
CQ BARS

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President's Corner

I am writing this having just returned from the IMERT conference in Bloomington, Illinois. For those of you who do not remember, IMERT stands for Illinois Medical Emergency Response Team. It was both a joy and a concern to attend the three day conference as a "Communications" person.

It was a joy because many of the speakers made reference to "Logistics" and "Communications" as new categories of team members. Many of the speakers discussed how they have come to appreciate having those of us with a communications background around and as part of the team. And of course, they also indicated that they needed more of us to cover the on-call teams, and the new Hospital team that is to be formed in the near future. I also had an opportunity to play with the ICRI equipment that we just spent around \$25,000 to purchase. Our version lets six different people on six different frequencies all talk to each other. Just the tool when tactical radio interoperability is the issue.

Attending the conference was also a bit of a concern as stories were told related to the Katrina deployment. Several stories highlighted how well meaning volunteers created additional problems because they were not trained to understand NIMS or ICS, and they were not pre-credentialed. As a result, they added to a problem that they wanted to help reduce. As I sat there, I thought about our group and asked myself the question, "Would we be part of the problem, or part of the solution?"

At our last meeting, Bob Mierop, Battalion Chief Administration Bolingbrook Fire Department, offered to conduct a NIMS class for us. I will be putting together a list at the next meeting of people who would be interested in attending a class. With enough possible attendees, I can schedule an instructor.

Our ARES Emergency Coordinator has worked the bugs out of the ID badge issue and has started issuing ID cards again. I have some pictures which he will be working on, and I will also bring the camera to the next meeting. If there is any thought in your mind that you would want to help, get your picture taken and ID card issued now. We won't have time during a disaster, and you may not gain access to where you are needed.

Don't let BARS be discussed at a debriefing as part of the problem. Let's take action now to reduce the credentialing issue



now. And if you did not know what all of the abbreviations meant, I'll see you at the NIMS class.

See you on the Radio
Dale, KB9LMK

Secretary's Column

I'm omitting my column this month to allow room for items submitted by our membership. Thank you both for your submission!!

73's for this month

Don - N9VJV

Last Months Meeting Minutes

The meeting was opened at 19:00 hours by KB9LMK (Dale). Introductions followed. Officers present were: KC9GHB (Mike), KB9JHV (Jason), and N9VJV (Don). Also present at the meeting were:

KB9LMK	N9GH	KA9J
KB9JLB	KC9GRH	N9ZMM
W9GBB	KB9JHV	KC9GSL
KC9DCJ	KN9LNU	WB9PDD

K9GHX	NW9V	KA9BHD
WX9WRN	KC9GMD	N9QOB
IC0IDG	KC9GHB	N9VJV

A motion to accept the minutes as published in CQ Bars was made by WX9WRN (Toni), seconded by N9ZMM (Archie) and carried.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by KB9JHV (Jason). A motion to accept as presented was made by NW9V (Phil), seconded by N9GH (Gary), and carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

2 meter: WB9BBK (Bob) reported that the machine was up and running. The new controller has been ordered. The auto ID and PL will be defeat able by keypad for Skywarn. It's autopatch capable but not configured.

220/440_WA9IL (John) reported that the 220 machine was coming up but not hearing audio. The 440 machine is still a bit noisy.

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Echolink is running great.

Net Control: N9ZMM (Archie) reported that checkins have steadily been improving.

Hamfest: KB9LMK (Dale) reported that the tickets have been ordered. N9LJY (Tom) is waiting on a date to measure the room. WA9IL (John) will CADD it out when the measurements are available.

Education: No Report.

VE: N9GH (Gary) reported that the next test session will be in April

Field Day: WA9IL (John) reported that N9LJY (Tom) needs band chairmen. We also need operators, and setup help. We especially need CW operators. We will start at a lower class and move up if stations and operators are available. KB9JHV (Jason) volunteered to chair a band..

Public Relations: No Report.

Skywarn WX9WRN (Toni) reported that the SPC is expecting a heavy season. See the Skywarn page for links to the 3/12 storm outbreak. She needs more committed spotters. The NES has told her that 3/4 " hail is considered severe. She asked that the spotters watch before reporting. She needs 2 reports to confirm. The Fermi Lab seminar is April 8. There will be basic classes in May and June and would like to get general public interested in attending.

Misc.: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

A motion to close old business was made by N9QOB (Ron), seconded by NW9V (Phil) and carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

KB9LMK (Dale) reported that he has been approached by another organization about getting a Chicagoland Superfest started. Are we interested?

On 3/27 Lake County EOC is asking for help for a 190 mile Bike-A-Thon informational meeting Dale has information for those interested.

