

Planning Information in A Response

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Whenever anyone gets a request for assistance most of the time they will get some specific requests up front from the served agency making the call for aid.

Sometimes this is not always the case. Whether it is a request to an individual ham, a local EC or DEC or even a message to the Section Emergency Coordinator, we want to do our best and provide the service required in a professional manner. To do this, we need certain info. Here is a summary of some things to ask for if you did not get the full "scoop" from the requesting party.

1. Agency requesting assistance? (Who are we helping? Is it a local Emergency Management Agency, the state EOC and Area/Local offices, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Baptist Brotherhood etc)
2. A Point of Contact or "POC" in case we need to contact them back. Get the Name, title, and the phone number of the requesting official and (if appropriate) any amateur radio frequency(s) they are using locally.
3. What type of aid is requested? (Manpower only, what type of equipment, HF/VHF/UHF, MCP capability? The mission to be undertaken? Is Special Training required of volunteers? There is a huge difference from one situation to another and all hams are not created equal with regard to training, licensing and physical ability.) In a recent case, it was requested that the hams assisting be ARC Damage Assessment trained. It is a waste of everyone's time in such a situation to send hams with neither 'EM' type DA training, no training or only trained in EOC Operations or other area not requested.

While we are on that topic, training in many subject areas is available many times throughout the year from ARC Chapters across Ky. If you would be willing to assist ARC with their various duties, TAKE THE TRAINING NOW! Whenever it is offered. Same with EM and other organizations. If you want to assist them and they are having the training made available, TAKE IT!

4. How much help do they want? (Saying send 'Some' or 'a few' can be 2 hams, 8 hams, 25 hams or more!) Get real numbers. Many times hams will gladly take off from work to assist in a disaster situation. In respect of this volunteer spirit, we don't need to send 30 if 10 will do. In this case, the other 20 could have gone about their affairs and waited until tomorrow if they were needed as relief ops. Likewise, we sure don't want only 4 sent if 20 are needed to deploy and do the job right.

REMEMBER! SHIFTS OF WORKERS MAY BE NEEDED in large operations! It is just poor planning to send in a massive number of people who have nothing to do today and then tomorrow, everyone has to go back to their regular jobs because they wasted today. This has happened!!!

Hams have rushed in on an incident in large numbers at the first. Many milled around because there was not enough to do and the next day only a few are willing to return as they are either disgusted, worn out because they did work yesterday or today they had to go back to their job. Planned work schedules will eliminate this and make everyone's life easier.

5. To what location do the hams report and at what time. Don't forget, Ky has two time zones! It is easy to be an hour early or an hour too late!

6. Any directions to the area or hazards/detours to be observant of in responding are important for the safety and well being of responders. Feel free to also ask for any other info you feel appropriate.

As I stated earlier, we want to be a professional group in our actions. Adequate information in planning a response is essential and is every bit as important as the job done on scene.

Source: Kentucky Amateur Radio Web Site – <http://www.kyham.net>