



The **NEWSCASTER**

The Official Publication of the Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.mts.net/~warc>

March 2010

IRLP # 1066 on VE4WRS 145.450-

VE4BB

“WSPR”

Weak Signal Propagation Reporter

By, Jim, VE4SIG

Date: Monday, March 8, 2010

Time: 7:30 PM

**Place: Dakota Collegiate (Theatre)
661 Dakota Street (At Beliveau Rd.)**

And now a word from the President

By Mark, VE4MAB

There are exciting times ahead for *Ham Radio!*

The sunspots seem to have come alive again and reports that DX is improving is sure to start filling up the log book once again.

I recently attended a presentation made by Eric Meth, VE3EI & ICOM's Technical Support Representative, on the benefits of the D-Star system being proposed for implementation in Winnipeg.

If you've been looking for something new and exciting to take your operating experience to a higher level, this is it! I encourage you to read and re-read Don's (VE4DWG) very informative article in this issue and check out the web links he has provided.

As the proposed D-Star system will be open to and will indeed be used by all Radio Amateurs, it is proper that WARC support ARES, the Manitoba Repeater Society, RAC Section Manager, MEMO and Public Safety Canada to ensure the D-Star system can be put in place for the benefit of all.

Take some time do some research regarding the D-Star system so you will be familiar with the system and its capabilities when discussed at an upcoming WARC meeting. And perhaps start planning to purchase your new RIG!

Stay Tuned!

April is " Home Brew Night"

Be sure to bring along your "Home Brew" projects for show and tell.

For those with projects too large, such as that "Perfect" antenna configuration, bring along some photos, digital or print, for your entry.

Other Important Dates...

Newscaster: Deadline March 30 2010

**WARC: Monthly Meeting Dates
March 8, 2010—WSPR or
Weak Signal Propagation Reporter
April 12, 2010—Home Brew Night**

**WSC: 2nd Thursday of month
Breakfast—Garden City Inn**

ARES: March 23, 2010

**Other: WARC Spring Flea Market
Sunday, April 18, 2010**

WARC Executive for 2009-2010...

President	Mark Blumm	ve4mab@gmail.com
Vice-Pres.	Garth Blumm	ve4gwb@gmail.com
Treasurer	Bob Jacobs	rcjacobs@mts.net
Secretary	Jim Sutton	Jim.Sutton@AAAalarms.ca
Membership	Garth Blumm	ve4gwb@gmail.com
Programs	Mark Blumm	ve4mab@gmail.com
Director @ Large	Vacant	
Past President	Geoff Bawden	ve4baw@rac.ca

Our Vision

To increase public awareness and respect for Amateur radio; to provide education and support in all aspects of the hobby to our members in a social atmosphere

WARC Meeting Minutes, Feb 8, 2010

Taken by Jim, VE4SIG

Introductions

Review of minutes of Previous Meeting

Approval by VE4GWN seconded by VE4HAY

Any Business arising from those Minutes

- none

Correspondence

- A number of membership renewals can in and were passed on to the President in absence of the Membership chair.

Committee Reports

Treasurer

- In January we had expenses of \$ 119.56 leaving us with a balance of \$ 6683.87

DX

- VE4SN reports dramatic improvements. Recently he has worked Uganda, Zimbabwe and Nigeria (s9+ on CW). There are a number of DXpeditions going on.

- 1) UAE until 13 Feb
- 2) JD1 from 06-14 February
- 3) Palau (T8) 10-16 Feb 80-10M on both CW&SSB

RAC

- VE4HAY reports that the annual Board meeting is scheduled for the end of April/start of May time.

They are looking for someone to head a Member Services Committee as well as people to run Insurance, Grants & Philanthropy.

ARES

- 23 operators provided communications for Sled Dog Classic which had nicer weather than last year.

Don't forget to sign up for the Marathon!

Education

- No report

Flea Market

- Charging ahead—still some tables available to book. 18 April @ Heritage Victoria Community Club.

Field Day

- Bruce VE4DBF has offered to coordinate our Field Day planning for this year.

