

DISASTERCOM

DERA Newsletter

41 Years of Service

December 2003



DERA Strategic Planning Workshop

Rosen Plaza, Orlando, Florida

February 6 - 7, 2004

Save the Date

See color insert for
Disaster Conference 2004
See link at www.disasters.org for
DERA Special Sessions Detail

February 2004						
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DERA SPECIAL SESSIONS

Strategic Planning Workshop
Annual Membership Meeting
Joint Training Session

Communication Interoperability
In conjunction with the
25th Annual Disaster
Management Conference 2004

**The Strategic planning sessions of this workshop will determine DERA's future.
Please attend and help chart our course!**

Travel Information

Take advantage of special discounted travel fares by calling Sharon at the
Disaster 2004 travel desk: 407-869-6888

India's Echolink Node

DERA Partner organization NIAR (National Institute of Amateur Radio), with headquarters in Hyderabad, India, is now regularly communicating with stations in the US over EQSO and EchoLink. Nearly two decades ago, NIAR's founder, Hon. Sri. S. Suri, began efforts to modernize emergency communications systems throughout India. EchoLink is only the latest in a long series of innovations that resulted. In 1999, NIAR sponsored a DERA representative on a disaster response trip to India.
(Continued on Page 4)



Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) is a program that prescribes treatments to protect the people and the land affected after a fire.
(Maps and findings inside this issue)

New DERA Board Member Jerry Cassidy

Mr. Jerry Cassidy began his term on the DERA Board of Directors in September. He has been an active member of DERA for six years and has been involved with many projects including our "Planning for a Safer Tomorrow" workshop series in Colorado. Jerry has also served with the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) since 1978 in a variety of leadership positions. Jerry, NØMY, has also been an active member of ARES for thirteen years. Welcome, Jerry! May your tenure on the Board be met with wholehearted support from those you serve.

DisasterCom is the quarterly newsletter of DERA International. News items and articles are always welcome.

ISSN 1521-1592

Editor: Catherine Lawhun

Membership in this Nonprofit Association is open to all who share our commitment to effective disaster preparedness and response.

See Back Page for Membership Application

The Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association, International

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DERA is a Nonprofit, U.S. IRS 501(c)(3)
Disaster Service and Professional Association
Established in 1962
Incorporated in the State of Wisconsin.
Newsletter ISSN 1521-1592.

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E I I P



A Personal Invitation from your Editor

For many years DERA has participated in the annual Florida Emergency Medical Foundation (FEMF) Disaster Management Conference in Orlando, FL. This year, we have graciously been extended the opportunity to conduct our Annual Meeting and special sessions in one of the most renowned and lavish conference facilities in the world. The Rosen Plaza, Orlando, is easily accessed by an international airport and there is every kind of amusing attraction, restaurant and shopping within walking distance. Universal Studios, Disney, Epcot, Sea World, Kennedy Space Center, Circ-du-Soleil and the new Holy Land Experience are all well worth staying an extra day to go explore.



Although there is no charge to our DERA members to attend the DERA special sessions and the meetings, we are proud to be a part of a conference that has a highly accredited course list. (up to 24 CEU's for various groups). It is our hope that you will take advantage of these excellent offerings. Registration for the FEMF conference is \$320 until January 5th. See the enclosed color insert for more information or visit www.femf.org/Disaster2004.html

Please note that there is no conflict between our special sessions and any of the regular conference sessions. We DO request that you reserve your space in the DERA sessions on the web at www.many-waters.com/DERA/Reservation.html

Consider registering as an exhibitor at this event. It is extremely well attended and event manager Jerry Cutchens will provide for all your needs and make your task a pleasure. Please mention DERA when contacting Jerry. He can be reached toll free at 800-766-6335 ext 15.

The Networking lunch is an FEMF sponsored luncheon and it is not necessary for DERA members to be registered at the conference to attend. Entrance to the Networking luncheon is only \$17.50 per seat.

DERA members have been on scene from one end of the country to the

other in the last few months with Hurricane Isabel on the East coast and the numerous fires out west. We want to bring the DERA membership together to commend our efforts as an organization, recognize everyone's willing service to our country, and strategize on where we want DERA to go in the future. We need your input to help further develop DERA as an organization steered by its members that reflects your interests and priorities. Please make an effort to attend our meetings and workshops this year. We are doing this for YOU!

