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HURRICANE FLORENCE

Please distribute to all traffic nets and EMCOMM organizations
www.radio-relay.org

Hurricane Summary:

The exact track of Hurricane Florence remains questionable. However, current models indicate likely landfall somewhere in North Carolina. Additional impacts, such as torrential rain, flooding and tropical storm force winds will affect a large area, possibly including portions of South Carolina and Virgina.

It is difficult to predict intensity at landfall several days out. Therefore, from a planning perspective, it is necessary to assume a worst-case scenario in those areas possibly affected until the data indicates otherwise. Emergency communications organizations and individual radio amateurs may want to begin preparations now for a significant disaster.

PREPARATION FOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS:

All public service communicators in the affected area should prepare by taking the following steps:

1. Verify that communications equipment typically used for local support is operational. For example:
    a. Test transceivers and ancillary devices, such as digital interfaces, computer software used for digital communications and the like. This is particularly important in the case of deployable items.
    b. Check any spare or field-deployable antenna equipment. Ensure that coax is in good condition, a variety of RF adapters are available, and everything is organized.
    c. Charge battery packs; have spare batteries (including dry cells and storage batteries) on hand.
    d. Exercise emergency generators *under load*. Ensure that enough fuel is available for at least several days of operation under load.
    e. Ensure that emergency lighting is available.

f. Ensure your family is prepared. One cannot effectively support his neighbors unless he is certain that his own family is secure. Have emergency supplies on hand including potable water, food, emergency cooking equipment and so forth.

g. Simple often works best in disaster areas. Have paper message forms and documentation available to support log-keeping, message formatting and other emergency communications functions.

h. If your local EmComm organization deploys to specific facilities (e.g. a hospital network, served agency facilities, etc.) in which equipment is already installed, assign operators to test this equipment now to ensure operational readiness.

i. Make a list of both local as well as state and regional communications networks accessible in your area. Note alternate frequencies as well as any specialized state or local calling and emergency frequencies used by your state/section.

2. In addition to any required paper forms, traffic operators should also have the RRI Form 1801 or 1801ACP fillable radiogram blanks as well as the Form 1703 and 1704 fillable Radiogram ICS213 blanks accessible on one's computer. In advance of the emergency, populate the forms with a sample text and print them as a **non-fillable PDF documents**. Check the product so that you are prepared to keep records and deliver traffic as necessary. Ensure that you are familiar with the process in advance of the event. See:

    http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/RRI-Radiogram-form-1801-A-Final-Approved.pdf

    http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/RRI-Radiogram-form-1801-B-ACP-Final-Approved.pdf

    http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/RRI-Form-1703-ICS-2017-5-1.pdf

    http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/RRI-Form-1704-ICS-2017-5-1.pdf

3. Review the *Draft RRI National Emergency Communications Plan* available at: http://radio-relay.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/RRI-NECRP-Draft-V6-Public-Distribtuion-Comp.pdf

4. Check that the capacity exists to monitor alternate frequencies (spare communications receiver(s), etc.) when required.

5. Operators should also be prepared to relay and deliver both welfare traffic and any agency traffic that might be transferred into the RRI system. Most agency traffic will carry the "Priority" ("P") precedence.

6. Weather data (WXOBS) may be requested throughout the affected area. Check and calibrate instruments. Ensure they will remain operational in the event of a power outage.

7. Situational awareness reporting (SITREP) is very important to local, state and Federal agencies as well as NGO relief agencies. Be prepared to originate SITREPs (see example in the RRI Draft National Emergency Communications Plan). Examine network topology to ensure that SITREPs originated in your local area can be transferred not just to RRI networks, but also your local/state EmComm organization for use at various emergency management levels when requested.

8. Emergency communications organizations participating in the *National SOS Radio Network* and *Neighborhood Hamwatch* programs should review the background material for these programs available at: http://radio-relay.org/emcomm/neighborhood-hamwatch/ and http://radio-relay.org/emcomm/national-sos-radio-network/   Some steps that can be taken now include:
   a. Identify operators who will monitor FRS Channel 1 for citizen requests for assistance: 462.5625 mHz.
   b. Contact any community organizations, which utilize GMRS, FRS and similar "non-licensed" assets. Ensure assets are available to provide interface with Amateur Radio Service networks.
   c. Ensure that the RRI **Public Service Announcements** are in the hands of local full-service broadcast stations should they need to be broadcast. Arrange for these PSAs to be broadcast on a regular schedule upon request from your local Emergency Management Agency. Links to these PSAs may be found at: http://radio-relay.org/emcomm/national-sos-radio-network/

9. Refresh your operating skills over the next few days by checking into a voice, CW or VHF traffic network. Familiarize yourself with the Winlink radiogram template. Originate a message to a relative. A simple text such as "THIS IS ONE WAY I MIGHT CONTACT YOU IN A DISASTER" would be sufficient.

10. Digital Traffic Stations should be prepared to provide more frequent connectivity to the RRI Digital Traffic Network during this event. Guidance regarding connect schedules will be provided in subsequent bulletins.

11. Local emergency communications organizations should have a plan in place to originate health and welfare message traffic. This may include a process to collect welfare messages at areas where disaster victims congregate, such as shelters, rest areas along evacuation routes and similar locations.

NETWORK ACTIVATION AND TOPOLOGY

It is too early to allocate network resources to specific emergency management functions. More information will be forthcoming in subsequent bulletins.

Local emergency communications organizations as well as individual RRI operators located in the potential impact area that are planning to interface with the national messaging layer (traffic system) should drop a brief e-mail to Radio Relay International within the next 48-hours. Please indicate the

modes and networks through which connectivity will be established should it be required. This will allow us to better stage resources and allocate networks to assist. RRI may be contacted at:

info@radio-relay.org

SYSTEM ACTIVATION REQUESTS

EmComm organizations or individual radio amateurs requiring support for either operational or welfare message traffic originations should review the activation request procedures contained in the *Radio Relay Draft National Emergency Communications Plan* Section II. Requests for activation may be sent to:

James Wades (WB8SIW)
RRI National Emergency Communications Coordinator
Marion, IL. 62959
269-650-0215
james.wades@radio-relay.org
wb8siw@winlink.org

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