

FEMA & ARRL Announce Disaster Communication Partnership

Release date:

July 18, 2014

Release Number:

HQ-2014-51

Hartford, Conn. – Today, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) announced a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that increases cooperation between FEMA and ARRL in the area of disaster communication. FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, KK4INZ, and ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, signed the agreement during the ARRL National Centennial Convention at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford, Connecticut.

This agreement will allow FEMA and ARRL to work together to provide resources, services and personnel, as available, in order to strengthen capacity in areas of emergency communications, mass care and emergency assistance, disaster preparedness, response and recovery, while also raising public awareness about the use of Amateur Radio as a public safety resource.

“Radio is one of the most resilient communications technologies we have,” Fugate said. “When the power is out and telecommunications are down, the Amateur Radio community can serve as a vital resource in support of emergency responders and survivors during a disaster. This MOA will strengthen FEMA’s partnership with ARRL and build upon our work to expand emergency communications capabilities and the use of Amateur Radio in emergency management.”

The agreement outlines the ways in which FEMA and ARRL will cooperate to carry out their respective responsibilities, with respect to disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery operations in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. The agreement sets forth the terms by which FEMA and ARRL will provide resources, services and personnel, as available, in order to strengthen capacity in areas of emergency communications, mass care and emergency assistance, disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

“From the earliest days of experimentation with radio to the present time, amateur radio volunteers have combined their passion for exploring radio technology with their devotion to assisting the governmental and charitable agencies that respond to disaster,” Craigie said. “This combination of inventiveness and service has saved lives for a century. We look forward to working with FEMA to further develop opportunities for trained, equipped and prepared amateur radio operators to serve the public interest whenever and wherever disasters affect our country and its communities.”

Amateur Radio operators have been responding to disasters since the beginning of the Amateur Service in the early 1900s. Through the ARRL-sponsored Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and other groups, federally licensed Amateur Radio operators have volunteered their time, equipment and expertise to their communities and country for all kinds of public service events and disaster efforts.

Following recent events, ARRL has supported local communities as they prepare for and recover from the devastation caused by disasters. As part of this agreement, FEMA and ARRL will strengthen their partnership and encourage first responders and citizens to consider joining the ranks of radio amateurs and their long and legendary history of public service to the nation.

###

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards. More information is available from www.fema.gov.

The ARRL's mission is based on five core areas, or "pillars": Public Service, Advocacy, Education, Technology, and Membership. Founded in 1914, the American Radio Relay League is the national association for amateur radio in

the USA. Today, with more than 164,000 members, the ARRL is the largest organization of radio amateurs in the world. More information is available at www.arrl.org.

Last Updated:
July 21, 2014 - 09:56