

City of Santa Rosa COPE Program Communication Planning Meeting

City of Santa Rosa General Services Building
Friday, July 14, 2006

Attendees

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Roger Sigtermans (facilitator)	kf6rwe@hotmail.com
Holly Gleason (recorder)	hollyg@sonic.net
Ken Harrison	Ken@kenharrison.com
David Dammuller	Davidda@sonic.net
Rich Freitas	kf6sza@arrl.net
Bill Hillendahl	kh6gfv@arrl.org
Lee Dibble, Jr	ke6eaq@aol.com
Ed Buonaccorsi	eb Buonaccorsi@srcity.org
Jeff Foster	jfoster@srcity.org
Paul Hess	phess@srcity.org
Alec McTaggart	Alec.mct@gmail.com
John Sawyer	jsawyer@srcity.org

Background

The City of Santa Rosa is implementing COPE – Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergencies, an emergency preparedness program for the Santa Rosa community. The community has been divided into 10 pre-designated geographic districts. Each district would have to collect and organize disaster-related information and transfer it to the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during a disaster or large emergency. The City of Santa Rosa needs a workable plan to provide those communication links between the 10 geographic community groups and the City's main EOC.

Sonoma County's Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) is the primary volunteer service that augments public safety communications for all local government jurisdictions and has been formally accepted as the principal method of auxiliary emergency communications provided to the local municipal governments, including the City of Santa Rosa. The City of Santa Rosa asked the Sonoma County Auxiliary Communication Service (ACS) to work with other volunteer radio groups in the Santa Rosa community, to plan and provide for a communications link between the 10 geographic community groups and the City's main EOC.

ACS provides communications service from the City EOC to the County EOC and will lead the overall planning effort. ACS is committed to collaborating with other interested individuals and community groups to develop the COPE community communications plan. ACS will eventually incorporate that community element into a City-wide Auxiliary Emergency Communication Plan for the City of Santa Rosa.

In Sonoma County, the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) has the primary responsibility of providing emergency communications support for non-governmental agencies and may augment emergency communications for governmental agencies when requested by ACS. ACS has requested the assistance of ARES in development and implementation of this element of the COPE community communications plan. Other interested individuals or groups from the community may also participate in the planning process.

Goal / Purpose

To develop, exercise and implement a plan that will connect neighborhoods to their COPE designated fire stations and to effectively relay disaster-related information from the fire stations to the City EOC. This meeting is to get agreement of the scope and organization of the project and determine next steps.

Discussion

Roger went over the agenda and solicited input, suggestions.

Cope Program Overview / Comm Plan Concept:

Paul gave the group a program overview of COPE. He explained the COPE program, reviewed the COPE manual, and explained the communications plan concept. He also passed out two graphics – one of the COPE Neighborhood Team Map and the other of the City of Santa Rosa Fire Response Zones.

COPE training will take 1-1/2 to 2 hours. The COPE manual is on the city website and is in both English and Spanish. The City is currently looking into doing a mass-mailing to city residents regarding implementing COPE. They will also give progress reports on status of COPE implementation.

The COPE concept is to help neighborhoods be more self-sufficient in case of an emergency and to quickly disseminate information from neighborhoods to the EOC. In the event of a city-wide emergency, people in the community may be without services for anywhere from 3 to 7 days or more. The City of Santa Rosa is divided into districts based on the location of fire districts. In event of an emergency, each fire station will become a command center. Neighborhoods will report information to their designated fire station. The fire stations will collect all information on the status of each neighborhood and summarize it quickly. Volunteer citizens, located at each of the fire stations will transfer information on problems to the EOC. This information will assist city officials at the EOC determine overall priorities in order to better manage resources.

Note: The Oakmont subdivision has already implemented COPE and formed neighborhood teams. They will use the Berger Center as their command center. It is larger and more centrally located than the Oakmont fire station. In addition, it also has emergency supplies.

The City Fire Department has enough radio equipment to furnish each fire station with a radio, headset, microphone, and power cord. These sets are contained in standardized Pelican cases for easy mobilization and distribution. Currently, the power cords must be made longer in case radio operators need to operate the radio from outside the stations.

Project Organization / Support:

The City has emphasized the importance of having a systematic and disciplined strategy for communications and problem solving. Not only for the times of emergency, but also during the planning and development process. The City of Santa Rosa will work directly with ACS to guide and monitor planning efforts. ACS will direct the planning process and be the designated point of contact for the volunteer community groups that agree to assist in the community element of the COPE communications plan.

ACS and ARES have agreed to communicate through designated points of contact.

ACS:	Primary Contact	Alternate
	Ken Harrison Chief Radio Officer Sonoma County ACS	Roger Sigtermans Assistant Radio Officer - Planning Sonoma County ACS
ARES:	Primary Contact	Alternate
	Rich Freitas District Emergency Coordinator ARES, Sonoma County District	Bill Hillendahl Section Manager / Section Emergency Coord. ARRL San Francisco Section

Also discussed was improving communications and cooperation by updating the formal list of designated contact for each group. (Each group has previously agreed to information sharing through regular, periodic reporting on activities, services, local agreements, plans and procedures. An effort to ensure that all of those are up to date would also enhance this planning effort.)

Roger suggested that a recruitment effort can be launched that promotes and seeks new volunteers for both the ACS and ARES groups. ACS is in the process of developing a recruitment and can incorporate ARES information into the materials that are destined for Santa Rosa residents. This will help establish a more cooperative relationship and strengthen the ties between the two organizations. Anyone interested will have an opportunity to participate in either ACS or ARES.

Bill and Lee requested a list of repeater assets. Ken discussed the designated ACS frequencies and agreed to provide a list of frequencies and the ACS Band Plan for future planning.

There was some discussion of frequency allocation and repeater coverage areas. Ken commented that the City can most likely all be covered using Simplex frequencies.

Next Steps / Planning Process:

Roger asked Rich and others what direction and format they would like to see the planning process take. Since ARES has agreed to assist, ACS wants them to have a sense of ownership over the community element of the COPE communications plan that is to be developed. Although taking credit is obviously not the intent, any group or individuals that contribute to the plan will be formally recognized after it is eventually incorporated into the City-wide ACS Communications Plan.

