SECC Meeting

January 14, 2019

Attendees:
In Person....
Clay Freinwald – Chair
Ted Buehner – Vice-Chair
Anthony Clark – Wash St Emergency Management
Lowell Kiesow-KNKX
Rich Hall-WMD IT
Carri Gordon-WSP

On Phone.....
Terry Spring – KWPX TV
Phil Johnson – Central Puget Sound LECC
Doug Blangsteb-Kitsap County DEM
Dave Holloran – San Juan County
John Price-Mason/Thurston LECC
Simone Ramal-McKay-Greater Spokane EM
Charlie Osgood-Alpha Media Wenatchee
Sean Davis-Franklin County
Larry Moore
Keith Shipman-WSAB

Introductions were made and the minutes from the previous meeting were approved. There were no additions to the agenda.

Monty Simpson is out of action for a while. The SECC is looking for someone to represent amateur radio in the interim.

Washington received a good participation score from the FCC for the last NPT (National Periodic Test). There have been some fines lately for FCC violations regarding EAS. The Yakima EM is now sending RWT’s.

Please continue to send the local area plan revisions to Chris Utzinger at Washington State Emergency Management. He recently received one from Pacific County.
The next WECCWG (The Washington Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group) conference is on February 20th at Camp Murray. The theme is Public and Private Coordination during a disaster. For further information, and to register, see http://mil.wa.gov/weccwg. This will be the debut of the Fred and Wilma play.

If a RMT (Required Monthly Test) is not sent, the originator involved must sent an explanation to the remailer. It is an FCC requirement that the receiving stations must either log a successful test or provide an explanation as to why not. The same is true for the local primary (LP) stations that send RWT’s (Required Weekly Tests) to stations downstream. Stations have been fined for not properly logging the required tests.

The North Sound LECC is planning a meeting at the FEMA Conference in Burlington.

More TAB updates are coming!

In old business, is there something wrong with the SRN (State Relay Network). There have been reports of sporadic reception in some areas. The SECC has no idea who is monitoring it and whether receivers are connected to EAS boxes. Clay is giving an old SAGE unit to the state to aid in monitoring it. Due to a FCC mandate, the State Patrol (owner of the SRN) had to switch to narrow band FM. If your receiver is not set up for narrow band reception you could be feeding a noisy signal with low audio into your EAS decoder. Just because you hear audio does not mean your box will decode it. The boxes are somewhat picky in what they will encode.

Larry @ WSP in Wenatchee....found 3 local broadcasters that had antenna and receiver problems monitoring Birch Mt. SRN. Rich Hall may put the state’s SAGE Endec in a mini-rack in his rig giving him the ability to drive around the state and monitor the different SRN sites. The question is which SRN sites are operating properly. A RWT is sent over the SRN around 11:05 each Tuesday, about 5 minutes after the state sends the CAP RWT. They are sent to all SRN sites, although the state can also send a test message to specific transmitter sites as well. The goal is to make the SRN functional and reliable.

Jim Dalke is planning to copywrite the WA-PAWS logo. Chris Utzinger was not on hand to address this issue after approaching legal.
Simone has sent the update for Tab 2, the Roster of LECC chairs and Emergency Managers, out for review. The final version to be sent out soon

Plan Revision Committee has been meeting regularly by conference call. The next calls are on January 27 and February 3. The Monitoring matrix, which shows who monitors what, will be the topic of discussion. Think of it as a tree with the originators on top, the LPs below them and the stations on the bottom. A bunch of situations were found that were less than ideal. The matrix has not been revised to reflect changes that have happened over the years. There were some situations where a markets LP’s were monitoring each other. There were also other single point of failures found. There also new ways to get national alerts from FEMA. The Sirius/XM barker channel is available 24/7 and is directly connected to FEMA. All you need is a cheap consumer receiver. You do not need to have a subscription to receive the barker channel. Premier Networks, a major syndicator, has a channel directly connected to FEMA. Many stations already receive programming through Premier. The local LP stations will be contacted to update their contact person and find out what sources they are monitoring. The committee will analyze and make changes as necessary. The goal is to eliminate single points of failure, as required by the FCC rules.

The use of WEA (cell phone alerts) by a county for a missing persons advisory was discussed. The Washington State Patrol thought that would not happen. Spokane has used it successfully. They use geo-tracking so the alert only goes to a small area. They have had a good response from citizens and have been able to quickly locate several Alzheimer’s patients. A state-wide policy is needed. Is WEA regulated and who has control? There should be time of day restrictions (not when people are trying to sleep). Also, some cities straddle two counties. There are also legal ramifications for having different policies in different areas.

Make sure your EAS firmware has been updated. If you haven’t, you are probably not receiving CAP messages from FEMA.

Ted has still not heard back from FEMA on his training proposal. His goal is to training on a national level with short videos on different subjects.

The correct RMT schedule is now on the state EMD website. See https://mil.wa.gov/emergency-alert-system-eas-state-plan. The original posting was wrong.
In the Mason/Thurston local area, the local plan revision is done. It is waiting for signatures.

Mason County sent a successful RMT. The TAB 24, LECC Guidelines, is done.

The Inland Empire LECC met last week for an excellent and productive meeting.

In the Columbia Basin LECC, there have been meetings with local broadcasters. Because of Hanford, WEA regular WEA tests have been mandated. When parts of their 911 system went down, WEA was used to inform the public in the affected areas. It worked well. It was not done late at night.

On January 22, AT&T will host an interoperability demonstration in Olympia. The FirstNet and NDR Showcase is designed for: Legislators and Legislative Staff, State & Local Public Safety Officials, First Responders.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 10 at 9:30 AM at Clover Park. Directions and agenda will be on the remailer.

The May SECC meeting will be in Ellensburg on May 12.