

AUXCOMM IN NC

Michigan AUXC Presentation

August 29, 2020

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Also makes a really great Martini!

THE LAST EASY DAY WAS YESTERDAY

Genesis of the NC AUXCOMM Program

Let's start at the beginning.

POTUS George W. Bush issued HS Directive 5 in February 2003 (Google it). Under the newly created DHS this was implemented. The ICS model was derived from the Federal Fire Service (Boise, ID) ICS program and expanded to fit the larger mission. This was in response to the stated establishment of a National Incident Management System (NIMS).

In May, 2005, then Governor of NC, Mike Easley, issued a proclamation, stating that all NC Agencies (etc.) would conform to the National NIMS/ICS model and a deadline was established. At that point in time, most NC Amateur Radio Comms activities operated under the ARRL "ARES" label. Some ARES members, at least leadership appointees, complied and completed the Basic Training courses (ICS-100, 200, 700, 800).....but many did not. There was a significant pushback from Hams across the state. I recall one vocal fellow saying "All I need is a PTT switch and a microphone".

We were regularly reminded by our partner Agencies (kindly note the absence of the word "Served") that, because our job was to do THEIR WORK, THEIR WAY (and not ARRL or OUR way), we had to comply. There was increased pushback from Hams across the state.

In the Spring of 2009, we, ARES, requested the use of the NCEM Situation Room at the old EOC location on Jones Street in Raleigh, for a statewide meeting. NCEM granted access and also asked for a short presentation time slot. That presentation was verbal, friendly and decisive. "Thank you for your historical help and assistance, You've made a difference. There is a problem, however regarding compliance with the NIMS/ICS mandate". and then the admonition: **"Get in, or get out."**

Now, that's easy to comprehend and understand.

So, we genned a database to record progress and began down that path.

Not known to any of us in NC, about that time, DHS/OEC (now DHS/CISA/ECD), being aware of the potential resource in the Amateur Radio regimen, sought the partnership and collaboration of the ARRL in developing a training program. DHS made a visit or two to the ARRL at Newington and departed with a "we'll get back to you about this" comment. Crickets.... Dead silence followed.

DHS/OEC began development of it's own Amateur Radio (and other NGO) initiative and named it Auxiliary Communications. In May 2011, the first formal AUXCOMM (pilot) course in the nation was conducted at Charlotte, NC and there were 16 attendees.

For those that have completed the ICS-300 class, you know the "game-changer" result. That's what happened at that first AUXCOMM class.

The AUXCOMM program eschews typical "membership" or "Club" activities. No colored badges, no colored shirts, no merchandise or book sales, no "Branding". The only common attribute is a consistent level of training and a clear and understood mandate that participants are part of the overall Communications Unit (COMU) which is a constituted part of an Authority Having Jurisdiction (an AHJ is a Government Entity and NOT a company or a company-sponsored sub-group). AUXCOMM participants are skilled, trained, business-like and perform their assigned tasks without fanfare. If your partner Agency wants you to wear a colored badge, they'll issue it. Same with dress and signage. AUXCOMM does not replace any other organization, but activities are specific to EMCOMM, with experienced Operators trained to a National Standard. AUXCOMM folks in NC are trained to the same standard as in every other state and territory without any third party influence or interference..

NC AUXCOMM folks participated in the development of the AUXFOG, the AUXCOMM core course curriculum, the Position Task Book (PTB) and the NQS typing activities. We have a voting seat on the NC State Interoperability Executive Committee. We have four NC-resident, Nationally Qualified AUXCOMM Instructors. Of the NC Credentialed AHIMT COMLs, about half are AUXCOMM NGO personnel. The AUXCOMM course has been taught in NC at least 6 times and, with in-state Instructors, that will occur more often.

There is a named AUXCOMM Program under the ESF2 Communications Plan at NCEM. and in the Federal SCIP program, nationwide. AUXCOMM is also a named resource in the FEMA-based EMAC program (state-to-state/Regional mutual aid)..

Since this started in 2009, the ARRL has not, until just now, moved toward NIMS/ICS understanding and soft-engagement. I regret to say....that is a wasted decade....a decade of years....more than 10 years.

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State of North Carolina



MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

PROCLAMATION FOR ADOPTION OF NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS) BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, the President in Homeland Security Directive (HSPD)-5, directed the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS), which would provide a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments to work together more effectively and efficiently to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity; and

WHEREAS, the collective input and guidance from all Federal, State, local, and tribal homeland security partners has been, and will continue to be, vital to the development, effective implementation, and utilization of a comprehensive NIMS; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and desirable that all Federal, State, local, and tribal emergency agencies and personnel coordinate their efforts to effectively and efficiently provide the highest levels of incident management; and

WHEREAS, to facilitate the most efficient and effective incident management it is critical that Federal, State, local, and tribal organizations utilize standardized terminology; standardized organizational structures; interoperable communications; consolidated action plans; unified command structures; uniform personnel qualification standards; uniform standards for planning, training, and exercising; comprehensive resource management; and designated incident facilities during emergencies or disasters; and

WHEREAS, the NIMS standardized procedures for managing personnel, communications, facilities, and resources will improve the State's ability to utilize federal funding to enhance local and state agency readiness, maintain first responder safety, and streamline incident management processes; and

WHEREAS, the Incident Command System components of NIMS are already an integral part of various incident management activities throughout the State, including current emergency management training programs; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Emergency Response Commission, by unanimous vote, formally endorses the National Incident Management System for use in incident management and emergency prevention, preparedness, training, response, recovery, and mitigation programs and activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina, I do hereby establish the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the State standard for incident management for its use in daily operations, as well as disaster operations in North Carolina. I direct all counties and departments to adopt and apply the NIMS for all routine, multi-company and agency incidents.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in the City of Raleigh this 11th day of May, 2005.




Michael F. Easley
Governor

ATTEST:


Elaine F. Marshall
Secretary of State

How it works – “NIMS 101”

“First of all, I'll state my premise for volunteer usage in the State EOC. It is simply that anyone, regardless of affiliation, professional or volunteer, who works in the SEOC during an emergency, works for us. Their parent organization has no operational control once they set foot in the Ops center. The parent organization has the responsibility to train and provide communications personnel to the agency. That is where their job ends. They are a *functional* unit, and *do not* command *operationally* in any manner. This avoids any ambiguity in the chain of command.”

Hank Koebler,
Chief, Operations,
Tennessee Emergency Management Agency

First Things First

COMU 101

1. It's all about RELATIONSHIPS
2. IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS
3. RELATIONSHIPS, IT'S ALL ABOUT THAT
4. THINK ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS
5. Did we mention Relationships....?

Now, Some AUXCOMM data

- NC AUXCOMM database lists 906 members as of 26AUG2020
- All members listed in the database have completed at least ICS-100, 200, 700, 800 and many have completed additional courses. We have a copy of every certificate.
- AUXCOMM now has a substantial number of COMLs credentialed by NCEM as Type 3 AHIMT qualified. None of these COMLs are employees of any Government Entity – all volunteers.

THANKS, EVERYBODY!

PLEASE DON'T STOP WHAT
YOU'RE DOING!