- Meet officers & fellow members
- Introduce your goals and programs
- Help plan our forward strategies
- Meet with affiliate organizations
- Exercise various communications interoperability issues with multiple response and relief organizations.
- Lounge by the Pool in sunny Florida in February.....



I look forward to seeing you there.

-Catherine Lawhun

Catherine Lawhun is also President of Many Waters Resource Network, Inc. providing volunteer engineering professionals for disaster response nationwide. 888-570-1344

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SALVATION ARMY in IRAQ

Reporting in Late August:

After meeting with the director of education, The Salvation Army was given four schools to assess and restore. The first was the Girls' Secondary School. Though there was little structural damage, the school's plumbing, electrical and sanitation systems were completely destroyed. In less than 10 days The Salvation Army's work was nearly completed on the school. In addition to the refurbishments, The Salvation Army has installed two computers and an air conditioner in the computer lab. The head teacher was moved to tears when she saw the progress.

"The team remains vigilant and our neighbors keep a watchful eye on our behalf. Our team is in excellent spirits and looking forward to making a difference in the lives of the people in this community," said Major Cedric Hills, international emergency services coordinator for The Salvation Army.

Reporting in Late October:

A suicide bomb attack badly damaged the International Red Cross Baghdad headquarters, killing two Iraqi Red Cross employees and as many as 10 other people outside the compound.

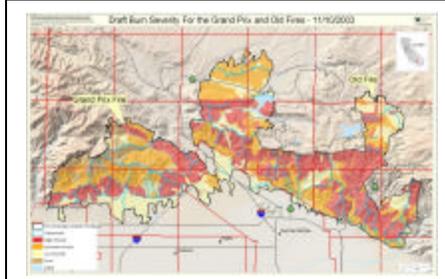
When Colonel James M. Knaggs, chief secretary of the Salvation Army phoned Major Molly A. Shotzberger, chaplaincy training director, she was about to join other Salvationists already helping people recover from Hurricane Isabel. To her surprise, Knaggs told her to pack instead for a six-week deployment in Iraq as a pastoral care officer and community liaison.

On November 4 she writes from Al Amarah, Iraq, "I have just returned from visiting one of the two hospitals here in Al Amarah. We visited the leukemia unit - all children there today - it was hard to hold the tears back. The patients must come every day for blood transfusions or they will die. The doctor in this unit told us they are in urgent need of a medication called "Desferal". He begged us to try to get this medicine for him. It is needed for the blood transfusions.

We too are saddened at the news out of Baghdad - it is such a shame because the majority of the Iraqi people are so grateful for everything that is being done to help them. A few are trying to undo all the good that has been done."

EIIP Virtual Forum GIS in Emergency Management

FEMA will be releasing their new HAZUS-MH (Hazards United States - Multi Hazards) program utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) promising to make modeling and mapping of hazards easier than learning ARCGIS for the emergency management community. (Read the entire transcript at www.emforum.org)



GIS makes it possible for severity mapping of burned area for California Fires (See related story on page 6)

CERT or CERT

The Dept. of Homeland security, in conjunction with Carnegie Mellon University, in September announced the creation of the U.S. Computer Emergency Response Team (US-CERT). The US-CERT will grow to include partnerships with private sector security vendors and other domestic and international CERT organizations. These groups will work together to coordinate national and international efforts to prevent, protect and respond to the effects of cyber attacks across the Internet. Unfortunately, the Acronym "CERT" was coined earlier. It is being used by the Citizens Corps Volunteers initiative known as the Community Emergency Response Teams which are currently in training at the state and local level throughout the United States.

National Mutual Aid

FEMA came one step closer to establishing a National Mutual Aid System after six states and the District of Columbia recently completed a pilot test of a new resource inventory system. The states participating in the pilot included Alabama, Colorado, Iowa, Massachusetts, Montana, and New Hampshire. The new system of cataloging resources into a single repository will make it easier for states to review and order the resources they need during a response since everyone will be using standard terminology. (continued on next page)



New Member Roster

Gerald Steckmeister
Courtland Manor, NY

Mike Hill
Dallas, TX

Justin McCaffrey
Massapequa Park, NY

David Geer
Spokane, WA

Michael K. Toko-Puku
Dakar, Senegal

Hugh A. Ward
Overton, NV

Jana Ward
Overton, NV

Martin Muteru Nderitu
Kenya Red Cross Society
Nairobi, Kenya

Tunde Akano
Nigerian Red Cross Society
Lagos, Nigeria

AHM Bazlur Rahman
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Shakir Adewale Jubril
Lagos, Nigeria

Welcome to DERA!

