



SETRAC Off the Grid Communications Drill December 18, 2023

After-Action Report/Improvement Plan

December 18, 2023

The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns exercise objectives with preparedness doctrine to include the National Preparedness Goal and related frameworks and guidance. Exercise information required for preparedness reporting and trend analysis is included; users are encouraged to add additional sections as needed to support their own organizational needs.

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	Off the Grid Communications Drill
Exercise Date(s)	December 18, 2023
Purpose	The purpose of this drill was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC) to communicate with partners during a region-wide communications disruption.
Mission Area(s)	Preparedness, Response and Recovery
HPP Capabilities	HPP Capability 2 - Health Care and Medical Response Coordination
Objectives	Assess the ability of the Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC) to establish communications with the Catastrophic Medical Operations Center (CMOC) in the event of a region-wide disruption of communications.
Threat or Hazard	Region-wide Communication Outage
Scenario	A cyber-attack has disrupted several communications functions across Southeast Texas, redundant backup communications systems are unavailable.
Participating Organizations	See Appendix B
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ANALYSIS OF HPP CAPABILITIES

Aligning exercise objectives and HPP capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. Table 1 includes the exercise objectives, aligned HPP capabilities, and performance ratings for each HPP capability as observed during the exercise and determined by the evaluation team.

Objective	HPP Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
Assess the ability of the Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC) to establish communications with the CMOG in the event of a region-wide disruption of communications.	Health Care and Medical Response Coordination	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performed without Challenges (P): The targets and critical tasks associated with the HPP capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. • Performed with Some Challenges (S): The targets and critical tasks associated with the HPP capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified. • Performed with Major Challenges (M): The targets and critical tasks associated with the HPP capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. • Unable to be Performed (U): The targets and critical tasks associated with the HPP capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s). 					

Table 1. Summary of HPP Capability Performance

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated HPP capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

Objective 1 – Assess the ability of the Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC) to establish communications with the CMOC in the event of a region-wide disruption of communications.

Overview

SETRAC conducted their December Off the Grid Drill in on December 18, 2023. The Houston Area Hospital Amateur Radio Net conducted the amateur radio component for this drill. The purpose of this net and the drill was to ensure that amateur radio stations located at hospital facilities and emergency response agencies were operational. Communications equipment like radios, cables, and antennas were tested through participation in the net. This was a directed net with the primary frequency 145.170 using the KA5QDG repeater with Net Control operating from the radio room at Houston TranStar, N5TRS. In all 128 Agencies/Facilities participated in this drill. Several agencies/facilities utilized multiple means of transmission for this drill.

- Satellite Phone – 5
- HAM Radio or Digital Check-in – 25
- Texting Platform - 118

With the increased emphasis of redundant communications from SETRAC and the hosting of several HAM radio training and licensing courses we have identified an increased usage and capabilities across the region on the HAM and Digital operations and check-ins. Continuing this effort will greatly enhance and better our regional communication capabilities region-wide.

A total of 15 facilities and 13 radio operators checked in on the net.

1. Check-ins from hospital facilities

Seven (7) hospitals checked in from their radio rooms with a total of 9 radio operators. All were clearly audible with strong signals.

Hospital / Tactical Call Sign (opt)	Radio Operator Call Signs
MD Anderson	KI5ZES
Houston HCA Northwest Medical Center / W5MWM	WB5HJV
Methodist Continuing Care	KD5PQJ
Methodist West / KT5MW	W5WMC, KI5RTE
Methodist Willowbrook	KD5U, WA5LEE (remote)
Methodist Baytown	KG5WZD
Clarewood Nursing Facility	KJ5VOJ



2. Check-ins from emergency response agencies

Eight (8) emergency response agencies checked in with a total of 8 radio operators. Signals were good to strong and clearly audible.

Agency / Tactical Call Sign (opt)	Radio Operator Call Signs
Atascocita Fire EOC (SETRAC #19)	KF5VIK
Coast Guard	unclear
Ft. Bend County EOC	K0LTB
Harris County Emergency Services District 8	W5BAY
Red Cross / N5WAJ	WB5HJV
Harris County Public Health	KI5SRC
Baytown Fire Department / K5BAY	KF5ETG
Chambers County Public Health	K5JBD

An optional digital check-in was included in the drill for those facilities with radios capable of digital communications. For the digital check-in, a Winlink message was sent to an email address. The message could be sent in either VHF/UHF or telnet modes. There were 12 digital check-ins.

Hospital or Emergency Response Agency	Radio Operator Call Signs
Atascocita Fire Emergency Services	KF5VIK
Encompass Rehabilitation Hospital of Katy	Shannon Harper
Houston Methodist Baytown	KG5WZD
Houston Methodist West Hospital / KT5MW	W5WMC, KI5RTE
Houston Methodist Willowbrook Hospital	KD5U, WA5LEE
Houston Methodist Continuing Care Hospital	KD5PQJ
Red Cross / N5WAJ	WB5HJV
HCA Houston Healthcare Northwest Medical Center / W5MWM	WB5HJV
Atascocita Fire Department Station 19 EOC	KF5VIK
CHI St. Luke's Health Memorial Lufkin Hospital	KB8QWN

The net also had 1 voice check ins and 2 digital check-ins from unaffiliated visitors.

APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

HPP Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
Health Care and Medical Response Coordination	Education	Continue to hold training sessions for HAM Radio licensing and Advance HAM training due to turnover and hospital visitation policies of external vendors being permitted access during pandemic operations.	SETRAC	SETRAC Training	Ongoing	Ongoing

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANTS

Appendix B: Participants

B-1

SETRAC

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Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)

Facility Name	Process
ABBA Gentle Healthcare LLC	T
Altus Hospice Beaumont	T
Angels Over Us LLC	T
Atascocita Fire Department	T
Atascocita Fire Department EOC	H
Atascocita Fire Department Station 19	H
Atascocita Fire Emergency Services	H
Avondale House	T
Bayou Manor Brazos Towers	T
Bayside Community Hospital	T
BCM Health	T
Beaumont Emergency Hospital	T
Bio Home Health	T
Caring People Adult Care	T
Chambers County Emergency Services	S T
CHI St Luke's Memorial Hospital Lufkin	H
Christus Jasper Memorial	T
Christus St. Elizabeth	T
Christus St. Mary Outpatient Center ER	T
City of Wharton EMS	T
Clarewood House Assisted Living	T
Clarewood House Extended Care Center	T
Coast Guard	H
Coastal Health & Wellness / Galveston County Health District	T
College Street Health Care Center	T
Columbus Community Hospital	T
Commitment To Caring	T
Cornerstone Specialty Hospital - Conroe	T
Cypress Creek Rehab	T
Deerbrook Emergency Hospital EHS	T
Divinity - Dallas	T
Divinity Hospice	T
Divinity Hospice Round Rock	T
East Houston Medical Center	T
Eden Hospice Care Services	T
El Campo Memorial Hospital	S T
Elite Hospital Kingwood	T
Encompass Health Rehab of Katy	T H

Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Humble	T
Encompass Health Rehab-The Vintage	S T
Encompass Health Sugar Land	T
Exceptional Emergency Orange	T
Exceptional Healthcare a Department of Altus Lumberton Hospital	T
FallCreek Rehabilitation & Healthcare	T
FKC Atascocita	T
FKC Dayton Dialysis	T
FKC Spring Cypress Home 100959	T
Fresenius Alvin Dialysis	T
Fresenius kidney Care Clutch City	T
Ft Bend County EOC	H
Graceful Care Center	T
Hallmark	T
Harbor Healthcare	T
Harbor Hospice Beaumont	T
Harmony Care at Beaumont	T
Harris County Emergency Services District 8	T H
Harris County ESD 8 (Northwest Community Health)	T
Harris County Public Health	H
Harris Health System ACS	T
Harris Health System Ben Taub	T
Harris Health System LBJ	T
HCPC/DCB The Behavioral Sciences Campus	T
Holiness Home Healthcare Corp	T
Houston Children's Dental Center	T
Houston HCA Northwest Medical Center	H
Houston Methodist Continuing Care	H
Houston Methodist Sugar Land	T
Houston Methodist West	H
Houston Methodist Willowbrook	H
Jacinto City Fire Department	T
Katy Fire Department	T
KF5OXQ	T
Kindred Hospital Sugar Land	T
Legent North Houston Surgical Hospital	T
Lufkin State Supported Living Center	T
MD Anderson Cancer Center	S T H
Memorial Hermann Children's Hospital	T
Memorial Hermann Health System	T
Memorial Hermann Katy	T
Memorial Hermann Memorial City	T
Memorial Hermann Northeast	T
Memorial Hermann Pearland Hospital	T
Memorial Hermann Rockets Orthopedic Hospital	T

Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital	T
Memorial Hermann Sugar Land Hospital	T
Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Medical Center	T
Memorial Hermann TMC	T
Montgomery County Public Health	T
MRC Creekside Retirement Community	T
MRC Pine Crest Retirement	T
Nacogdoches Medical Center	S T
Nurses Night & Day, Inc	T
OakBend Medical Center Jackson St	T
OakBend Medical Center Wharton	T
OakBend Medical Center Williams Way	T
Oakmont of Humble	T
PAM Rehabilitation Hospital of Beaumont	T
PAM Rehabilitation Hospital of Clear Lake South	T
Pax Et Vita Home Care	T
Pax Et Vita Hospice Agency, LLC	T
Peach Creek Assisted Living #1	T
Peach Creek Assisted Living #2	T
Red Cross	H
Rice Medical Center	T
Sabine County Hospital	T
Silverado Hospice - North Houston	T
Silverado Hospice-South Houston	T
Spindletop Center	T
St. Joseph Medical Center	T
St. Luke's Health Memorial Livingston	T
Summit Nursing & Rehab	T
Texas Children's Hospital TMC	T
Texas Emergency Hospital EHS	T
The Arboretum of Winnie	T
The Heights of Tomball	T
Timberidge Nursing and Rehab	T
TIRR Memorial Hermann	T
TOPS Surgical Hospital	T
Tyler County Hospital	T
US Renal Baylor Scott	T
US Renal Care Houston Home Therapies	T
US Renal Care Webster	T
USRC Pearland Luxury	T
UTMB Clear Lake Campus	T
Vidor Health and Rehab	T
Vitas Hospice Agency	T
West Janisch Health Care Center	T
Woman's Hospital of Texas	T

Woodland Heights Medical Center	T
Woodlands Home Therapies	T

H = HAM Radio S = Satellite Phone T = Text