



ARES COMMUNICATOR

Information for Scott County Amateurs



August, 2007

Accurate, Reliable Emergency Communications

Volume 7, Number 8

FCC Releases Post-Katrina Order, "Final Rule"

On July 11, the FCC released their order regarding the recommendations of the independent panel reviewing the impact of Hurricane Katrina on communications networks (the Katrina Panel). It contained their conclusions following a review of the comments filed in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). The Commission asked for comments a week after the release of the report and recommendations of the Katrina Panel and directed the Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) to implement several of the recommendations. The FCC also adopted rules requiring some communications providers to have emergency/back-up power and to conduct analyses and submit reports on the redundancy and resiliency of their 911 and E911 networks. The FCC's actions are to go into effect August 10.

The Commission noted that "the amateur radio community played an important role in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and other disasters," and instructed the PSHSB to "include the amateur radio community in its outreach efforts."

The FCC invited comments on the Katrina Panel's recommendation that the FCC "act to enhance the public safety community's awareness of non-traditional emergency alternative technologies that might be of value as back-up communications systems in a crisis." Several commenters suggested that the public safety community be educated about the applicability of Amateur Radio in a crisis. The FCC agreed with these comments, saying that improving the public safety community's knowledge of, and training in, alternative technologies would improve preparedness for future crises. They directed the PSHSB to "develop and

Post-Katrina Order *cont'd page 2*

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Reader submissions encouraged!

Background Checks, Again ARRL BoD Update

The ARRL Board of Directors took action on the issue of background checks at its second meeting of 2007, held July 20-21 in Windsor, Connecticut.

A major concern at this Board meeting was the topic of served agencies and background investigations. The Ad Hoc Background Investigation Committee agreed that pursuing federally recognized credentialing for Amateur Radio volunteers was critical for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) to function. The Committee chairman, ARRL Atlantic Division Director Bill Edgar, N3LLR, proposed that the Board adopt a policy with regard to Memoranda of Understanding with the various served agencies.

The Board adopted a policy that "communications volunteers participating in ARRL-sponsored programs should not be required by served agencies to undergo background investigations of any kind," but notes that criminal background checks—performed by law enforcement agencies—are "generally acceptable." The policy continues, "It is not reasonable for a served agency to require these volunteers to

Background Checks *cont'd pg.3*

ARES Activities

**Weekly Net Monday 7 PM 146.535 mhz (s)
Breakfast Saturday, August 11th**

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
Bloomington	147.090+	9:00pm	Sunday
Neighboring Nets			
North Dakota	3.937Mhz	6:30pm	Daily
South Dakota	3.870Mhz	6:00pm	Daily
Wisconsin	3.985Mhz	5:30pm	Daily

Post-Katrina Order *cont'd from pg. 1*

implement an awareness program to educate public safety agencies about alternative technologies and to encourage agencies to provide regular training on any alternative technologies to be used," including educating public safety agencies about alternative technologies.

The recommendations said that several Amateur Radio operators recommended changes to Part 97 of the FCC's rules; Part 97 is the section that covers Amateur Radio. Many of the suggestions, the report said, have already been implemented, and as such, require no further action. For example, "the Commission recently eliminated Morse Code proficiency as a license qualification requirement, an action supported by several commenters in this proceeding."

The FCC once again made clear that Part 97 "does not prohibit Amateur Radio operators who are emergency personnel engaged in disaster relief from using their amateur radio bands while in a paid duty status." This changed this past December in WT Docket 04-140, the "Omnibus" Amateur Radio Report and Order (R&O).

The Commission also previously decided to phase out RACES station licenses, "making proposed changes to rules relevant to these licenses moot." ARRL Regulatory Information Specialist Dan Henderson, N1ND, notes that the FCC "is not phasing out the RACES program, just the RACES station licenses." (From The ARRL Letter)

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Test Your ICS Knowledge

This month we will take a look at some of the concepts from the IS-100 course, Introduction to Incident Command System. This is the first of the FEMA courses all ARES members must complete before participating in any response activities. You can find the course materials at this site: <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is100.asp>. Now, test you knowledge of the ICS.

