



ARES COMMUNICATOR

Information for Scott County Amateurs



August, 2006

Accurate, Reliable Emergency Communications

Volume 6, Number 8

Cuban Hams QRT

The *Palm Beach Post* newspaper reported on August 3, 2006 that there appears to be a “communication crackdown” in Cuba in light of President Fidel Castro’s illness, and that Cuban hams may have been ordered off the air for now.

Hams in Florida have reported listening today for CO (Cuban callsign prefix) stations on “the usual 40-meter frequencies” and hearing no Cuban stations. In addition, the regular noon-time Cuban Net was not heard on the air. So there is still no official confirmation (and it’s quite possible there never will be), but it appears that Cuban hams have been ordered off the air for the foreseeable future.

“As more and more exiles try to get in touch with the island, some are finding an apparent communications crackdown has kicked in,” reports the newspaper. “Perhaps the worst-hit are HAM radio operators who are reporting that their Cuban counterparts have been noticeably absent from the airwaves since Monday.” The paper quotes Jorge Luaces, KC4HTV, a ham whose wife (also a ham) is a reporter for the *Post’s* Spanish-language weekly, as saying he believes that the state agency that regulates ham radio in Cuba is preventing amateurs there from getting on the air.

Other Cuban-Americans told the newspaper that they have no trouble getting through to relatives by phone or e-mail, but that no one is providing much information - if they know anything - because the government closely monitors phone calls and e-mail. It is much more difficult, however, to monitor every possible amateur radio transmission.

Late Friday, August 4, 2006, a couple of Cuban hams were reported operating in CW and PSK31 however no voice communications were reported.

The full newspaper article is available online at http://www.palmbeachpost.com/pbcsouth/content/local_news/epaper/2006/08/03/m14a_CUBA_NO_TALK_0803.html

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Emergency Communications Bill Includes Role For Hams

A bill to enhance emergency communication at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) includes Amateur Radio operators as part of an overall effort to provide interoperability among responders. The 21st Century Emergency Communications Act of 2006 (HR 5852), an amendment to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, passed the US House on a 414-2 vote and has gone to the Senate. Its sponsor, Rep David G. Reichert (R-WA) — who chairs the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology — says his legislation is designed “to improve the ability of emergency responders to communicate with each other” — interoperability.

“Until the events of September 11, 2001, many people in this nation believed and assumed that first responders from different disciplines and jurisdictions could actually talk to each other,” Reichert — a former police officer — told the House in support of his bill. “It wasn’t happening. It is still not happening today. Unfortunately, that was not the case then, and, as demonstrated by the inadequate responses to Hurricane Katrina, that is not the case today.”

Reichert told his colleagues that the inability of first responders to communicate with each another effectively led to the loss of many lives along the US Gulf Coast last year.

Ecomm Bill cont'd pg. 2

ARES Activities

Weekly Net Monday 7 PM 146.535 mhz (s)
Breakfast Saturday August 12th

SELECTED TRAFFIC NETS

Designator	Freq.	Local Times	
MN Phone	3.860Mhz	Noon, 5:30pm	Daily
MN CW	3.605Mhz	6:30pm, 9:50pm	Daily
ARES			
Scott ARES	146.535 S	7:00pm	Monday
Carver ARES	147.165+	8:30pm	Sunday
Neighboring Nets			
North Dakota	3.937Mhz	6:30pm	Daily
South Dakota	3.870Mhz	6:00pm	Daily
Wisconsin	3.985Mhz	5:30pm	Daily

Emergency Communications Bill

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“This is simply unacceptable,” he said.

His measure also would require the DHS to strengthen its efforts to improve emergency communications. HR 5852 calls for Amateur Radio operators to be part of a “Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group” (RECC Working Group) that would be attached to each regional Department of Homeland Security office. The RECC Working Groups would advise federal and state homeland security officials.

In addition to radio amateurs, membership in the RECC Working Groups would include state and local officials; law enforcement, first responders such as fire departments; 911 centers; hospitals; ambulance services; communications equipment vendors, telephone, wireless satellite, broadband and cable service providers; public utilities; broadcasters; emergency evacuation transit services; state emergency managers, homeland security directors or representatives of state administrative agencies; local emergency managers or homeland security directors, and “other emergency response providers or emergency support providers as deemed appropriate.”

Federal government representatives to the RECC Working Groups would include representatives from the DHS “and other federal departments and agencies with responsibility for coordinating interoperable emergency communications” with state, local, and tribal governments.

