



**Public Disaster Education and Preparedness (PDE+P) Committee
of the Marin Operational Area Disaster & Citizens Corps Council
(DC3) Committee Meeting**

PDE&P Meeting Minutes for November 1, 2021

Draft approved at 12-6-2021 PDEP Meeting

Members Present:

Catherine Way	Co-Chair, DC3, City of Larkspur Councilmember, MCCMC
Adriana Rabkin	Co-Chair, DC3 Member, Director Marin VOAD
Anne Carta	Marin Medical Reserve Corps
Tom Cromwell	Marin Medical Reserve Corps etc.
Vincent Valenzuela	DC3 member, Red Cross Marin/Solano Disaster Program Mgr.
Garry Lion	DC3 member, Marin Economic Forum
Maggie Lang	Mill Valley Fire, Emergency Prep Coordinator

Members Excused or Absent:

Amber Davis	HHS Public Health Preparedness Manager
Quinn Gardner	San Rafael FD Emergency Manager
Rob Ireson	Interim Chief, RACES/ACS, rob@aqmconsulting.com

Members Public Present

Andrew LeBlanc	Department of Public Works, aleblanc@marincounty.org
Rachel Kertz	Central Marin NRG Coordinator, coordinator@nrgmarin.org
Frank Cox	Former PDEP Co Chair/DC3 Member frnkcox7@gmail.com
Jody Timms	Age Friendly Marin Network jodytimms@comcast.net
Raed Al-Zaher	SRFD Prep Coordinator, Raed.Al-Zaher@cityofsanrafael.org
Lori Schifrin	CERT, MMRC lori.sch@att.net
Matthew Estipona	Marin CIL, matthew@marincil.org
Amy Glenn	Central Marin NRG Advisory Comm, aglennstyle@gmail.com
Milt Hyams	DC3 District 1 Representative, mmhyams@aol.com
Elaine Wilkinson	Southern Marin NRG Coordinator, nrg@smfd.org
Sara Robinson	Marin Aging & Adult Services, SRobinson@marincounty.org
Marco Berger	Multicultural Center of Marin, mberger@multiculturalmarin.org
Skip Fedanzo	CERT, Marin Amateur Radio Society, drferret@comcast.net

The following documents were emailed to PDEP in advance:

- PDEP_Agenda 2021-11-1.pdf**
- PDEP_Minutes 2021-10-4a.pdf (Draft to be approved)**

I. Welcome, Introductions, Review of Minutes

- Catherine Way welcomed attendees. Draft PDEP Minutes 10/4/2021 were reviewed. Garry Lion motioned, Maggie Lang seconded. Minutes were approved.

II. Radio Communications Volunteer Program, Andrew LeBlanc, Marin County Department of Public Works, Telecommunications Division

- See Powerpoint slides
- Andrew manages the Dept. of Public Works (DPW) Telecommunications team, where he has been for just under a year.
- DPW is part of a team with Milt Hyams, Skip Fedanzo, and Adriana Rabkin to develop a robust program to support the needs of vulnerable residents in the community when there are no telecommunications or internet like during a prolonged public safety power shutoff (PSPS) or a big earthquake.



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- This is the Marin Radio Communications Volunteer Program (RCV) ¹. It is designed by amateur radio volunteers in the Community. We are partnered with Marin VOAD, Marin Amateur Radio Society (MARS)², Marin County Volunteer program and RACES/ACS³, the Office of Emergency Services auxiliary radio communications system; it is sponsored by the County Dept. of Public Works.
- This program was developed to address the need for an infrastructure independent communication system when traditional communications do not work.
- FEMA has a chartered organization to support first responders in a disaster – this is RACES/ACS. We are looking to create a separate organization with amateur radio operators who would provide communications to community-based organizations (CBOs).
- The one-year pilot program is underway. This program would be activated during disasters when cell towers are down, landlines don't work and when the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated. The radio operators would provide critical non-emergency communications to Marin VOAD and Health & Human Services in the EOC.
- The benefit of this program is we are providing continuity of operations to the CBOs for shelters, feeding, and other wrap around disaster services.
- This program is similar to both RACES and MARS, both of which use amateur radio operators for their communications.
- There are seven CBOs in the pilot program: Canal Alliance, Community Action Marin, SF-Marine Food Bank, West Marin Community Services, North Marin Community Services, San Geronimo Valley Community Center and Homeward Bound. We have 16 volunteer Ham radio operators.
- The RCV planning team meets weekly and we hold regular radio tests, workshops and exercises where we are running scenarios of activation in a prolonged PSPS or other major event. We can learn from Texas power loss events where communications were vital for everything.

