

COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY RAINBOW EVENT FOR 2005

Team arrived in Roanoke VA. On 6 June, 2005, I arrived a couple of days earlier, ordered Radio Equipment that I thought may be needed for this years operation. The location of the gathering was not known at this time.

On June 7, 2005 it was determined that the gathering would be in West VA. Exact location was unknown. I contacted the local technician, Bruce Cross for locations of forest controlled sights and access. We scouted the area to make an assessment of terrain and possible repeater locations. The team and L.E.O.'s changed locations to Snowshoe, West VA.

We ordered lines and began setting up phones and DSL Communications for the Team. A number of Rainbow's were camping in the Elkins area and communications was required for both that area and I.C.P. We began setting up Repeaters to accomplish this task.

The site owner of for the repeater to cover the Snowshoe area had concerns regarding the quiet zone. Frank Ealand and Tom Thomison, both of the Washington Office telecom staff handled the quite zone issue.

We issued hand held VHF radios to the assigned L.E.O.'S and found out that most of the vehicles did not have user programmable Mobile Radios. Radios that were installed in most of the vehicles, either we did not have the proper software and cables or attempts to program them with what we did have failed.

Calls were made to local commercial shops to see if they had the capability and if so what were the costs. It was determined that the local shops could reprogram the Midland and Kenwood radios for a cost of approximately \$800 and that they were not able to reprogram the Motorola radios.

Calls were made to attempt to obtain user programmable radios from Forest Service locations. Some were found in California and were shipped to my location Via Fed EX.

Upon their arrival the radios were temporarily installed in the needed L.E.O. vehicles. I would recommend that in the future all L.E.O.'s have at least one Field Programmable Mobile Radio installed in their vehicle. Without a Field Programmable Mobile Radio it

would have been extremely difficult to obtain a high quality of communications needed for them to perform their jobs and could have resulted in a safety risk. It would have also caused all radios to be reprogrammed a second time as another repeater frequency had to be added as the rainbow group moved south.

During this time contact was made with the Local State Police and the Dispatch location would be established at their office in Elkins. Contact with the state technician was made and our command Frequency was placed in the radio at that location. L.E.O.'S could now run 28, 29 reports as needed.

The exact location of the Gathering was still not known however, there was an indication that they maybe going south of Snowshoe, VA. Another Repeater would be required to handle this area. One additional VHF Repeater with link and a UHF repeater was ordered.

Upon arrival of the equipment it was installed in an area called Sharps Knob. The UHF repeater was installed on Snowshoe Mountain as it had line of site to all existing repeater locations. The existing repeaters were then switched over to repeat linking instead of simplex to accommodate the added equipment.

Upon a decision and signing of a permit in the area called Cranberry the repeater at Sharps Knob was removed and relocated in the gathering area. All four repeaters were linked together, so no matter where communications were needed, from the Gathering site to the Elkins area, it would be covered and all communications would be heard by all no matter of their location.

There was an issue when the Rainbows installed a repeater site on the ground in the gathering area. After a discussion with the Rainbow Communication person, and research of FCC and Forest Service lands policies, it was decided by the Forest and Permit administrator to amend the Permit to include this. This should be part of the Permit on Future Gatherings.

From this point on, communications, with only small problems, which were resolved quickly and for the most part ran smoothly.

Frank Ealand was my assistant and his expertise and knowledge were extremely helpful and appreciated. .

Chuck Howard
N.I.M.T. Communications Chief