



May 2021 SETRAC Off the Grid Communications Drill

After-Action Report/Improvement Plan

May 17, 2021

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)	May 17, 2021
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 HPP Capabilities	HPP Capability 2 - Health Care and Medical Response Coordination
Objectives	Assess the ability of Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC) to establish and maintain communications with the coalition members in the event of a region-wide communications disruption.
Threat or Hazard	Communication Failure
Scenario	Recent Severe weather caused the disruption of multiple communications systems across Texas. Most of Texas not only lost communications, but the electrical power as well.
Participating Organizations	See Appendix B
Points of Contact	Lisa Spivey – 281-822-4446 lisa.spivey@setrac.org John Wingate – 281-822-4439 john.wingate@setrac.org

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 Regional Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (RHPC) to establish and maintain communications with the coalition members in the event of a region-wide communications disruption.	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). 					

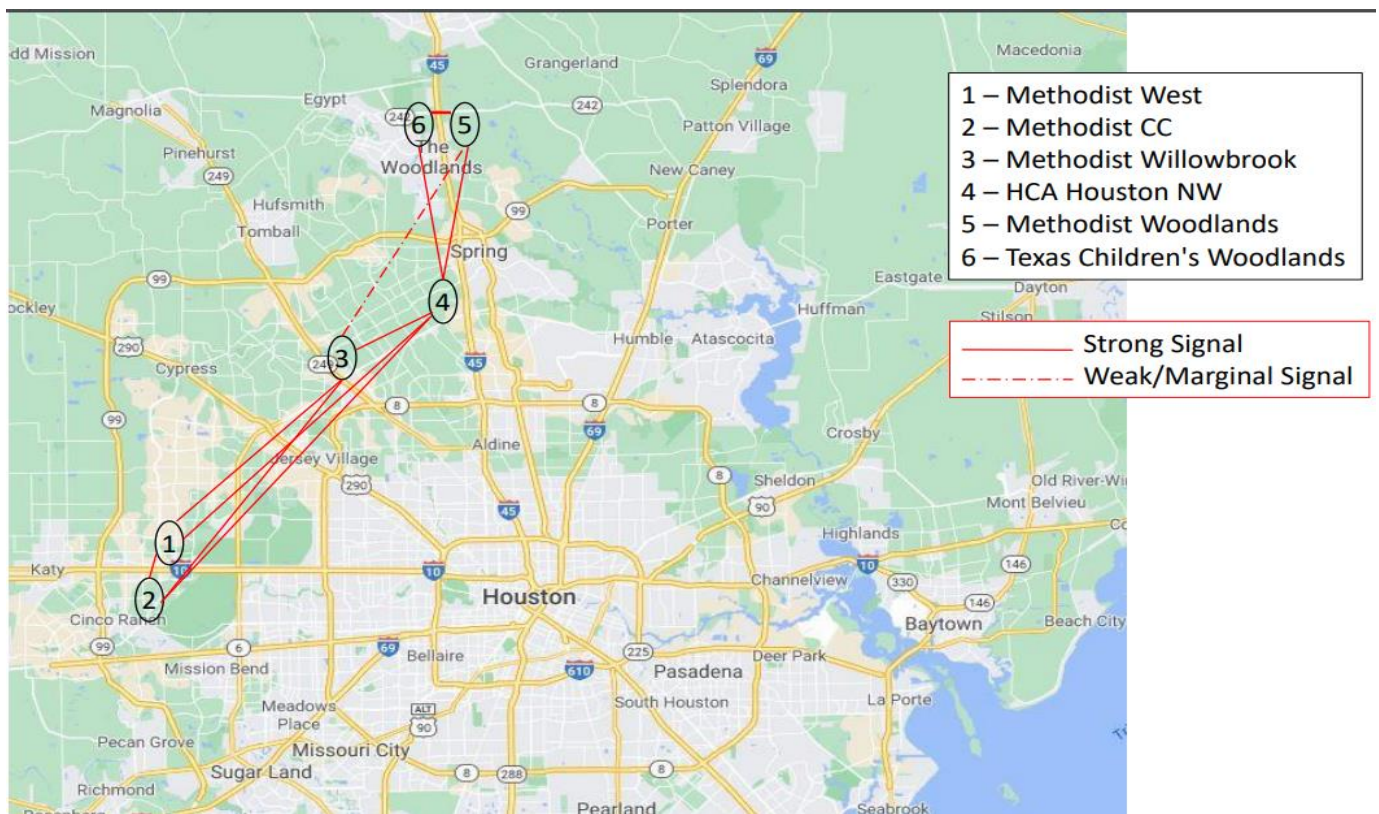
Table 1. Summary of HPP Capability Performance

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 and maintain communications with the coalition members in the event of a region-wide communications disruption.

Overview

The May 2021 Off the Grid Drill involved 115 participating agencies in establishing alternative communications in the event of a region-wide communication failure. Of the 115 participants there were 102 that communicated using web-based texting service, six (6) utilizing the HAM Radio through the Houston Amateur Radio Network, and seven (7) participating agencies using satellite to satellite phones.



Additional HAM Information:

Part 1

Hospitals checked in on primary frequency 145.170 (using KA5QDG repeater.) Successful check ins were from these hospitals:

- HCA Houston Northwest**
- Methodist Willowbrook**
- Methodist Woodlands**

Check-in was from top floor of parking garage using mobile radio and antenna. Performance would be improved with permanent installation and antenna on top of building.

Methodist West

Methodist Continuing Care

Texas Children's Hospital

Check-in was mobile using Echo Link. Although the stated objectives of this exercise did not include testing Echo Link, we were able to do so and confirm that communication to the primary frequency using Echo Link from a location in Florida was successful.

