



This has been a period of many natural disasters. Heavy rains and consequent flooding caused widespread destruction in Thailand with its manufacturing base severely affected. Philippines also experienced heavy flooding after Typhoon Sendong and Christchurch was hit by yet another earthquake. In all these events radio amateurs were at the forefront in providing much needed communications to assist the civil authorities in relief and rescue efforts.

A Word from the Chairman of IARU Region 3

Michael Owen VK3KI

Emergency Communications

The year just past has been a year when amateurs have been able to provide communications in emergencies far too regularly.

This issue includes two items about amateurs once again providing communications in emergency situations. Jim Linton, Chairman of the IARU Region 3 Disaster Communications Committee with RAST reports on the floods in Thailand and with PARA Chief Operations Officer Eddie Valdez reports on the typhoon in the Southern Philippines.

One of the things that remain in my mind from the Region 1 Conference and the GAREC meeting in Sun City, South Africa in August 2011 is the presentation by the IARU Region 3 Secretary Ken Yamamoto on the contribution of radio amateurs following the earth quake and tsunami in Japan on 11 March 2011.

While the official invitation letters are yet to be sent out, the 15th IARU Region 3 Conference is planned to commence on 5th November this year, at the KimDo - Royal City Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

When the Directors discussed the arrangements for the Conference at their meeting in July last year, they agreed that they would suggest to the Conference that the theme of the Conference be emergency communications.

We think that a theme may ensure that the Conference is more than just a “talkfest”, but is able, by focussing on a particular, current and relevant issue, to reach useful and meaningful conclusions.

Of course, for that to work, we need to tell our member societies in advance what we have in mind. That way, the IARU Region 3 member societies can prepare contributions around that theme.

But what sort of matters could be considered under that general subject?

One is that in different countries, indeed in different regions within countries, the role of amateurs in formal emergency structures may be very different, and so the nature of the preparedness may be very different, too.

But how much integration into formal emergency structures is there? How much is the amateur contribution really ad hoc?

What have we learnt from the events of the last few years? Can we better prepare? Is the provision of emergency communications really a local matter or should we look to common international procedures, for example?

We all know that at WRC 03 when Article 25 was reviewed, a new provision, Article 25.9A was inserted, saying “Administrations are encouraged to take the necessary steps to allow amateur stations to prepare for and meet communication needs in support of disaster relief.”

Many of us thought that the words “to prepare for” were particularly important, as practises were to be encouraged.

But is that right? Is there a role for international communications in some situations? Are we prepared to provide that?

Do national regulations in some countries still inhibit amateurs preparing for and providing emergency communications?

In short, the Directors are inviting the member societies, based on their own experience, to look at the role of radio amateurs in providing emergency communications and identify both our strengths and weaknesses, and hopefully identify what steps can be taken to improve the effectiveness of what radio amateurs can do.

We know that many amateurs in many places have contributed much in emergency situations. But can we improve what we can do? If so, how?

Saving almost 1,000 lives in Thailand

The Radio Amateur Society of Thailand (RAST) Secretary Paul Wacharaphol HS4DDQ reports his team helped to save almost 1,000 lives by coordinating rescue communications in cases of medical emergencies during the severe flooding. He coordinates the emergency medical communications at Public Health Ministry on Ngarmwongwan Road and using the callsign HS0AC. Speaking at a small RAST gathering at Sena Place Hotel on Sunday November 6, Paul HS4DDQ told how the emergency unfolded.

Since the flooding began in July at least 529 people have been killed in the affected 63 of Thailand's 77 provinces. The cost to the local economy including hundreds of global manufacturers who rely on its low-cost factories keeps rising. The amateur radio station established by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NTC) using the call HSOAB were also discussed, along with the donations that RAST has received that now total over 50,000 baht, including a large amount received from donors in Malaysia. The NBTC has praised the role that radio amateurs have been playing to help people cope with the disaster by providing communications support and this have been especially helpful in flooded areas where several mobile phone cell sites have failed. Government agencies have been able to take advantage of the amateur radio communications infrastructure when their own networks failed.

Using their skills and experience radio amateurs kept communicating with one another under adverse conditions. The volunteer spirit that has carried radio amateurs to the “front-line” has also helped many victims of Thailand's worst flooding in over 60 years. Pranee Nettrattana E21DKD who controlled the RAST club station HS0AB was praised for her efforts. The station was inundated by flood water to a depth of over one metre, but that the campus was presently still inaccessible and the extent of damage to equipment is yet to be evaluated A good example of this was demonstrated by Champ Muangamphun E21EIC and his wife Goi E20NKB, who left after the meeting with flood relief supplies in their four-wheel drive vehicle well -equipped with a boat strapped to the roof.

- Jim Linton VK3PC, Chairman IARU R3 Disaster Communications

Committee and RAST.

(The RAST Club station HSØAC was later totally destroyed- pictures at <http://www.qsl.net/rast/>)

Typhoon hits Southern Philippines

The death toll has reached 1,250 in the storms that swept the Southern Philippines on December 16 to 18 with many more still missing. Eddie Valdez DU1EV reports that Typhoon Sendong triggered massive flooding and has greatly affected the DU9 call district. He advises that prior to the Typhoon, the Ham Emergency Radio Operators (HEROs) activated the emergency frequencies on 40m and 2m. "The HEROs were assisting the local government units by providing communications until regular power could be restored," said Eddie DU1EZ.

"The local reservoir in Cagayan de Oro was damaged and drinking water was scarce. Not to worry, HEROs used their emergency back-up power at their home station to draw water from their deep wells and selflessly distributed drinking water for free." It was the training and preparedness that made all the difference for the HEROs who met their tasks as only radio amateurs can in such dire circumstances. Many were sleeping as the Typhoon caused rivers to burst their banks, leading to landslides and villages being washed away.

