Packet Network Update

Date: Dec 03, 2012

From: Santa Clara County ARES/RACES Packet Committee

Subject: Packet Network Update – New BBS Network Gateway

Attention: All ECs, AECs, MACs and other Santa Clara County Packet Users

This Packet Network Notice contains important information which affects your ability to access and use the county packet network. This update covers the following topics:

- New BBS Network Gateway
- Questions/Comments/Concerns

Please read this information thoroughly and pass along to any packet users in your local area.

New BBS Network Gateway

The Santa Clara County ARES/RACES packet network already includes a gateway to the AMPRnet and an outbound-only e-mail gateway. A new gateway has been added which connects the county network with the traditional BBS network.

The traditional BBS network is a worldwide network consisting of amateur radio BBS systems interconnected by RF and Internet links. Some of the Internet links may use the AMPRnet for connectivity. The BBS sysops coordinate how private messages, NTS traffic, and bulletins are forwarded throughout the network. A link to any one BBS in the network is sufficient to be able to send or receive traffic to or from any other BBS in the network. Links to more than one BBS generally results in faster and more reliable delivery of all traffic. Our network is currently linked to six other BBSs. More links are in the works.

Users on BBSs which are connected to the BBS network can typically be reached by sending to an address in the form of:

usercall@bbscall.#region.state.country.continent

For a list of the BBS network names associated with our BBSs, see the Packet Frequencies and BBS Info page: http://www.scc-ares-races.org/freqs/packet-freqs.html.

For more detailed information about this and other packet network addressing formats, see the new Packet Network Addressing page: http://www.scc-ares-races.org/packet/packet-addressing.html.

Why is this Important?

Many locations and organizations use traditional BBS networking to forward messages between BBSs. For example, our next-door neighbors in San Mateo County use traditional BBS network forwarding to send messages. With this new capability, we can now send messages directly to and from their BBSs. We can also use this method to send messages to the State Operations Communication Center in Mather, CA.

What's Next?

The current BBS network links are based on Internet connections. The BBS sysops in the Bay area are already working to establish RF connections so that we can cover the entire Bay area without relying on the Internet. Eventually, we want to establish an RF path to Sacramento.

How to Learn More

1. Read the new Packet Network Addressing web page. A link to it can be found on the main packet page of the county ARES/RACES website, under the "Frequencies and Network Info" section.

2. Attend training. The 2012 Year End Summary class will contain information about the new gateway and future packet classes will be updated to incorporate the information.

3. Send a message. You can send yourself a message using this address style. Or find a buddy on another BBS and send each other a message.

4. Stay tuned for future updates as we establish protocols and procedures for communicating formal message traffic between counties.

Questions / Comments / Concerns

That's all for this update. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, it is likely that someone else does, too. So it would be helpful if you direct them to the scc-packet Yahoo group. That way, everyone can see the question and the answer. URL: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/scc-packet