

Winnipeg Amateur Radio Emergency Service
in conjunction with
Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club



MANITOBA MARATHON
17 JUNE 2012
AMATEUR RADIO REPORT
PSE-126

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AUG 2012

This report covers the ARES Amateur Radio component of 2012 Manitoba Marathon. Amateur Radio volunteers were asked for feedback and it has been integrated into the report. The format of this report is based on previous Manitoba Marathon ARES reports.

This report has four main sections:

- Planning/Preparation
- Operation
- Recovery
- Mitigation.

Provision of Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) units for select on-course vehicles is provided by an organization not formally linked to the Marathon Radio Group or to ARES.

2012 PLANNING/PREPARATION

Winnipeg Amateur Radio Emergency Service (WPGARES) and Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club (WARC) have formally collaborated on a joint Marathon operation since approximately 2001. As previously reported, WARC is the umbrella or general interest Amateur radio club in Winnipeg that previously organized Marathon communications 1980-2001. WPGARES is concerned with provision of emergency Amateur communications for the civil authorities in time of disaster or communications emergency.

The Marathon Radio Group (MRG) is currently chaired by WPGARES Emergency Coordinator Jeff Dovyak VE4MBQ, deputy is Robert Stegmaier VE4RST. Technical advisors are:

Don Gerrard VE4DWG
Norman Coull VE4EH
Derek Hay VE4HAY
Mark Blumm VE4MAB
Mark Havens KB7REU
Ellis Seddon VE4AJO
Kelly Taylor VE4XT
Dave Stimpson VE4DJS.

Recruiting for the 2012 Amateur Radio component began in earnest in JAN 2012, with notices in the monthly WARC publication "*The Newscaster*", verbal reports at WPGARES and WARC meetings, e-mails to last year's volunteers as well as general e-mails to Winnipeg ARES members.

The detailed agenda for the Amateur Radio briefing was reviewed by MRG members before being finalized. MRG deliberations and discussions were carried out by e-mail and discussions during other meetings and the regular Saturday morning coffee sessions at "The Arches" (McDonalds Restaurant at St James & Ellice). No specific MRG planning meetings were held prior to the 2012 Manitoba Marathon.

Volunteer Amateur Radio Operators were asked to notify the ARES Coordinator in advance if they were unable to attend the Amateur Briefing so arrangements could be made for their volunteer t-shirts, "loaner" identification vests and race day documentation. The majority of Amateurs who were unable to attend made advance arrangements and greatly decreased the work for Coordinators.

As in previous years, during the Amateur Radio Briefing 12 JUN, participants received three Marathon-generated booklets:

- 2012 Manitoba Marathon Amateur Radio Guide (content by Marathon Radio Group and Marathon technical staff)
- 2012 Course Station Maps
- 2012 Manitoba Marathon Participant's Handbook

As well as three or four loose single sheet documents:

- 2012 Amateur Radio Briefing Agenda (same template used each year with additions or deletions decided upon by MRG Coordinators, MRG advisors & Marathon technical staff)
- 2012 Amateur Radio Roster
- “Marathon Alert Form”
- Half-Marathon “Runner Report” Form (to those along Half-Marathon Course).

Once again, Amateur Radio traffic vests jointly owned by WPGARES and WARC were loaned to non-ARES Hospitality Net and Medical Net participants so that they would be easily identified by various Marathon stakeholders.

Main changes for 2012 compared to previous years included:

- One Station location change (Mile 14 Hospitality Station)
- Amateur Radio-specific changes included:
 - Set-up of 6 element Yagi antenna at SW corner of Care Centre location pointed at VE4UMR repeater to allow for penetration into lower level of Care Centre for Medical Net Repeater
 - Set-up of portable UHF repeater as an alternate path for communications from lower level of Care Centre to Comm Centre
 - Care Centre Status reports to a dedicated operator at Comm Centre every 15 minutes via UHF repeater
 - Production of a specific information sheet for Amateurs new to the Marathon operation by a retired educator who is a long-time ARES member and Marathon volunteer
 - Explicit instructions inserted in Amateur Guide for Liaison operators as well as a template script.