The ability to communicate within ICS is absolutely critical. To ensure efficient, clear communication, ICS requires the use of:

- A. Agency-specific codes.
- B. Common terminology.
- C. Radio codes.
- D. Technical language.

There is no correlation between the ICS organization and the administrative structure of any single agency or jurisdiction. This is deliberate because:

- A. Every incident or event requires that different management functions be performed.
- B. On small incidents and events, one person, the Incident Commander, may accomplish all five management functions.
- C. In ICS, the person at the top of the organization can act with less political pressure,
- D. Confusion over different position titles and organizational structures has been a significant stumbling block to effective incident management in the past.

Check next month's ARES Communicator for the solution



Answers for the July ICS Quiz

Depending upon the size and type of incident or event, it may be necessary for the Incident Commander to designate personnel to provide public information, safety, and liaison services for the entire organization. In ICS, these personnel make up the:

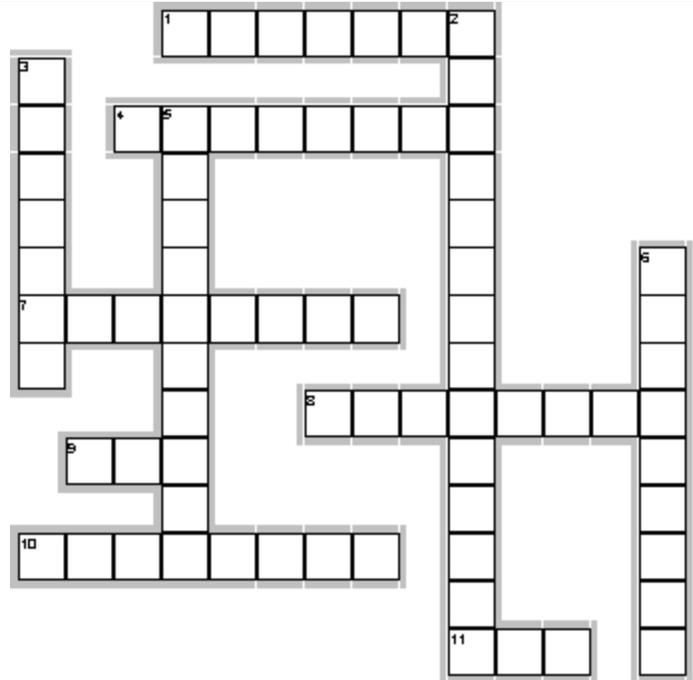
C. Command Staff.

Every incident must have a verbal or written Incident Action Plan. The purpose of this plan is to provide all incident supervisory personnel with direction for:

A. Taking actions based on the objectives identified in the plan during the operational period.

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Numbered Radiograms



Across

1. ARL TWENTY FIVE Furnish as soon as possible the _____ conditions at your location.
4. ARL TWENTY Temporarily _____. Will need some assistance.
7. ARL FOURTEEN Situation here becoming _____. Losses and damage from flood increasing.
8. ARL _____ Medical emergency situation exits here.
9. ARL _____ Coming home as soon as possible.
10. ARL ONE _____ safe here. Please don't worry.
11. ARL _____ Will contact you as soon as possible.

Down

2. ARL NINE Additional four _____ needed to assist with emergency at this location.

3. ARL EIGHTEEN Please _____ me as soon as possible
5. ARL _____ Evacuation of residents from this area urgently needed. Advise plans for help.
6. ARL _____ Help and care for evacuation of sick and injured from this location needed at once.



July Crossword Solution

Across

2. LIGHT—Radio waves travel at the speed of _____?
3. APRS—Communications mode utilizing automated position reporting.
5. FILTER—Used to reduce spurious emissions.
6. GRID—_____ locator is a four digit designator assigned to a geographic location.
9. FCC—The government agency that grants your amateur radio license?
10. TENMINUTES—You must identify your transmission with your FCC callsign every _____?
11. OVERLOAD—Interference caused by very strong signals from a nearby source.
12. AMSAT—The group that coordinates the building and or launch of the largest number of amateur radio satellites.
13. NOISEBLANKER—might reduce the effect of ignition noise on a received signal.