New business

- VE4JNF mentioned that during his Cuban holiday he managed to make 2 QSO's—on in Alabama and they other in Russia. Getting a licence to operate while there was easy and there was no cost (although he was closely watched)

Good & Welfare

- nothing to report

Programs

- The program for this evening will be a DXpedition to Peter Island video.

-The program for March will be WSPR (Weak Signal Propagation Reporter) by VE4SIG .

-April is Home Brew Night

Moved to adjourn

- By VE4GKS

-Seconded by VE4SIG

Amateur Radio Service Centre
Industry Canada

P.O. Box 9654, Postal Station T
Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 6K9
Telephone: (613) 780-3333
Toll free: (888) 780-3333
Fax: (613) 998-5919
E-mail: spectrum.amateur@ic.gc.ca
http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/internet/insmt-gst.nsf/en/h_sf01709e.html

IRLP Node 1066
145.450 MHz -600 KHz
(VE4WRS)

Comments or if you just want to reach us :
Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club
C/O VE4WSC
598 St. Mary's Road
Winnipeg, MB R2M 3L5

DIAMOND IMAGE



Floyd Rolph VE4 FDR
835 Cavalier Drive Tel: (204) 888-3227
Winnipeg, MB R2Y 1C6 Fax: (204) 831-6400

- South Western & Victorian home decor
- ty Beanie Babies
- Balloon bouquets & decorating
- Gifts
- Printing eg: Business cards, letterhead, envelopes
- Wedding invitations

WPGARES

By Jeff, VE4MBQ

Emergency Coordinator

Twenty-three ARES volunteers provided Amateur Communications SUN 31 JAN for the Voyageur Sled Dog Classic that was based at The Forks. It was a lot easier working outside all day in wind-chills around -25 to -20 C rather than the -50 C wind-chills that we had to adapt to in 2007. Thanks to VE4s:

MMG, EH, GWN, HK, XM, EDE, CLK, XYL, GMT, ACX, SE, DWG, AJO, JNF, HAZ, BOY, TRO, MAB, WTF, KAZ, SBS, LIT and MBQ.

Special thanks to VE4XM & VE4EDE for bringing out their snowmobiles and to Walter VE4VB for use of VE4CNR.

Our February General Meeting featured Garth VE4GWB and Richard VE4ESX who gave us a thought-provoking presentation on the Manitoba Ski Patrol Search and Rescue Exercise that they participated in late last fall. A lot of discussion was stimulated by Richard & Garth. Thanks to Rolf VE4VZ for repairing one of our HTs.

We will be providing Amateur Radio Communications once again for the Scouts Canada Klondike Derby at Camp Amisk 6, 7 MAR with approximately fifteen operators/day. A description of Klondike Derby can be found at:

<http://www.scouts.ca/dnn/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=0P/38vSH6Tk=&tabid=670>

We recently learned that the Manitoba Parkinson Society has photos from their 2009 SuperWalk posted online and that several ARES volunteers appear in the photos. Please see:

http://www.parkinson.ca/c.qIIZIdNYJwE/b.5779519/k.2100/2009_SuperWalk_Winnipeg/siteapps/tools/PhotoGallery.aspx

The Manitoba ARES Executive is collaborating with Public Safety Canada, Manitoba EMO, Icom Canada and Micro-Hightech Communications towards installation of a D-STAR digital voice and data repeater system in Winnipeg.

The idea is to have an Amateur Radio digital voice and data system available for use by ARES operators to link various Capital Region Emergency Operation Centres (EOCs) during an emergency or crisis yet have the system available for use by any D-STAR equipped Amateur operator the rest of the time.

There will be a lot more information coming out in the near future. Apparently George Hill from Micro-Hightech will have some very competitive prices on D-STAR equipment in the next while. Information on D-STAR can be found at:

<http://www.icomcanada.com:80/dstar/index.htm>

Our next General Meeting is TUE 23 MAR 1900h at Sir Wm Stephenson Library 765 Keewatin Street. Speaker/topic to be announced.

Manitoba Marathon

By Jeff, VE4MBQ

We still need at least thirty (30) volunteer operators for the Manitoba Marathon SUN 20 JUNE.