It is our sincere aim to help you attain your professional and personal goals



Has your membership expired?

Check expiration date on newsletter mailing label

No need to reapply for membership. Just send in the label with payment.

Please invite a friend or colleague to join DERA.

A membership application form is on the back page.

Mutual Aid (Continued from page 3)

FEMA staff members will analyze results of the pilot test, make any necessary changes, and then make the system available to all 50 states. Eventually, the resulting inventory will be put into an automated system that will make it easy for emergency managers to determine the location of resources they may need in a future crisis.

Mutual aid agreements are a way to leverage the nation's resources to respond to disasters of all types. FEMA promotes and encourages mutual aid and has made development of a National Mutual Aid System a top priority. Such a system will enhance the nation's ability to respond to catastrophic events, including acts of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction and natural disasters. FEMA's Preparedness Division recently awarded a \$2 million grant to the National Emergency Managers Association (NEMA) to help develop a model intrastate mutual aid agreement that could be used by any state without such an agreement or compact in place.

In the *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, the President called for "a comprehensive national system to bring together and coordinate all necessary response assets quickly and effectively." As part of this effort, FEMA established a working group of federal, state, and local agencies and organizations to develop categories of emergency response assets commonly exchanged in disasters via mutual aid. NEMA is an active participant in this process.

In Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, the President also directed the development of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). To promote interoperability and compatibility among local, state, regional, and national components, NIMS includes a core set of concepts and principles, including the incident command system, multi-agency coordination systems, identification and management of resources (including systems for classifying types of resources), qualifications and certification, and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident resources.

A number of the processes outlined in NIMS, such as resource identification and typing and resource inventory, mirror work underway via FEMA's National Mutual Aid Initiative.

As an example, The National Resources Management Working Group is currently typing a list of critical response resource within identified disciplines.

Wes Biggs, DERA Director, appointed to PBS Station's Board

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI -- KCPT TV 19, Kansas City local PBS affiliate has announced that Wesley R. Biggs, Sr., North Kansas City has been appointed to the station's Community Advisory Board. Members of the Community Advisory Board helps with the station's public relations and help coordinate special events. Biggs has been appointed to the 14 member Board for a two-year term.

Biggs serves as a Lieutenant Colonel with the Missouri Wing of Civil Air Patrol. He is a past Group Commander (NCR-MO-104) and past Squadron Commander (NCR-MO-114). Lt. Col. Biggs is a master rate as a Public Affairs Officer. Lt. Col. Biggs started his Civil Air Patrol Service as a Cadet member of the Northland Composite Squadron in 1984.

Biggs has served as a Member of the Board of Directors for DERA from November of 2000. He has also served a one-year term on the Board of Directors, of Sheffield Neighborhood Association in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1987 and 1988.

Wesley Biggs is self-employed in the Distribution and delivery business.

India's Echolink Node

(Continued from Page 1)

The year after Col. Wilson's disaster trip to India, Mr. Suri, and his son, Mohan, came to the U.S. and attended the Dayton Hamfest with DERA members Bob Dockery and Jay Wilson. While at that event, they had a good visit with the radio team working the emergency communications vehicle owned by the Wisconsin Wing of the Civil Air Patrol. See related story WISCONSIN CAP Mobile Command Post Fire. After the Hamfest, Mohan stayed in Colorado and helped run the DERA office for about 4 months. He has been back in India for some time and now and, in addition to an Echolink node, has a brand new baby boy which was born on September 10 of this year. **Congratulations on both counts Mohan!!!**

Echolink Net will be conducted in Echolink VU2RG-R from Hyderabad daily at 16.00 U.T.C. All are welcome to join and say hello to other radio operators across the globe through VU2RG-R.

FCC Makes Emergency AM Advisory Radio Available

The FCC has made available designated AM emergency advisory radio frequencies public safety professionals can use to inform citizens before during and after disasters. These channels, which have traditionally been used by departments of transportation, airports and national parks to convey traveler information, may also be licensed by local government for a variety of applications, including critical safety broadcasts during emergencies. Strategically located flashing signs and/or sirens alert those in the area to tune in on any AM radio receiver. More recent sign systems allow beacons to be activated throughout cities immediately via VHF/UHF radio. Many communities with existing siren systems mount public relations campaigns to condition residents to tune to special frequencies to get specifics, whenever siren sound. Emergency advisory radio stations may broadcast on any AM frequency between 530 and 1700 kHz that meets FCC separation parameters. They commonly have a three to five mile radius area of coverage, expandable, as described above, using synchronization. The cost of an emergency advisory station is usually less than a single outdoor warning siren. Local governments can obtain frequencies on a first-come-first-served basis. Because of the popularity of these types of stations in recent years, it is recommended that those evaluating such systems obtain licenses right away.

