



Omega Thunder 2025 – Participant Quick Reference Guide

Scenario Summary

On August 8–9, 2025, a series of severe monsoon thunderstorms (Storm Complex "Omega") impacted the Tucson valley. Lightning and high winds caused significant damage to public safety communication systems, especially affecting mountainous repeater sites and valley-based infrastructure.

By 0600, the Pima County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated under ICS. Initial communications attempted using primary systems were more degraded than expected. Initial reports did not reflect the full extent of the failure. A possible OEM Comm activation request is pending assessment by the EOC.

By 0630, the initial major storm cell had passed, and a light rain was falling. The National Weather Service forecast indicates increased storm activity later in the morning.

Net Control operator George James, KD7XP, will begin the exercise at 0700 on Saturday, August 9 on the 146.880 (pl110.9-) repeater. No OEM Comm activation is in place at this time. Injects will be delivered by Net Control during the exercise to simulate situational updates and message traffic.

Exercise Objectives

1. Demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain emergency communications during a degraded environment.
2. Validate the ability to pivot to alternate frequencies within 3 minutes of receiving Net Control directive.
3. Validate the ability to establish and use alternate communications pathways (HF, VHF, UHF) and digital modes (Winlink, FLDigi MT63-2KL). Digital modes are optional.
4. Practice use of ICS forms including ICS-213csr (Community Status Report – a locally adapted ICS-213 form available on the oemcomm.org website homepage) and ICS-309 (communications log, maintained by Net Control and/or individual stations if a Radio Room is not activated).
5. Each station will complete at least one ICS-213csr form and submit it digitally or via voice.
6. Demonstrate the ability to coordinate message traffic through Net Control to support simulated operational continuity.

Participant Instructions

This exercise will be a directed net. Stations must contact Net Control before transmitting unless otherwise instructed. Follow all instructions given by them. Please conduct yourselves in an orderly and professional manner. Radio traffic pile-ups are possible, so please be patient as Net Control works through them. It is very possible that radio traffic, to include voice and data, will be directed to other frequencies. The OEM Comm frequency list is available on the oemcomm.org website, and attached to this email. Possible data modes include FLDigi MT63-2KL and Winlink.

Remember to begin and end transmissions with the words "This is an exercise". If a real world event occurs, announce "Real World, Real World, Real World" to suspend exercise operations.

Logistics

Start: 0700 local time, Saturday, August 9th

End: 1300 local time

Frequency List: Attached and available at oemcomm.org

Modes Used: Voice (VHF/UHF/HF), FLDigi MT63-2KL, Winlink

Net Control: Will direct traffic and assign alternate frequencies as needed

Lead Agency: Pima County Office of Emergency Management

POC/Exercise Controller: Jim Fisher / Technical Communications Manager

Post-exercise survey for the After-Action Report (AAR) will be conducted via email