Questions

- Catherine Way: Do the radio operators use radio jargon? Skip Fedanzo: Ham radio operators intentionally avoid using any lingo and avoid using codes. We are sending the CBO message, not ours. Catherine: How does each CBO reach you? Skip: RCV operators work out of their vehicles outside of each CBO location. The CBO will give us the message and RCV operators transmit messages to other RCV operators, not to the CBOs. CBOs do not use hand held radios. They are not the ones communicating.
- Catherine Way: What are some of the challenges you have found? Andrew LeBlanc: It has been difficult to get the CBOs to understand their own internal communications in a disaster. Some of them do not yet know how they will communicate within their own organization at multiple office and site locations around the County. The other challenge has been demystifying radio.
- Frank Cox: Does any of this have value in preparedness? Andrew LeBlanc: Yes. The Golden Eagle regional Bay Area exercise this week will be a practice exercise for us. This is an exercise for an 8.2 earthquake when communications will be down and roads will be inaccessible. The exercise takes place 48-72 hours after the event and our RCV

¹ Marin Radio Communications Volunteers (RCV) <https://www.marincounty.org/main/county-press-releases/press-releases/2021/dpw-volunteerradio-092121>

² Marin Amateur Radio Society <https://w6sg.net/site/>

³ Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service Auxiliary Communications Service: <https://www.marinraces.org/wp/>



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operators will practice communicating with each other. We are not reliant on anyone else to help with this. We have met with CBOs and have asked them how they will mobilize their staff in a disaster. Some have this planned out, others not as much. They are starting to look at their own disaster preparedness and internal communications procedures.

- Tom Cromwell: Is this equipment hand held? Skip Fedanzo: The radio equipment we use is not hand held. But we do have mobile radios that can be carried in a car or even in a backpack. The Ham radio equipment uses different radio repeaters and is on different radio frequencies from GMRS hand held radios.
- Catherine Way: Who else are you reporting to? Andrew LeBlanc: We will be presenting to DC3 at the December meeting and will expect to meet with the BOS in early 2022.

III. Revisiting Focus Area 1: Vulnerable Residents

- We are working on a memo to present to DC3 that summarizes the focus areas that PDEP has been addressing this year. We see this memo as possibly being a playbook for the County Emergency Coordinator position.
- PDEP committee has reviewed and discussed vulnerable residents, NRGs and emergency communications. We circled back to the conversation about vulnerable residents and the CBOs that serve them and felt it was too narrow and that trusted partners need to be broadened to include more.
- The focus of today's discussion is to identify all of the partners that address vulnerable residents and what resources exist for disaster preparedness. We had initially identified nonprofits as an important source of community education in this area. After our conversation about Listos and Quinn's comments about kids, sports clubs, scouts, coaches, etc., it is important that we broaden this category to include other sources of information and education. What are other sources of disaster preparedness education in the county?
 - Get Ready program
 - FireWise
 - Red Cross
 - Organizations that work with homeless, seniors and people with AFN
 - Schools
 - Neighborhood Response Groups (NRGs) and other neighborhood associations
 - Faith based organizations
 - Public agencies like HHS, fire, medical services, sheriff's office
 - Alcoholics anonymous
 - Libraries
 - Businesses
 - Sports programs
 - Family resource centers or community centers where social workers are on site
 - Independent and assisted living facilities; publicly funded housing sites and private housing centers; family subsidized housing (speak with Amber Davis, County Public Health about their relation with the housing sites)
 - Social and community clubs including yacht clubs
 - Outreach events and opportunities like the County fair, farmers markets, shopping centers, etc.
- We will include an appendix with links to MBER, Get Ready and others.



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- PDEPs intent is for this information to be used as a playbook for the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. This person will not be able to do everything alone, but must work with Aging & Adult Services, Marin VOAD, cities and towns, and others.
- Catherine and Adriana are meeting with Supervisor Rodoni on November 22 to discuss our presentation to the DC3 on December 9th.

IV. Updates from PDEP members

MCCMC Marin County Council Mayors + City Councilmembers

- Rachel Kertz provided the update: MCCM had a presentation from a UCSF infectious disease specialist. Catherine was nominated to serve another term.

