



Monthly Packet Message Passing Exercise Review

OpPeriod: 03/18/2026 09:00 to 03/24/2026 18:00



Santa Clara County ARES®/RACES

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Author: Andreas Ott, K6OTT

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My Notes

- . ~~yay, no check-ins to XNDEOC@W1XSC!~~ until 03/21
- . courtesy messages are back, this time the script runs them first & answers/rejects messages before processing them further for practice content. Still did not catch all issues, but I don't want to reject more.
- . Yet more messages sent to XNDEOC@anyBBS outside of practice or to wrong BBS! Dates from Oct and Nov 2025. This requires us SysOps to clean up manually. Please send to yourself or to a friend instead.
- . switching to alternate BBS via bulletin: experience from Feb drill and poll - exercise again what did not go so well, aaaaaaaaaaand BINGO!, we need to do that more often
- . alpha software QA, multi-mode, multi-run
- . Subject line differences Outpost <> PacketShell
- . ping utility (hidden)

W10 is still going strong

Messages Passed Summary

Approximate number counts from the Xanadu EOC ICS-309 (as of 03/24-19:00)
Participants BBS: W1XSC - 12, W2XSC - 0, W3XSC - 3, W4XSC - 0

Assignments sent total (+ testers)		14 (+6)
Actual participating / dropped / MIA		15/5/0
Actual OP / PFM / PSM / Fun+rerun		11/4/2/1
Content Messages exchanged/bulletins *		313
	ICS213 sent+received	33
	Situation Report	17
	Notable Report	16
	Other	~ N*15

Thank you for participating in this exercise!!!!

- Excluding DELIVERED: received 119, sent 194, excluding other/debugging/broken 5
Overall total to/from Xanadu EOC: 537
- in Folders: bulletins: 7, op-to-op: 68, Forms: 50, Delivery Receipts: 119

Practice Objectives

- Based on SCC documentation
 - SCCo ARES/RACES Packet Operations - Type III, Part A and Part B courses; Type II (this includes how to configure Outpost from scratch) **NEW**
 - How to Send a Packet Message with Outpost - 09/19/2013
 - Standard Packet Message Subject Line - 08/03/2022
 - Standard Packet Check-in/Out Message - 09/25/2024
 - Outpost Users Guide, Basics; Version 3.7 | March 2023
 - RACES Recommended Form Routing Cheat Sheet [Rev: 13-Aug-2026] **NEW**
 - new PackItForms [13-Aug-2026, see also: Presentation 19-Aug-2026] **NEW**
- **Reading and Following Directions! Compulsory! IMPORTANT!!!**
- minimum version Outpost 164B and PacketShell v1.4.2 required
- Exercising simulated 3rd party and operator-to-operator messages
 - Most new Veoci Forms have now been exercised!
 - Operator to operator messages: Check-In and Check-Out, receive plain text
 - Receiving ICS-213 from the EOC
 - XSCEVENT and XND@XSC City Notice retrieval and sending standard/plain messages
- Simulated paperwork Turn-in: ICS-309s (packet and voice is mandatory), we are asking you to turn in “everything”, the complete set; (plus ICS-214 for an activation); supervisor may have commented on your paperwork

How did we do in general?

- My offer: simulate a complete standard field activation you can go through on your own pace. No deep bogs or tar pits, maybe an oil spill on the race course.
- Forms! Are you getting used to them?
- Message Prefix: should be X98- only, never 098- or your FCC suffix XRL-
- From: when operating in manual mode, please set MYCALL to the **correct** tactical call, and remember to ID as your FCC callsign
- XSCEVENT and City Notice XND@XSC – missing read notice from 1 station. When you operate manually, check bulletins at the start and once per hour! Always check for City (here: XND@XSC) bulletins!
- What do you do when you did not get a DELIVERED: receipt?
- ICS-309s: mandatory, like in a real activation (see SCCo Performance Standards), Field Ops Class, Packet Class



How did we do in general? 2

- missing **** This is drill traffic **** no longer an issue as it was placed onto the forms by the originator (no need for you to add to form)
- Instructions to Radio Operator: on the same form you hand to agency staff (this is a practice/exercise artifact)
- Immediate voice net notification ! 1 late
- Script does now handle resends X98-###R_H_ better than before and will reply to your original and re-sent message if the remaining Subject line was formatted correctly per regex

How did we do in general? 3

- XNDEOC@W1XSC, oh my! No DELIVERED: receipts given here.

