



ARES COMMUNICATOR

Information for Scott County Amateurs



July, 2006

Accurate, Reliable Emergency Communications

Volume 6, Number 7

“Getting Ready for Disaster” New DVD from FEMA

The Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has released a new citizen preparedness DVD titled, “Getting Ready For Disaster- One Family’s Experience” is ready for distribution to help people get ready for those natural and man-made disasters that may impact their families and their communities.

The DVD guides viewers through important steps of disaster preparedness and brings into focus issues such as drafting a family disaster plan, stockpiling food and water; helping children cope with disasters and preparedness for special populations such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

“Being prepared for disasters is everyone’s responsibility,” said FEMA’s Acting Director, R. David Paulison. The DVD follows FEMA’s all hazards approach to disaster preparedness. The content is based on the most reliable hazard awareness and emergency education information, such as the latest scientific knowledge and physical research on what happens in disasters.

The DVD’s story surrounds a 12 year-old boy, whose school assignment challenges him to learn about disasters and emergencies. He is instructed to develop a disaster plan and a disaster supplies kit for his family with his family’s help. As a result of following the easy steps to preparedness, the youngster and his family 1) get prepared together, 2) manage to help others as they get prepared, and 3) decide to volunteer so that they can help even more of their neighbors get prepared.

The DVD is designated # “FEMA 500” and is now available at the FEMA Distribution Center by calling 1-800-480-2520.

BREAK - OVER

Katrina Panel Recognizes Hams’ Contributions

The role of amateur radio operators in the response to Hurricane Katrina was recognized by the Federal Communications Commission’s “Independent Panel Reviewing the Impact of Hurricane Katrina on Communications Networks.” The panel’s final report to the Commission on June 12, included a paragraph on the Amateur Radio Service, which stated:

“Amateur Radio Service. As with other communications services, amateur radio stations were also adversely affected by Katrina. Equipment was damaged or lost due to the storm and trained amateurs were difficult to find in the immediate aftermath. However, once called into help, amateur radio operators volunteered to support many agencies, such as FEMA, the National Weather Service, Hurricane Watch and the American Red Cross. Amateurs provided wireless communications in many locations where there was no other means of communicating and also provided other technical aid to the communities affected by Katrina.”

Among the panel’s many recommendations was one that, in a disaster, any restrictive amateur radio rules be waived in order to permit any “transmissions necessary to meet essential communications needs.”

BREAK - OVER

ARES Activities

**Weekly Net Monday 7 PM 146.535 mhz (s)
Breakfast Saturday July 8th**

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

The ARES COMMUNICATOR is published for the benefit of Amateur Radio Operators in Scott County and other interested individuals.

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Reader submissions encouraged!

THE NATURE OF DISASTERS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR AMATEUR RADIO Part Three

By Tom Cox VE6TOX

(Editor's Note: This is the last of a three part series covering a presentation to the Communications Academy 2006, April 1, 2006, Burien WA)

NATURE OF AMATEUR RADIO

Amateur Radio has a nature that makes it extremely useful in disasters. It also has a nature that makes it extremely un-useful in disasters.

Nobody knows what Amateur Radio is or does.

When communications fail, Amateur Radio comes on.

Amateur Radio never has to physically converge - if you have one ham "on the inside" everyone else can monitor and stay out of the way until needed.

Amateur Radio is dispersed, which helps with the damage assessment and defining the exact boundaries or scope of a disaster.

Amateur Radio is less likely to be forced off the air because it has equipment redundancy (every ham seems to have 10 radios), alternate power supplies and is willing to take as many car batteries as required to keep communications going.

Amateur Radio is not tied to the specific locations, agencies, types of disaster and can be flexibly used for multiple types of disaster.

Amateur Radio is a scarce resource - despite having thousands of hams, many are too old to respond, many are physically unfit to respond, many only want to do CW or contesting or DXing and have never participated in any emergency training. If you expect 100 hams, you will get 10.

Amateur Radio is one of the worst at giving situation reports despite the fact that everyone can hear them and would be informed.

Amateur Radio doesn't make itself user-friendly - nobody knows who you can talk to, how to use an NTS form, or where you are to use you.

Messages sent by Amateur Radio have a much lower chance of getting responded to. This is because there may be no answer available, the message got to the wrong person, the person who got the message has much higher priorities, because the message is tied up in the Amateur Radio paperwork pile or because the sending and receiving operators never followed up to see why an answer hadn't come through. The end result is that people are appreciative of any messages that do get responded to but the majority of messages never get an answer.