Marin VOAD

- Adriana Rabkin: The VOAD works closely with Jennifer Ancona, who will be the lead for care and shelter when the Emergency Operations Center is activated. We are coordinating the public-private response in a disaster to ensure that all the involved parties are at the table. We collaborated for the recent local fires and severe weather events. This work along with the Community Response Teams is helping to build an efficient disaster response in Marin.
- The Community Response Teams or CRTs act as local VOADs – they are a collaboration of local community based organizations and partners who can come together to address public health events. This effort is funded through County Public Health through a 2 year grant. There are 4 CRTs located in different geographic areas of Marin: Southern Marin, San Rafael, Novato and West Marin. The Marin VOAD participates in all of these CRTs and brings additional coordination with other non-profits in Marin as well as coordination with the government disaster response.

West Marin

- Steve Marcotte was not present. No update.

Red Cross (ARC)

- Vincent Valenzuela: Sound the Alarm, Be Red Cross Ready and Pillowcase Project are all in progress.
- Red Cross is working with Jennifer Ancona, HHS Care & Shelter lead, to identify the go to shelter sites in every city in Marin. We are walking through each shelter site to identify where registration, feeding, sleeping will all be. This is a big step toward disaster preparedness for the County. Red Cross has a shelter survey process. In Marin we have 130-140 sites, from large sites to small community churches. We are narrowing this down to the sites we are most likely to use; the small locations will not be activated, especially during Covid. For congregate shelters, the requirement is 110sf per person now during Covid. Adriana Rabkin: It will be important to let sites know they should NOT set up if they are no longer a designated Red Cross site and that they should steer people toward the shelters that are part of the County coordinated response. Vincent: We have not taken sites officially off the list yet.
- Tom Cromwell: We need coordination with Care & Shelter and MMRC to coordinate which shelters will be used as medical shelters. We have had trouble in the past using Red Cross designated sites because they were saving themselves for Red Cross use and would not permit use for other purposes. ARC needs an education program to explain the Red Cross designation and that sites can be used for other purposes, especially if it is County driven, like for medical shelters. Anne Carta and Jennifer Ancona would coordinate around this in a disaster.
- People will be scared after a disaster and will flood certain locations. Part of our preparedness needs to be to shelter at home. If your home or property is safe, stay there.



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People also need to understand that Temporary Evacuation Points (TEPs) will be set up before shelters are established. They should not go to sites they think might be shelters or were shelters in the past. Each site needs to be assessed and deemed safe before it can be used as a shelter.

- Jody Timms: How do you communicate with the shelters? Messaging through cities or the County EOC.

Southern Marin / Business Community

- Garry Lion: Sent an email about recovery efforts.

Mill Valley Preparedness, community efforts

- Maggie Lang: The Southern Marin Disaster Committee meeting was on 10/21. We heard from Clive Savacool, the new fire chief of South Lake Tahoe FD about lessons learned from the Caldor Fire:
 - Be careful of color coding with mapping as different maps show different colors
 - Keep public continually informed about what is going on. Need to check social media for rumors and misinformation
 - Ensure official volunteers have verifiable credentials
 - People show up with shelters without medications
 - Elected officials want to help; know how to use them
 - Don't forget your staff and support them because they are members of the community and are going through same trauma as evacuees
 - Plan for pets
- It only took the FD 4.5 hours to evacuate South Lake Tahoe. 25% had already left during evacuation warnings. Evacuation Orders should not come as a surprise to people.
- They had 7 incidents of looting/breaking into homes and 70 incidents of bears breaking into homes.
 - Sara Robinson: Other lessons learned were they had to work hard at coordinating the disaster response. Relationships with agencies before the disaster were very important. OES and the Water District need very clear communication. You need a bilingual resource company on hand to ensure simultaneous Spanish alerts. They evacuated all disaster volunteers and needed CERT and NRGs. Lastly, the state will shut down your hospital if you don't leave staff on hand and keep the lights on; it is a long recertification process to re-open.
- The Emergency Preparedness County Coordinator job description is final and should go public this week. They set up times for interviews and the candidates will have to go through full background check. It is possible they will fill the position in January.
 - Tom Cromwell: How do we prevent overloading this new person? Maggie: The coordinator will have a high level of involvement. We need local NRG coordinators to train block captains and build NRGs. They will work with the County Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. Instead of revamping Get Ready or Listos, the coordinator can use what we have and build off of it.
- We have a local Mill Valley CERT team for traffic management. We held Red Cross shelter management training and now have a CERT shelter team as well. We are holding the 3rd hybrid training class this year for Tam Valley.
- The NRG time change drill is this Sunday. We are continuing to bring in new block captains and new NRGs.
- Elaine Wilkinson is the new Southern Marin NRG Coordinator. PDEP welcomed her to the group.



