

Team Topics



January 2008

TEAM TOPICS REVISITED

Will wonders never cease, at least that's what some people say. I would be curious to know how many REACT members remember the Team Topics publication of several years ago. Well, here it is again.

Team Topics is an informal newsletter from REACT International (RI) that contains recent information that REACT Teams should know before the next issue of *the REACTer*. Team Topics is mailed to the REACT Team's address. When the Team receives its copy, it is expected that the information will be shared with each Team member. Mailing to Team addresses saves RI the cost of postage required to send Team Topics to each member and is much quicker and easier to assemble and mail. Each issue of Team Topics will also be available on the RI web site.

If your team prefers to receive Team Topics by e-mail, please send an e-mail request for the Team Topics e-mail version to REACT International, Inc., headquarters including your Team name and Team number. It will be the responsibility of the Team to forward the team topics by e-mail to its members.

Dick Cooper, *President*

Norman Kaplan, *Treasurer & Assistant Secretary*

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Free Team REACTers for PR

For 2008, REACT International, Inc., is offering each Team up to three (3) complimentary subscriptions of the REACTer for six (6) issues, to be sent to local agencies and/or officials. To have these subscriptions sent, send the name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and recipient's official position to REACT International. The subscription(s) will be added to the regular mailing and will go out at the same time as all other REACTers. If more than three subscriptions are needed, they are available at \$7.50 each.

New Electronic Filing Requirements for Small Tax-Exempt Organizations

Annual Electronic Notice - e-Postcard (Form 990-N)

Small tax-exempt organizations (whose gross receipts are normally \$25,000 or less) are not required to file Form 990 (long form) or Form 990-EZ (short form). Beginning in 2008, small tax-exempt organizations that previously were not required to file returns will be required to file an annual electronic notice, Form 990-N, *Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for Tax-Exempt Organizations not Required To File Form 990 or 990-EZ*. **This filing requirement applies to tax periods beginning after December 31, 2006.** (Note that "gross receipts" is the total amount received, without deductions for expenses.)

The e-Postcard will require the Team to provide basic information such as Team name, address, any other names that the Team uses, a Web address (if it exists), the name and address of a principal officer of the Team, and a statement that the organization's annual gross receipts are still normally \$25,000 or less. *The IRS will revoke the tax-exempt status of any organization that fails to meet its annual filing requirement for three consecutive years.*

IRS will put the Form 990-N on its web site sometime in January.

RI Headquarters Will Help Teams Without Computer Access

The RI Headquarters office will file Form 990-N for any Team *without computer access to do it on its*

own. If your Team has no computer access, please send REACT International a note with your Team number, name, and address. RI will send you the information to be filled out and returned. Upon receipt, the office will file the Team's Form 990-N with the IRS.

Information Which Must be on File at REACT HQ

Information RI Must Maintain for Each Team

The IRS is requiring parent organizations to maintain information on its subordinate and affiliated organizations. This information includes the Team's current Bylaws, Constitution or Articles of Incorporation, and Standing Rules. The required information also includes all Board minutes, general meeting minutes, and special meeting minutes. REACT International, Inc., is required to produce copies of these at IRS request. ***Please be sure to send RI copies of each of these documents to keep our files current.***

Your Team (US only) MUST Have an Employer Identification Number (EIN)

If your Team does not have its own EIN (Employer Identification number), please get one. Teams without one on RI's list will get Form SS-4 in their Team renewal packet. Teams may also get Form SS-4 from the IRS web site, www.irs.gov. If you are in a hurry, fill in the form and call 1-800-829-4833 to get an EIN issued over the telephone. **Teams may NOT use RI's EIN number, which is only for REACT International, Inc.**

When the Team receives its EIN, send a copy of the number to RI headquarters. The number will be entered into the Team's database record and will be reported annually in the future to IRS to ensure the Team is covered under the REACT International group Section 501(c)(3) nonprofit exemption.

After-Action Reports

It is said that the job is not done until the paperwork is filed. There are two ways to file after-action reports: 1) public relations format and 2) event action report format. REACT International, Inc., needs to maintain information on what the Teams are doing. For example, when applying for grants, the grant making organizations need to know what RI does and what support the Teams give to their local communities.

Public relations format is newspaper style with the first paragraph describing the event, the date, the area of the event, your Team name, and the names of members working the event. The second and successive paragraphs further describe the information in the first paragraph.

Event action report format is a form or printout that includes the event, the date(s) and time(s) of the event, what the event was, where it was held, who worked the event and how long the members worked (time in and time out), what the problems were and what went right, and radio frequencies used.