IMPLICATIONS FOR AMATEUR RADIO

If Incident Command is the best management system in the world, use it to structure your Amateur Radio response.

Don't wait to be called. Even if you are told not to respond, you can still prepare your group and monitor the situation. It is better to ramp up fast and then stand down rather than to wait until being called and working from a catch-up position. [Every post disaster lessons learned review includes emergency services saying they should have ramped up earlier, instead of trying to play catch up.]

Send one person to the EOC or calling agency. This requires you to have a working relationship with the government and served agencies. If they tell you they will call you only if they need you, it is time to do a presentation on "If all communications have failed, why do you suddenly think you will be able to contact Amateur Radio?"

Amateur Radio is a scarce resource. You will not be able to cover all locations requiring communications.

Avoid being sent to useless locations - use your expertise to make suggestions on where amateur communications can be of greatest use.

If the disaster is widespread and Amateur Radio is dispersed, use Amateur Radio to assemble a systematic and thorough report on what areas are affected.

Look for black holes. Areas with no amateur to give a good or bad damage assessment must be ruled out by having someone take a look. If the area is not affected, the emergency services need to know. If it has been devastated, the emergency services need to know.

If the disaster is widespread and Amateur Radio is dispersed, expect that Amateur Radio will be unable to move easily due to blocked roads, traffic congestion or damaged bridges.

Just like the emergency services may be equally affected as the general population, so will Amateur Radio. Repeaters may be working or out-of-service. Be prepared to use both simplex and repeater and not train on just one or the other.

People will insist on using phones and phones will be a huge priority for the response - the faster the phone system is repaired, the faster the response will be able to work. Anyone who has taken the time to compile a list of cell

Nature of Disasters *cont'd from pg. 2*

phone numbers for key people will become the stars of emergency communications.

When phones come back on, start to stand your members down rather than burning them out.

Use your system to give constant and regular situation reports. In the absence of official reports, talk only about your Amateur Radio response.

Don't expect people to know who you can talk to or how to send messages. You are going to have to put up big signs that are welcoming, let people know who you can talk to (where are your stations?) and help them through the messaging process.

Spend as much time as possible following up on messages and trying to close the loop.

Get into digital communications. The more you can do here, the more useful you will be in a disaster. If volumes of traffic are an issue for all disaster response, then voice messaging no longer cuts it. [An average of just 6 NTS type messages can be sent each hour by voice.]

STRUCTURING YOUR RESPONSE

Use a formal and complete Incident Command response including; organization, objectives, terminology and operational periods. [Use it to manage the Amateur Radio response outside of the incident area. Within the incident area, you fall under the existing Incident Command.]

Have a set of Standard Operating Procedures to help each person [in the ICS structure] to do their job.

Send regular situation reports over the air and post them on the internet as well. Assign one person to ensure the nets get the latest and read the latest situation reports on the air - a minimum once an hour on operations frequencies and once every 15 minutes on check-in frequencies.

On an individual basis, make a cup of coffee. [This gives you time to mentally get prepared to go.]

Grab & Go bags should be one bag for personal gear (waterproof) and one for a single station set-up. If one person can't carry it, it is too much

Use spares. It is a requirement of Incident Command and gives huge operational flexibility to your group. Spares give you flexibility. Who takes over if you cannot?

Station spares at the hospitals first. If the hospitals can be ruled out because this is not a mass-casualty incident, then look for unusual locations. [The peak of hospital use is post-disaster.]

Reception centers may not be used or may have enough phones depending on the nature of the emergency. Don't tie yourself up there if you aren't needed.

Inform surrounding clubs. Don't be an example of why

Pentagon Memorial



Washington, D.C. (June 15, 2006) - Flowers are placed at the original stone of the Pentagon, during a groundbreaking ceremony for the Pentagon Memorial. The stone was returned following the rebuilding of the site where terrorists struck on Sept. 11, 2001. The Pentagon Memorial will commemorate the 184 people, who lost their lives in the Pentagon and on board American Airlines Flight 77. U.S. Department of Defense photo by Helene C. Stikkel



Amateur Radio operators are often the worst communicators. [Notify them early in your response.]

Omit things from your Incident Command System and Standard Operating Procedures by conscious and methodical intent rather than simply forgetting to do it. If you don't need a safety officer, don't assign one, but don't forget it!

