on image manipulation techniques to reduce image size.
6. Identify key relay points (i.e., St. Mary's Hospital parking garage and certain home stations) for simplex communication of digital traffic.
7. Upgrade or replace software on the county netbooks.

VI. Net reports

1. To be appended later.