Innovative changes from past few years that are still maintained:

- Staff VE4WWO in the Prairie & Arctic Storm Prediction Centre approximately 0600-1130h
- One EMT in each Medical Supply Vehicle so as to allow Medical Supply Vehicles to transport sick & injured runners that can sit up back to care Centre with some level of medical supervision not requiring RN/MD or ICP/ACP levels of supervision
- Distribution of medical ice on course by medical Supply & Sweep Vehicles
- Goldeyes Baseball Club Paramedic on a motorbike operated by an experienced ARES member (a former paramedic who maintains his skills)
- Interoperability for field medical operations achieved by the Amateur Coordinator carrying a “loaner” portable radio from the Goldeyes Baseball Club Paramedic group
- “Shadow” for Care Centre Charge Nurse (“Shawna’s Shadow”) with specific info updates to Chief Dispatcher at Comm Centre, template report form produced in 2011 and utilized again in 2012.

The Marathon Radio Group was represented at every Marathon Technical Committee and Medical Committee meeting that we were invited to.

Based on communications problems encountered in 2011 between operators in the lower level of the Care Centre and Comm Centre operators there was much discussion in fall 2011 and winter 2012 on how we might overcome the problems encountered. Ultimately two possible solutions were examined during a scheduled ARES exercise SUN 15 APR 2012:

1. A 5/8 wave mag-mount antenna on a structural beam in the ceiling of the basement of the Care Centre connected to 100 feet of low-loss LMR-400 cable (loaned by Darcy Wilson VE4DDW) connected to a 6 element Yagi built by Richard Sheridan VE4ESX, placed in the SW yard of the Care Centre pointing at the VE4UMR repeater site.
2. Set-up of portable UHF repeater VE4MER on the east side loading dock of the Care Centre (owned by the Mobile Emergency Communications Group) to provide a UHF link between the two sites.

The passive antenna system for accessing VE4UMR from the lower level of the Care Centre worked very well once we settled on a 5/8 wave mag-mount (disappointing results with a 1/4 wave mag-mount) and a single piece of LMR-400 cable (in retrospect, using two pieces of RG-8 joined by a PL-258 coupler likely introduced too much loss).



Yori VE4ACX, Richard VE4ESX and Rob VE4RST in front of 6-el Yagi
(Note “Caution” tapes & flagging)
Photo Credit Jeff Dovyak

VE4MER worked very well for communications by UHF hand-held portable radio in the lower level of the Care Centre to hand-held portable radio in the operations room of the Comm Centre.

We also examined the effect of swapping the folded dipole VE4UMR repeater antenna with the taller vertical antenna used for APRS in an effort to boost the coverage area for VE4UMR. With consent of UMARS leadership an ARES technician swapped antennas temporarily – that swap resulted in a marked degradation of VE4EMR performance and was quickly swapped back to the normal antenna.

Some time before race day, the Marathon Technical Coordinator provided a list of specific vehicles that would be available from the provincial Vehicle and Equipment Management Agency (VEMA). The ARES Coordinator was able to advise on who would pick up which vehicle and advise the “drivers” which vehicle to pick-up.

One of the operators assigned to the Recovery area was re-assigned during the Medical Meeting to act as a dedicated Comm Centre operator handling reports from Care Centre Manager’s Shadow (via UHF).

All Amateur Radio operators operating on the Medical Net were invited to the Medical Team briefing SAT 16 JUN – the majority attended.

2012 OPERATION

The 2012 operation ran from approximately 0530-1345h. Ultimately, **eight-one** (81) Amateur volunteers (final roster at end of this section) covering nine-two (92) positions were assigned to each Hospitality Station, Relay Exchange Zones, Super Run Hospitality Station, 10K Hospitality Station, five Course Vehicles (Lead Full, Lead Half, Course Closing, 2 Sweep Vans), Start Line, Medical Vehicles (4 ACLS, 2 Therapy, 2 Medical Supply and Paramedic motorcycle “Bike 9”), Hospitality Net Control, Medical Net Control and Care Centre. Seven (7) non-Amateur volunteers supported our operation. Of the eighty-one Amateurs involved, seven (7) were new or “newer” Amateurs that were partnered with Amateurs with previous Manitoba Marathon experience.

The operation was carried out on four closed, directed Amateur Radio nets using tactical calls-signs. The Hospitality Net, based at Winnipeg Senior Citizens Radio Club controlled Hospitality Stations, course vehicles (lead vehicles and sweep vans) and start line. The Medical Net based at the new Comm Centre controlled medical vehicles on the course and the operators in the Recovery area and the Care Centre (but did not handle status reports from the Care Centre). A sub-net on UHF addressed communications for Care Centre Manager’s Shadow at the Care Centre. A primary and back-up repeater were identified for each net as well as a simplex frequency. A repeated UHF frequency was used to link the two Net Control stations.