If able to volunteer or just looking for more information please send me an e-mail at the above address, call me up on VE4WPG or drop by *The Arches* on SAT morning (just don't come by SAT 6 MAR 'cause I'll be at Klondike Derby).

Ready Set, GO!

By David, VE4DAR

Red River College's (RRC) Continuing Studies Division is *ready*. In fact they have even started to advertise it. Now it's up to that intrepid cadre of WARC instructors to dust off their teaching notes and update their PowerPoint presentations because the next Basic Course is *set* for April 6 – June 24. It will run 6:00 – 9:00 pm Tues. & Thurs. at RRC's Princess Street Campus.

Course cost is \$150 (including the Study Guide) paid to Red River College. Chief Instructor is Bob Jacobs VE4RCJ.

More info can be discovered at www.rrc.mb.ca on the left side, click on continuing studies > part-time courses. Under letter A, scroll to Amateur Radio Operator Introduction. For telephone information call Ellie at 949-8353. Registration is in person at the Notre Dame or Princess Street campuses, on line, or by telephone at 694-1789. Please refer to Course Code PDEV – 1018.

Now it's up to you to *go forth* and promote this Basic Course among your family, friends, neighbours, and local institutions. Talk with your kids, grandkids, fellow workers and curlers. The last course was cancelled due to not enough registrations. The good news is RRC already has registered two persons. Let's boost that to 20!

***Amateur Radio Hams Host Annual Flea Market
Extracted from an article in "The Headliner"
By Trevor Suffield***

Jim Sutton was just 10-years-old and sick in bed when a lifelong passion took hold of him. His parents brought him a radio that was different from the normal transistor radios he had used due to the short wave bandwidths.

"I pull up the antennae, and I'm sitting in bed hacking up a lung, and the next thing you know I'm listening to the British Broadcasting Corporation," says Sutton, who lives in Old St. Vital. "That was it, and I was hooked ever since then."

Sutton is the secretary for the Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club, which is holding its semi-annual flea market Oct. 18 at the Heritage Victoria Community Club at 950 Sturgeon Rd.

The flea market is an opportunity for local hams to come out and meet other amateur radio operators and pick up some equipment at the same time, Sutton says. "You'll see antennas, radios, hard drives, computers and all sorts of stuff that are of interest to amateur radio operators or anybody with an interest in technology," Sutton says.

The flea market will feature displays for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service and the Winnipeg Senior Citizens Radio Club VE4WSC.

"If someone is interested in amateur radio, and they wanted to learn more about it, this would be an opportunity to do it," Sutton says.

Sutton, whose call sign is VE4SIG, says the thrill of connecting with someone even just a province or two away is exciting.

"It's like an electric shock goes up your spine, like wow that is so cool!"

Flea market co-ordinator Dick Maguire, whose call sign is VE4HK, has been a ham for over 40 years and acknowledges the number of amateur radio operators has slowly been on the decline in recent times.

***What have you done to "promote
amateur radio this week"***

That line we credit to an old News stalwart, Peter Parker with using in his old VK1 and VK3 casts many years ago and it still stands true -WLA

**Winnipeg Amateur Radio Club
Spring Flea Market**

**Sunday April 18, 2010
Heritage Victoria Community Club
950 Sturgeon Road, Winnipeg, MB**

Admission \$3.00

**Doors open for coffee and socializing 9:30 am
Vendor Setup 9:45 am-10:30 am
Doors open for buyers 10:30 am-noon**

**Tables: \$5.00 each for WARC members
Commercial & non WARC members \$10.00**

**For Tables—Contact Ruth Mills VE4XYL by
e-mail at ve4se@mts.net or call 204-837-6915**

**For more info- Contact Dick Maguire VE4HK
by e-mail at ve4hk@rac.ca or call 204-256-3143**

"Most young people are not interested in amateur radio anymore. I would say most amateurs are 50-years-old and up," says Maguire, adding that events like the upcoming market are important in helping spread the word.

Maguire estimates there are 1,000 operators in Winnipeg, and another 1,000 throughout the province.

While the Internet has lured away some operators, amateur radio is still the preferred form of communication for most hams, according to Sutton.

The start up costs can range from a few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars, depending on the equipment.

