D-RATS OPERATING GUIDE

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to propose a standard procedure for EmComm operators using D-Star/D-Rats to follow during an emergency. This procedure will specify in Detail how to set up D-Rats, how to pass traffic to the Red Cross and other served agencies and avoid interfering with other D-Star users trying to simultaneously pass traffic.

EmComm operators using D-Rats must monitor and pay attention to traffic on the repeater or the simplex frequency, before transmitting digital data. The operator must announce on the frequency, WHEN IT IS CLEAR that they have traffic. The operator must stand by until the frequency is clear to pass their traffic. Please do not talk on the frequency while the data is being transmitted. After the traffic has been passed, announce that the repeater is clear so it can be used by someone else that needs to send traffic.

Our purpose is to coordinate the passing of messages to avoid collisions. If you do not follow these procedures, data is not going to get thru reliably.

It is your responsibility to insure your message gets to it's served agency.

This procedure will work with 6 to 10 operators and will require no NCS.

A NET will be called by the D-Star EmComm coordinators (SM ASM EC) when the net grows in considerable size and a NCS is deemed necessary to coordinate passing of messages to avoid collisions.

EXAMPLE:

This is N4ABC I have traffic, please stand by.   (*Nobody needs to knowledge this*).
This will alert everybody on the repeater to stand by while you pass your traffic.

This is N4ABC, frequency is clear.
This tells everybody monitoring the repeater that it is clear for someone else to pass their traffic.

Keep it Short & Simple:

Keep it **SHORT**. When you have 6 to 12 operators on the frequency wanting to pass traffic simultaneously, we must keep the voice to a **MINIMUM** so everybody has a chance to pass their traffic.

Maintain the ICS 213 and log all message that are sent. Be sure to turn this in to your EC.

D-Rats setup:
Be sure to delete all forms out of the Boxes so that you have a fresh start for messages.

Be sure to fill the forms out completely with names and ICS Positions.

You will use the ICS 213 US OS forms in D-Rats for the EOC and the Red Cross.

For Parrish Medical Center, you will use HICS 260 Patient Information Form sent from the accident scene to Parrish Medical Center, where in turn it will be forward to the emergency room.

Preference set up:

Sounds Tab: set up a sound to notify you when you have a message (You have a Message etc.). This will let you know when you have a message if you are busy on the chat window sending non priority traffic.

Paths Tab:

Under File Transfer path, show the bath to the D-Rats Shared folder on your desktop.

In the Message Tab, make sure the:

"Automatic Message Forwarding"   is not Enable (this lets you send the message manually)
Messages will get though without interfering with someone else trying to send a message at the same time
"Include Original in Reply"   is Enable (this keeps the message and reply on one form)

After composing the 213:

click the Send Button, your message is then placed into the Out Box.

Go to the Out Box, high light the message and click the "Send/Receive" Button to manually send your message when the repeater is clear. You have complete control to send your messages.

Message Reply:

After you receive a message, you can use the original message to reply back to the sender

Click the Reply Button, the form will reappear with the Destination Call Sign reversed, fill out the reply box at the bottom of the form and sign and date it, click send, it goes into the Out Box.

Chat Window:

Use the Chat mode for non priority messages and the ICS forms for priority messages.

For Parrish Medical Center, use Join Channel to set up private chat channels between the field operator #N1RFD-OC and the Parrish medical center coordinator #N6USP-HC

Preference settings:
Radio tab
Check mark your radio, uncheck everything else. This keep the emergency Isolated from all other traffic on the internet.
Only those with their radios check mark will be working the emergency.

Logging your messages:

All messages after you have sent them will be put into your Sent Box, **DO NOT** delete any of these message UNTIL you print them out for your logs.

How do I do this?

- Go to the Sent Box, double click on the message to open it.
- Click the Print button.
- Internet Explorer will open and you will see the form.
- Click the print button in your Internet Explorer to print the form.
- Be sure to turn in all your forms to your EC.

Sending the form electronically by e-mail

- Go to the Send Box, double click on the message to open it.
- Click the print Button.
- Internet Explorer will open, Go to Page tab, click Save As.
- Name the form. (use message number, the subject Name and date 9-2010)
- Save As (*txt) file. (make a Folder in C:\ in My Documents named ICS FORMS) put all your forms in this folder so you can copy and paste in your email to the EOC Backup (N4LEM).

D-Rats Shared Folder:

- This folder is automatic created and placed on you desktop.
- Save all your important documents that pertain to the emergency in this folder.
- These files can be down/uploaded using the File Tab by anyone on the net.

I would only send 5 *txt forms at a time by e-mail.

If we use this guide, Messages will flow smoothly.

When the frequency starts to get crowed, (8 to 12 operators) a NCS will be needed to insure the message gets passed with out collisions.

Occasionally D-Rats will hang up, just restart the program.

There is a newer version that is more stable:

Go to http://dev.d-rats.com/drats_daily/daily-02232012/   ctrl + click to follow link. Down load this file for Windows.

d-rats-daily-02232012-installer.exe