Down

1. PHONE—Voice transmissions by radio.

3. AUDIOFEEDBACK—_____ is caused by placing the microphone and speaker too close to each other.
4. SIXMETER—_____ band includes the frequency 52.525 mHz.
7. VOLTMETER—Used to measure electromotive force between two points such as the poles of a battery.
8. LINKED—A series of repeaters that can be connected together to provide users with wider coverage. BREAK - OVER

Background Checks *cont'd from pg. 1*

consent to credit checks, mode of living investigations or investigative consumer reports. In negotiating or renegotiating Memoranda of Understanding that commit the League to provide volunteer emergency communications support, the League must be assured that these volunteers will not be required by the partner organization to consent to credit checks, mode of living investigations or investigative consumer reports.”

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Duty - Honor - Country

Douglas MacArthur

(This is an excerpt from a talk given by General and Brother Douglas A. MacArthur at West Point on May 12, 1962 he received Sylvanus Thayer Medal, which the highest honor is awarded by the United States Military Academy.)

Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be. They are your rallying points; to build courage when courage seems to fail; to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith; to create hope when hope becomes forlorn. Unhappily, I possess neither that eloquence of diction, that poetry of imagination, nor that brilliance of metaphor to tell you all that they mean. The unbelievers will say they are but words, but a slogan, but a flamboyant phrase. Every pedant, every demagogue, every cynic, every hypocrite, every troublemaker, and, I am sorry to say, some others of an entirely different character, will try to downgrade them even to the extent of mockery and ridicule.

But these are some of the things they do. They build your basic character; they mold you for your future roles as custodians of the nation's defense; they make you strong enough to know when you are weak, and brave enough to face yourself when you are afraid. They teach you to be proud and unbending in honest failure, but humble and gentle in success, not to substitute words for actions, not to seek paths of comfort, but to face the stress and spur of difficulty and challenge; to learn to stand up in the storm but to have compassion on those who fail; to master yourself before you seek to master others; to have a heart that is clean, a goal that is high; to learn to laugh yet never forget how to weep; to reach into the future yet never neglect the past; to be serious yet never to take yourself too seriously; to be modest so that you will remember the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom, the meekness of true strength. They give you a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions, a freshness of the deep springs of life, a temperamental predominance of



General Douglas Mac Arthur
US Army

courage over timidity, an appetite for adventure over love of ease. They create in your heart the sense of wonder, the unflinching hope of what next, and the joy and inspiration of life. They teach you in this way to be an officer and a gentleman.

The code which those words perpetrate embraces the highest moral laws and will stand the test of any ethics or philosophies ever promulgated for the uplift of mankind. Its requirements are for the things that are right, and its restraints are from the things that are wrong. The soldier, above all other men, is required to practice the greatest act of religious training—sacrifice. In battle and in the face of danger and death, he discloses those divine attributes which his Maker gave when He created man in His image. No physical courage and no brute instinct can take the place of the Divine help which alone can sustain him. However horrible the incidents or war may be, the soldier who is called upon to offer and to give his life for his country is the noblest development of mankind.

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Simple 2M Antenna

Probably the most basic antenna for 2M is a standard SO-239 chassis mount coax connector with five pieces of 12-14AWG solid house wire soldered to the connector. Strip off the insulation, solder the wires, then form 1/2" loops in the ends of the wire and cut off any excess so the wires are 19.5" long. (The loops are to protect your eyes from the sharp ends.)

The four radials bend down at 45 degrees and that should give a near perfect SWR across the whole 2M band with 440 thrown in for free.

The antenna can be hung from a tree with string or have the coax connector taped or tie-wrapped to the top of a light duty mast as above. Mini RG-8X would be the coax cable of choice for this light duty emergency antenna.