WISCONSIN CAP Mobile Command Post Fire

On October 4, Fire broke out in a state of the art mobile communications command post owned by the Wisconsin Wing of the Civil Air Patrol. This extremely well designed vehicle was built in large part through the efforts of DERA member Lt Col. Dan Ritchie and his friends in West Bend, Wisconsin.



Lt. Col. Daniel Ritchie sits in the burned-out vehicle.

The vehicle was the only one of its kind in the state and could cost \$60,000 or more to replace. Members drove it to 55 emergencies last year alone, working to coordinate police and medical responses. The Wisconsin group consists of about 1250 volunteer members and is trying to raise \$60,000 to replace the vehicle. For more information, contact the Wisconsin state CAP office at (414) 527-0580.

How to Build a Network

Where do you start building a network? The local **information and referral agency (I&R)** has these organizations in its database. The I&R knows what they do, who they serve, and how to access their services. It is in regular contact with them. Thus, the I&R is a logical core element of the network. Information flows from the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) to the I&R, from the I&R to the non-profit and faith-based organizations that serve the hardest-to-reach people, and from those organizations to the people themselves. Feedback on conditions and needs flows in the opposite direction. Ensuring that the network has full, accurate and timely information is too important to be left to chance. It has to be based on a formal relationship between the network and the EMA. The relationship must be established prior to the disaster, clearly defined and exercised, like all other parts of the emergency plan.

2-1-1

A New Piece in the Toolbox

The EMA's job of working with local I&R has recently been made easier. In 2000, the FCC set aside 2-1-1 as the uniform number for comprehensive community information and referral services (I&R's). Throughout the United States, parallel to 9-1-1 for life threatening emergencies. In its standards for 2-1-1 services, AIRS, the national professional association for I&R, requires a relationship with the local EMA. AIRS' guidelines and training materials to help 2-1-1 services partner with EMA's are at:
www.airs.org/pub/pub/_dis_211.asp.

To date, the 2-1-1 dialing code serves 62 million people in 22 states. By July 2005, it is expected that most Americans will have access to 2-1-1 dialing. An immediate effect wherever 2-1-1 has been implemented is a sharp drop in inappropriate calls to 9-1-1. 9-1-1 system operators, who had been leery of 2-1-1 in the beginning, now widely support it.

Like all advances in emergency management, developing comprehensive community preparedness networks that include local non-profit and faith-based organizations means additional work for EMA directors. However, it also means the acquisition of valuable assets that they cannot afford to overlook. See also www.211.org.

California Fires

At the peak response efforts showed 16,000 firefighters engaged all of whom battled the fires that swept across more than 743,000 acres, caused 22 deaths, and destroyed more than 3,570 homes. By Nov. 5 the numbers of engaged firefighters had dropped to just over 6,000. Media reports differ but, some reports indicate that more than 83,000 customers have been impacted by power outages associated with the fires.

SBA Loans

SBA Loans for Damages related to Southern California Fires Disaster Deadlines for filing for counties including Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernadino, San Diego and Ventura began: Oct. 31 and continuing. Deadlines for filing for applications for physical damage to homes, personal property, and businesses: December 26, 2003 Filing deadline for economic injury applications: July 27, 2004

Already, there have been \$3.2 billion in insurance claims for homes alone.

Red Cross Response Extended Effects of Fires

Biomedical Services' Blood Region: Santa Ana winds and the fires had severely impacted the humidity. Our National Testing Labs require an environment of air humidity in the range of 30% to 70%. We have humidifiers in our labs to correct for this. The winds and fires have pulled all of the moisture out of the air to a level where our humidifiers cannot keep up. As a result we had to suspend testing at the San Diego NTL until we could bring this environmental parameter back into control.

The San Diego Division of the Southern California Region had to cancel more than 15 blood drives. This is a loss of 517 prospective units. Red Cross had already shipped 125 units of Red Cells to our colleagues at the Blood Bank of San Bernardino-Riverside Counties to assist them as they had also lost blood drives due to the wild fires.