According to the bill, the RECC Working Groups would function to assess the survivability, sustainability, and interoperability of local emergency communications systems to meet the goals of the National Emergency Communications Report. That report would recommend how the US could “accelerate the deployment of interoperable emergency communications nationwide.”

The RECC Working Groups also would be tasked with ensuring a process to coordinate the establishment of “effective multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency emergency communications networks” that could be brought into play following acts of terrorism, natural disasters and other emergencies.

HR 5852 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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Hams Invited To Aid Wildlife Researchers

Wildlife researchers are asking radio amateurs and VHF monitoring enthusiasts to help listen for radio tag signals from migrating birds. A non-profit organization in New Mexico wants to find the wintering grounds of the burrowing owl, which summers in the grasslands of Kirtland Air Force Base.

“Twenty-eight of the birds have been fitted with pulsing radio-tags near 172 MHz, and attempts will be made to track them by aircraft to see if they go east toward Texas, west to California, or south to Mexico,” says ARRL Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) Coordinator Joe Moell, K0OV. “It’s likely that aircraft will lose contact with most of the owls, so volunteers throughout southwestern states and northern Mexico are being asked to listen for them.” Moell said July 25 that the birds “will start moving any day now.”

Meanwhile, researchers at two Toronto universities are radio-tagging 20 young purple martins at a breeding colony in Edinboro, Pennsylvania.

“These beautiful birds are expected to start flying south in mid-August, probably to winter grounds in South America,” Moell says. “Hams in southern states from Texas through Florida are asked to be listening and possibly detect the flyovers.”

He says those living in the migration zones and can receive 172 MHz signals can help. “If you have radio-direction finding equipment for VHF, so much the better,” he adds.

Moell’s “Homing In” Web site <<http://www.homingin.com>> has much more information on these projects. The site includes frequencies and equipment suggestions as well as a descriptions of the unique characteristics of wildlife tags to help listeners distinguish them from other signals they may encounter at 172 MHz. The site also tells how to join the BIOTRACKERS mailing list for the latest updates and discussions of wildlife-tracking topics.



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FBI's "Infragard" Program Courts Amateur Radio As Ally

Amateur Radio's value as one component in a cooperative effort to protect critical national infrastructure was the focus of an InfraGard "Communications Interoperability and Ham Radios" summit held in July in New York City. An FBI program, InfraGard is dedicated to promoting dialogue between the private sector and the federal investigative agency "concerning critical infrastructure protection issues." ARRL Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH, and Affiliated Clubs/Mentor Program Manager Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, represented League Headquarters at the gathering, which featured a range of speakers.

Hobart says Amateur Radio came up on InfraGard's



radar earlier this year and got the nonprofit organization thinking of Amateur Radio as a possible partner, ally and service provider in emergencies. New York Metro InfraGard put together the one-day session July 17 at Cisco Systems' New York office as a way to get more familiar with Amateur Radio.

"They understand that ham radio has 'been there' in terms of emergencies and disasters and is working to improve its ability to respond," Hobart said. She said New York Metro InfraGard President Joe Concannon "expressed his deep interest in Amateur Radio as a partner and a desire to learn more about our capabilities."

"This InfraGard meeting brought together a group of people who care about post-disaster communication preparedness, and a majority of the people in attendance were active members of the Amateur Radio community," Jeff Pulver, WA2BOT, chairman and founder of pulvermedia.com and cofounder of Vonage, observed later in a blog entry. "This was my first time in the post-VoIP era that I had a chance to talk to hams about my early experiences with VoIP and how my ham radio background has had a positive effect on the past 12 years of my life."

Pulver said the InfraGard meeting provided "a great audience to speak to, since we shared a common passion for communications and common ground on a number of topics." He said that includes the need for coordination between the ham radio community and fellow communication enthusiasts "who want to volunteer their time the next time disaster strikes."

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Portable Operating Tips:

How To String A Dipole In A Tree

Contributed by A. Nony Moose

One important part of field expedient operations is being able to quickly install an antenna for HF operations. Wire dipole's are compact, yet efficient. It is important to get the antenna as high as possible. A method commonly employed by many groups during Field Day is to use a bow and arrow to position the support lines in a tree. These are tied to the ends of the dipole, which is then raised into position.

Here are instructions on the proper method.

