



Monthly Packet Message Passing Exercise Review

Period: 07/19/2023 09:00 to 07/26/2023



Santa Clara County ARES®/RACES

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Messages Passed Summary

Approximate number counts from the Xanadu EOC ICS-309 (as of 17:00):

Assignments sent (total):	23
Participating / dropped / fun / staff:	20 / 0 / 0 / 3
Content Messages exchanged *:	
Form ICS213	108
Form EOC213RR	25
CSV form	25
Other	283

Thank you for participating in this exercise!!!!

- Excluding DELIVERED: 443, includes resends and testing.
Overall total to/from Xanadu EOC: 843

Exercise Objectives

- Based on SCC documentation
 - SCCo ARES/RACES Packet Operations - Type III, Part A and Part B courses
 - How to Send a Packet Message with Outpost - 09/19/2013
 - Standard Packet Message Subject Line - 02/22/2020
 - Standard Packet Check-in/Out Message - 09/25/2023
 - Outpost Users Guide, Basics; Version 3.4 | July 2020
 - RACES Recommended Form Routing Cheat Sheet [Rev: 19-Feb-2023]
- Exercise simulated 3rd party and operator-to-operator messages
 - Check-In and Check-Out
 - XND City Notice retrieval
 - Operator to operator messages
 - 3rd party messages
 - Hand-written forms “handed” to operator via URL to simulate a “complete” form being handed from Principal
 - Operator limited to header (routing form) content and **** this is drill traffic ****
 - URL assignments now will be “given” in operator-to-operator messages and not 3rd party form
 - Another CSV “thumb drive” file simulation

How did we do in general?

- City Notice XND@XSC downloaded and reported by most
 - Good, 5 missing reports
- Pic-a-nic Baskets! added message in Assignments
 - 5 kiosks missed
- Real-life stained ICS-213 worked
- CSV file thumb-drive worked o
 - One Kiosk added a header for routing information
 - 7 Subject: line errors – not related to “CSV” at end of line
 - One mangled content
- EOC213RR mostly worked
 - Generally, we don’t appear in 3rd party To/From information
 - 3 kiosks thought we do
 - Most kiosks noted that “high priority” mapped to “Immediate”
 - 4 kiosks did not use the simulated voice net for Immediate notification
- ICS-309 (packet) task number and task names, still some issues
- ICS-309 (voice) 9 stations did not turn in
- Plain text message problem: 5 kiosks has prefix issues. Reminder, packet operator has to make sure front of Subject meets standards: e.g., X19-123P_R_

The Assignment:

Greetings,

You are receiving this email as you have signed up for the SCC Packet Message passing exercise that opens at 09:00 tomorrow (Wednesday). This exercise continues for one week and closes on next Wednesday at 17:00.

The process begins by sending a properly formatted Check-In message to the Xanadu City EOC using the tactical information that has been assigned to you below. 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 "Thank you" will contain your last assignments.

Scenario for this month's exercise: you have been assigned as a packet radio operator supporting messaging at a festival information kiosk for the Xanadu Annual Picnic Festival. July is National Picnic Month, as well as National Hot Dog Month, National Ice Cream Month, and National Watermelon Month. All of these traditional picnic foods will be served at many places around the festival. Kiosks provide information to festival participants, take lost people reports, provide bottled water, and more. Your supervisor will be the Kiosk Manager, Yogi Bearra.

Your tactical number: 19
Your role: Packet Radio Operator for Festival Kiosk 19, you can shorten to Kiosk 19
Your Tactical Call Sign is: XND019
Your message prefix is: X19
Starting message number: your_choice
SCC Event Position[**]: Primary_Station_test
Incident Name: Xanadu Picnic Month Festival
Activation Number: XND-23-0719P
Your BBS: Use your normal primary/secondary. There is no simulated-down BBS for this exercise
Xanadu EOC mailbox: XNDEOC@W1XSC.ampr.org (primary)
XNDEOC@W4XSC.ampr.org (secondary)
XND EOC activation period: From Wednesday, 07/19/23 09:00 until Wednesday, 07/26/23 17:00 (sharp)
Simulate Voice communications with Xanadu EOC: For simulated voice net messages, call the EOC at **650-542-8987** and leave a voice message., SMS/MMS text messages are also accepted. (Yes, this really works for this exercise).
Ref: [2021 Packet Type III Part B course, slide "Standard Packet Subject Line"](#)

There will be Zoom "Office Hours" held next Wednesday from 19:30 to 21:30. Conference details will be sent in a separate email. The agenda for this call will be to review an overall exercise "score card" and to interactively review any issues, problems, and to answer any questions.