Conferences

Airport Fire-Rescue U.S.A.

The INTERNATIONAL AVIATION FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (IAFPA) has issued a CALL FOR CONFERENCE SPEAKERS for our 'AIRPORT FIRE - RESCUE U.S.A.' 5th Annual International Conference being held on May 17-19th 2004 at the Excalibur Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada (USA).

-CALL FOR SPEAKERS-

Speakers who wish to present a conference paper must submit a topic NO LATER THAN January 30th 2004.

All previously unpublished papers aimed at the technical and scientific advancement of aviation fire safety and improved aviation fire protection are encouraged for submission. For a partial list of topic areas that will be considered please visit:
www.iafpa.org.uk

Basin and Range Province Seismic Hazards Summit II

Evaluating Approaches, Techniques, and Policies for Seismic Hazard Characterization in Extensional Regions A conference to be held at the John Ascuaga's Nugget Resort **Reno, Nevada May 16, 17, 18, and 19, 2004** Sponsored by Western States Seismic Policy Council United States Geological Survey Federal Emergency Management Agency *And Geoscientists from: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Wyoming*

- CALL FOR PAPERS - Schedule

Titles: February 5, 2004

Expanded Abstracts: March 10, 2004

Early Registration ends: March 15, 2004

Proceedings Papers: June 30, 2004

Further details will be posted at
www.nbm@unr.edu

Germ Detection System Active in 31 Cities

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. government has set up a \$60 million network to help detect a biological attack in 31 cities across the country, Homeland Security officials said on Friday. The BioWatch system collects air samples at about a dozen sites in each of the cities. The samples are then checked for potentially deadly diseases that could be

used in a biological attack. The goal of BioWatch, located mostly in major urban areas such as Washington, New York City and Houston, is to discover if any bacteria or viruses have been released into the air as part of a biological attack. If so, the department would then mobilize public health and law enforcement officials. Officials said the system will only identify germs once they are already in the air. "By the time you get a hit (positive result), people could have already been infected," said Parney Albright, assistant secretary for science and technology at the Department of Homeland Security. But detection will allow officials to identify the germ and dispense drugs to treat the disease, possibly before any symptoms appear among those infected. "The sensitivity (of the system) is sufficient to detect attacks that would kill lots of people," Albright said. "But this will not protect us from every possible attack," he added. He said BioWatch would not have been much use in trying to detect the deadly anthrax sent in letters mailed to politicians and the news media in 2001. Since it was launched, BioWatch has analyzed more than half a million samples with one positive result - in Houston last month when the air sensors detected fragments of tularemia. Although tularemia is considered a potentially dangerous biological weapon in part because it is highly infectious, it occurs naturally - as was the case in Houston - and is commonly found in animals such as rabbits.

LABOR INTENSIVE SYSTEM

Air samples are collected at least once a day and taken to special laboratories where technicians extract DNA samples to do genetic testing for a number of diseases. The tests are specific for each germ that is viewed by the government as a likely biowarfare or terrorism agent. Officials would not say what bugs they screen for, saying only that it was less than a dozen. Experts have said they could include the germs that cause anthrax, tularemia, smallpox, plague, botulism and hemorrhagic fever. Officials said the system covers half the U.S. population, but some experts have questioned the amount of air that is tested. They say sensors need to be correctly positioned to accurately detect an attack. The program costs about \$2 million per year per city, much of which is spent in labor costs, Albright said. BioWatch is funded by Homeland Security, and has been operating since early 2003, when officials grew worried about the threat of biological attack in light of the war in Iraq. The department

set up BioWatch sensors at many of the Environmental Protection Agency's air quality monitoring stations. The laboratory analysis is done in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

North Carolina Disaster Reservists

The North Carolina Division of Emergency Management Public Assistance Disaster Reservist program was created in May of 2001 to provide a technical compliment to the division's disaster response and recovery effort. Since that time a total of 32 men and women with backgrounds ranging from engineers to road and bridge maintenance supervisors, data entry clerks to insurance specialists, have answered the state's call to help us assemble a cadre of professionals on-call in the event of a disaster. According to NCEM Director Eric Tolbert, "Although it's a program still in it's infancy, the Disaster Reservist Team has already put the state in the best possible position regarding staffing for future disasters. The high caliber of people we have attracted so far definitely fits our need to have a team of Emergency Management experts available to the state on an as-needed basis". Disaster Reservists are often retired local, state, or federal civil service employees and are classified as "temporary employees" in the Disaster Reservist Team (DRT) roles. DRT positions are available for both specialists and supervisors in the following disciplines: Architect, Damage Assessment Specialist, Data Entry Clerk, Public Works Engineer, Public Works Specialist, Grants Manager, Insurance Specialist, Bridge Maintenance Supervisor, Bridge Maintenance Specialist, Road Maintenance Engineer, Building Contractor / Developer. Due to the increased need in all aspects of disaster recovery, additional job descriptions may be added in the future.