Mail area: xndeoc

9 messages - 9 new

St.	#	TO	FROM	DATE	SIZE	SUBJECT
> N	1	xndeoc@w1xsc	xnd030	Mar 21	498	X30-400M_R_Check-In XND030, Milepos
N	2	xndeoc@w1xsc	xnd030	Mar 21	494	X30-403M_R_XSCEVENT notice read at
N	3	xndeoc@w1xsc.	xnd033	Mar 21	509	033-1002M_R_Check-In XND033, Milepo
N	4	xndeoc@w1xsc.	xnd033	Mar 21	519	033-1003M_R_Check-In XND033, Milepo
N	5	xndeoc@w1xsc.	xnd033	Mar 21	519	033-1004M_R_Check-In XND033, Milepo
N	6	xndeoc@w1xsc.	xnd033	Mar 21	509	033-1005M_R_Check-In XND033, Milepo
N	7	xndeoc@w1xsc	xnd032	Mar 21	501	X32-2352P_R_Check-In XND032, Milepo
N	8	xndeoc@w1xsc	xnd031	Mar 24	1052	X21-114M_I_SitRep_Xanadu City
N	9	xndeoc@w1xsc	xnd031	Mar 24	1052	X21-114M_I_SitRep_Xanadu City

(#1) >

Additional Observations...

- when operating in manual mode, are you using a checklist?
Are you sending (UI) identification packets at session end?
- “**** This is...” is always a good body in any empty message
- Mile Post 98 vs. MILE POST 98 vs. Milepost 98: all OK
- line breaks (ignored), JNOS is not helping here
- The closing instructions referred to fields in the Outpost ICS 309 Comm Log Builder, clarified what should be there.

#DNRAFI

"Radio Operator" contains your "First and Last Name / your FCC callsign"

"Station ID / Callsign" contains your facility "tactical name / tactical call"

- Strong Suggestion: archive and clean out all Outpost messages before the event, restore later

The Assignment:

You are receiving this email as you have signed up for the SCCo Monthly Packet Message Practice that opens at 09:00 this Wednesday 03/18/2026. This exercise continues for 6.375 days and closes on **Tuesday (03/24/2026) at 18:00**.

Please read this entire email, it contains important information.

The process begins by sending a properly formatted Check-In message to the Xanadu EOC using the tactical information that has been assigned to you below. Read and follow the directions in each received message from XNDEOC. If you sent the correct response message you will receive the next message task in this exercise. A message with the Subject containing "Goodbye from the Xanadu Packet Net" will contain your final instructions.

Important: we are exercising the current packet forms (Outpost 164B); the older versions of the forms will no longer be accepted. All methods of running the exercise, Outpost PM, PacketForms manual and PacketShell (v1.4.2) are supported. If you are operating in manual mode with a tactical call, please remember to send a proper FCC callsign ID packet at the end of each transmission.

Simulated Scenario for this month's exercise: The Xanadu City EOC has been activated in support of the Spring Ultra Marathon race, where runners can enter different races up to 100 mi distances. Your assignment is to provide packet radio communications for a Milepost that has been established along the route, where runners are timed when they pass through and also have the opportunity to pick up water, snacks, electrolytes, power gel pouches and use the restroom. There will be an EMT at your location.

Offline operations: if you would like to practice how to operate without Internet access, please email me back and I will send you the message PDFs ahead of time.

Voice Net: For an even more realistic voice net experience, when you have arrived at your simulated assignment location (and when you are ready to leave from it) you can call the same EOC number 408-475-3789 and do a voice net check-in or check-out. Just leave a brief voicemail "This is Milepost XX, checking-in/out. *Your FCC callsign*". Your voice check-in/out is automatically acknowledged. The voice net participation and logging it to a separate ICS-309 are part of the practice this month.

This is a simulated incident for which we are using amateur radio like in any communications outage, despite most communications systems still working nominally at this time.