1. Find a clearing with two tall trees, one on either side of the area.
2. Check area behind tree to be sure no one is there.
3. Aim arrow toward top of one tree and shoot.
4. Can't find lost arrow, get spare and decide to tie leader line to the arrow.
5. Aim arrow toward top of one tree and shoot.
6. Retrieve arrow from ground in front of you, take foot off of leader line.
7. Aim arrow toward top of one tree and shoot.
8. Find arrow hanging in tree about two feet above your outstretched hand.
9. Jump to reach arrow, land on rock.
10. Wrap ace bandage around sprained ankle.
11. Walk in woods to find a stick to reach arrow.
12. Treat poison ivy.
13. Reach up with bow to snag arrow, pull gently.
14. Find heavier string to replace broken leader line.
15. Go to step 2.

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Infragard *cont'd from col 1*

Allan Manuel, an attorney in the FCC Public Safety and Homeland Security Branch, indicated the Commission is willing to be more flexible in accommodating Amateur Radio during emergencies and disasters.

For their part, Hobart and Fusaro demonstrated the League's "Ham Aid" go kits of Amateur Radio gear that can be rapidly deployed to disaster areas where the Amateur Radio infrastructure has been lost or compromised. They also provided attendees with copies of the ARRL's Community Education Program brochures and materials.

Hobart says Concannon envisions a model in New York City that other InfraGard chapters across the country could emulate. "I think it's an opportunity for Amateur Radio to align itself with a high-profile group with key federal connections," she said.

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Two New DX Countries on the Air

The United Nations admitted the Republic of Montenegro as its 192nd member on June 28, automatically making Montenegro the 336th current DXCC entity. Montenegro declared its independence on June 3 following a national referendum May 21.

There are fewer than 100 native radio amateurs in Montenegro. The International Telecommunication Union has not yet assigned a distinctive call sign block to the new country, although current Montenegrin radio amateurs have been using their YU/YT/YZ/4O-prefix call signs.

Radio amateurs and equipment from all over Europe and from a few countries outside the continent converged the following week on Montenegro — the newest DXCC entity — for the Montenegro International DX Festival. The event kicked off at noon on Thursday, July 20, with a salute to Montenegrin hams, the Amateur Radio Association of Montenegro and the country's telecoms authority and military.

The three-week Amateur Radio event is aimed at putting the tiny, new Balkan nation on the DX map in a big way. Seven stations identifying as 4O3T will be on the air from various locations. Nineteen-year old Nikola Ilic, YZ6AMD, made the first 4O3T QSO to start the festival, working DF3IU.

During the formalities, Montenegro Amateur Radio Union President Veso Babic, YU6A, and event organizer Ranko Boca, YT6A, welcomed all visitors to Montenegro. International Amateur Radio Union representative Hans Blondeel Timmerman, PB2T, promised to help Montenegro become an IARU member-society. Babic also reminded those on hand of Amateur Radio's valuable emergency communication effort following an earthquake in 1979.

A recent addition to the DXCC rules has led to the designation of Swain's Island (KH8) as the 337th DXCC entity. A brief inaugural DXpedition operating under the call sign KH8SI was to get under way in late July. The new language in the DXCC rules effectively reclassified American Samoa as a political entity for DXCC purposes. Subsequently, the DX Advisory Committee and the Awards Committee concurred with a request, accompanied by substantiating evidence, and added Swain's Island to the DXCC List as the first "separation entity" from American Samoa. Contacts made with Swain's Island on or after 0001 UTC on July 22, 2006, will count for DXCC credit.

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RED FRIDAYS

By: A. Nony Moose

(Ed. Note: A. N. Moose is our itinerant correspondent who occasionally submits email dispatches for our publication)

Very soon, you will see a great many people wearing Red every Friday. The reason? Americans who support our troops used to be called the "silent majority" We are no longer silent, and are voicing our love for God, country and home in record breaking numbers. We are not organized, boisterous or over-bearing. We get no liberal media coverage on TV, to reflect our message or our opinions.

Many Americans, like you, me and all our friends, simply want to recognize that the vast majority of America supports our troops.

Our idea of showing solidarity and support for our troops with dignity and respect starts this Friday -and continues each and every Friday until the troops all come home, sending a deafening message that every red-blooded American who supports our men and women afar will wear something red.

By word of mouth, press, TV — let's make the United States on every Friday a sea of red much like a homecoming football game in the bleachers.