Use non-hams to assist. They can do member callout, logging of net traffic, writing situation reports, updating other clubs, covering for bathroom breaks, providing logistics support, timing situation reports, taking pictures.

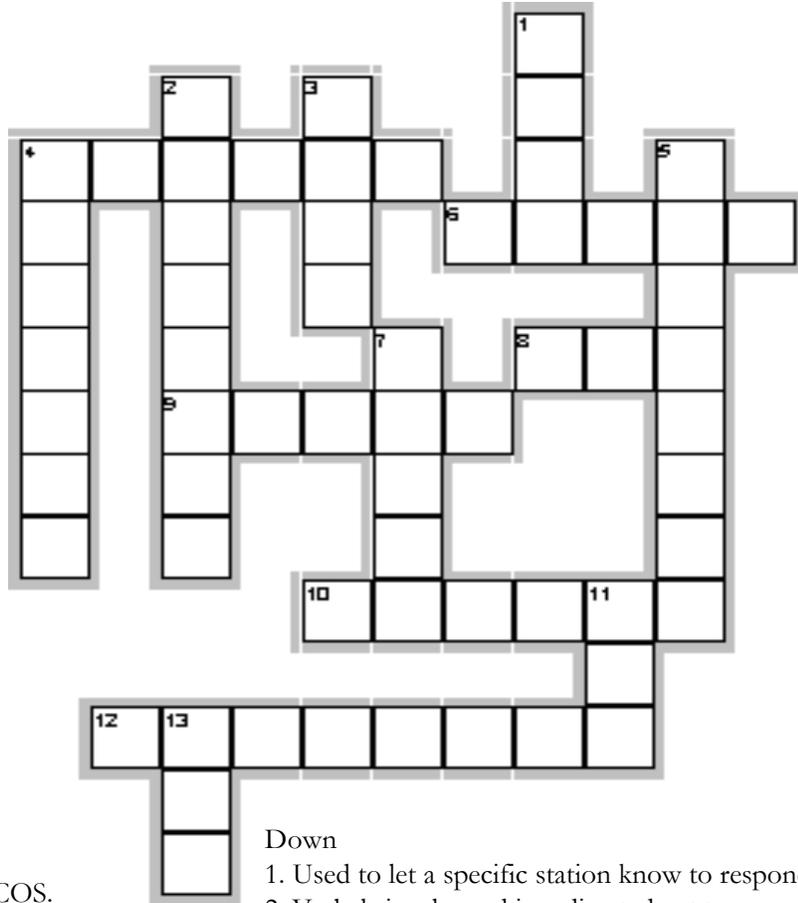
Take pictures. It makes your "Lessons Learned" much more interesting even if nobody learns your lessons.

Be flexible! Disasters are never what you thought they were going to be.

Prowords



*MAINTAINING ORDER
IN
EMERGENCY
COMMUNICAITONS*



Across

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

Down

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

Summer Activity – June Crossword Solution

Across

1. FERTILIZING—Promoting lush, green, growth.
6. CYCLING—Seeing the sites from two wheels.
7. GOLF—Trying to hit the ball straight.
8. READING—Deciphering the printed page.
9. BOATING—Planing over the rippled surface.
11. CROQUET—Hitting the ball through the arches.
13. BASEBALL—Played by the 'boys of summer'
14. GARDENING—Irritating mother nature to encourage growth.
15. SWIMMING—Frolicking in one of the 10,000.

Down

2. TANNING—Planned ultraviolet radiation exposure
3. COLDDRINK—Most desired after activity in the hot sun.
4. FISHING—This is always good however the catching may be slow.
5. CANOEING—Gliding through the no-wake zone.
6. COLDBEER—Desired by adults after activity in the hot sun
10. MOWING—How to maintain that well manicured lawn.
12. WALKING—A neighborhood tour, on foot.

THE FINAL INSPECTION

The Marine stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

"Step forward now, Marine,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other
cheek?
To My Church have you been
true?"

The soldier squared his shoulders
and said,
"No, Lord, I guess I ain't.
Because those of us who carry guns,
Can't always be a saint.

I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.

But, I never took a penny,
That wasn't mine to keep...
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.



And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears.

If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.

There was a silence all around the
throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the Marine waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.

"Step forward now, you Marine,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's
streets,
You've done your time in Hell."

