

# ***Western Public Service System (WPSS) Emergency Communications Plan (ECP)***

## **Purpose**

A disaster by definition means that available resources; whether communications, first responders, emergency medical, fire, and/or police are overwhelmed. Additionally, roads and other transportation, power, water, gas, and food supplies may be compromised.

The purpose of this plan is to provide all members and supported agencies with the information necessary to (1) understand the role of the WPSS and its members in a regional emergency; and (2) the procedures to follow in order to participate and assist the WPSS in fulfilling that role.

## **Mission**

### **The mission of the WPSS in a regional disaster**

1. To confirm that to the extent possible, all members are safe and have resources and shelter to sustain them; and provide members with an outside connection, a 'voice.' We need to know where our members are; whether in their home, a shelter, on the road or otherwise evacuating.
2. To serve as an information resource for local, regional, and national agencies who have dynamic requirements for historical as well as real-time information regarding infrastructure and available resources.
3. As propagation and available members on-air allows, perform sending information (formal and informal messages) to WPSS members. And, as it can be done safely, to other local community members or community (i.e., city, county) leadership.

### **Approach. (We train for this every night.)**

1. **Activate WPSS** Following the announcement or declaration of a regional disaster WPSS will activate on a round-the-clock basis until directed by the WPSS leadership to stand-down.
2. **Net Control** The first member on the air will assume the role of net control and retain that role until relieved by another net control operator. When a net control needs to he or she may ask for another member to assume the role. If for some reason the net control operator goes off the air or can no longer be heard then another capable station shall announce their assumption of the role. If the

disaster response continues for an extended period the WPSS leadership may formalize the schedule for net control operators and communicate it by available means.

3. **Relays** Other members not necessarily affected by the disaster are encouraged to remain on the air as much as possible and act as relays. Many members in the affected region will be operating from compromised, portable or mobile equipment, and expeditionary antennas; hence, relays will be critical.

## Responsibilities

1. **Family** Each member's primary responsibility is to her or his family, close friends, and neighbors. It is a basic tenet of volunteer emergency response agencies (CERT, ARES, MARS, Red Cross, and etc.) that each member ensure their family is safe and has the necessary resources and shelter.
2. **Check-In** Once your primary responsibility to family and neighbors has been met, then all members (not just those on the roll call) should utilize existing communications and power resources to check-in with the WPSS net control on 3952 KHz.
3. **Planning** In preparation for disasters each amateur radio operator should make backup plans for power and radio equipment. The primary assumption is that normal grid-based power will be unavailable within the geographical area of the disaster. The use of portable or mobile radios with battery or generator supplied power, and expeditionary antennas may be necessary. These preparations should be made now, and periodically tested and tried-out to ensure everything works.
4. **Net Control** Maintain an available membership list and record personal status and local infrastructure information from members as they check in. Also, take check-ins and available information from our visitors to the net in the affected region. Be prepared to forward information about infrastructure and other resources to outside agencies as requested by available communications.