

# ST. JOHN AMBULANCE YOUTH ON-THE-AIR 2002

## INTRODUCTION

In relation to total membership, very few St. John Ambulance Youth members are lucky enough to attend any of the out of region Camps (in other Provinces or International) which take place every year. The majority miss this wonderful and enlightening experience and with the ever increasing expense of travel (ground and air), it also becomes more and more difficult for large numbers to attend these events. St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air has none of these disadvantages. It cost little, has no limit to the number participating and almost any member of the organisation can join without leaving his or her community. It enables youth members throughout the world to talk to each other on an equal footing irrespective of nationality, position in the organisation, or even length of service. Please note that in Canada, anyone can speak on amateur radio as long as they are under the supervision of a licensed operator.

In addition, it is hoped that St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air will become the catalyst for our youth members to delve into the Radio Communications, and/or International Friendship proficiency subjects.

This will be our third year of operation, and we hope that your division will join us in this event. The details on the following pages explain how members will be able take part in this event.

## **DATE AND DURATION OF THE EVENT**

This year St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air will commence at 1200 UTC (8 a.m. EDT) on Saturday October 26<sup>th</sup> and close down at 2359 UTC (8:59 p.m. EDT), with the alternate date of Sunday October 27<sup>th</sup> using the same time frame. The amount of time given to the event will be governed by local circumstances and rest largely with the Radio Amateur in charge of the equipment.

## **HOW TO TAKE PART**

Divisions who know the names and addresses of local Radio Amateurs or Radio Club, may approach one or more of them to see if they would be interested in co-operating with them. If they do not know who or where they are, divisions may contact National Headquarters for information or they may contact:

Radio Amateurs of Canada Inc.,  
720 Belfast Road, Suite 217  
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 0Z5  
Tel. (613) 244-4367, FAX (613) 244-4369 or by e-mail at: [rachq@rac.ca](mailto:rachq@rac.ca)

In the Province of Québec you may contact:

Radio Amateur du Québec Inc.  
4545, Av. Pierre-de-Coubertin  
C.P. 1000, Succursale M  
Montréal (Québec) H1V 3R2  
Tél.: (514) 252-3012, Fax.: (514) 254-9971 or by e-mail at: [raqi@sympatico.ca](mailto:raqi@sympatico.ca)

It would be up to the divisions to make the initial approach. Radio amateurs are very enthusiastic about their hobby and divisions would find that most of them are willing to help. This is a wonderful opportunity and divisions should support it with enthusiasm.

## FREQUENCIES TO BE USED

Band	SSB (phone)
80 m	3.730 MHz
40 m	7.050 MHz
20 m	14.130 MHz *
15 m	21.160 MHz
10 m	28.390 MHz

\* Primary frequency – please look here first!

Please be aware that radio conditions, like the weather, vary from place to place, hour to hour and from year to year. The frequencies could be + or – depending on QRM (Interference). If your station finds conditions poor be patient, they can change quite suddenly.

## RADIO AMATEURS

Any Radio Amateur with an interest in St. John Ambulance Youth can help by having youth members visit his/her station for any period during the day or by setting up a station at the local division's meeting location.

Before organising a station, amateurs are strongly advised to satisfy themselves of the degree of interest within the local division. In the past, some Amateurs have operated large stations and staged full-scale exhibitions only to be disappointed at the response shown by the local youth division. Participation can vary from being on the air for an hour or two with one member present, to operating for the whole twelve hours with a large number of participants.

St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air is NOT a contest. The intention is to establish contact with other St. John Ambulance stations, in order to have an opportunity to learn about Youth Programs elsewhere, and tell others about St. John Ambulance Youth in your own region.

## BASIC RULES

1. Radio Amateurs enter the event by calling "CQ St. John Ambulance Youth" or by answering other stations heard using this call.
2. The suggested frequencies and mode should be used.
3. All Radio Amateurs must strictly observe their licence regulations.

## HELPFUL “CHEAT SHEET”

The most talkative youth becomes "mike-shy" when asked to talk on the radio the first time. It is a good idea to prepare some questions that the juniors / cadets / crusaders can ask, and to go over them with them before they attend St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air.

For best results prepare some suitable questions beforehand using suggestions from your own members. Brainstorm up the questions that interest your group, and make a poster in large letters so that they can read it while they are speaking. For non-readers, some picture clues could do the trick!

Here are some sample questions, however ten or twelve well thought out questions should be more than enough.

1. What is your name?
2. Where do you live? How big is the place where you live?
3. How long have you been in St. John Ambulance?
4. Were you ever a Junior / Cadet?
5. What is the weather like where you are?
6. What are your hobbies?
7. When did you last go to camp? Where did you go? How long were you there?  
Did you sleep in tents or in a building?
8. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
9. Do you have any pets? What are their names?
10. What proficiency badge(s) are you working on?
11. What sports do you like?
12. Are you on the INTERNET? Would you like to exchange E-mail addresses?
13. Would you like to be a pen pal?
14. How many proficiency badges do you have?
15. What is the last proficiency badge you earned?
16. Do you play a musical instrument? Which one? How long have you played?