A motion to close new business was made by KC9GRH (Bryan), seconded by K9GHX (Jim) and seconded.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by N9QOB (Ron), seconded by N9ZMM (Archie) and seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Don, N9VJV
Secretary

From the CQ Newsroom... Courtesy Elden – WA9IQL

The White House today released its review of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina, which, according to a statement, "identifies the systemic problems in Federal emergency preparedness and response revealed by Hurricane Katrina - and the best solutions to address them." The report included 17 lessons the Executive Branch learned after reviewing and analyzing the response to Katrina; made 125 specific recommendations to the President, and identified 11 critical actions to be completed before the first day of the 2006 hurricane season.

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The report also included a section titled, "What Went Right" in the Katrina response, which singled out Amateur Radio Operators for particular praise:

"Other organizations worked tirelessly to assist emergency responders that, due to the storm, did not have the equipment and means to effectively carry out their duties. Amateur Radio Operators from both the Amateur Radio Emergency Service and the American Radio Relay League monitored distress calls and rerouted emergency requests for assistance throughout the U.S. until messages were received by emergency response personnel. A distress call made from a cell phone on a rooftop in New Orleans to Baton Rouge was relayed, via Ham Radio, from Louisiana to Oregon, then Utah, and finally back to emergency personnel in Louisiana, who rescued the 15 stranded victims. Ham Radio Operators voluntarily manned the Amateur Radio stations at sites such as the National Hurricane Center, Hurricane Watch Net, Waterway Net, Skywarn and the Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network."

Finally, the report identified three immediate priorities:

- 1) Implementing a comprehensive National Preparedness System "to make certain that we have a fully national system that ensures unity of effort in preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters;"
- 2) Creating a "Culture of Preparedness" that "emphasizes that the entire Nation - at all levels of government, the private sector, communities, and individual citizens - shares common goals and responsibilities for homeland security;" and
- 3) Implement corrective actions "to ensure we do not repeat the problems encountered during Hurricane Katrina."

A White House fact sheet summarizing the report is available online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/02/20060223.html>.

RADIO AMATEURS BUSY AS DEADLY STORMS AGAIN HIT MIDWEST

Amateur Radio volunteers in northwestern Tennessee and elsewhere were active April 2 when a string of tornadoes struck the Midwest and South. The severe weather left more than two dozen people dead and many injured, most of them in Tennessee. ARRL Tennessee Section Emergency Coordinator Jimmy Floyd, NQ4U, reports SKYWARN volunteers relayed reports to the National Weather Service Office in Memphis as the twisters approached.

"Several hams were active in the Dyersburg-Newbern area Sunday night passing local traffic for the area folks needing to let relatives know that they were okay," Floyd told ARRL. "According to local hams, most of the communication infrastructure was intact after the storms."

Authorities in Dyer County, where 15 people died, say some houses were totally destroyed by the storms, and large trees across highways hampered access by emergency crews. Severe damage reports emerged from Gibson County where some 1200 houses and other structures--including the police station--were said to have been damaged. The NWS said it had received preliminary reports of more than 60 tornadoes April 2. Tennessee state police were continuing to search for additional storm victims and warning those "without legitimate business" to keep out of the affected areas and let first responders and law enforcement personnel do their jobs.

In Illinois, Lawrence County Emergency Coordinator Gary Auerswald, WB9UDJ, found himself in the middle of "a horrendous storm" while returning home with his family from

Indiana.

"Trees were coming down, and people were getting blown off the road," he told ARRL Illinois Section Emergency Coordinator Pat Ryan, KC6VVT. "All electricity in the area went out." Fallen power lines prevented Auerswald from taking his usual route along Illinois Route 1. "We traveled by back roads and oil field roads and made it home," he said. Downed trees and power lines and other property damage greeted his arrival. "A lightning burst gave me a clue to what else was missing: My antenna farm," he said. Auerswald said that until he can "piece something together," he's off the air. He was providing power to his home from a generator.

Ryan reports the Illinois ARES HF Section Net on 75 meters secured early because of high atmospheric noise levels. The ARES Net on the Starved Rock Radio Club W9MKS repeater in Lenore yielded to an ongoing weather-spotter net activated earlier by Jim Morris, N9PLM, who served as net control. "Weather Net members monitored for storm activity and, at one point, the LaSalle County EOC was activated," Ryan said. One person died in Illinois.

Other states affected by the tornadoes and high winds included Arkansas, Missouri, Indiana and Ohio. Kentucky Section Emergency Coordinator Ron Dodson, KA4MAP, reported "plenty of nets up and running" the evening of April 2. Dodson says the storms decreased in severity by the time they reached his state. "Trees, power and phones lines went down," he said, "but there were no major structural incidents or injuries."

