

ARES® MEETING FLORIDA STATE EOC TALLAHASSEE  
JUNE 20, 2009

The ARRL ARES® Emergency Coordinators, Section Managers, Section Emergency Coordinators and District Emergency Coordinators from the entire State of Florida were invited to this meeting at the State EOC in Tallahassee. There were about 70 people in attendance. The Southern Florida Section had representatives from St. Lucie, Indian River, Martin, Lee, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties.

Our host was John Fleming (WD4FFX) the Communications and Warning Officer of the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

David Halstead, Interim Deputy Director welcomed the group to the EOC and spoke about the critical importance of amateur radio to the State Emergency Management. He stated that the SEOC uses the incident command system. He also mentioned that there may be a three day interoperability test at Camp Blanding in December and requested that amateur radio be part of that test.

Ben Nelson, State Meteorologist presented a slide show and spoke about the factors that affect the formation, path and strength of hurricanes. Ben Nelson has a weekly weather report at <http://www.youtube.com/floridasert> . There are other status reports at this site but you have to search for them.

Mr. Fleming spoke about:

- Amateur radio was not dependent on infrastructure, could go the distance on any mode.
- Described the capabilities of the SEOC amateur radio station KA4EOC
- Spoke about how amateur radio volunteers come under Florida Statutes Chapter 252 Emergency Management.
  - Amateur radio volunteers who participate in mutual aid outside of their home county must have ARRL Emcomm and NIMS training.
  - These mutual aid volunteers will receive liability and workman's compensation from the state if they are assigned outside their home county and entered into the EM Constellation database.
- EM Constellation Database is a new database being used for pretty much everything to do with tracking activities for an emergency. It replaces Tracker.
- First Responder Access Card (FRAC)
  - ID cards issued by DOD
  - Background and drivers license check is required
  - Will be required to enter a declared disaster area
  - ARES® members can get a FRAC if they have the required Emcomm and NIMS training
  - State is working on a plan to issue these
- RACES was discussed and it was stated that the Florida Emergency Management did not recognize RACES. It is expected that the FCC will eliminate RACES from the FCC rules this year.
- Upcoming federal grant funding for communications interoperability and that local ARES® groups might be able to participate and get funding through their counties.