Amateurs were assigned to positions in the same manner as previous years. Many returning volunteers ask for the same station year after year. This year, of three reserve or back-op operators identified, only two had no other responsibility other than being a back-up monitoring the Hospitality Net in case of any sudden volunteer availability problems on the course (preference would be pairs of operators for each course sector). The race course is best sectored geographically into three areas:

- South of the Assiniboine River
- North of the Assiniboine River
- East of the Red River.

Ultimately, only one back-up or reserve operator was pressed into service this year due to an assigned operator not being on-time for Race Day check-in.

A Hospitality Test Net was arranged for 2030h THURS 14 JUN to allow newer Amateurs and Amateurs whose assigned locations had changed to visit or reconnoiter their location and ensure that their personal radios were properly programmed.

The actual Amateur operation unfolded essentially as expected.

Final ARES Roster 2012 Manitoba Marathon

Net	Assignment	Secondary Assignment	Call Sign	First Name	Last Name
Hospitality	Mile 2/ Mile 25	South of the Assiniboine	VE4VZ	Rolf	Bandlow
Hospitality	Mile 2/ Mile 25	Mile 25	VE4DJS	Dave	Stimpson
Hospitality	Mile 2	Mile 25	VE4DXR	Leor	Drory
Hospitality	Walk		VE4CAT	Catherine	Suarez
Hospitality	Walk		VA4DON	Don	Suarez
Hospitality	Mile 4		VE4BOY	Juanito	Alambra
Hospitality	Mile 4		VE4DAE	Ernelyn	Hingada
Hospitality	Mile 6		VE4WKP	Kumara	Perera
Hospitality	Mile 6		VE4WPL	Piyumi	Perera
Hospitality	Mile 8		VE4WMK	Aruni	Perera
Hospitality	Mile 8		VE4WSP	Supun	Perera
Hospitality	Mile 10		VE4MHZ	Paula	Ehn
Hospitality	Mile 10		VE4GLS	Gord	Snarr
Hospitality	Mile 12		VE4PGL	Pawel	Glowacki
Hospitality	Mile 12		VE4BCB	Brian	Beadle
Hospitality	Mile 14		VE4SBS	Sunday	Satiada
Hospitality	Mile 14		VE4LYN	Linda	Satiada
Hospitality	Mile 16		VE4QV	John	Pura
Hospitality	Mile 16		VE4EDH	Eric	Hope
Hospitality	Mile 18		VE4JLO	Lorenza	Schultz
Hospitality	Mile 18		VE4JBL	Jojo	Lagman
Hospitality	Mile 20		VE4GKS	Gerald	Sherman
Hospitality	Mile 20		VE4PH	Pete	Haertel
Hospitality	Mile 20		VE4PEH	Patricia	Haertel
Hospitality	Mile 22		VE4MMG	Mariska	Maguire
Hospitality	Mile 22		VE4UG	Irv	Cosgrove
Hospitality	Mile 24		VE4ANF	Bing	Fernandez
Hospitality	Mile 24		VE4LIT	Lito	Guevara
Hospitality	Mile 25	[from Mile 2]	VE4VZ	Rolf	Bandlow
Hospitality	Mile 25	[from Mile 2]	VE4DJS	Dave	Stimpson
Hospitality	Half Marathon		VE4EIH	Ed	Horton
Hospitality	Half Marathon		VA4AJG	Alan	Grant
Hospitality	Super Run		VE4QB	Phil	Barton
Hospitality	Super Run		VE4ABY	Ahmed	Byagowi
Hospitality	Relay 1		VE4NQ	Brian	Pettapiece
Hospitality	Relay 1		n/a	Betty	Pettapiece
Hospitality	Relay 1		VE4HQ	Tom	Blatch
Hospitality	Relay 2		VE4CHT	Kurt	Sargent
Hospitality	Relay 2		VE4JS	Jan	Schippers
Hospitality	Relay 3		VE4GZ	Jim	Griffiths
Hospitality	Relay 3		VE4SCH	Dario	Schor