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Public Health Preparedness and related programs

- Amber Davis was not present. No update.

Access & Functional Needs (AFN) communities:

- This position is currently not filled.

Public Safety / Emergency Management

- Raed Al-Zaher: Messaging was an issue during the recent storms in San Rafael. Messages were ignored. People got stranded due to ignoring messaging and barricades. It took 3 Nixle messages and an Alert Marin before people started to listen. If there were a wildfire we would have similar messaging problems. Adriana Rabkin: Take action now and check to see what residents are signed up for. Get people signed up following the event while it is on their mind and they have concerns about disasters.
- New San Rafael businesses did not know about resources like sand bags, messaging, etc. Skip Fedanzo: you can use CERT volunteers to notify businesses about resources.
- Will shelters follow County and current mask-mandates now that masks have been lifted indoors? Vincent Valenzuela: masks are 100% required by all staff, volunteers, and residents. Anne Carta: The County order includes required masking in shelters.

Marin Medical Reserve Corps (MMRC)

- Anne Carta: MMRC is preparing for pediatric vaccinations. We are still doing contact investigations, testing, and are now on standby for sheltering. Looking at FY22 plans to broaden our response outside of Covid.
- The Marin Medical Reserve Corps has been recognized as the Marin County 2020-2021 Volunteer Team of the Year! Dr. Cromwell will receive the award on behalf of the volunteer team. <https://www.marincounty.org/depts/bs/meeting-archive>
- Tom Cromwell: Exploring ways to reactivate FADR program, which has been inactive for 16 months.
- Belvedere-Tiburon disaster council met last week. There continues to be confusion around evacuation of the peninsula. The DC will revisit this because it is a major problem: how will we deal with evacuating 3,000 cars with ongoing construction, traffic concerns, etc.

Public Preparedness Coordinator / Get Ready Marin

- This position is currently not filled.

OES RACES Chief Radio officer, San Rafael CERT steering and Firewise

- Milt Hyams: RACES / ACS⁴: Milt is the newly appointed District One representative to DC3.
- RACES is increasing the repeater infrastructure. We have our own repeaters and will put them on San Rafael hill and Big Rock hill will be added.
- Marin Amateur Radio Society (MARS) has repeaters on Mt Tam, Barnabe and Bahia. These repeaters help with handi-talkies.

Public Comment/Questions

- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/fellow-creatures/202103/how-human-vulnerability-influences-the-surrender-pets>

⁴ Marin County Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and Auxiliary Communications Services (ACS) are volunteers working under the authority of the Marin County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES). <https://www.marinraces.org/wp/>



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- Rachel Kertz and Skip Fedanzo: Central Marin NRG and CERT update: Doing time change drill this Sunday. First time we are doing an evening drill. Drop in at fire station 15, downtown Larkspur, 5-8pm, to do additional training. CERT will do official handoff. Piper Park has a trailer of supplies. CERT will have simulated radio reports.
- This Saturday Greenbrae Hills is doing an open-trailer NRG fundraiser. Greenbrae Hills Safety Fair - Saturday, Nov 6 from 11-1 at School Park.

V. Closing Items

- Catherine Way: we want to formalize the process of adding PDEP members. Want to ensure DC3 sectors are well represented.
- Next PDEP meeting is Dec. 6.

Closure: 2:52 pm end of meeting

Next Meetings: 1-3pm:

Dates may be flexible as circumstances require

PDEP Meetings Year 2021: 12/6/2021

PDEP Meetings Year 2022 (dates may be adjusted): Jan 10, Feb 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6, July 11, Aug 1, Sept 12, Oct 3, Nov 7, Dec 5.

Site: PDEP conducts meetings online using ZOOM.COM during the Pandemic. We hope to return to meetings at the Central Marin Police Community Room soon.

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**DC3 Meetings: 3-5pm:**

**DC3 Year 2021: 12/9/2021**

DC3 Meetings are currently remote and are broadcast on Zoom and Facebook Live. They hope to return to Board Chambers, Civic Center, soon. Dates may be flexible.

**Online:** <https://www.marinsheriff.org/about-us/field-service-bureau/office-of-emergency-services>

**Email:** [pdepcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:pdepcommittee@gmail.com)

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