



CENTRALIA AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICES TEAM

MAY 20TH, 2014

“Comm Two” - Our Summertime Project

The conversation with Bob Berg, Centralia’s Chief of Police, started like this: “Chief, we need a new project for our ARES team. You have this little blue box van sitting all by itself and not really being used.....”

Two weeks later, Chief Berg was handing us the keys saying “have fun!” The 1993 Chevrolet box van, one of three the police department received from military surplus and adapted for our local police department’s needs, has a diesel engine and 25,000 original miles

Originally used by the Air National Guard, it is 17 feet long overall with a rear utility box that measures 7 feet wide, 10 feet long and is tall enough to stand up inside. With easy access through the cab, via a side door on the passenger side or double doors at the rear, it should make the perfect auxiliary communication vehicle. “Comm Two” - now its designated tactical call sign (because the larger communication van’s tactical callsign is Comm One) will also make a great ARES team project.



With room for two radio desks, containing VHF, UHF and law enforcement & fire radios, there is still plenty of room if we wish to add a high frequency radio system. Additional area will be taken up with white boards, equipment storage and places to hold those little creature comforts like a coffee pot and an ice chest.

The team is currently working through all the ideas on how to repurpose this vehicle but our first planned outing will be Field Day 2014 so there is plenty of work and very



little time to accomplish much of what needs to be accomplished. No funding came with the van so we’ll need to get creative. Throughout the summer, we’ll send construction updates and photos to keep you up to date. Are we having fun yet?

You bet we are!





Bill McGowan
W7FQQ

Centralia ARES team advisor, Bill McGowan, W7FQQ is a very generous guy. He also has a very generous son-in-law, Steve Szombathy, W7UDI. Steve has a real talent for repurposing used Land Mobile radios into amateur radios. He previously provided Centralia ARES with two great VHF and two UHF radios. Now he is bringing eight more radios and a full 2 meter repeater for use in our communications backbone system. He is even going to install the repeaters for us.

Our 440 repeater was previously owned by Steve Smith, W7HDO (one of our Members-At-Large) who gave it to Kim Aiken, AC7YY (another of our Members-At-Large) who generously donated it to the Centralia ARES team. Nobody can say hams aren't generous people.

Now both repeaters will be installed together at Riverside Fire Authority's Cooks Hill fire station. With the antenna at 70 feet, the coverage maps look pretty good for the area.



Firefighters Casey McCarthy, KG7GQL and Jade Gross KG7AQJ who volunteered their time to run the RFA ladder truck.



Carol, KE7YZB, Lyle, KB7PI, Teresa, N4MBA, Bill, W7FQQ, Ricardo, KE7YYY and Linc, K0ZCO



Chief Mike Kytta, KG7GQT



Firefighter Jade Gross, KG7AQJ and Lewis County Radio Technician Scott Mattoon, WA7SM

*Thanks to everyone involved in this antenna project.
You are GREAT!*