The Public Assistance Disaster Reservist program has a continuous recruitment mission. To apply for the team, complete a state application. (PD107 and PD107A) State applications can be downloaded from www.osp.state.nc.us/jobs and mailed to:

*North Carolina Emergency Management
Public Assistance - DROC,
4716 Mail Service Center,
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4716
ATTN: PA Disaster Reservist Coordinator*
For more information contact Disaster Reservist Coordinator at: 919-715-8000 or visit our website at: www.ncem.org/PA/.

Short Message Service

The short message service lets anyone with a cell phone easily send and receive text messages. SMS is popular among businesses and teenagers overseas where it serves as a cheap and easy way to communicate. The U.S. has been slow to embrace SMS because early technical issues made it difficult to send messages between cellular carriers, and Americans didn't need the cheaper alternative to phone calls. A growing number of U.S. businesses are looking at SMS as another communication tool to supplement phone calls and e-mail. Governments find it helpful, too. In April, authorities in Hong Kong used SMS to send a text message to more than 6 million cell phones to quash a panic over the SARS virus. The message let citizens know that the city was relatively clear and wouldn't be officially declared an infected area. SMS text messaging can also save lives. In California, a program called Emergency Digital Information Services uses SMS to keep citizens prepare for emergencies. A handful of agencies across the state have access to a pipeline developed by the Governor's office of Emergency Services and can send messages to the public whenever necessary. Citizens can subscribe to whatever alerts they want to receive- earthquake advisories, blackout alerts, severe weather, among others - and get the current critical information. Many emergency service processes dependent on paging systems could be switched over to SMS as the costs of FM access increase providing a dual use for the cell phones that most rural volunteer responders already own privately.

In Memoriam

Harold Gibson, VE3NKU, was a sterling Salvationist and representative of the highest Christian ethic. He well symbolized the amateur spirit. He loved amateur radio and the many friends he made through the years. He was part of the first Salvation Army Radio Operators Fellowship founded by Lt. Colonel Carl Lindstrom W9JSF, in the 60's and was part of its resurgence in the mid-eighties. I met him then on the newer SAROF 3920 net. Later, he was the first net director for the Canadian SAROF net. He was a faithful net member and was one of the four amateur operators that took part in the very first SATERN net on June 26th, 1988. It was a joy to listen to his comments regarding the fellowship, the SATERN program, and also to listen regarding the work of The Salvation Army in his home corps in Hamilton, Ontario. I am sure the he and Ernie VE3BIX, his friend who preceded him in death are

renewing their friendship as this correspondence is sent out. We all extend our condolences to his family and friends. He will surely be missed. It was a privilege to know him and to see the witness of an exemplary life.

Submitted by
Major Patrick E. McPherson
National Director SATERN
and fellow DERA member

CEO COM Link

An article entitled Calling All CEO's, which appeared in a recent issue of The Government Executive, reports that before the fires were even extinguished at Ground Zero, the newly appointed head of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge was promoting the formation of a secure (and secret) communication channel through which high-level government officials and the CEOs of a handful of America's largest firms could communicate and swap information.

Known as CEO COM Link, the system, which is not talked about openly by government officials, is reportedly a secure conference call system that can be activated in an emergency. Before it, reports Falconer, nothing of the sort existed. However, in the event of another massive terrorist attack, it is expected that Ridge will use COM Link to communicate with economic leaders within minutes of an attack about the state of the nation's critical economic infrastructure.

A homeland security emergency exercise (war game) involving top business and government officials last April simulated a hacker attack on the financial markets and a simultaneous bio-terror attack on Chicago, reported Falconer. COM Link was tested during the exercise and according to some experts mentioned in the article, it proved to be a success. "The difference between [using] it and not [using] it saved over a million lives in the war game," C. Michael Armstrong, chairman of Comcast told an assembly of security experts at an industry event last May in Arlington, VA.

