

Bosque Amateur Radio Club Mobile Radio Program

The initial effort for the Bosque Amateur Radio Club (BARC) Mobile Radio program was to focus on the VHF band and to procure 10 ICOM 2300H and 10 Yaesu 3100R mobile radios for deployment in Ukraine. However Doctors of the World procured 12 ICOM 2300H and 10 Yaesu 3100R before BARC was able to respond. The vendor provided cables but no VHF antennas.

Over the coming months the need for portable hand held radios became apparent. After discussing the issue with C4U (Care4Ukraine.org) portable hand held radios was the new focus. These radios are used by drivers and volunteers. They are used to communicate with other drivers and the various "Community Stations". Community Stations are based on the specifications and antenna plans provided by BARC. They are powered by solar generators (Jackery or EcoFlow) with solar panels. Community stations are operated by an assigned local resident (with training) who in turn trains two additional residents as backup. Transmissions are relay-matrix on a specified day/time schedule. Stations are secured in rebar cages with a padlocked hatch. Radios are also given to local first-responders and police as their equipment has generally been scavenged by regional defense units. Donations include 38 refurbished radios from UK radio club and MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières). Additional units have been donated by groups/individuals from six different countries. BARC was able to collect enough donations from club members to purchase and ship 14 HT Baofeng UV-5R radios to Ukraine. In the meantime BARC had identified two antennas (1 omni-directional and 1 beam) that are inexpensive and could be made with materials that are local to the area. Bill Kent came up with a novel approach to transport the antennas. Plans were drawn up and photos for assembly were sent via secure email. There are currently 65 antennas deployed in Ukraine for the BARCnetUA.

The Ukraine Radio Program has now been officially renamed as BARCnetUA (BUA). The effort is pushing the idea of "older tech has modern relevance". It's been functioning for months, and is adding locations each month. C4U is the driving force in the creation of BUA. BUA is 100% civilian purposed. BUA-1 has been deployed and BUA-2 is in the process of being deployed. BUA-1 will place 12-15 transmitters in the northeast region of Ukraine between Chernihiv, Sumy and Poltava. This is a flat agricultural region. On a map, the subject area can be identified as a triangle with longest leg beginning at the town of Berenza, roughly 210 miles to the SE to the town of Ochtyrka, and the apex centered 160 miles SW at the town of Pyriatyn. Different combinations of radios, solar power generators, and solar panels will be employed and monitored. There are plans to deploy a third BUA at a future date. Coverage area is per MSF request and C4U aid distribution agenda.

C4U has working relationships with multiple humanitarian groups and are 100% self funded (no gov't support)/ no formal financial connection to other groups, and no religious affiliations. C4U is in itself a recognized aid group with 30+ volunteers from 10 countries. C4U shares transport and works with deliveries and evacs with IMC, Mercy Corp, Save The Children, MSF, Americares, and others. ADH (Aktion Deutschland Hilft) is a German NGO that does great work and C4U cooperates with frequently, however, no formal ties between any of them due to declared focus and taxes. It's the rule. But if a message is received via BUA from a teacher in a learning center or that someone needs medical attention C4U could handle the evacuation or transport meds to a "doctor". Also medical aides might use one of the C4U learning centers for a quick kid's check.

As Joseph from C4U pointed out “There are times that it seems there's more aid groups than there are people to help. But many groups will not get close to the line of contact that is where BUA is appreciated the most.”

C4U gets food and hygiene donations from a few German and Polish mega markets, but still have to pay for petrol, drivers and van rentals. Because of that funds for radios would be an additional challenge. The UK folks gave C4U radios and solar generators, but they can't do more until wintertime has passed.

To donate to C4U and the radio program point your browser to Care4Ukraine.org put in your donation amount and add the key word “Radio” in the Supporting Words section. For the donation to go to the kids program and add “Kids”. Adding the keyword “General” the donation will go to the kids or medical program as needed.

More about C4U can be seen on the Raw Travel website:

<https://rawtravel.tv/video/10-05-webcut-helping-ukraine-with-care4ukraine/>