BREAK - OVER



COMMENTS ABOUT DISASTERS - FOR THE FUN OF IT

- Things happen faster than you can react or think about.
- Things don't work and things go wrong.
- There are no right answers, especially when information is unavailable or incorrect.
- Any decision you make will be determined by others, who were not there, to be the wrong decision.
- Lessons learned are "lessons listed" rather than anything people learn.
- Backup generators fail. Over half of them fail in the first 24-48 hours.
- Some problems are not solvable.
- Rumors start in the absence of reliable official information.
- It takes a while to get organized.
- Key people will be missing - out of touch, out of region, or dead.
- If you don't know the key people, you won't be allowed in to the emergency response. If they know you, they will let you in.
- Most people don't learn from disasters. People in tornado alley don't all have tornado cellars and people rebuild in floodplains.
- People don't have 72-hours of supplies and expect the government to provide everything in that period that might be required.

- People are unrealistic in what they expect the responders to do.
- Reception centers or evacuation centers are the last place people want to stay and will be completely empty unless it is the only available place to stay (at which point it becomes full to overflowing).
- No matter how many frequencies you have, you can only listen to one or two at the most. Emergency organizations wanting more frequencies will still experience communications failures.
- No matter how much interoperability you have, you can only listen to one frequency and one person at a time. Adding more people onto a single frequency only clogs the frequency to a greater degree.
- The media may be the only source of reliable information because the municipal information representatives are spending too much time massaging and spinning the limited information they have.
- Nobody has the total picture or will ever know exactly what happened. All decisions made in this situation risk being the wrong decisions.
- If you wait to be called, you will likely never be called because they have too many other issues or can't find your number when they finally do want to call you.

BREAK - OVER

Quick Training Tips

Call Soup

Station Identification

The objective of Scott County ARES is to provide accurate and rapid communications for our served agency when called upon for assistance. Accuracy of communication is foremost however speed is a very close second.

The emergency communications procedures we practice on the weekly net are all tailored to promote accuracy and speed. Station identification and tactical call sign operation are two procedures that target increased net efficiency.

Consider the following exchange on a directed emergency net;
N0ZGW this is KA0FDX, I have one priority for W0DCK at the Red Cross, OVER.

KA0FDX this is N0ZGW, ROGER. Call W0DCK and pass your traffic, N0ZGW OUT

W0DCK this is KA0FDX I have one priority for you, OVER

KA0FDX this is W0DCK, ready to copy OVER.

Getting dizzy just sorting out the call signs? How much of this call soup is actually necessary?

Lets take a look at what the FCC says in Part 97 about station identification.

§97.119 Station identification.

(a) Each amateur station, except a space station or telecommand station, must transmit its assigned call sign on its transmitting channel at the end of each communication, and at least every ten minutes during a communication, for the purpose of clearly making the source of the transmissions from the station known to those receiving the transmissions. No station may transmit unidentified communications or signals, or transmit as the station call sign, any call sign not authorized to the station.

There are two important points in this excerpt from the rules. First, each station is required to identify at the end of each communications NOT each transmission. Second, you are only required to identify YOUR station.

Lets see how this would affect the exchange we suffered through above using tactical calls and proper station ID.
NET, One priority for Red Cross, Shelter One OVER.
Shelter One call Red Cross and send you traffic, N0ZGW OUT.

Red Cross, ready to copy OVER.

Using good directed net procedure we have significantly reduced the unnecessary blabber on the net and increased accuracy of communications.

Remember that the emergency procedures we practice on our weekly, directed net are significantly different than our DX-ing, Contesting, or everyday operating habits.

BREAK - OVER

Dog Days Begin (July 3)

The phrase “Dog Days” conjures up the hottest, most sultry days of summer. *The Old Farmer’s Almanac* lists the traditional timing of the Dog Days: the 40 days beginning July 3 and ending August 11, coinciding with the



heliacal (at sunrise) rising of the Dog Star, Sirius. The rising of Sirius does not actually affect the weather (some of our hottest and most humid days occur after August 11), but for the ancient Egyptians, Sirius appeared just before the season of the Nile’s flooding, so they used the star as a “watchdog” for that event. Since its rising also coincided with a time of extreme heat, the connection with hot, sultry weather was made for all time.

BREAK - OVER



ARES Breakfast

Saturday July 8th
7:30AM
Perkins Restaurant
Savage, MN



NECOS Schedule - June 2006

3 Jul	W0NFE Bob
10 Jul	KB0FH Bob
17 Jul	AB0YQ Steve
24 Jul	K0KTW Pat
31 Jul	N0PI Dan
7 Aug	W0NFE Bob