ARC-Restructure

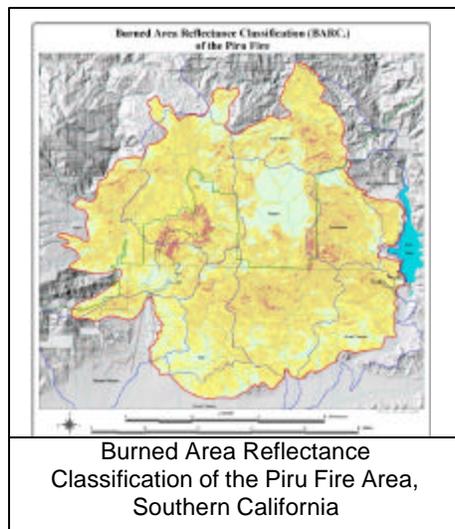
Interview with Larry Koslick, Florida State Disaster Manager

The Red Cross has been moving towards an organization wide restructure for several years now. With a renewed priority on Disaster, they are consolidating a lot of services and are moving away from the previous concept of Regional Offices to Service Center Offices. Another important innovation is

the use of Value Added Cards, which are credit card type cards, filled with a particular number of dollars, based on investigated relief commitment. During the Typhoon in Guam last year, they were using traveler's checks to make awards because of the lack of electricity but they have since been able to put their new systems to use in both the Hurricane Isabel and California fire relief efforts.

Under an ongoing program termed Disaster Services Technology Integration, the agency is drastically improving on it's archaic database software called 'CHEERS' which was developed in the mid '80's. It will be a fully integrated system and portions are being rolled out this coming year for initial review.

Burned Area Emergency Response



The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) program deals with the risks immediately after a fire. The goals of the BAER team include protecting life, property, water quality, and deteriorated ecosystems.

BAER teams are staffed with hydrologists, soil scientists, engineers, biologists, silviculturists, range conservationists, archaeologists, and other professionals. They first assess and evaluate the burned area, then prescribe treatments to protect the people and the land in the burned area. The BAER team assessments often begin before the wildfire has been fully contained.

After a fire, damaged vegetation, and soils that shed water can lead to severe erosion and flash floods. The team's rehab activities may include re-seeding of ground cover with fast-growing or native species, removing safety hazards, mulching with straw or chipped wood, and installation of fallen trees and other

barriers to catch sediments on steep slopes. The team will also assess the need for drainage structures, new or improved culverts, monitoring of flash flood danger and landslides, or emergency spillways to keep roads and bridges from washing out.

BAER team activities are a cooperative effort among federal agencies (including the Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Geological Survey, and others), along with state, tribal, and local forestry and emergency agencies. BAER team efforts are closely coordinated with private landowners in the area.

"The main objective of the assessment report is to determine the cost of treatment," said Julie Lydick, regional forest representative for BAER, but whose regular job is assistant director for State and Private Forestry for the U.S. Forest Service based near San Francisco. "And with the magnitude of these fires, we are expecting the BAER cost to come in around the 2 million-dollar mark."

Isabel Response- One Lesson Learned

Power had begun returning to the half-million or so residents who still had none as a new week began. ARRL Virginia Section Emergency Coordinator Tom Gregory, N4NW, reported that commercial power finally returned to his home September 24. He'd spent 141 hours running his home from an emergency back-up generator. Gregory, who lives in Stafford County, lost power September 18. Now he strongly advises amateurs involved in public service communication to have a supply of emergency power available for such situations, so they can remain on the air.

DMAT

National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) was created in 1984 as a nationwide medical response system to: supplement State and local medical resources; provide backup medical support to the military and VA medical health care system during an overseas conflict; and to promote development of community based disaster medical systems. It comprises more than 8,000 private sector medical and support personnel, organized into approximately 109 response teams (called Disaster Medical Assistance Teams or DMAT) across the nation.



Save the Date...