When you are done for the day just fold all the elements together until it fits in a pouch in your Jump Kit. They will easily straighten out again the next time you need it. This antenna is easy to build and requires no tuning other than measuring and drooping the radials about 45 degrees. The secret is in the droop because that matches the antenna to your coax. If the elements went straight out the SWR would be at least 2:1. But with the 45 degree droop, the SWR is very low across the whole 2M band.

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Quick Training Tips

I Was Going To . . .

We have been lucky so far this summer in that there have been very few severe weather alerts and even fewer SKYWARN activations. This may be bad news for emergency communications preparedness. This lack of activity ultimately leads to a bad case of “I was going to-itis”.

During periods of inactivity we often neglect the routine maintenance items that take care of themselves during normal seasons. Like what? Let’s suppose you suddenly hear the news about a tornado warning, grab your HT and head for your favorite spotting location. You turn on the HT and monitor the SKIWARN net for twenty minutes or so while watching the sky to the west-northwest. Yup, that lowered cloud base is sporting some rotation. You squeeze the HT to report and you see the display is blank.

The phone rings and you are informed that the ARES group is being activated in support of the Red Cross. You are assigned to go to the High School and establish communications for a shelter being opened as you speak. You grab your jumpkit and then come to a stop. Hmm, did I put that coax back after I used it on field day? What about that twinlead j-pole I used when we went camping this spring? Did I put it back? A quick check, a short search and everything is back in the bag.

You head out the door and realize your wife took the vehicle with your dual-band rig and went shopping! You look at the other vehicle and see that someone took the mag-mount off again. Fortunately, you spy it hiding over in the corner of the garage and grab it on the run and plop it on the roof.

As you slide behind the wheel you ask yourself, “I wonder if I have the cigarette power cord for the HT?” “Do I have the SMA to BNC adapter?” What about the ?

See how a bad case of “I Was Going to-itis” can sneak up on you? As Barney Phife used to say, “Andy, we have to nip it! Nip it right in the bud!”

Now is a great time to do a little mid-season preventive maintenance on your jumpkit.

Turn your HT on and monitor a local repeater or tune in a radio station on the general coverage models. See just how long the battery pack will monitor before going dead.

Check the “systems” in your jumpkit. What do I mean by systems? Let’s start with power. Do you have the ability to power your equipment from a variety of sources? The minimum options include; direct from a car battery, the auto power port or cigarette lighter, a dedicated power

connection in you vehicle(s), back-up battery pack. Better check for those spare fuses too.

How about the antenna systems? Do you have at least a twin-lead J-pole in the jumpkit? Have you checked the SWR on it lately? Do you have some extra coax in the kit? Have you actually tested it under power to make sure the connectors are good? What about the adapters needed to connect all of your rigs to any of the antennas? SMAs, BNCs, PL259s, can you interconnect them all?

What about the Xcvr system? Are the rigs programmed with the local emergency frequencies? Have you tested them to make sure any repeater PL tones are correct? Have you tested the crossband function lately? (Can you remember how to program the function on more than one radio?)

Here’s a system I bet many forget. How about the administrative system in the jumpkit? Do you have your; ARES Operating Aids, instruction manuals, or copies of important sections, identification cards – Skywarn, ARES ID, and amateur license, a local street map, a list of local emergency contacts, spare pencils, pens, paper, etc? How about \$20 to \$40 in cash – bills and coin, just in case you get hungry or need gas or batteries!

Now is the time to make that quick check so that you are ready to go when the call comes. You don’t want to be standing there with a long face muttering, “I was going to “

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ARES Breakfast

Saturday August 11th
7:30AM
Perkins Restaurant
Savage, MN

NECOS Schedule - August, 2007

6 Aug	WONFE Bob
13 Aug	KB0FH Bob
20 Aug	K0KTW Pat
27 Aug	N0PI Dan
3 Sep	WONFE Bob
10 Sep	KB0FH Bob