Hospitality	Relay 4		VE4SYM	Susan	Collings
Hospitality	Relay 4		VE4TRO	Fred	Collings
Hospitality	NCS		VE4HAY	Derek	Hay
Hospitality	NCS		VE4AJO	Ellis	Seddon
Hospitality	Lead Vehicle Full	Care Centre Relief	VE4HK	Dick	Maguire
Hospitality	Lead Vehicle Half	Comm Centre Relief	VE4BN	Ed	Bethune
Hospitality	Closing Vehicle Driver		n/a	Gail	Lamoureux
Hospitality	Closing Vehicle Assistant		n/a	Clorisce	Lamoureux
Hospitality	Closing Vehicle Driver/Operator		VE4UK	Denis	Bosc
Hospitality	Sweep 5 Asst		n/a	Emily	Stewart
Hospitality	Sweep 5 Asst Radio Operator		n/a	Ryan	Havens
Hospitality	Sweep 5 DRIVER		KB7REU	Mark	Havens
Hospitality	Sweep 7		VE4TTH	Peter	Toth
Hospitality	Sweep 7 Driver		VA4IAM	Ian	Brownlee
Hospitality	Start Line	Dr Pilat's Shadow	VE4RST	Rob	Stegmaier
LINK	WSCRC Host	Liaison Op	VE4AND	Bert	Andrews
LINK	WSCRC Host	Liaison Op	VE4RCJ	Robert	Jacobs
LINK	Liaison Op at Comm Centre		VE4CZK	Jeff	Cieszcecki
Medical	Medical NCS		VE4EH	Norman	Coull
Medical	Medical NCS		VE4HAZ	Harm	Hazeu
Medical	Relief NCS		VE4BN	Ed	Bethune
Medical	Recovery-1	Start-Line MED	VE4RAI	Rob	Iwacha
Medical	Recovery-2	Comm Ctre Liaison	VE4STS	Bob	Myatt
Medical	Cora Lee's Shadow		VE4ESX	Richard	Sheridan
Medical	Intake/Triage Area		VE4ACX	Yori	Tsuji
Medical	Intake/Triage Area-2		VE4FHS	Frank	Serafin
Medical	Shawna's Shadow		VE4CDM	Craig	Martin
Medical	Dr Pilat's Shadow	Start Line	VE4RST	Robert	Stegmaier
Medical	Med 1 - driver		VE4JNF	John	Foster
Medical	Med 1 - radio		VE4NCH	Pat	Verbaascho tt
Medical	Med 2 - driver		VE4GWN	Glen	Napady
Medical	Med 2 - radio		VE4YYL	Rosi	Napady
Medical	Med 3 - driver		VE4JHJ	Gord	Casewell
Medical	Med 3 - radio op		VE4TG	Doug	Henry
Medical	Med 4 - driver	(from Goldeyes)	n/a	Ken	Oneschuk

Medical	Med 4 - radio op		VE4LDI	Diane	Perry
Medical	Therapy 5 - driver		VE4MBQ	Jeff	Dovyak
Medical	Therapy 5 - radio		VE4WTF	Luke	Dovyak
Medical	Therapy 6 - driver		VE4MAB	Mark	Blumm
Medical	Therapy 6 - radio		VE4EAR	Ed	Richardson
Medical	Supply 7 - driver		VE4SE	Tom	Mills
Medical	Supply 7 - radio		VE4XYL	Ruth	Mills
Medical	Supply 8 - radio		VE4JAH	John	Howells
Medical	Supply 8 - Driver		VE4GWB	Garth	Blumm
Medical	Paramedic Bike 9		VE4DWG	Don	Gerrard
Medical	VE4WWO		VE4ALW	Bill	Simm
Medical	Ski Patrol Monitor		VE4RDO	Andy	Fenstad
Medical	Ski Patrol Monitor		VE4TNT	Rob	Harwood
Spare3	East of the Red		VE4GKS	Gerald	Sherman
Spare2	North of the Assiniboine		VE4WJE	Willard	Elliott
Spare1	South of the Assiniboine		VE4VB	Walter	Bezpalko

Supply kits and coolers **were** labeled with correct unit nomenclature this year as opposed to previous years (communication between ARES Coordinator & Medical Logistics Coordinator was key to solving this former issue).

There appeared to be some confusion at the “corral” near the Recovery Area in terms of accessing coolers with medical ice for on-course Medical Vehicles. This was sorted out within approximately ten minutes and on-course vehicles “loaded up” and departed.