Your role:	Packet Radio Operator
Your Additional ID text	Milepost 98 (This is your facility's tactical call for any voice nets and logging.)
Your facility's packet tactical call sign:	XND098
Your facility's message prefix is:	X98
Starting message number:	your choice
SCC Event Position[**]:	Primary_Station; you signed up in category "Primary_Station_tester" [**]
Incident Name:	Xanadu Spring Ultra Marathon March 2026
Activation Number:	XND-26-03181P
Your BBS:	Use your normal primary BBS, if not available use your secondary.
Simulated physical location:	<i>Race course at mile XX</i>
Xanadu EOC mailbox:	XNDEOC@W1XSC.scc-ares-races.org (primary) XNDEOC@W4XSC.scc-ares-races.org (alternate)
XND EOC activation period:	From Wednesday 03/18/2026 09:00 PST until Tuesday 03/24/2026 18:00 PST
Participation credit requirements	Packet messages: Check-in, Check-out, ICS-213, Situation Report, Notable Report, operator to operator plain text messages Email to instructor, completed: ICS-309 form(s)
Simulated Voice communications with Xanadu EOC:	For any simulated voice net messages, call the Xanadu EOC at 408-475-3789 and leave a succinct voicemail message; SMS/MMS text messages are also accepted.

Check-In Ack

Read the entire doc, all the way to the last line!
Every Document!

- Substitution rules
- XX, DD, HH:MM
- -30minutes
- Do not replace DD with literal "XX"
- Subject Line reminder

Check-In acknowledged to the Xanadu City Packet Net for this monthly packet practice. You have these guidelines and assignments:

1. Please make sure each message you send has this somewhere in the message content:

**** This is drill traffic ****

2. Your local Milepost Manager will "hand" you messages to process, and will receive any incoming messages from you.

3. In any messages you are asked to transmit:

- a) If you see an "XX" (double-X), replace the XX with your assigned tactical number.
- b) Replace any "DD" with the actual day value that you are transmitting the form for the practice.
- c) "HH" and "MM" with current 24-hour clock hour value and the current minutes value
- d) If you see a "+time" or "-time" add or subtract the correction to/from the current time. For example, if the form has "HH-1hour:MM", use your current time minus 1 hour, or "03/DD+tomorrow/2026", you would enter tomorrow's date for the DD replacement.
- e) Replace any "##" with an integer number.

4. All messages you send out should follow the standard for the Packet Message Subject line

<SenderMsgNbr>_<HandlingOrder>_<MsgSummary>

Examples of a plain and a PackItForms message:

X98-127P_R_Status of sandbag supplies

X98-127P_R_IC5213_Status of sandbag supplies

**** This is drill traffic {20260318-check-in-ack}****

Msg 1
ICS213

- **** on form
-

MESSAGE FORM ► For paper: use ballpoint pen – blue or black ink only (See back for instructions)		Origin Msg #: ² _____	Destination Msg #: ³ _____	
Date ¹ : 03/DD/2026 (mm/dd/yy)	Time (24hr): HH:MM (0001 to 2400)	Handling ⁵ (✓one): ☐ Immediate (ASAP) ☐ Priority (<1 hr) ☒ Routine (<2 hr)		
		This Message Requests You To ⁶ : TAKE ACTION (✓one): ☐ Yes ☒ No REPLY (✓one): ☐ Yes, by _____ ☒ No		
T O	ICS Position: (required) ⁷ Planning		F R O M	ICS Position: (required) ⁸ Milepost Manager
	Location: (required) ⁹ Xanadu City EOC			Location: (required) ⁹ Milepost XX
	Name: (optional)			Name: (optional)
	Telephone #:(optional)			Telephone #: (optional)
SUBJECT: ¹⁰ Supplies Level				
REFERENCE (e.g., Number of earlier msg.): ¹¹ _____				
MESSAGE: ¹² (what, when, where needed; how long; contact name and phone number - KEEP MSG BRIEF) Available supplies: water 30 gal, power gel pouches 144, medical kit full, electrolite paks 8 boxes, sanitation capacity 50% left. Next scheduled report in 4 hours. **** This is drill traffic ****				

Msg 2 SitRep

- ICS To:
pulldown
- Priority _I_
- use voice net!
- **** on form
- page 2 empty
- page 3
mandatory

