



Sam Sumner, W4ZKM

President, TNECA

214 Scott Lane * Kingston, TN 37763

(H) 865.376.9215 (C) 865.898.1468 (W) 865.574.5327

w4zkm@tneca.org

Roane County AEC – Interoperability

Roane County Unit **407** / Skywarn Spotter #1492

5/9/2010

Folks,

I want to use this “edition” of “*The President’s Letter*” letter to give you a little information on the mobilization of TNECA personnel (*and many others*) to provide disaster support in Hickman County.

Firstly, I would like to thank the following TNECA persons who responded to provide support:

KD4GT – Cliff (Team Lead) WO4U – Paul
KJ4GDJ – Robert AK4ED – Ed

This deployment was a combined effort of several agencies/groups. As “**Unit Commanders**”, Mike Harris (N4ULM) and Elizabeth St Vincent (K4KTG) brought knowledge, training, and a sense of “calm and organization” to the deployment. Roane County OES&HS provided the operational equipment (the Silver Bullet) and personnel. TNECA also provided trained personnel, and other Ham operators responded from various places. With all of these groups/persons combining into one TEAM, we were able to make a difference.

Here is a listing of the operators that I am aware of:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Mike	N4ULM	Williamson Co
Elizabeth	K4KTG/AAR4HA	Williamson Co
Cliff	KD4GT	Cumberland Co / and Roane Co DEC / and TNECA
Paul	WO4U	Cumberland Co / and Roane Co DEC / and TNECA
Robert	KJ4GDJ	Cumberland Co / and TNECA
Ed	AK4ED	Cumberland Co / and TNECA
Sam	W4ZKM	Roane Co DEC / and TNECA
Cody	KI4FUV	Roane Co DEC
Ron	AI4VG	Cumberland Co
Rick	KI4RQV	Rutherford Co
Tim	KJ4TER	Rutherford Co
Chuck	KJ4KVC	Hickman Co
Jacob	KI4JJE	Maury Co
Freddy	N4XW	Hickman Co

(If I have missed any operators, please forgive the oversight...) Once again, **each** of these operators provided vital contributions of time and knowledge to this mobilization. My thanks, as well as that of Hickman County, goes to each of these operators.

*To be USEFUL, we MUST be READY. To be READY, we MUST be TRAINED.
To be TRAINED, we MUST plan AHEAD. Anything less is PLANNING for FAILURE!*

As for the actual mobilization, Cliff had been with the Mobile Communications Trailer (also known as the “Silver Bullet”) since it had been deployed by Roane County OES&HS on Tuesday. It is my understanding that Cliff and crew had a little problem getting there due to the “roads out / detours” situation (of course... this is highly understating the situation). He, Paul, and Robert deployed the Silver Bullet (MANY thanks to Howie Rose, Scott Stout, Shorty Rayburn, and Bill Farnham [KI4FZT] from Roane County Office of Emergency Services and Homeland Security for allowing us to use their asset, “*the bullet*”) and set-up as Hickman Command. This team operated until Paul and Robert demobilized later in the week. As this was my Friday off, I offered to respond to replace someone for the weekend.

When I arrived in Centerville at about 12:00 hours local (Central) time on Friday, I found that - although it had been relocated during the week - the Silver Bullet was still being operated as Hickman Command, and was actively being used to provide communications between Hickman County “management” (EMA, County Mayor, etc.), the Tennessee State EOC (on the MTEARS system), as well as local communications between shelters, water distribution points, etc. on two local repeaters and a simplex frequency.

As I checked in, I was assigned to work as a net-control operator. This was good for me, as I was able to see (and experience) the interaction between the “command” levels, the “administrative” (Government-type) people, and the operators.

Throughout the time I spent there, I found several things to be true:

- 1) Every operator present had a “CAN DO” attitude, and was willing to do whatever it took to provide support to Hickman County, to TEMA, to the Red Cross, and to other agency personnel.
- 2) All of the operators that I observed working this deployment were well trained, and handled their assignments in a very capable and appropriate manner.
- 3) Both “management” and “command” levels were willing to listen to, discuss, and (in some cases) implement suggestions made by operators (not just communications operators) – whether these operators were volunteers or professional emergency personnel.
- 4) Without exception, I found that the “management” and “command” levels treated all volunteers and operators with the respect and acceptance that is given to professionals and colleagues.
- 5) When the event was demobilized, everyone seemed willing to take time to discuss the deployment, and find *lessons learned* material to take away with them. In short, this was not just a deployment, it was another educational opportunity! The basic theory was that ANYTHING we do gives us the opportunity to learn!

There is a specific item that I feel needs to be mentioned... Freddy (N4XW) provided some of the most important contributions to the event. The two VHF repeaters used by amateur operators are owned and maintained by Freddy. Many times during the event, I heard the comment that “amateur radio saved this county”... I believe that this is mostly a tribute to Freddy. His planning, his ability to work hand-in-hand with county officials, and his willingness to put his plans into action demonstrated the true spirit of Amateur Radio... to serve no matter what the situation. Freddy, thank you for your foresight and efforts! Your actions should be an example to all of us.

*To be USEFUL, we MUST be READY. To be READY, we MUST be TRAINED.
To be TRAINED, we MUST plan AHEAD. Anything less is PLANNING for FAILURE!*

In closing this letter, let me remind you about the people in Hickman County, as well as surrounding counties. Although our services have been demobilized, and many services have been restored, many services are still in a very not “up to par” status. These people **still need support**. Please keep these people in your thoughts and prayers, and donate to agencies such as the Red Cross who are working to make things better.

I want to state again that this event – *like everything we do* – was a Team Effort (“*there is no ‘I’ in TEAM*”). No one person is/was irreplaceable, but **each** person was **vital**! I found that everyone I worked with during the deployment felt this way, and operated with this in mind. As individuals, what we can do is limited. As a team - made up of many agencies and people - **we ALL succeeded!** Thank you all for your time, efforts, and especially your attitudes.

It was my honor to serve in this mobilization, and to represent TNECA to those we served.

Sincerely,

Sam

Sam Sumner
President, TNECA
W4ZKM



*To be USEFUL, we MUST be READY. To be READY, we MUST be TRAINED.
To be TRAINED, we MUST plan AHEAD. Anything less is PLANNING for FAILURE!*