Some notes/reminders:

- [**] Your SCC event position is not your tactical assignment position. It was what you selected when you signed up for this event.
- You may need to have knowledge of sending and receiving spreadsheets in csv format using Outpost. There are instructions in the [Packet Type III Part A exercises material](#). See Section 2.5.
- The Xanadu City EOC will only process messages during the exercise activation time period:
- If you are going to try to use LibreOffice on Windows for the first time for this practice, there are some instructions on installation and .csv file opening on the [practice page](#)
- If you are reading these directions, send a plain text routine message to XNDEOC with the Subject "Pic-a-nic Baskets!"
- You will get a DELIVERED receipt for each message received by XNDEOC.

How'd we do: Starting Status

- Re-ordered list to encourage reading to see what changed
- Added 3) to review "fixed" message content in messages from XND EOC.
 - Will move this info to training page
 - Will also discuss with JimO about possible options.

Check-In acknowledge to the Xanadu County Packet Net for this month's message passing communication practice. You have these guidelines and assignments:

- 1) This month's practice will simulate forms being handed to you by your manager available as PDF via URL.
 - a) After they "hand" you the form(s), they walk away and are not available for updates/corrections.
 - b) You may need to complete the form using the Radio Routing Cheat sheet and your best judgement.
- 2) 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" add the correction to the current time. For example, if the form has "HH:MM+3h", use your current time plus 3 hours, or "08/DD/2022+tomorrow", would be enter tomorrow's date for the DD replacement.
 - e) Replace any "##" with an integer number.

3) Outpost's scripting package can't edit message content to personalize it: any forms sent from Xanadu EOC to anyone are the same message. For any messages you receive from Xanadu EOC, please make the following mental/time adjustments:

- a) Your tactical position may be referred to with an XX. Take this to be equivalent to your assigned tactical number.
- b) Fixed Date value is when the drill started, e.g., date of the 3rd Wednesday. Fixed time values will be at or near when the drill starts: e.g., between 09:00 and 11:00.
- c) If there are any relative times in the message, See 2) above, make equivalents based on the date/time the message was sent by Xanadu EOC. For example, if you see a Take Action, Reply By, Yes, with a Time value of +2h, base your reply time limit from the time the message was actually sent plus the relative offset. Example, if the form Date and time are: 07/19/2023 10:00, reply time +2h, and the time Xanadu EOC sent the message was 07/21/2023 17:00, then you need to reply by 07/21/2023 19:00.
- d) NOTE: these equivalences apply ONLY for form messages RECEIVED from XNDEOC. They do not apply to messages "handed" to your by your manager.

4) This practice may put some notes into the forms for various fields. A note to you is bracketed by "<" and ">" signs. For example, you may see:

"<enter your simulated field post address>"

Simply, replace the brackets and the note text with the requested text for that field, do not include the brackets and the instruction text.

5) A utility is available in the Xanadu EOC: it will now respond to ping messages. Specifically, the word "ping" is the only word in the routine Subject line: e.g.,

XND000-000P_R_ping

no extra spaces before the "ping". You will get a response back if Xanadu EOC is processing messages with the reply subject of "PONG".

6) Please make sure each message you send has this somewhere in the message content:

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

[20230719 1-check-in-ack]

ICS-213 Opening Status

- Stained – figured real-world experience at a hot-dog festival would encourage sauce getting everywhere
 - Yes, actually is Frank's Hot Sauce, not ketchup (catsup)
- 2 with small typos'
- One duplicate sent, didn't use Resend procedure
- From ICS Position and Location intended set stage for any routing information needed during this practice

CSV 4-hour update report

- Mostly went very well
- Issues
 - One kiosk had mangled lines, looks like all original line endings were removed
- Putting “CSV” at the end of the Subject line
 - A few kiosks missed this
 - Next time instructions will be put “.CSV” or “.csv” at end of the Subject line
 - Outpost then recognizes this for “Save as, no headers” as file extension
- So, on how do we really want to include Routing Slip Information with a CSV file we’ve just been asked to send?
- How to print the Routing Slip content at the receiver?