However, before you can start transmitting you must first take an exam and be licensed by the federal government through Industry Canada.

"Amateur radio is one of only two hobbies that is federally regulated before you can practice," says Maguire, adding that becoming a pilot is the other hobby.

Sutton says amateur radio is still a vital part of world communications, saying that when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and all forms of communication were down, amateur radio was still functioning and informing people.

"When all else fails, there is amateur radio," says Sutton.

Radio Amateurs Of Canada ~ Positions Available

Paid Position at the RAC Ottawa Office

The RAC is seeking a client focused, people oriented individual to manage member relations and sales; this would include member renewals, answering questions from members and prospective members of the services that RAC offers, fielding concerns and complaints as well as managing RAC's store operations.

The successful applicant must have a high degree of inter-personal skills, be proficient in English and French [both written and spoken], have a background in sales or marketing, and be a certified amateur radio operator. The individual must be a problem solver and interested in a challenge and must be able to work with and motivate a team of amateur radio volunteers.

The successful candidate would report to the RAC Office Manager and be expected to undertake the duties of the Office Manager in the event the Manager is away. Hours; part time to full time, Pay; \$13.00 per hour (+).

Please send questions and a resume to the President at ve4baw@rac.ca.

The RAC Philanthropy and Grants Program

The RAC is looking for a dynamic, motivated volunteer to establish a Philanthropy and Grants Program at the RAC.

Many amateurs look for ways to leave a legacy and other amateur radio associations [such as the ARRL] have mechanisms in place to both provide a memory for such amateurs and an opportunity for amateurs to help amateur radio.

Potentially coupled with the Philanthropy Program is a new Grants Program to look for third party funding to enhance amateur radio.

If you have any ideas or questions or are interested in submitting a resume for either or both of the Philanthropy or Grants Program please email..

Bill Unger, Ontario NorthEast Director at wunger@confederationnc.on.ca
or
Geoff Bawden, President at ve4baw@rac.ca.

The RAC Insurance Program

The RAC is looking for a dynamic, motivated, client oriented amateur with a background in insurance to help the RAC administer and expand its insurance program. The position includes insurance administration, liaising with clubs and members and marketing of the RAC Insurance program.

Questions and resumes should be directed to the First Vice President, Mr. Ian MacFarquhar, ve9im at ve9im@rac.ca.

Membership and Service Enhancements

Looking for a Part-Time Volunteer Career in Helping Amateur Radio Operators? Want to work with dedicated, like minded radio people?

The dynamic national organization representing Canadian amateur radio operators is looking for a people person and service oriented leader to enhance member services.

Duties include: assessing members wants and needs, analyzing the effectiveness of existing service delivery and measuring member satisfaction with services. Duties will also include developing strategies to attract and maintain members to the Radio Amateurs of Canada. This position will report to the President of the Radio Amateurs of Canada.

Remuneration: nowhere near what you are worth. You will be doing it for the love of radio. Like the rest of us.

Title: negotiable. Start date: anytime.

Submit a resume and your availability to the President, Geoff Bawden, ve4baw: ve4baw@rac.ca.
Questions freely accepted.

Assistant to the Midwest Director

Derek Hay, VE4HAY, is still looking for Assistant Directors.

If you wish to assist Derek in your area of your province please contact Derek at ve4hav@rac.ca