17. What sports do you play? Are you on a team? How long have you played?
18. Where are you going on your summer holiday?
19. Have you ever been to visit \_\_\_\_\_? (insert the community / province where you live).
20. How many members are in your division?
21. Where does your division meet?
22. What is the station (amateur radio shack) like where you are?
23. How many Youth Leaders do you have in your division?
24. Are there other activities for you to do during St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air besides talking on the radio?
25. Will you send us a QSL card?
26. What is the name of the amateur radio operator at your station?
27. Would you like to get your license and become an amateur radio operator, too?
28. How many stations have you talked to today?
29. How many members have you talked to on the radio today?
30. What was the farthest away place you talked to today?

## INFORMATION FOR AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS

Some suggestions:

- Know how many youth and leaders you can handle at one time.
- Show the youth 'around' your shack.
- Briefly explain how Amateur Radio works and what they can expect.
- Make sure you explain to the youth and leaders about Call Signs. Teach them the call sign of the station. Explain how it identifies your station anywhere in the world.
- Have a map of Canada and the world to show the youth where the other station is located. If you don't have one, ask the leaders to bring one.
- Explain the microphone and that the receiver shuts off when PTT is pushed - "You ain't learning nothin' when you're talkin'!"
- Teach them to use the OPO method.
  - O for only "One" person speaks at a time.
  - P for "Push" to talk (the PTT).
  - O for use of the term "Over" to indicate the end of your transmission and that you are turning over to your contact as you release the "talk" switch.
- Have a sheet with the Phonetic Alphabet handy, have the guests practice spelling their names in phonetics.
- Encourage the Leaders to bring their "cheat sheet" of suggested questions & topics for the youth.
- Tell them how and why you became interested in Amateur Radio, and what form your present amateur activity takes. Mention some other things people like to do with amateur radio, and some ways amateur radio can provide public service.
- Show them your QSL card, and some you have received.
- Explain the function of QSL cards and encourage them to fill out & send QSL cards to each station you talk to during St. John Youth Ambulance On-The-Air. Encourage them to include a SASE, so that the contacting station can "QSL them direct".
- If possible, make sure your set-up allows use of earphones (for you) and a speaker (for them) simultaneously... This allows the youth to hear all that is going on, even when it is not their turn, but gives you that extra edge in QRM or QRN. (You can expect lots of "local QRM" in your station!)

- Make sure that guests are well supervised at all times. Stress to chaperones that the equipment is expensive and that meddling can be dangerous.
- Have chaperones make sure that no one wanders away from the shack.
- Make sure that you have a good time. Talk to other St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air stations if possible. If you can't find any, see if you can contact a station who will have an interesting exchange with your group. Once the youth are talking, other St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air stations will find you. High pitched voices and giggles really stand out on the air waves!
- There are suggested frequencies for St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air. Call "CQ St. John Ambulance Youth" on or near these frequencies, or listen for youth talking & join in when they finish a QSO. If you get a QSO going with a non-St. John Ambulance Youth station, other St. John Ambulance Youth stations will find you by the giggles & pauses, and ask to jump in. Sometimes the youth get a big kick out of working a DX station, even though he/she is not a St. John Ambulance Youth participant.
- If you know of other St. John Ambulance Youth stations who will be participating, try to set up schedules on appropriate bands and frequencies, but don't make any promises you can't keep.
- An excellent way to assure good, reliable communication is to arrange a schedule on a local repeater with another St. John Ambulance Youth group, or some co-operative radio amateur. Be sure to ask permission from the Repeater owner, & allow breaks for normal traffic. Explain about repeater timeouts and try to avoid them!
- At some stations it may be possible to have HF and VHF running simultaneously, especially if more than one radio amateur is available to supervise.
- 1 hour to 1-1/2 hour are good lengths for a session.

Phonetics are not only an asset to communication with inexperienced, excited young people, they are also a lot of fun for kids! If you can, download a graphic of the phonetic alphabet.

Four youth members with a leader is a good group, but you may find you can manage a larger group. Youth are encouraged to be in uniform.

Remember, kids don't know much geography so a large map where you can point out contacts would be an asset.

The Youth Program of the St. John Ambulance Brigade appreciate your participation in helping us make this a fun and memorable experience for our members.

## **AFTER THE EVENT**

Divisions will be requested to compile all the information (about the other division(s) and their region or country contacted) noted during the event. Sometimes stations make memorable contacts resulting in stories worth sharing, these should be included in the report as well. This kind of information will help to monitor the success of St. John Ambulance Youth On-The-Air, so the names of individuals and a bit of information on the topics of discussion should also be included. If photographs are available, copies would be mostly appreciated. The names of members appearing in the picture should be printed on the back of the photograph.

To receive a participation certificate for the division; reports, photographs, etc. should reach National Headquarters (to the attention of Don Lapierre, Manager, Community Services) by December 1<sup>st</sup> this year.