CSV – how to include Routing Slip content

- Issue is receiver doesn't know who to deliver CSV file to as there is now ICS TO Position information
 - Unless specifically included by the CSV “form” creator
- How does a packet radio operator do this as a “fax machine”?
- Several methods:
 - Provide training on to manually add and remove lines before the CSV content – could be prone to many errors
 - Provide copy & paste template for adding lines before CSV content
 - Having all CSV creators put standard Routing Slip format in their files
 - Copy & paste into an ICS213 message field, how to cleanly put into a file?
 - Create a new PackItForm for adding Routing Slip content to text file content
 - Almost like an ICS213 but easier to copy into and out of the message field
 - Add file extension recognition to support saving on the receiving side.

CSV – manual insert or template copy and paste

- Kiosk 21 thought of this (note doesn't have handling):

```
Subject: X21-1110P_R_4-hour report for Kiosk 21 4-hour_report.csv
```

```
- Routing Slip Info...
```

```
To: Planning Section
```

```
Location: Xanadu EOC
```

```
From: Kiosk Manager
```

```
Location: Kiosk 21
```

```
Form: CSV file
```

```
Topic/Subject: 4-hour report
```

```
- CSV data follows after one blank line...
```

```
Xanadu Festival Kiosk,21,,,
```

```
Subject:,4-hour festival report for Kiosk 21,,,
```

```
Manager:,Yogi Bearra,,,
```

```
Date: ,07/18/23,,Time:,02:10
```

CSV – manual insert or template copy and paste

- JimO was noodling on this after he and I discussed that the ICS213 message field might not be the best place for CSV. This has everything:

```
Packet Radio Routing Slip
<HEADER>
*Origin Msg#:
*Date:
*Time:
*Handling (I/P/R):
*TO: Position:
*TO: Location:
TO: Name:
TO: Contact Info:
*FROM: Position:
*FROM: Location:
FROM: Name:
FROM: Contact Info:
*Form Type:
*Topic:
</HEADER>
```

CSV content via PackItForm

- John Kristian read the “Food for Thought and future discussion” items for the exercise and volunteered to create a form for dealing with this
- Steve Roth independently said “create a packitform”.
- Want to hear from others on this Zoom call for any opinions
 - <discussion>, after a very good discussion:
 - John (W6JMK) to create a PackItForm prototype for sending files, essentially the routing slip information + file content.
 - Both ascii text (txt, csv) and small binary files
 - Will look at ways to easily copy a file into the form at the sender, and out of the form into a file at the receiver. First use case: sending CSV file
 - Will look at ways to print the routing information
 - Thomas raised awareness that we don’t want this as a mechanism for sending malicious content
 - Mark (K6FJC) will intro start of project on the packet email list

EOC-213RR Xanadu Picnic Month Festival

- From prior months:
 - Again, what is a 3rd party message? <discussion>
- Radio Routing Cheat Sheet says: *For an ARES/RACES exercise or training event, use the information given for that event, e.g. "Xanadu EOC" may be specified instead of "County EOC", etc.*
 - Still some kiosks used "County EOC" – counted as OK for now
- Accepted From Position:
 - Kiosk Manager, Manager, XND### Manager
- This was a "High" priority RR -> "Immediate" handling order
 - Simulated voice net message to XND EOC required
 - 4 kiosks missed doing the call
 - One kiosk sent as "Priority" handling order
 - Six kiosks did not provide an ICS309 for the simulated voice traffic

Summary

- Nice participation for this go!
- Areas for continued practice have been identified

Next practice is posted:

- Expect third Wednesday start: 20th September
- Expect same level of efforts, but may “up” sent 3rd party from 2 to 3 for July

Expect Xanadu EOC vacation in August

Next UP: Exercise Scorecard

- Reminder, there is no pass or fail
- The scorecard is a tool for indicating areas for improvement