Contest Calendar

Extracted From

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/>

ARS Spartan Sprint	0200Z-0400Z, Mar 2
AGCW YL-CW Party	1900Z-2100Z, Mar 2
ARRL Inter. DX Contest, SSB 0000Z, Mar 6 to 2400Z, Mar 7	
Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	0600Z-0629Z, Mar 6 0630Z-0659Z, Mar 6 0700Z-0729Z, Mar 6 0730Z-0800Z, Mar 6 0700Z-1100Z, Mar 7
UBA Spring Contest, CW	0700Z-1100Z, Mar 7
DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest	1100Z-1700Z, Mar 7
SARL Hamnet 40m Simulated Emerg Contest	1200Z-1400Z, Mar 7
CLARA HF Contest	1700Z, Mar 9 to 1700Z, Mar 10 1700Z, Mar 13 to 1700Z, Mar 14
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1100Z-1200Z, Mar 10 1900Z-2000Z, Mar 10 0300Z-0400Z, Mar 11
HA3NS Sprint Memorial Contest (80m)	1830Z-1900Z, Mar 12
(40m)	1900Z-1930Z, Mar 12
RSGB Commonwealth Contest	1000Z, Mar 13 to 1000Z, Mar 14
AGCW QRP Contest	1400Z-2000Z, Mar 13
ARCI HF Grid Square Sprint	1500Z-1800Z, Mar 13
Feld Hell Sprint	1600Z-1800Z, Mar 13
EA PSK31 Contest	1600Z, Mar 13 to 1600Z, Mar 14
Elecraft QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 13 to 1800Z, Mar 14
SOC Marathon Sprint	1800Z-2400Z, Mar 13
Idaho QSO Party	1900Z, Mar 13 to 1900Z, Mar 14
North American Sprint, RTTY	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 14
SKCC Weekend Sprint	0000Z-2400Z, Mar 14
UBA Spring Contest, 6m	0700Z-1100Z, Mar 14
NSARA Contest	1100Z-1500Z, Mar 14 1700Z-2100Z, Mar 14
Bucharest Contest	1600Z-1729Z, Mar 15 1730Z-1859Z, Mar 15
Wisconsin QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 14 to 0100Z, Mar 15
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, Mar 18
10-10 Int. Mobile Contest	0001Z-2359Z, Mar 20
BARTG HF RTTY Contest	0200Z, Mar 20 to 0200Z, Mar 22
SARL VHF/UHF Analogue Contest	1000Z, Mar 20 to 1000Z, Mar 21
Russian DX Contest	1200Z, Mar 20 to 1200Z, Mar 21
Oklahoma QSO Party	1300Z, Mar 20 to 0100Z, Mar 21
AGCW VHF/UHF Contest	1300Z-1900Z, Mar 21 (144) 1400Z-1659Z, Mar 20 (432) 1700Z-1759Z, Mar 20
North Dakota QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 20 to 1800Z, Mar 21
Virginia QSO Party	1800Z, Mar 20 to 0100Z, Mar 22
9K 15-Meter Contest	1200Z-1600Z, Mar 21
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0100Z-0300Z, Mar 22
SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Mar 24
CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Mar 27 to 2359Z, Mar 28
UBA Spring Contest, 2m	0700Z-1100Z, Mar 28

In The Beginning...

By, David VE4DAR

Looking around during coffee at the Arches, I wondered how folks got started? So I asked some of them, "What was it like when you got started in ham radio?"

"It was better," replied Jim VE4CY. "When I was about 14 years old, my parents gave me a Philco table radio. I listened to the rock stations, CKY and CFRW, and then I heard stations from places as far as Chicago and Salt Lake City.

That got me started in Short Wave listening and from there I moved into Amateur Radio. I like 6m CW. The challenge is waiting for an opening; like fishing. It used to be rare; now 6m is standard on many radios.



Chris VE4SET said his most exciting time was as a kid in Norway hearing NRK coming from a downspout. In those days eaves and downspouts were made of zinc. Zinc oxide at a bad solder joint acted as a rectifier and Chris said he heard this weak signal.

That got him started; first in CB. Later he listened to ham radio, but didn't get his licence until he moved here, where Chris took a course with Rick VE4OV.

Next was the tale of Williard VE4WJE. "When I was 13 years old, my parents said that these chickens will be yours if you feed all those. I did; sold them; and sent to Edmonton to get parts to build a one-tube radio.

I had an electric soldering iron but we had no electricity, so I had to wait until Sundays to go to a lady's house to do the soldering. I used acid core solder; it worked anyway!

I still have it. It's in a nice wood cabinet that I sanded and varnished." Today Willard's interest is building antennas, only 33 inches long!



I captured Dick VE4HK selling MRS memberships. He was 15 years old when he bought an assembled Heathkit AR – 15 from Dave VE4PN. On 80m he heard old timers such as Ben VE4SH, Bert VE4BF, Zeke VE4ZB. “They seemed to be having lots of fun, so I figured this is good.” Then Dick took the Commercial Radio Operators’ course at MIT (now Red River College); asked for his amateur licence and was given the Advanced standing. “That’s how I got started. I’ve been having fun ever since.”

