

**Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency**

**Region #2**

**Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services Team**

**WC1MAB**



April 2016

Vol 2016 - Issue #2

## **This Month in Emergency Communications: Brush Fire Threats**

While spring has been somewhat slow to make it this far into the northeast, it seems that it won't be long before we are monitoring the normal hot-spots of severe weather and beginning to make plans for an approaching Hurricane Season. April typically plays host to all sorts of strong thunderstorms, however, this time around instead of rain this month has brought with it an increased threat of brush fires. As members of our respective Emergency Management (Civil Defense) Agencies, I urge our operators to be mindful of enhanced fire weather or "Red Flag" days. Have a plan on how you can contact your local fire response agencies and report any unusual smoke conditions on days having Red Flag conditions. In our part of the country open burning is not uncommon, but it IS uncommon for local fire departments to allow burning if ANY kind on Red Flag days due to the hazards involved.

Does your agency have a plan to support brush fire responses? Brush fires often require larger amounts of specialized equipment such as brush breakers and water tenders. Even a "small" brush fire of an acre or two can require fairly extensive mutual aid from nearby communities and even counties. Does your agency have a plan in place to communicate with departments from multiple communities? At what point in such an incident would you contact county or state entities to assist in providing communications equipment and support? Planning ahead for these types of incidents can help your agency shine when problems arise.

## **Monthly Net Report**

This month poor road conditions seemed likely to keep many operators away from their EOCs for Communications Night. Even with the bad weather, and including the two off-site net control stations, a total of **27 check-ins** were noted across the four sector nets. Snowfall totals were requested by NWS Taunton and many stations were able to assist in this data gathering with very short notice.

With only one radio operator able to make it to "The Bunker" at Region 2 Headquarters in Bridgewater, the ability of the region to successfully run two sets of two simultaneous nets was an excellent display for our served agencies of the resilience of our operation as well as the commitment put forth by our individual operators.

This coming month we will be working to get Marshfield up and running as an off-site Net Control Operator as well further increasing our ability to handle multiple nets with limited operators available to respond directly to The Bunker or to bring up nets quickly while operators are enroute to Region #2 HQ to begin operations from there. Thank you to all who participated!

## Sector 2A

**Net Control (WC1MAB): M1YLQ - Mike**

### **RACES Stations**

- 1.) Fall River – WA1MZL Steve
- 2.) Norton – WC1NOR –
- 3.) Rehobeth – KB1LAC
- 4.) WX1BOX/KD1CY\* - Rob

### **Non-RACES / Non-Sector Stations**

- 1.) Wareham – N1WCO – Eric

\* WX1BOX is not a RACES station, but as a station representing a federal entity it is listed under RACES stations for this report.

## Sector 2B

**Net Control (WC1MAB): N1YLQ - Mike**

### **RACES Stations**

- 1.) Marshfield - KA1PS – George
- 2.) Pembroke - KB1PFL
- 3.) Plymouth – N1SYC – Bob
- 4.) Whitman – KB1MTW
- 5.) Taunton\* – N1EZH – Barry

\* Taunton is assigned as Sector 2A, but due to propagation limitations, N1EZH typically checks in with Sector 2B.

## Sector 2C

**Net Control (Local): N1UMJ - John**

### **RACES Stations**

- 1.) MEMA Region 2 HQ – WC1MAB
- 2.) Brewster – K1CKK
- 2.) Dukes County – KB1QL
- 3.) Nantucket – W1PJR
- 4.) Falmouth – KB1GTG

### **Non-RACES / Non-Sector Stations**

- 5.) Plymouth? – KD4OFZ
- 6.) West Yarmouth – KC1CTB

## Sector 2D

**Net Control (Local): WA1PLE - Don**

### **Checked-In Stations**

- 1.) MEMA Region 2 HQ - WC1MAB
- 2.) Dover – WJ1R – Jim
- 3.) Medfield – W1NIG – Neil
- 4.) Millis – K1HRV – Dave
- 5.) Sharon – K1FNX – Mike
- 6.) Walpole - W1JFR
- 7.) Foxboro – KC1DOD – Matthew
- 8.) Norwood – KA1PGI - Brian
- 9.) North Attleboro – KC1AGQ - Jim
- 10.) Wrentham – WA1AR – Alan

## Amateur Radio on Assignment: Boston Marathon 2016

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, somewhere around 250 amateur radio operators joined thousands of volunteers from Hopkington to Copley Square in Boston to support the 120<sup>th</sup> running of the Boston Marathon. While the final numbers are still being calculated, it was readily apparent that this year's event went quite smoothly. I can personally report that I heard at least one instance of excellent emergency radio traffic handling in the finish area as EMS was summoned for a person (non-runner) having a cardiac issue.

For operators looking to get some hands on experience with large scale emergency event communications, I highly recommend participating in this event. It has been referred to as one of the worlds largest "Planned Mass Casualty Incidents" and it is a tremendous opportunity to witness first hand how Amateur Emergency Communications can play a critical role in large scale events. It is also an excellent opportunity to spend a day with other highly motivated volunteers from other disciplines (EMS, Sports Medicine, Red Cross) and learn more about what they do while showcasing our capabilities. I have heard that more than one Red Cross volunteer has now taken an interest in getting their Ham Ticket based on their interactions with Amateur Radio volunteers this past Monday. If all of that isn't enough, you also get a high quality commemorative volunteer jacket and race day credentials. Sign-ups for volunteers generally open in early January and stay open for Ham Operators through early March. If you are interested or have any questions, please reach out to some of the hams who were involved this year or send me an e-mail at [WC1MAB@gmail.com](mailto:WC1MAB@gmail.com).



## Station Showcase: Marshfield EOC

In the March newsletter it was suggested that operators could share photos of their RACES Stations in an effort to learn from one another and see how other communities operate. Since incidents causing RACES/ARES activations tend to spread operators pretty thin, it would be a pretty rare occurrence for operators to spend much time at another emergency operators work station.

Very shortly after this request was issued, George McCarron KA1PS from the Marshfield EOC sent in some images of his operating station.



George explains: “I’ve attached a few photos of the communications room at the Marshfield EOC. They include: the RACES station which has a 2 meter/ 440 transceiver, a marine radio transceiver, a HF transceiver, a BECONS transceiver and a MEMA transceiver. Also shown is a TTY phone (for hard of hearing callers) plus a regular phone which connects to all other phones in the EOC as well.

The equipment just to the left of the RACES station is a duplicate 911 machine. This room also has duplicate Police, Fire and DPW stations. On the opposite room side are a fax machine, a printer and TV screens that monitor regular TV, MEMA and Plymouth Nuclear.

The EOC has a separate director’s office, kitchen, administrative office and rest room.”

Marshfield is a community that falls within the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ.) As an EPZ community they may have specialized radio equipment not found in other communities further away from Plymouth County.

This is a great example of an EOC that has clearly integrated Amateur Radio into their emergency operations plan as a solid communications resource.