February 6-7, 2004 Orlando, Florida

Please remember that our Annual Membership Meeting, Workshop Forum and Joint Communications Interoperability Training Sessions will be held in **Orlando, Florida on February 6-7, 2004**. This is being held in conjunction with the 25th Annual International Disaster Management 2004 Conference presented by the Florida Emergency Medicine Foundation(FEMF). Info & registration: <http://www.disasters.org/2004>

Program Partners

- DERA
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida
- ACEP - Disaster Section
- Fire Chief Magazine
- Florida Hospital Association
- JEMS Communications
- Central Florida Disaster Medical Assistance Team (FL-6)
- Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology
- Florida Department of Health, Bureau of EMS

When

February 2004						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

Where

The Rosen Plaza Hotel
9700 International Drive
Orlando, FL 32819
800-627-8258

Travel Information

Take advantage of special discounted travel fares by calling Sharon at the Disaster 2004 Travel Desk: 407-869-6888

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The DERA workshops will feature:

- ◆ Joint Communications Interoperability Training Session- DERA/FAIRS/SATERN/VEOC
- ◆ Strategic Planning Workshop: DERA 2050-Where the Membership Wants to Go
- ◆ Networking Social, Continental Breakfasts, Luncheons and Membership Meeting

The Strategic planning sessions of this workshop will determine DERA's future. Please attend and help plan our journey!

Friday Feb. 6	Saturday Feb. 7
General Sessions - 8 am – 11:45 am Disaster Medical Response Staten Island Ferry Incident: Lessons Learned University of Massachusetts Civil Disturbance (Lessons Learned)	Track 1-Outbreak/Public Health - 8 am- 11:30 am Emerging Infectious Diseases SARS- The NY Hospital Experience Protecting Emergency Responders- the Public Health Role
Networking Lunch 11:45 am -1:30 pm	DERA Lunchtime Forum & Social
Track 1-Outbreak/Public Health - 1 pm - 4:30 Terrorism Preparedness –Implications to Public Health Infrastructure Public Health & Law Enforcement Relations Protecting Rural Communities from Terrorism	Track 2 – Medical 8 am- 11:30 am Rescue Medicine Protecting Emergency Responders Healthcare Response to Chemical Release
Track 2-Medical - 1 pm - 4:30 Interagency Coordination Toxicology of Structural Collapse Radiation Exposure	Track 3 – Planning 8 am- 11:30 am Command and Control - Advanced Concept Technology Virtual Warehouse - Planning for Donations The Panic Myth
Track 3-Response - 1 pm - 4:30 Special Ops for Terrorism and Hazmat Crimes Pairing Disaster Search Dogs with Paramedics Mass Decontamination	General Sessions - 1 pm - 4:30 2003 Blackout - the NY City Experience Central Canadian National Train Derailment Pro-Player Stadium Terrorist Attack Drill
DERA Joint Interoperability Training 6 pm-10 pm Communications – FAIRS SATERN Virtual EOC Sound Commander	DERA Membership Meeting & Workshop Forum 6 pm-10 pm Programs, Goals, Missions, Logistics, Vision Planning, Strategies & Appointments



No Charge to attend DERA sessions, but reservations are needed by January 25, 2004.

Send to: DERA, POB 797, Longmont, CO 80502, or

Signup online at <http://www.many-waters.com/DERA/Reservation.htm>



FEMF registration is required to attend daytime sessions of the International Disaster Management Conference: \$320 before Jan. 5, 2004; \$350 afterwards. Contact FEMF directly: (800) 766-6335 or (407) 281-7396. Online: <http://www.FEMF.org>
 Email: info@femf.org



Networking Luncheon, Friday, February 6, 2004: \$17.50 . (No additional charge to those registered for the Disaster Management Conference). Contact FEMF (see above) to purchase luncheon ticket.

Latest Updates: www.disasters.org/2004

DERA DisasterCom
P.O. Box 797
Longmont, CO 80502-0797

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Quarterly Newsletter

ISSN 1521-1592
12-2003

Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association

2004 Membership Application

(Express Renewal for Current Members: Include mail label, show changes, enclose payment)

Name: _____ Organization: _____ Referred By: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ Country: _____

E-Mail: _____ Radio Callsign: _____

Please Select Membership Category:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional / Technical / Academic
\$45.00 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit Organization
\$65.00 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive / Management
\$75.00 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> Gov't Agency or Small Business
\$75.00 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer, Student, Retired
\$25.00 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Membership
\$175.00 per year |

Please Show Method of Payment

- Check/Money Order VISA MasterCard Government IMPAC Purchase Order

CHARGE CARD NUMBER: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ EXPIRES: ___ / ___

Authorized Signature: _____

Include appropriate exchange rates for foreign currency. All checks or bank drafts must be negotiable through U.S. Banks. FEIN 39-1777651

Mail Application To:

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P.O. Box 797
Longmont, CO 80502