News From The Net

RAC Bulletin 2010 005E Earthquake in Chile 2010-02-28

Earthquake in Chile

At the request of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) and the Red Chilena Nor Austral Servicio (RECNA), all Amateurs are requested to keep all IARU Center of Activity Frequencies clear until further notice as health and welfare traffic is being passed to and from Chile.

As well, the RECNA requests that they're call frequencies be avoided. They are..
28300,28500,21200,21350,14200,14350,7050,7095,3738,3750 khz.

Many thanks for your understanding,

73

Doug Mercer VO1DTM
Vice President Field Services
Radio Amateurs of Canada

RAC Bulletin 2010 004E New Manager NARED—Mervyn Halvorsen, VA3TSA 2010-02-21

RAC Vice President Field Services Doug Mercer, VO1DTM is pleased to announce the appointment of Mervyn Halvorsen, VA3TSA/VO1TSA as our new NARED Manager effective immediately.

Merv has many years of ARES experience, has worked in support of ARES during the BC fires while he lived there, has worked closely with me in support of the Newfoundland and Labrador EMO at the Provincial EOC. Merv was active “on the ground” following Hurricane Katrina in Biloxi, Mississippi and while in Newfoundland was in charge of Emergency Services for the Salvation Army, Critical Incident Stress Trainer, as well as Chaplain for the St. John’s Regional Fire Department.

Merv and family now reside in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Welcome aboard!

It will be great working with you again.

Doug Mercer VO1DTM CEC
Vice President Field Services

Is D-Star Coming to Winnipeg ???

You may have heard a rumor by now about a D-Star repeater, either, as discussions on the local repeaters or conversation at a local coffee gathering, At this time, I would like to confirm there IS a significant initiative underway by Manitoba ARES to bring about the installation of a D-Star Digital repeater system in the capital region - serving Winnipeg and surrounding areas.

There are a number of reasons for this, which I will outline for you , but first I will give you some background information.

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is an amateur radio public service program – operated by Radio

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Amateurs of Canada (RAC) on this side of the border, and similarly, an ARES program operated by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) exists with our neighbors in the United States of America..

The reason that Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) exists - is to assist and support our emergency response agencies and various levels of government in times of crisis, and during interruption of communications on so forth.

As with all amateurs, we take our initial course, get our amateur license and use the hobby as a fun past time and get involved in things like contesting, DX, CW, EME, ATV, digital modes, APRS, IRLP, Echolink or where ever else each of our personal interests in this great hobby takes us.

What may be a little different with the ARES amateur operator is being part of an organization with a nationally developed formal training plan for ongoing emergency training, invitations to participate in provincial and federally organize emergency training programs, a schedule of ongoing meetings, familiarization tours at various fixed emergency stations, participation in disaster exercises, and the possibility of being "called out" to assist in an emergency that can occur with little or no warning.

To be able to respond to these call outs, ARES members generally have an inventory of mobile and portable equipment suitable for rapid deployment, along with various pieces of support materials which may include a go-kit stocked with batteries, power supplies, additional feed lines, antennas, repair tools and so forth that can be brought to a site and establish a field station where previously none existed. In many cases, it is kind of like "Field Day", but on one hour's notice, and we didn't know where we were headed till the call came in.

Now none of this enthusiasm and communications capability would really matter except for somewhere to use it, and that is where our "clients" or what we may refer to as "our served agencies" comes into play. ARES members in Manitoba serve and supports a number of emergency agencies and programs which includes: Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization, Manitoba Health Disaster Services, Public Safety Canada, Environment Canada, City of Winnipeg Emergency Program, as well as support of a large number of communities and rural municipalities in the province.

ARES in Manitoba has supported these various agencies in a number of recent situations such as the major Manitoba flood in 1997, during the Year 2000 precautions, during the events of September 11, 2001, the

Flood of 2009, and many smaller events such as during forest fires, telecommunications disruptions due to fibre optic cable damage, just to name a few. Most recently, members of ARES monitored the HF bands at the amateur station at Public Safety Canada for the first two days after the devastating earthquake in Haiti - seeking information on conditions there that would be of assistance to the officials at Public Safety Canada and Department of Foreign Affairs in the time prior to the arrival of foreign aid teams with emergency telecommunications gear.

