

# After Action Report - VOI Field Day 2018

## Event Overview

To work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (excluding the 60, 30, 17, and 12-meter bands) and in doing so to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions. A premium is placed on developing skills to meet the challenges of emergency preparedness as well as to acquaint the general public with the capabilities of Amateur Radio.

Date and Time Period: Field Day 2018 was held June 23-24, noon to noon MDT

## Event Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives for this exercise / event.

- Set-up and operation of a 3A station using callsign W7VOI
- Networked logging PCs
- Use of wire HF antennas (no towers or beams)
  - OCF Windom 80 – 10 Meters
  - NVIS - 75 & 40 Meters
  - 6-meter Yagi with J-pole as back up
- Satellite Station
- Educational Opportunities
  - NVIS antenna set-up and operation
  - Soldering a PL-259
  - Satellite operations
  - Survey and discussion of “electronic parts”

In addition: Combine the Field Day event with the VOI annual picnic, including tailgate, auction, and a \$100 gift certificate raffle

## Events Synopsis

This event was the execution of a VOI sponsored Field Day club operation combined with our annual picnic.

A small oversight committee was in place, President, Vice-President, and a FD Safety and Site Coordinator. An Event Safety Officer was in place during the event.

The FD site was two adjoining properties, owned by two Amateur Radio operators, providing a combined space of approximately 2.5 acres.

No owner stations or antennas were used per the ARRL FD rules and information packet.

The philosophy was that three antennas would be pre-placed for the event on Friday. The Windom and the 6M Yagi with a J-Pole as back-up.

The 75M & 40m NVIS would be erected as part of an educational session on Saturday.

Operating positions would be set-up but no equipment would be connected prior to the operating period began. One exception was the establishment of the computer network and the configuration of the logging software to operate in a Master – Slave mode.

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The picnic would serve as the “food” portion of our FD event. The usual events of the picnic were planned for – tailgate, auction, raffle, educational, and food.

Signage was created and displayed to direct participants to appropriate parking and operating locations.

Approximately 40 people participated, FD stations were staffed during the 24-hour operating period.

At 12:01 PM, Sunday, the drawing was held for the \$100 DX Engineering certificate. Lisa & Mark pulled the winning ticket. Andrew, KE7FIY, was the winner.

Tear-down and clean-up then proceeded.

## Analysis of Issues

This section analyzes the issues raised during this exercise/event. The issues evaluated are based on the objectives.

### Issue #1: VOI Field Day / Picnic 2018

- **Activity:** Food Service; Education; Equipment; Event Costs; and Other Costs for the combined event are provided. There was no comparative analysis conducted to prior events or activities.
- **Observation:** General observations are built into the Analysis section.
- **Reference(s):** No specific plans, policies, procedures, laws, or regulations that apply to the observation will be referenced as a part of this document. ARRL has a 50+ page document that includes structure and rules for the event. All station operations must be in accordance with Title 47 CFR Part 97.

### Analysis:

## FOOD SERVICE

- Plenty of food
- Good Alternative Menu:
  - Chicken, potato or macaroni salad, roll & butter, beverage and ice cream sandwiches
  - Dessert: Ice Cream sandwiches. These were also eaten as snacks later
    - ARB coolers were great for storing ice cream sandwiches
- Snacks & Popcorn
- Cookies / Trail mix brought by Rod for overnight operators
- Water & Sodas – Dark Cola, Diet Dark Cola, Clear Cola
  - Liked the Orange Crush addition to mix

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## Future Considerations:

- More Orange Crush
- Add root beer - suggested
- Root Beer or Orange Crush floats for dessert.

## Albertsons Observations:

- Provided wrong Deli salad – ended up with two types of potato salad instead of macaroni and potato as choices
- 12 cases of ice cream sandwiches showed up instead of 12 boxes (rectified at time of pick-up)
- Had to contact three departments to place an order for one meal

## Other:

- Reduced our ice purchases
- Plenty of garbage cans
- Meal Cost \$2.50 pp based on 120
- Extra food fed members and others

## EDUCATION

Educational sessions were held on the following topics

- Soldering PL-259
- NVIS Antenna setup, instruction, propagation
- Satellite Station use and operation
- Survey of electronic components

## EQUIPMENT

Radios/Stations were loaned by:

- Chris, WH6CPT, 6M station
- Doug, W7DVR, 80 – 10M station
- Don, ND7L 75M & 40M, NVIS station
- ND7L provided the logging software and laptops,
- WH6CPT provided network connectivity
- Tables and some chairs provided through KI7CZR

## EVENT COSTS

- No fees for park
- Combined fees for two events were less than two separate events
- Porti-Potti, \$100
- Wash Station, \$80
- Food, beverage and utensils, \$300 using employee discounts

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- Appears that auction may have covered food expenses of combined event
  - Donated items were sold

## OTHER ITEMS

- Purchase and installation of the logging software was successful
- Pick-up and delivery of auction items made auction beneficial \$\$\$
- 202 contacts were made
- 40M and 6M were the bands with the most contacts
- 2018 Moral Support by HP BARC; however, set-up, operations, and tear down was conducted by VOI, VOI can do it
- Andrew Spenser, KE7FIY was the winner of the \$100 gift certificate. Drawing took place Sunday, 12:01 PM MDT. The raffle raised \$135 at near \$0 cost.

## Missed Opportunities

- Low Attendance
  - Ride for Hope event on same day; And in 2019
  - HP FD held separately; Most are also VOI members
  - Announcements and blasts of the event were sent to the general membership, media sites, and email lists
- Press Release
- Message to SM
- Copy Bulletin
- Invite local VIP two doors down
- Pretest items were not identified, corrected or noted

## Recommendations

A full FD committee needs to be put into place with adequate time for event planning and execution.

- Consider: Have Field Day with HPBARC - they had great attendance for both set up and tear down, but were hurting for operators once Field Day started. Two of the Five contributing operators were not even members
- Consider: Other area clubs for opportunities or invites

Refining the meal numbers would provide more accurate food requirements thus potentially reducing cost. Numbers are needed prior to the event to allow orders or purchases to be made.

A “hamburger” menu would reduce waste/extra of burgers only. However, the fixings would still need to be purchased and would need to be consumed as it would not store well.

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Tables and chairs are always an issue to address. Participants were asked to bring their folding chairs. This seem to work well. Most did not need a table. However, those that did need a table, tried to use the operating positions.

Needed headphones / Splitter amps for operators and loggers

Satellite Station was not pre-tested as requested; experienced missing cables and connectors that were removed by their owners after 2017 FD. Possible software updates or change of application required. No written checklist or procedures available. Volume of the sub-band (IC-9100) was set to 0.

Initially an IC-746 was provided by ND7L but it appears that it has an intermittent no audio on transmit or only indicates it is transmitting. A FT-897 was substituted.

Lost an hour due to bad feed coax from the Icom to the Windom OCF Dipole. Receiving well, however high SWR. Lack of contacts led operators to conduct further investigation.

The PL-259 was installed on this coax as one of the educational sessions. An analyzer was not used to after this installation.

Feed coax for NVIS was Radio Shack 80% shield RG-58. This was used for convenience as it was available with all connectors needed. It used a least three sections of coax with barrel connectors. Even so, this antenna worked great.

## Conclusion

While the event was successful and enjoyed by those who participated – It is the “Why are we doing it” instead of the what & how of the event. What is the true ROI of an event or activity Is there a tangible or intangible ROI for VOI or Amateur Radio?

## Appendix A: Improvement Plan

Finally, as all data has been gathered, develop an Improvement Plan that lists each finding, the improvement actions that will be taken, the responsible party and the expected completion date.

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### After Action Plan Improvement Matrix

Issue & Recommendation	Staff/Program responsible for correction	Supporting staff or programs	Target date for resolution or completion
Need headphones / Splitter amps at operating / logging positions	VP – Field Day Committee		
Test Satellite Station (was not pre-tested) missing cables, connectors, software, and procedures	VP – Program staff	Tech Committee	
Evaluate other simple antennas for FD use	Tech Committee	VP – Field Day Committee	
Larger FD committee with leads assigned for each silo	VP		
Evaluate FD and Picnic combined event Consider “Why” instead of what & how of the event. What is the true ROI of an event or activity	VOI BOD		
Repair IC-746 if cost effective	ND7L		
Special Events Supplies: Dedicated coax, signage, tables, & chairs, etc. Possibly radios / stations	VP – Program staff		