If every one of us who loves this country will share this with acquaintances, co-workers, friends, and family. It will not be long before the USA is covered in RED and it will let our troops know the once "silent" majority is on their side more than ever, certainly more than the media lets on.

The first thing a soldier says when asked "What can we do to make things better for you?" is...We need your support and your prayers.

Let's get the word out and lead with class and dignity, by example; and wear something red every Friday.

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WTC DISASTER COMMEMORATIVE STATION OPERATION SEPT 11, 2006

"W2IK/WTC911" will once again be in operation to commemorate the World Trade Center Disaster. The W2IK callsign was the first signal to emanate from "Ground Zero" on September 11, 2001, it is only fitting that this callsign be used for this commemorative station.

"W2IK/WTC911" will be in operation beginning 9 AM EST and operating until 11 PM EST and can be found on the upper sections of 15, 20 and 40 meters, all SSB. A special color QSL certificate will be mailed to each station making a contact that sends a LARGE SASE with their QSL card to the QRZ address of W2IK.

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National Incident Management System

FEMA IS-700 Basics

Across

4. An Area Command organization does not include a / an _____ Section.
6. _____ is used more than one agency has responsibility for the response, such as in a hazardous material spill.
7. The ICS is a proven incident management system that is based on organizational _____.
9. Resource typing involves categorizing resources based on _____.
10. A plan based on lessons learned from actual incidents is a / an _____ plan.

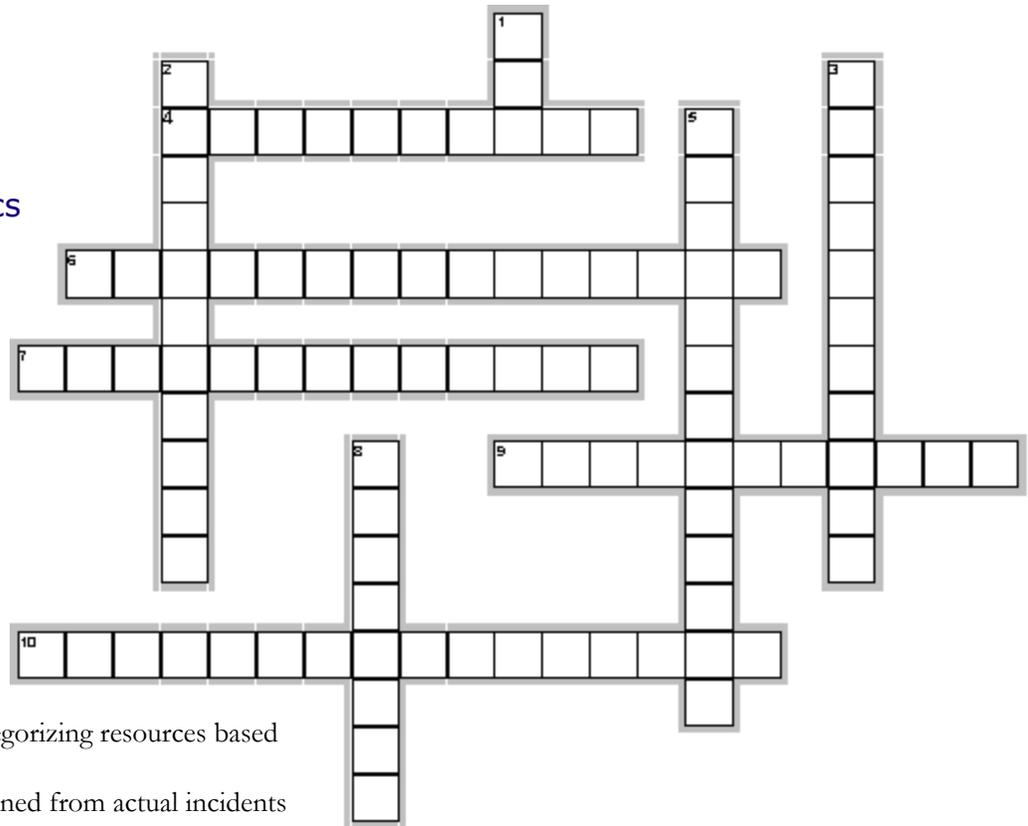
Down

1. Incident Action Plans depend on _____ to accomplish response tactics.
2. NIMS standards for communications and information management are based on the principle that a common operating picture is required to ensure _____ among responders.