So now you know a bit about what ARES is, and some of what we do.

Our Situation—

Over the past decade, we have seen huge advances in consumer electronics and communications capability. This has take place both in "our world" as members of the general public, but also in the business world and in the world of emergency planners and emergency response agencies.

This has resulted in an influx of cell phones, smart phones (iPhone/Blackberry) running mobile applications, province wide trunking radio systems, voice of IP technology, satellite phones, GPS equipment, wireless internet cards for laptops, Bluetooth integration of devices etc. into the day-to-day of the business world. Yet as recently as just a few years ago, the systems with several linked amateur FM voice repeaters was much more communications capabilities than many agencies could imagine, yet now these same agencies may now have dozens of trunked radios allowing province wide communications, blackberries or iPhones along with laptops and wireless cards for their field staff, supplemented by an inventory of several satellite phones for good measure. They live in a very data intensive world.

As emergency response agencies turn to ARES to support them if a disaster threatens to interrupt their communications, a "voice only" system suddenly appears to really limit their ability to communicate, and certainly limits our ability to assist them.

Our Solution—

And this is where the ICOM D-star system joins back into this explanation. D-star is different and it's a entirely digital signal that has capability for movement of data. For us, that is the strong selling point of D-Star.

D-Star is an open standard developed by the Japanese Amateur Radio League - a national organization of amateurs not unlike RAC or ARRL. It is a standard that all equipment manufacturers have available to them - though currently only ICOM has marketed

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compliant equipment. There is also amateur produced software, accessories and add-on's that are now readily available.

The repeater system is totally digital - there is no conversion to, or from an analog format. The equipment and repeaters for 2M and 70cm bands are digital voice and support low speed data. The equipment for the 23cm band has a digital voice mode, and a 23cm digital data mode and specific repeaters that handles voice and a separate one that handles 128KB digital data. And for most of the available ICOM D-Star mobile and portable equipment – simply add a compatible GPS signal, and now you can transmit your location at a pre-determined interval and/or every time you transmit – using the data portion of the transmission. This DPRS position data can be seen by other D-star users, plus can be seen on the internet – same as APRS can.

What D-Star IS:

D-Star is efficient and a channel has a band width of 6.25khz.

D-Star is very good for point-to-point communications – especially like from a remote emergency site to an emergency operations centre or between Municipal Emergency Operations Centres and the Provincial Co-ordination Centre. D-Star allows easy movement and distribution of data. D-Star can integrate with other digital modes – example HF digital modes for long distance movement of data, then into D-Star for “local delivery”.

D-Star access of the “gateway” allows long distance connectivity – somewhat similar to IRLP – though can locate a station even if you are not sure where they are. D-Star (ICOM) 2M and 70cm hand-helds and mobiles have modes that are compatible with the existing local analog repeater equipment. D-Star is another mode of amateur radio.

Our D-Star repeater installation will be “open” and available for use by all amateurs – with the obvious exception being those few occasions when 1 or more band(s) may be needed to support ARES operational requirements.

What D-Star IS NOT:

D-Star is NOT a replacement of the current analog voice repeaters, it is a supplement or compliment to them.

The current analog FM voice repeater systems will still be here decades from now.

Your analog FM amateur radio (non-D-Star equipment) is not compatible with a D-Star repeater.

D-Star may not be for everyone.

As stated earlier – it is another mode in this hobby – though one that ARES units can make good use of for support of our served agencies.

The move forward

On February 19, we held an informational meeting regarding our D-Star initiative with the Manitoba ARES Executive, the RAC Section Manager for Manitoba, the President of Manitoba Repeater Society and the President of Winnipeg Amateur Radio club. This meeting featured an in depth presentation by the ICOM Canada Senior Technical Service Representative about the D-Star equipment and its use.

We at Manitoba ARES Executive are committed to this initiative and are moving ahead with the installation of an entire suite of four D-star repeaters representing three amateur bands to be located near downtown in Winnipeg.