Either format is acceptable – *please file after-action reports on each event with RI Hq.*

Please note that the above information may be sent in on paper or electronically on a CD. Please do not e-mail the information, since this could easily fill RI's e-mail space on its server.

GMRS, Amateur, and Other Call Signs Requested

In RI's rebranding effort, we are trying to find out our resources. This information is requested annually as part of the Team's Renewal. However, the data base is not accurate. Please send HQ a listing of each of your Team members, reflecting the following information:

- all radio licenses that they have (including class of license)
- CB and FRS capabilities

REACT International will use this information to appropriately answer questions from the Federal

Communications Commission, FEMA, other government agencies, and National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (NVOAD). Along with the FEMA courses passed, this information is used to aid in disaster planning and response.

Rebranding REACT

When REACT was founded in Chicago in 1962, the least expensive and most common radio available was Citizen Band (CB) radio. REACT's mission was motorist assistance and emergency communications, using CB to cover the large number of CB radio users. Today, 45 years later, REACT is still known for its CB work and in many cases is considered to be only a large CB club. REACT is still focused on emergency and disaster communications and motorist assistance, but REACT members no longer use just CB radio. REACT members also use GMRS, FRS, MURS, business band, and amateur radio (HAM) to aid in communications. In addition, REACT uses the Internet. REACT needs to get the message out that "we are no longer just CB radio users." REACT International is already emphasizing this point, and Teams and individual members should also help spread the word. REACT Teams are "Communications Teams," and being labeled as "CB clubs" limits the perception that others have of REACT capabilities.

Team Renewals for 2008

Renewal Packets

Renewals were mailed the week of October 22, 2007. All Teams should have received their renewal packets by November 1, 2007. If your Team has not received its renewal packet please contact REACT International, Inc., by telephone at (301)316-2900, on the Internet at reacthq1@reactintl.org, or by regular mail 5210 Auth Rd., Ste 403, Suitland, MD 20746.

New Professional/Business Class of Membership, Bylaws Section 3.4(b)

A review of the REACT International, Inc., database found a number of non-person memberships. This occurs when a position or a company name is used instead of an individual's name. These members might include "chief of police," "director emergency management agency," a Red Cross chapter, or a traffic watch organization. This type of membership could cause problems with both our liability insurance and IRS Section 501(c)(3) status.

In order to avoid potential problems, the Board of Directors was requested to create a new class of membership at the Summer Board Meeting. The Board added a new "Professional/Business Class" to include the type of "non-person" membership listed above. These members *will* receive the REACTer, but *will not* be covered by either the RI blanket liability insurance or RI group Section 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit status. Dues for Professional/Business Class Membership are \$30 per member (but no insurance premium will be due).

Changes in REACT Supply and Mailing Prices

Due to increased costs from our manufacturers, the price of the 3" triangular patches is now \$1.35 each and the 5" patches are \$3.25 each.

Recent increases in the postage rates have forced REACT International, Inc., to follow suit. Mailing rates are now:

All prices are in United States dollars.

Canada:

Up to 1 pound - \$4.60, with each additional pound or fraction thereof - \$3.05

Other International Countries:

Up to 1 pound - \$12.00, with each additional pound or fraction thereof - \$11.00

United States Or United States Possessions:

Up to 1 pound - \$4.60

Zone	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>
pounds					
1-2	\$4.90	\$5.50	\$5.60	\$6.20	\$7.50
additional	\$0.85	\$1.10	\$2.00	\$2.65	\$3.05

No Change in 2008 Dues/Insurance

At its August Special Meeting in Nashville, Tenn., the Board of Directors decided to keep the 2007 annual dues rates, and not to increase the insurance fee. This will result into a budget deficit, which the Board directed be paid from retained earnings from previous years.

Board of Directors Elections

In 2008, REACT International, Inc., Regional Directors for Regions 3, 6 and 9 are to be elected. Nominations are due by March 15th. Region 3 is comprised of Tennessee, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Puerto Rico; Region 6 is comprised of Alaska, Hawaii, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, and Region 9 is comprised of Canada, West Indies, Scotland and the Philippines. Ballots will be sent in April to the teams in Regions 3, 6 and 9, and an article will be in the March/April edition of the REACTer. Ballots will be due back in REACT International office by June 30th. Ballots will be counted in the first week of July and announced to the Board. The new members will take their position after the Summer Board Meeting. As always, new Board members are invited to attend the Summer Board Meeting.

Public Service Through Communications for more than 45 Years!