Texas Children's Hospital Woodlands

Check-in was from top floor of parking garage using mobile radio and antenna. Performance was reduced because they were using this equipment since access to the radio room was restricted due to COVID.

Part 2

Hospitals attempted simplex (direct) contact hospital to hospital on frequency 146.440 FM

HCA Houston Northwest successfully contacted:

Methodist Willowbrook

Methodist West

Methodist Continuing Care

Methodist Woodlands

Texas Children's Woodlands

Methodist Willowbrook successfully contacted:

HCA Houston Northwest

Methodist West

Methodist Continuing Care

Methodist Woodlands

Methodist Woodlands successfully contacted:

HCA Houston Northwest

Texas Children's Woodlands

Methodist West successfully contacted:

Methodist Continuing Care

Methodist Willowbrook

HCA Houston Northwest

Methodist Continuing Care successfully contacted:

HCA Houston Northwest

Methodist West

Methodist Willowbrook

Texas Children's Hospital Woodlands successfully contacted

HCA Houston Northwest

Methodist Woodland

HPP Capability – Health Care and Medical Response Coordination – Full Capability

Strengths

1. Additional partners are identifying the need for redundant and alternate methods of communications.
2. Participation is reaching new partners and bringing up additional conversations on the regions capabilities and work arounds.

Area for Improvement

1. Education: Identify the need for additional educational opportunities for our region on the capabilities surrounding us and is already incorporated in the facilities/agencies.
2. Identify and share training opportunities for obtaining a Technical and General HAM Radio Operator License.

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	Identify the needed education for our region on the capabilities of the alternate communication equipment that is already incorporated into the facilities/agencies.	SETRAC	Corridor Coordinators	6/1/2021	Ongoing
	Education	Identify and share training opportunities for obtaining a Technical and General HAM Radio Operator License.	SETRAC	SETRAC Training	6/1/2021	12/31/2021

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANTS

Participating Agencies/Facilities
A Compassionate Care Home Health
ABL Homehealth Services Inc
Abra Hospice
Affinity Hospice
Afton Oaks Healthcare
Altus Houston Hospital
Angels Care Hospice
Baytown Home Dialysis Clinic
Beaumont Nursing and Rehab
Bridgecrest Rehabilitation Suites
Brighton Senior Living of Tomball
CCC Health Care Inc
Castle Pines
CHI St Luke's Woodlands, Lakeside and Springwoods
CHI St Luke's Health Lufkin
CHI St Luke's Health Memorial San Augustine
CHI St Luke's Health Vintage Hospital
CHI St Luke's Livingston
Christus Dubuis Hospital of Beaumont LTACH
Coastal Health & Wellness / Galveston County Health District
Columbus Community Hospital
Commitment to Caring
Communication Essentials
Continuing Care at Eagles Trace
Cozy Living Community
Cristos Healthcare Services
Cypress Assisted Living
Cypress Creek Rehabilitation
Cypress Point Healthcare and Wellness
Debok Healthcare Inc
Deerbrook Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation
Dogwood Trails Manor
East Bernard EMS
Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Humble
Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Sugar Land
FMC Mission Bend Dialysis
Focused Care at Humble
Golden Splendor PCH
Groveton
Harris Health System
HCA HH Tomball
HCA Houston Healthcare Northwest

Healing Through Caring Homecare, LLC
Healthpoint Home Health and Infusion services.
Hemphill Care Center
Hillside Nursing and Rehabilitation
Home Health Unlimited
Houston Methodist Continuing Care
Houston Methodist West Hospital
Houston Methodist Willowbrook Hospital
Humble Fire Rescue
Huntsville Memorial Hospital
Jiwealth Health Services
Kingwood Endoscopy
Lifecare Options Home Health
Lifeway Healthcare Inc
Matagorda Regional Medical Center
MC-Public Health District
Memeeha llc
Memorial Hermann Home Based Services
Memorial Hermann Pearland
Memorial Hermann Southeast
Memorial Hermann TMC
Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital
Memorial Hermann Orthopedic and Spine Hospital
Methodist West
MH Greater Heights
MRC Creekside Retirement Community
Mzee Home Care Services, LLC
Navasota Nursing and Rehabilitation
North Cypress Medical Center
OakBend Medical Center - Jackson Street
OakBend Medical Center - Wharton
OakBend Medical Center - Williams Way
Pages Health Services
Pam Rehab
PAM Rehab Hospital of Clear Lake South
Pam Rehabilitation Hospital of Humble
Parkside Surgery Center
Pine Arbor
Regent Care Center of Kingwood
River Kids Pediatric Home Health
Rose Hill Assisted Living
Rose Hill Retirement Home
Sabine County Hospital
San Jacinto Manor
Spanish Trail ALF of Silsbee
Spindletop Center
Springwell Healthcare Services Inc
St Luke's Lakeside Hospital
St. Giles
Sylvan Shores Health & Wellness

Texas Children's Hosp.-Woodlands
Texas Children's Hospital Main Campus
The Medical Center of SETX - Port Arthur
The Medical Center of SETX Beaumont
The Orchard
Trinity Rehabilitation & Healthcare
Trucare Hospice and Palliative Services
United Memorial Medical Center
US Renal Care Houston Home Therapies
UTHealth HCPC
Vibrantlife of Katy
Vidor Health and Rehabilitation
Villa Toscana at Cypress Woods
West Wynde health services
Westward Trails
Whispering Pines Lodge
Windsong Care Center
Winners Healthcare Solutions, Inc
Xtra-Care Home Health Inc