



Mini SET 2025 SET After Action Report ("AAR")

May 5, 2025 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 5, 2025, Central Oregon Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Team, here after referred to as COARECT, held a mini-SET (Simulated Emergency Training). The purpose of which was to evaluate the effectiveness of using the Mobile Interagency Communications Unit (MICU) when operating from the La Pine Main Fire Station; to determine the effectiveness of new antenna placed at the fire station; familiarize members with the scribe position; to fill and evaluate the effectiveness of scribes; and to ensure simplex was an effective alternate frequency for operations during an emergency. The exercise built upon the efforts of previous SET's COARECT conducted in the past. Additionally, the SET was to continue the training and fine tuning of individual Net Controllers and station check-in skills.

Stations began to check in via Echo Link at 3 pm. Each station checking in was assigned a sequential number they would use for all further check ins, the stations were then instructed to QSY to simplex frequency 146.52. After which check in stations were instructed to QSY to Finley Butt Repeater 444.9250. Lastly, all stations were Then instructed to report back and check-out with the initial Netcontroller either via echo link or directly through the Walker Mountain Repeater. The exercise was terminated at approximately 3:45 pm.

As with any training exercises they are supposed to identify issues that might arise during an actual emergency. With this premise in mind, the SET can be considered a success. Now it is up to COARECT to build upon the positive outcomes as well as to determine actions necessary to improve and/or fix the weak points.

All Net Controllers and stations checking in did an outstanding job, there was a vast improvement over the pervious SET's as there was very little traffic congestion and interference. Having a tech position on site with the MICU proved extremely valuable as there were some issues with the new headset that were resolved very quickly. Also, scribes were a tremendous asset to the Net controllers and provided a seamless operation overall. The antenna at the main La Pine Fire Station worked extremely well for operation with local repeaters, it would be of interest to determine area of coverage for simplex frequencies.

While the fire station location and antenna enhanced simplex operation from pervious SET's but use of simplex was problematic to a degree relative to reception by all stations (should be expected). This did create some issues on this frequency with Net Controller not moving forward to the next sequential number when someone didn't check-in. For most part stations did not attempt to provide miscellaneous comments when checking with a Net Controller, which allowed for a smoother flow of information between all involved.

The only issue of consequence had to do with the identification of relay stations while working simplex. Some members felt relay stations should be identified prior to any operation while others felt it should occur at the time of the operations. This issue needs further discussion by the membership and a decision made as to the most effective process to use.

Again, this exercise went very well and demonstrated the positive impacts of continued practice and involvement of the membership.



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Bottom Line

A-WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE?

1. To operate both the MICU at the La Pine Main Fire Station and the utilization of the new antenna installed at this location.
2. To test radios in the MICU and determine effectiveness in operating multiple radios.
3. To ensure team members are sufficiently familiar with their radios to program simplex frequencies.
4. To ensure team members are familiar with Echo Link operation and demonstrate an ability to activate and check-in.
5. Test coverage area of simplex frequency from the main fire station location.
6. Improve station check-in organization and effectiveness.
7. To continue team members familiarization with the basic operations necessary in the event of an emergency call-out.
8. To allow net controllers to continue to practice and enhance their skills in handling traffic.
9. To maintain effective SET oversight and effectiveness with the appointment of a SET Incident Commander.
10. To maintain radio/equipment reliability with the appointment of a Communication Technician.
11. To familiarize team members with the function of a scribe.

B-WHAT WENT WELL?

1. Having a person with electrical technology skills on site to resolve technical issues.
2. Continued use of IC to provide general oversight of the operations.
3. The use of scribes to transcribe information being provided at check-ins and assist Net Controllers with check-in coordination.
4. Assigning sequential numbers and using those for additional check-ins was effective in maintaining organization and control, reducing pile ups.
5. Team members demonstrated a working knowledge of Echo Link and their ability to program their radios.
6. Team members continued to gain experience in checking in on simplex and repeater frequencies.
7. During issues with the simplex frequencies COARECT relay stations provided valuable assistance with the check-in of stations that could not be heard or those who could not hear Net Control.
8. Net Controllers clearly announced the SET with instructions and requests of monitoring stations to please stand by, unless reporting an actual emergency. They also announced at appropriate intervals their call signs and that this is a drill.
9. Net Controllers worked to maintain control of their assigned frequency and check-ins.



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B-WHAT WENT WELL?

10. Participation by members was down from the previous exercise, but still a respectable showing: 13 stations checked in with auxiliary power and 7 personnel worked at the COARECT control point (MICU) or Echo Link station.
11. Effective utilization of SET Task Force, in planning and development of the SET.
12. Instructions were distributed to the membership ahead of the SET.

C-WHAT COULD HAVE GONE BETTER?

1. Early identification of relay stations on simplex.
2. Improvement of headsets in the MICU.
3. Improve clarity and understandability of stations checking in (background noise) as well as need to slow down on check ins.
4. When a station does not check in Net Controllers need to move on to the next sequential number.
5. There should be no need for relay stations on repeater frequencies.
6. Ensure all Net Controllers are online and ready prior to the start of the SET.
7. Stations were checking out midway through the exercise while others were still checking. This created some confusion.
8. There some extemporaneous comments were provided beyond what information Net Controllers were asking for.
9. Continue efforts to increase the number of personnel who are willing to participate in future SET's and/or ECOM activities.

D-WHAT SHOULD BE CHANGED GOING FORWARD?

1. Continue utilization of IC, Electrical Tech, and Scribes
2. Contact all Net Controller prior to the commencement of the SET, to ensure they are ready.
3. Request all call signs be provided phonetically.
4. Reduce background noise in radio stations.
5. Change all headsets from stereo to mono.
6. Determine when relay stations on simplex should be identified.
7. If Net Controllers are unable to make contact with the next sequential numbered station after two attempts, proceed to the next number and return to the missing station later.
8. Ensure all equipment is tested before the beginning of the exercise.
9. Determine a method for stations to check in and out without creating confusion (Need for further discussion).
10. Install headset plugs and headsets for scribes on the opposite side of the MICU.
11. Only provide information requested by Net Controllers.
12. Replace MICU heavy coax cable with a lighter type of coax.
13. Add Clocks to the MICU.
14. Emergency Operational SOG: including MICU equipment identification and instructions; frequency communication plan; training requirements, procedures, methodologies, and SET requirements; interface and responsibility to local Ecomm



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organizations and elected officials; and emergency callout, organization, preparedness, response and recovery.

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