Situation Report			Veoci: 20250521 PPDF: 20250812	
Radio Operator Only:		Origin Msg #:		Destination. Msg #:
This Section to be Completed by Jurisdiction/Field Personnel: (Underlined=Required)				
Date: <u>03/00/2026</u>		Time: (24hr): <u>HH:MM</u>		Handling: ☒ Immediate (ASAP) ☐ Priority (<1 hr) ☐ Routine (<2 hr)
T O	ICS Position: <u>Planning</u>		F R O M	ICS Position: <u>Milepost Manager</u>
	Location: <u>Xanadu City EOC</u>			Location: <u>Milepost XX</u>
	Name:			Name:
	Contact Info:			Contact Info:
Overview				
Prepared Date: <u>03/00/2026</u>		Prepared Time: <u>HH:MM</u>		
Jurisdiction: <u>Xanadu City</u>		Incident Name: <u>Ultra Marathon</u>		
Emergency Declaration: ☐ Unknown ☐ Yes ☐ No				
EOC Activation: ☐ Normal ☐ Duty Officer ☐ Monitor ☐ Partial ☐ Full				
Incident Description:				
Additional Incident Information: <u>**** This is drill traffic ****</u>				
Lifeline Status				
Lifeline Status: ☒ Stable ☐ Stabilizing ☐ Unstable ☐ Unknown				
Update: <u>as of 13:00 - runners passed 176, runners exited DNF 3, water consumed 22 gal, medical incident 1.</u>				
Unmet Needs: <u>running low on electrolyte packs and power gel pouches, we will submit order form.</u>				

Situation Report

Msg 3 NotRep

- checked boxes
- Severity Medium
- Priority handling
- Escalate: No
- **** on form
- ICS To: pulldown
“Situation(al)”
- Expire: No

Notable Report			Veoci: 20250523 DOC: 20250812
Radio Operator Only:	Origin Msg #:	Destination. Msg #:	
This Section to be Completed by Jurisdiction Personnel: (Underlined=Required)			
Initial Information			
Date: 03/DD/2026		Time: (24hr): HH:MM	Handling: ☐ Immediate (ASAP) ☒ Priority (<1 hr) ☐ Routine (<2 hr)
T O	ICS Position: Situational Analysis Unit	F	ICS Position: Mile Post Manager
	Location: Xanadu City EOC	R	Location: Mile Post XX
	Name:	O	Name:
	Contact Info:	M	Contact Info:
Jurisdiction: Xanadu City		Originator: Ashley Paulson	
Severity: (Pick One) ☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low			
Escalate to County Op Area? ☐ Yes ☒ No			
If Yes, is this event Incident Specific? ☐ Yes ☐ No			
If above question is Yes, name of Op Area Incident:			
Event Details			
Title: Medical Incident Timeline			
Date: 03/DD/2026		Time: HH-1hour:MM	
Event Type:			
☐ 1: Transportation ☒ 8: Public Health and Medical ☐ 15: Public Information ☐ 2: Communications ☐ 9: Search and Rescue ☐ 16: Animal Services ☐ 3: Construction and Engineering ☐ 10: Hazardous Materials Response ☐ 17: Volunteer Management ☐ 4: Fire and Rescue ☐ 11: Food and Agriculture ☐ 18: Cyber Security ☐ 5: Management ☐ 12: Utilities ☐ 19: Donations Management ☐ 6: Care and Shelter ☐ 13: Law Enforcement ☐ 20: Continuity of ☐ 7: Resources ☐ 14: Recovery Operations/Government			
Details: 10:44 runner collapsed 500 ft before MP, 9-1-1 call / 10:46 EMT first responder on-scene / 10:57 Fire & EMS on-scene / 11:23 transport code 3 **** This is drill traffic ****			
Contact Information			
Point of Contact Name:		Contact Phone Number:	
Contact Email:			
Event Expiration			
Do you want this event to expire?: ☐ Yes ☒ No		If Yes, Date to Expire:	

Notabl

ICS-309 forms turned in

- Some good, voice 309s not optional this time; missing: 0
- your supervisor would ask you to turn in missing paperwork at the end of the shift. When your are using a voice net (like, almost always!) please make a voice ICS-309.
- Otherwise, will be scored based on instructions
- **#DNRAFI** for filling in fields
- Operational period, base for time stamps. If date change, make an “empty” line entry with the new date.
- during an incident or activation: do not rely on computer “fillable” PDF forms, please use paper and turn them in.
Risk: loss of data, unable to print.
- Outpost “Time” field is actually “MM-DD HH:MM”

Summary

- Very Good go! Look at all the green on the scorecard!
 - Especially for those that became unstuck on their own
- Next “monthly” practice: Saturday 16 May 2026 county drill. XNDEOC on (business) travel in April

Next UP: Exercise Scorecard

- Reminder, there is no pass or fail, only green-yellow-red, county standards ask for 90% or better; blue or white (blank fields) means missing data
- The scorecard is a tool for indicating areas for improvement