The Capital Region installation will include the following equipment:

ICOM 2M digital voice repeater,
ICOM 70CM digital voice repeater,
ICOM 23CM digital voice repeater,
ICOM 23CM digital data repeater,
ICOM D-star controller and gateway software installed on a server.

The system will be on an uninterruptable power system, and have generator backup. Antenna Installation height will be approximately 75 metres above ground. The system server will be connected to the internet, which will allow use of the remote connectivity features of D-star.

The internet connectivity will also provide us with the ability to route messaging, email and data files between computers in the emergency operations centers via 1.2Ghz radio to ARES personnel at a remote location, and future, planned HF data integration will allow cross country data movement even in the absence of local phone and internet systems.

Further info – Links to D-Star Info on the web:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D-STAR>
<http://www.dstar.ca/>
<http://www.dstarusers.org/>
<http://www.icomcanada.com/dstar/index.htm>
<http://www.dstarinfo.com/>
<http://www.d-rats.com/>
<http://www.ifindu.net/DSTARRepeaters.aspx>
<http://www.dxzone.com/cgi-bin/dir/jump2.cgi?>

¹⁰
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D-STAR>
<http://www.dstar.ca/>
<http://www.dstarusers.org/>
<http://www.icomcanada.com/dstar/index.htm>
<http://www.dstarinfo.com/>
<http://www.d-rats.com/>
<http://www.jfindu.net/DSTARRepeaters.aspx>
<http://www.dxzone.com/cgi-bin/dir/jump2.cgi?ID=17070>
http://www.dvdongle.com/DV_Dongle/Home.html
<http://www.usmartdigi.com/>

This is a project would not be proceeding without the generous support by a number of partners.

I would like to thank:

-ICOM of Canada - Jim Backeland: VP/General Manager

-Eric Meth VE3EI: Technical Support Representative
-Micro-HighTec Comm Ltd. – (Winnipeg ICOM Dealer) – George Hill

-Public Safety Canada,

-Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization

-The efforts of the members of the Manitoba ARES Executive – Wayne VE4WR, Gord VE4GLS and Jeff VE4MBQ.

The future

Will there be other D-Star installations?

We are not 100% sure, but we sure hope so. The capabilities are a good fit for ARES requirements, so in an ideal world there would be a basic D-Star installation near most major population centres around the province that have an amateur radio presence in them.

Finally, if you have suggestions, comments, criticisms, ideas, would like to find out more about the initiative, would like to assist with this initiative or would like to find out more about ARES – we'd like to hear from you.

Contact me at : ve4dwg@mts.net

73

Don Gerrard - VE4DWG
Section Emergency Coordinator
Manitoba, Canada
Amateur Radio Emergency Service

VHF Nets

MRS Nets - 147.390 Mhz +

Sundays & Thursdays at 9:00 pm

This net covers Winnipeg and the MRS linked repeater system, and includes various announcements on amateur radio activities, plus Dick's "Swap and Shop"

Seniors Morning Net 147.390+ Mhz

Weekdays at 9:00 am

This net covers Winnipeg and hams of all ages are welcome to join in this net which is always a lot of fun!

IRLP(Internet Radio Linking Project)

Net - 145.450 Mhz - Node # 1066

Wednesdays at 8:00 pm

This net connects you with the world using your VHF rig and using the internet as the backbone!

Six Meter Net - 50.238 Mhz

Wednesdays at 9:00 pm

HF Nets

MB Evening Phone Net - 3760 Khz

Daily at 7:00 PM CT

Prairie Traffic Net (CW) 3660 Khz

Daily at 01:30 UTC

Aurora # 2 Net 7055 Khz

Daily at 02:30 UTC

MB Wx Net 3743 Khz

Daily at 8:30 AM C

Do you have an area of expertise you'd like to present at a WARC meeting to share with your fellow hams??

Contact us at: ve4bb@rac.ca

Newscaster

By, Mark, VE4MAB

For the March issue, please send in your submissions no later than march 30, 2010 to ve4mab@gmail.com

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Please send your submissions/comments to the editor
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