**9/27/18 – Wayne-Pike ARES Net – Training**

**“PERSONAL LOG BOOK”**

It’s not only a “good thing to have”, but virtually a MANDATORY item when functioning as a supplementary communications resource for a Served Agency during an emergency or disaster situation!

* Good thing to have… yeah, some place to document all that takes place, like notes from our nets and training info, miscellaneous ARES policies / procedures, even a place to affix (scotch tape) ARES info you get.
* Mandatory (drills or real events!)… critically important for post-event (post mortem), info for continuous improvement, and – especially – to document events, actions, conversations, directives, etc. that might be valuable info in case of future litigation.

For general “good things to record”, usually just a date is sufficient – put a date in your log book, and then anything that is noteworthy to record on that date. This covers most routine stuff and it’s primarily for your own record keeping. An example might be personal notes you take during our weekly nets re training, ARES activities, upcoming drills, questions that you might ask or which might be asked of you, follow-up tasks that you’ll do, etc.

For drills, and particularly REAL EVENTS, you should record not only the dates, but also the specific times that you make entries in your log. For recording times, I recommend 24-hour format in EASTERN TIME (EST or EDT). This avoids AM/PM confusion, and also eliminates GMT (Zulu) to EST/EDT conversion confusion.

There is not such thing as “too much documentation” when it comes to “real events”! Anything that you do, anything that someone tells you, any “orders” you’re given (the order and who gave it), any actions you take, any transmissions you make, any communications you receive or relay, ANYTHING and EVERYTHING should be logged!

Hypothetically if a “PIC” (Person In Charge) says “…get a message to the Red Cross office and tell them that we need more cots here…”, you would first log the time, ask the PIC’s name and title (function), if there’s anyone in particular to who to address the message, which Red Cross office, phone number (if known), how quickly the cots are needed, and whether or not a response is required. There may be other info needed, but you get the idea… ANYTHING can be important!

At this point a decision needs to be made… should I (a) create a Radiogram or ICS-213 message form myself or (b) relay the message to a special Relay Station that has been assigned by the ARES EC (or AEC in his absence). Remember, we’re running a DIRECTED NET. So, probably the first thing to do would be to contact the NCS station who would direct you to the proper action. The NCS might say “Call W3PDQ, the RELAY STATION”, or “Call K3XYZ, who is at the Honesdale Red Cross”, or the NCS may forward the question to the EC or AEC for direction. If the action is to call the Relay Station, you may be told that the Relay Station would put the request into a Radiogram or ICS-213 format and send it. In this case you could communicate all the pertinent info to the Relay Station via normal conversation and let the Relay Station verify he has the correctly received the info, and create the formal message. On the other hand, if you are directed to communicate directly with the recipient station, you might be directed to put the message into a Radiogram or ICS-213 format.

ALL of this info, discussions, those involved, etc. should be logged (with times) in your personal log book. Remember, this is a hypothetical situation intended to illustrate the importance and examples of using your personal log book.

I use a spiral notebook. This is more secure as it’s difficult to remove or edit pages without it being obvious. Also loose-leaf notebooks are prone to damage during handling. It’s OK to cross stuff out that is not germane to the situation, or which turns out to be an erroneous entry. If you do this, just initial and date your cross-out. Don’t erase!

Like all training, there will probably be exceptions to everything I’ve said… but the intent here is to emphasize the importance of documentation.