Prowords Puzzle Solution July Crossword

Across

4. FORMAL—Type of net strictly controlled by a NECOS.
6. BREAK—Indicates a separation between address and text; between text and signature in formal traffic.
8. OUT—Used to indicate you have concluded your communications and no response is needed.
9. ROGER—Indicates that a transmission has been received correctly and in full.
10. ISPELL—Indicates to the receiving station that the following word will be transmitted phonetically one character at a time.
12. DIRECTED—Type of communications network STRICTLY controlled by the NECOS following established procedures to accurately and rapidly move information for our served agency.



3. _____ is often used in public health emergencies that are not site specific.
5. Supervision of three to seven individuals illustrates the _____ concept.
8. NIMS provides a _____ framework that applies to all phases of incident management.



Down

1. OVER—Used to let a specific station know to respond.
2. PROWORDS—Verbal signals used in a directed net to promote accurate, rapid communications.
3. WAIT—Acknowledge a station and let them know there will be a delay.
4. FIGURES—Indicates to the receiving station that a group of numerals follows.
5. TACTICAL—Callsigns that identify the station's location or its purpose during an event, regardless of who is operating the station.
7. NECOS—The station in charge of the net and directing the flow of messages and general communications.
11. LID—An operator who disregards or ignores net procedures.
13. ITU—Phonetic alphabet used in ALL emergency communications.

Required Training for Emergency Communications Volunteers

The subject of additional emergency training for volunteers was addressed recently in a statement from the Dept. of Homeland Security. Volunteers who expect to gain entry to disaster areas to provide communications support must complete FEMA on-line courses IS-100, IS-200, and IS-700.

The courses are available on-line from the FEMA Emergency Management Institute website at <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/crslist.asp>. As you scroll down the list of courses offered, you will come to IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System. When you click on the link for the course you will be taken to a page that gives you a description of the course and lists any prerequisites needed.

You will see several options located at the bottom of the page. One option available is **Printable version - Student Manual** and **Download Final Exam Questions**. Now would be a good time to download and print the final exam questions. Following the **Printable version - Student Manual** link will present you with a menu of the eight units which you are able to download as a PDF file. You can also download the entire course in one large file using a selection at the bottom of the page. If you are comfortable studying from the screen you can view the unit PDFs or easily print a hard copy, if you are 'printed page handi-capped like your editor!

Keep the Final Exam questions handy as you read through the course material, researching the questions as you move along. (Your intrepid editor took three to four hours working through the first on-line FEMA course.) When you finish studying the material, go back to the IS-100 website and take the final exam listed at the bottom of the page. This step consists of transferring your answers from the printed questions you researched to the on-line answer sheet.

When you have filled out all the on-line information all you have to do is watch the email in-box. You should see an email message announcing the course completion within about two days. Within a week or two you will receive a certificate, in the snail-mail box, from FEMA certifying that you have completed the course.

That's all there is to it! The whole process is a lot more complicated to describe than to implement so let's get going!

BREAK - OVER

Quick Training Tips

NECOS

Net Control Station Fundamentals

Think of the Net Control Station, NECOS, as a "ring-master" or "traffic cop." The NECOS decides what happens in the net, and when. He decides when stations will check in, with or without traffic, and whether messages will be passed on the net frequency or an alternate frequency. The NECOS needs to be aware of everything going on around him and handle the needs of the net, its members, and served agency as quickly and efficiently as possible. It can be a daunting task in a busy and challenging net.

In order to maintain an efficient net the NECOS relies on two important tools; the net script, and net participants trained in emergency communications procedures.

The net script provides consistency to the net regardless of the particular station serving as NECOS. This consistency makes it easier for the stations participating in the net to go about their business of moving information from one place to another.

The NECOS directs the communications activity on the net as the traffic cop keeps traffic moving and accidents to a minimum. The NECOS also is responsible for correcting lapses in net operating procedure to keep the net moving along. One difference between the NECOS and traffic cop is that the violation of procedure won't cost you a fine or a trip to court!

Being a good NECOS takes some thought and practice but the skills can be learned easily. Our weekly ARES net is a good place to hone those skills.

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ARES Breakfast

Saturday August 12th
7:30AM
Perkins Restaurant
Savage, MN



NECOS Schedule - August 2006

7 Aug	W0NFE Bob
14 Aug	KB0FH Bob
21 Aug	AB0YQ Steve
28 Aug	K0KTW Pat
4 Sep	N0PI Dan
11 Sep	W0NFE Bob