The April 2 tornadoes came less than a month after a huge string of tornados swept through the nation's midsection on another Sunday, killing 10 people in Missouri and Indiana and causing damage in several other states, including Illinois, Kansas and Arkansas.

ARRL ALLEGES MISREPRESENTATION BY BPL OPERATOR, INACTION BY FCC

The ARRL once again has called for the immediate shutdown of the BPL pilot project in Briarcliff Manor, New York. In a March 29 letter that takes both BPL operator Ambient Corporation and the FCC to task, the League documented continued interference on amateur frequencies at various points of the Westchester County system. The ARRL has filed five previous interference complaints about the system, the first in October 2004. The system operates under an FCC Part 5 experimental license.

"In response to this interference, which has never been resolved or even substantively addressed by the Commission," the League wrote, "the experimental permittee, Ambient, has defiantly and consistently denied the interference, which Commission Enforcement Bureau staff personally witnessed and confirmed."

Copies of the League's latest complaint went to the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology and its Experimental Licensing Division as well as to the FCC Secretary and Ambient Corporation.

The ARRL disputed representations in a February 14 letter from Ambient counsel George Y. Wheeler to FCC Experimental Licensing Division Chief James Burtle. Wheeler's letter "simply denies that there is interference, which is patently untenable at this point," the League said. "However, the Commission's inaction has implicitly validated Ambient's inaction and repeated misrepresentations."

Interference measurements ARRL Laboratory Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI, made February 20 revealed "no substantial changes" in the system's interference profile on amateur frequencies, the League pointed out.

"The system is still operating un-notched on amateur bands at

several separate locations, although notching of the amateur bands was evident at other locations in the system," the League said. Despite Ambient's claims that it had notched amateur bands, Hare found in several areas and ham bands that "none of the system appears to be notched." A 20-page supplement detailing Hare's February 20 findings accompanied the League's further complaint.

The findings show the Briarcliff Manor BPL system continues to cause harmful interference to Amateur Radio communication "and it is not compliant with applicable FCC Part 15 regulations," the League contended. It also fails to comply with the terms of its FCC Part 5 experimental authorization, nor is its operation consistent with Ambient's claims in progress reports it's filed with the FCC.

The League said it is "beyond any reasonable dispute" that the Briarcliff Manor BPL system fails to comply with Part 5 rules requiring permittees to cease transmissions "if harmful interference to an established radio service develops" and not resume transmissions until it's certain harmful interference will not recur. Part 15 rules contain similar provisions for unlicensed devices that may interfere with licensed services.

In addition, the League said, information regarding the Briarcliff Manor BPL system has yet to show up in the publicly accessible BPL database as Part 15 rules require. The ARRL took issue with Wheeler's assertions that the system's information does not have to appear in the database. "Section 15.615 of the rules makes no exception for Access BPL systems operating pursuant to an experimental authorization," the League stated.

Given its failure to comply with both Part 5 and Part 15 rules governing its operation, the Briarcliff Manor BPL system must be shut down, the ARRL demanded. "Alternatively, the Commission should rescind the experimental authorization and determine other appropriate sanctions against Ambient Corporation," the ARRL concluded.

Courtesy of Frank KA9VPH

The FCC wants to reduce the Fiscal Year 2006 regulatory fee to obtain an Amateur Radio vanity call sign to \$20.10 for the 10-year license term. The current vanity fee is \$21.90. The Commission proposed the new fee in a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2006," in MD Docket 06-68, released March 27. If ordered as proposed, the new vanity fee would become effective in August or September. The FCC is obligated to collect nearly \$289 million in regulatory fees during FY 2006 to fund its operations.

Comments on the proposed fee schedule are due Friday, April 14. Reply comments are due Friday, April 21. The FCC has projected collecting \$171,188 in vanity call sign fee receipts from 8500 applications in FY 2006.

The vanity call sign fee has assumed somewhat greater significance this year as the renewal window is about to open for the first Amateur Radio licenses assigned vanity call signs in 1996. Applicants who wish to keep their post-1995 vanity call signs must pay the vanity call sign regulatory fee in effect at the time the renewal application reaches the FCC. Any Amateur Radio renewal application may only be filed within 90 days of the license expiration date.

Amateur Radio licensees holding vanity call signs granted prior to 1996 do not have to pay a regulatory fee when renewing. This is because Congress did not begin requiring the FCC to annually recover its regulatory costs until 1993. Additionally, such licensees are not specifically tagged as vanity call sign holders in

Some articles courtesy of the ARRL.