



Press Release

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Diversity comes in many shapes, sizes and background Auxiliarists who are Ham Radio Operators Assist

One of a Series

Port Isabel Island, TX - Several Auxiliarists from Flotilla 7-2 in Port Isabel, Texas, at the tip of South Padre Island, have been using their Ham Radios to listen for messages coming out of Haiti. Auxiliarists Larry Steller, age 75, a former electronic technician; Fred Mann, age 60, a college professor; and Skip Layne, age 45, a local pastor, have been standing watch at their radios since 15 January.

They are monitoring two on-the-air networks, the Maritime Net and the SATERN (Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network) net. The number of Haitian Hams able to get on the air has been limited. The Flotilla 7-2 team recorded and then transmitted to the Coast Guard messages reported by their contacts in Haiti. Reports included alarms of civil unrest, requests for private pilots to fly supplies into Haiti, and requests from what seems to be the one of the very few Haitian Ham Radio Operators on the air, Father John, whose call sign is HH2JR. One of his requests was for himself: he asked for supplies for his generator so he can stay on the air.

Other Ham Radio Operators from Haiti's Caribbean neighbors have also participated in forwarding requests to the appropriate recipient. Conditions on the air have been poor, with tremendous amounts of static over multiple frequencies used for emergency traffic. Listening to such noise is a tedious and

straining exercise, but one which has its own rewards when you are able to copy a message and then forward it to ease the fear of a loved one or mobilize the authorities with vital information.

Ham Radio and their operators have been synonymous with disasters since Amateur Radio (the proper term for Ham Radio) started. From hurricanes to landslides, air crashes, earthquakes and war, Ham Radio Operators have responded to transmit vital information to the authorities and to loved ones of at home of those affected by the disaster.

Even if the sender is in Iraq and the receiver is Denver, Ham Operators will get that message to the ultimate recipient. Ham Radio Operators are known for their public service and in this disaster they continue that proud tradition.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed volunteer component of the United States Coast Guard created by an Act of Congress in 1939. The 30,000 volunteer members (men and women), America's Volunteer Guardians, support the Coast Guard in nearly all of the service's missions.

Auxiliarist Fred Mann Public Affairs Office of Flotilla 7-2 of the Eighth Coast Region District assisted in the writing of this release.

Photos:

FredMann.jpg – Auxiliarist Fred Mann at his "Ham Shack".

<http://www.auxguidanceskills.info/pr/FredMann.jpg>