To avoid the access problem that Sweep Vehicles encountered in 2011 dropping exited runners off at the Triage Area, Sweep Vehicles were provided with Medical Vehicle signs so as to be able to pass freely past the security checkpoint without undue hassle.

It is greatly appreciated that the old, torn, incomplete set of magnetic Medical Vehicle signs was partially replaced for 2012. An additional eight (8) signs are required for 2013 (to allow front & back of vehicle coverage)



Signs prior to 2012
Photo Credit Jeff Dovyak



"New" 2012 Signs
Photo Credit Jeff Dovyak

The passive antenna system at the Care Centre worked very well Race Day.

A number of "loaner" UHF portables were cached in a locker of the Care Centre along with spare battery packs (thanks to Darcy Wilson VE4DDW).

BIKE 9 has difficulty accessing the medical repeater from the north side of the course (5 watt hand-held with operator vs 50 watt mobile radios with external antennas on vans).

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING
MANITOBA MARATHON AMATEUR RADIO OPERATIONS
loaned equipment or facilities, recruited volunteers

Winnipeg ARES
Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club
Winnipeg Senior Citizens Radio Club
Manitoba Repeater Society
University of Manitoba Amateur Radio Society
Pathfinders Amateur Radio Club
South-Central ARES
Manitoba ARES
Mobile Emergency Communications Group

Winnipeg ARES-owned equipment was used for temporary base radio stations at the Comm Centre, three on-course Marathon vehicles and at least three “loaner” portable radios with accessories were provided to three Amateurs requiring portable radios (two new Amateurs did not own hand-held radios yet) and an additional three ARES-owned portables were loaned to the MECG organization for their APRS operation.

2012 RECOVERY

Recovery activities for the Marathon Radio Group mainly involves return of borrowed equipment and documenting any “Lessons Learned”. The majority of borrowed equipment was returned by 23 JUN but all equipment was not returned until after 01 JUL. On a go-forward basis in 2013, it will be made clear that all loaner equipment is to be returned by the SAT after Race Day, 0830h at the local Amateur community coffee-break location.

A summary report has been prepared for publication in the SEP 2012 WARC newsletter. An interim report was provided to Marathon staff via e-mail 21 JUN that mainly addressed volunteer management issues and some issues not resolved by Comm Centre on Race Day.

2012 MITIGATION

(i.e. LESSONS LEARNED/CONCERNS/SUGGESTIONS)

We must provide better repeater coverage for the Medical repeater so that BIKE 9 can easily access the Medical Net from anywhere on-course:

- A suggestion has been made to look at the feasibility of temporarily locating a portable VHF Repeater on one of the very tall apartment blocks just north of the Fort Garry Campus. Another suggestion was made that the UMARS group considers a possible relocation of VE4UMR to one of those tall apartment buildings (don't know if that is feasible on several grounds).

Four "Sweep Vehicle" magnetic signs should be produced so that these two vehicles are explicitly identified.

An additional four (4) Medical Vehicle magnetic signs are required for 2013 (to allow front & back of vehicle coverage).

Amateurs on the medical side must be reminded that food & drink is prohibited in the Care Centre and that the Care Centre is not to be "visited" when on a break or out of the vehicle to look around.

Several experienced Amateurs on the medical side expressed concern over the "bottle-neck" of participants that seems to occur between the stadium and the recovery area when the major portion of the race comes through. Perhaps consideration should be given to increasing the participant flow-through or adding a dedicated medical response unit to patrol the area or both but that is outside the scope of what ARES can do.

Hospitality Station Captains should be distinguishable from the numerous volunteers at a given station. One way to achieve that would be to obtain a set of unique vests that would be held by the Marathon and used annually to identify Hospitality Station Captains. [this is an unresolved recommendation from prior years]

Some time ago, a telephone list of Tech Team members used to be circulated within the group – that practice seems to have stopped – perhaps consideration could be given to resuming that practice. [this is an unresolved recommendation from prior years]



“MILE 22” Operators and Athletic Therapist
Mariska VE4MMG, Irv VE4UG and Kelly Klassen CAT(C)
Photo Credit Rhonda Dovyak



“THERAPY 5” Operators at MILE 22
Jeff VE4MBQ and Luke VE4WTF
THERAPY 5 Vehicle in the background
Photo Credit Rhonda Dovyak



Yori VE4ACX and Richard VE4ESX
Photo Credit Richard Sheridan