

**Amateur Radio EmComm participates in Emergency Management Institute exercise.
Use of NBEMS – By Jack Dellinger KC3JD**

On February 14 & 15, 2012, Amateur Radio operators from Adams and York County, Pa. were invited to participate in an emergency management exercise held at the FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) at the FEMA facility in Emmitsburg, MD. Don K3DCS ACS Officer Adams County was the person contacted.

Citrus County, Florida, Emergency Management team was involved in a week long training program at EMI. The Citrus County team included three Amateur Radio operators, none of which had much experience in EmComm. The EMI staff invited several experienced EmComm Hams from Adams and York Counties to provide voice and digital instruction and training to the Hams from Citrus County. We all took our Go-kits (voice & digital). See 2nd page for pictures of setups.

We spent the better part of two days at EMI explaining and demonstrating our use of voice and digital communications to the Hams from Citrus County. On the first afternoon we participated in a 'warm up' exercise that the entire Citrus Co. EMA Team was given to practice some of the things they were being taught. Adams/York team demonstrated both voice and digital (NBEMS/FLDIGI MT-63 2K) by sending messages provided in the exercise package. We had brought two voice stations and two digital stations with us. The exercise was held in-doors, and the two rooms used were only 50 feet apart, so we only needed mag. mount antennas and low power. We operated voice on 2 meters and digital on 440.

The second day of the exercise was a full simulation of a category II hurricane. Hurricane 'Whiteout' was to make land fall in Citrus County (This is an exercise message). The EMI staff hit Citrus EMA with an 'all communications down, but Amateur Radio. All message traffic was sent and received via Amateur Radio for over one hour. We were quite busy!!!! FLDIGI/FLMSG again proved to be faultless and quite capable of handling the traffic. We mostly used the ICS-213 form in FLMSG. We did have a couple 'Shelter Lists' and 'Medications Lists' that were EXCEL '.csv' files to send/received. We also used FLMSG ICS-205 to send our frequency usage plan. All messages were sent and received and printed. We logged all traffic via ICS-309 forms.

Note: We have included in our procedures, that on sent and received messages we record the last six characters (numbers) of the file name given to the message. We have the number written on the printed message and on the ICS-309 log with each message description. When we have a 'response' to a message we are able to look-up the original message on the 309 log and then find the original message, using that sequence number, in the 'RECV' folder and import it into FLMSG. This procedure works very well.

Note: We also used a 2 meter simplex frequency (HT) as a 'Logistical' Net. We would call the Receiving Station stating that we had digital traffic for them. Upon their answering that they were ready, we would announce "(callsign) sending digital in 10 seconds". The 10 seconds would give us time to key 'autosend' and record the 'sequence number' on the log. After the message was sent, we would announce "End of traffic (callsign)". Receiving Station would announce "100 percent copy" or "not received, send again". Again this procedure works very well. And YES we included "This is an exercise message" at the beginning and end of text on ALL messages.

Between the Simulation Cell (SIMCELL) room and the Citrus EOC room I believe we sent and received over thirty messages. Both the EMI staff and Citrus County staff were impressed by our message handling abilities. During the exercise the staff's would also accept any thoughts we had about how certain situations should be handled. I think my having spent three weeks in Mississippi after Katrina gave me some acceptance by the staff that might not have been there otherwise. We have made good contacts with the Hams from Citrus County and have all ready heard from them (email) asking for further info on EmComm in general and NBEMS in particular. I sent Gerry W4GKB the ARES E-Letter and link to paNBEMS group, plus I sent Jan KK4DYB info on links to download FLDIGI etc. and YouTube links. Hopefully we can infect Western Florida with FLDIGI fever, HI HI.

Don K3DCS, ACS Officer Adams County, has all ready received a note from the EMI staff, thanking us for our participation and indicating that Amateur Radio will be invited to future training exercises.

Brian K3BMK Adams County ACS

Alan KB3TOZ Adams County ACS

Jack KC3JD SCTF/ARWG, York County ACS/YARS



1 On left Digital On right voice Gerry W4GKB 2 On left digital (KC3JD) On right voice (K3DCS & KK4DYB)



3 voice (Jan KK4DYB from Citrus Co) K3BMK voice Go-kit

Above, if you look read hard, in middle background you can see my mag mount ant. on cookie sheet.



4 Couple of antennas used in Citrus EOC



5 Brian K3BMK & Alan KB3TOZ working digital

Missing from pictures is Mark KK4BNK Citrus Co.