Jim Linton VK3PC, Chairman, IARU Region 3, Disaster Communication Committee with PARA Chief Operations Officer, Eddie Valdez DU1EV.

JARL elects new officers

Effective 1st November 2011 Japan Amateur Radio League has elected the following:

President: Akira Inage, JA5MG
Vice President: Kazuo Niwa, JA1AYO
Vice President: Norimasa Nemoto, JH1UBU

Seanet 2011

This year's SEANET convention was held between the 17th to 21st November in Brunei

Delegates from AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, BRUNEI, CHINA, GERMANY, JAPAN, KOREA, PHILIPPINE, SERBIA, SWITZERLAND, USA, 9M2, 9M8, 9M6, attended the conference

THAILAND, who participate regularly were absent due to the flood and events thereafter

SEANET 2012 has been fixed for 22nd Nov 2012 to 26th Nov 2012 in Kuala Lumpur.

Increase in New Zealand Amateur Power Limit

NZART advised its members that Radio Spectrum Management agreed to the request that the general power limit for Amateur bands be increased.

From 30 November 2011, the power limit for most bands will rise from 500 watts to 1000 watts peak envelope power (pX), as defined in ITU Radio Regulation 1.157. The only exception to this increase is for those bands (130 to 190 kHz, 505 to 515 kHz, 26.95 to 27.30 MHz and 921.00 to 928.00 MHz) which currently have lower limits and, in these cases, the current limits will continue to apply.

This will assist NZ Amateurs to:

- * participate in weak signal work including EME, meteor scatter, DXing etc;
- * remain competitive, despite their remoteness, when participating in contests.

Australian regulator to permit higher power for Advanced licensees on trial basis

The ACMA has advised the WIA that it intends to accede to the WIA's request that advanced licensees may apply for a variation of their licence to permit higher power from a fixed location on a trial basis from 1 March 2012. The ACMA has stressed to the WIA that it remains concerned about the risk of interference from the use of higher power.

At the end of 12 months the position will be reviewed by the ACMA.

The ACMA has adopted this approach to enable any particular difficulties to be identified and satisfactory solutions found to, in the words of the ACMA, "enable the trial to progress to appropriate ongoing arrangements from early 2013"

The ACMA will publish the changes to the licence process and forms setting out the further information needed for an application for higher power before 1 March 2012.

"WRC-12 (World Radiocommunication Conference 2012)

As mentioned in the last issue 23 of our Region Newsletter, WRC-12 will be held in Geneva from January 23-February 17, 2012.

The good news is that Agenda Item 1.23 "to consider an allocation of about 15 kHz in parts of the band 415-526.5 kHz to the amateur service on a secondary basis, taking into account the need to protect existing services" becomes now ACP (APT common proposal) as a result of APT members voting recently. This means that we get a majority support for this agenda item in Region 3.

The cooperation of each society responding to this letter is highly appreciated

15th Region 3 Triennial Conference

The IARU Region 3 Conference, the fifteenth such conference which takes place every three years, is scheduled to take place in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam from Monday, 5th November 2012 through Thursday, 8th November 2012.

The current Region 3 Directors will meet just before and after the conference and the Directors who will be elected at the conference usually join the outgoing directors at the meeting after the conference.

Full details will be sent to all societies in due course and will also be available on the IARU Region 3 webpage

The 2012 International YL Meet- a reminder

This meeting is now scheduled from the 3rd to 9th May 2012 at Adelaide

Full details are available at

http://ylinternational2012.com/index.php?p=1_6_Adelaide-Meet

Keith Malcolm VK1KM SK

Very many people in many countries were saddened by the sudden passing of Keith Malcolm VK1KM on Thursday, 13 October 2011. Professionally he retired as Joint Director of the Communication Laboratory of the Spectrum Management Agency, then to become a consultant to the Department of Communications in relation to digital television broadcasting and television black spots. He attended many ITU meetings as a member of the Australian delegation, and became widely known and respected.

Keith's interest in amateur radio started in the 1960's, in the very active Melbourne VHF Group. He became the Group's President in the latter

years of the 1960's and his interest in VHF continued all his life. As he wound down his professional life, he contributed a great deal to amateur radio, participating in the preparatory meetings and study group meetings for the World Radio communication Conferences on behalf of the WIA, and as a member of the Australian delegation to WRC-03 and WRC-07 representing the amateur services nominated by the WIA

He provided valuable advice to IARU Region 3 in relation to its participation in the APT's APG, and valuable advice to the WIA in the standards area, particularly in relation to BPL and in relation to radiation exposure. Keith was known for the ability to express complex concepts simply, and a rare skill with written language.

Keith was awarded the Ron Wilkinson Award in 2005. The WIA and amateur radio is much poorer with the passing of Keith, an unassuming man of great knowledge and experience, who gave much through his representation and participation at the highest levels.

The Region 3 Web Site: Go to: <http://www.iaru-r3.org>.

Editor: Gopal Madhavan VU2GMN, Director IARU Region3.

E-mail: vu2gmn@gmail.com

Publisher: The International Amateur Radio Union Region 3
P. O. Box 73, Toshima, Tokyo 170-8691, Japan.

E-mail: secretary@iaru-r3.org

Tel: +81 3 5395-3124 Fax: +81 3 3943 8282

The statements or opinions in this Newsletter do not, unless otherwise stated, necessarily reflect the views of IARU Region 3, the Directors or the Secretariat. Items from this Newsletter may be freely copied for publication by Member Societies of IARU.