

Mississippi Section Report for December 2015

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Last year South Mississippi received an unwanted early Christmas present as a tornado moved through Marion, Lamar and Jones Counties. Unfortunately this year North Mississippi got the unwanted early Christmas present as residents in 15 North Mississippi Counties suffered 241 homes destroyed or suffered major damage during the major tornado outbreak, 25 businesses were destroyed or suffered major damage, and unfortunately the death toll reached 12.

NW MS DEC KB0ZTX reports that on December 23 at 2:53 PM a F3 tornado began a long track across North Mississippi starting in Bolivar County. The Desoto County EOC was activated by KF5KVL, N5UOV, and W5FLD as they begin monitoring activity on the 146.91 CARA repeater. Storm reports from Hams began coming in quickly as the tornado progressed across the state. As it approached Como, KF5BTH reported damage in Panola County. An attempt was made to close Interstate 55 to allow the large dangerous tornado to pass. After the cell dissipated, it re-energized in Tate County at 4:10 PM as an F4 tornado. KI4QAQ relayed several reports of the tornado from observers as it passed through Tate and into Marshall County. These reports were relayed by N5PYQ real time to the NWS via NWS Chat. The NWS upgraded the warning for Marshall County to a Tornado Emergency for Holly Springs. WA4PTD confirmed the approaching tornado from north of Wall Doxey State Park as it came across Highway 7 and proceeded across Highway 78. The tornado then traveled through Benton, Tippah, Hardeman, and McNairy counties.

Ken (KB0ZTX) came into Holly Springs observing the tornado as moved north of Highway 78 and proceeded on a damage path on Highway 7 just one mile South of the city. The damage was extensive and reports were again relayed along with those of injuries to NWS - Memphis. Ham Radio was shortly thereafter used on simplex VHF to help coordinate the establishing of a command post at Walmart as responders came in from numerous counties and agencies. KB0ZTX communicated with KD5ARO (Mark Kaply, Marshall EMA and Sherriff) via simplex to help organize and deploy the responders as they rolled into the staging area. EMA, fire rescue, SAR, law enforcement, and medical response were coordinated from this location. ARES worked closely with the local EMA as they gathered information for MEMA. KF5HRD and KI4QAQ were on site with Fire Services to assist also.

The following day, N5PYQ, KA5JNK, KE5NBD, and KF5WVJ arrived to help reactivate the command post and coordinate further staging and deployment of emergency personnel, NWS survey teams, Damage Assessment Teams, MEMA, and the Governor's inspection visit, again under the direction of KD5ARO. Personnel were also sent to Benton County to assist with the search efforts there.

During the tornado event the Marshall County Fire Repeater went down and cell service was severely hampered as several providers lost tower sites. The Holly Springs Fire Repeater was so bogged down with traffic and with the crippled phone system, ARES had difficulty establishing contact between the Alliance HealthCare System Hospital and Ambulance Service and the Incident Command Post. Ham radio once again saved the day as we were able to establish communications via the KD5VMV repeater.

The damage was extensive all across north MS with a track almost 150 miles long altogether with injury and loss of life. DEC KB0ZTX notes that he is very grateful to the Hams mentioned above and so many more that helped along the way through the storm event. Hams played a vital role in warning, response, and recovery for this event. Ken commends those Hams for their service at this time of need in their community.

From Northeast Mississippi DEC WX5N reports that the Tishomingo County ARES activated their Weather Net with KF5FXR as NCS. Reports indicated that Prentiss County had power outages, EC WX5SE reported from Itawamba County that trees were down and roads flooded, EC WB5CON reported no damage in Alcorn County, and EC WA5TEF reported minor damage in Lee County. Other nets that were known to be activated in response to the storm event were the Central Mississippi Skywarn Net, Delta ARES Emergency Net, and the Rankin County ARES Net. Other Nets were most likely active but have not been reported as of this writing.

In additional ARES News ASEC K1REZ reports that during 2015 Mississippi ARES made major improvements in the status of emergency communications preparedness in Mississippi, on both the statewide and local level. Mississippi ARES Teams, Section Nets, and Local Nets tested, proved, and improved their EMCOMM response capabilities through participation in the annual Simulated Emergency Test (SET) on August 8, 2015. 436 ARES members, 11 local nets, and 6 statewide section nets participated in the Mississippi SET, with a total of 1905 check ins and 3478 pieces of traffic passed on behalf of served agencies. Each of our county ARES Teams that participated in the SET exceeded their previous SET scores, some astronomically. In the emergency preparedness criteria which the SET tests, Mississippi ARES scored a total of 4409 points, an outstanding improvement over our 2014 score of 445 points. Each of our Local and Section Nets that participated also exceeded their previous SET scores. In the emergency preparedness net criteria which the SET tests, Mississippi Nets scored a total of 6236 points, an outstanding improvement over our 2014 score of 567 points. While we won't know how we stand nationally until ARRL releases its national results in the July 2016 issue of QST magazine, these scores are on par with the scores of the top three states in the nation during the 2014 SET. These scores mean that Mississippi ARES and Mississippi's Nets greatly increased their EMCOMM preparedness capabilities during 2015.

As noted above the emergency preparedness of our ARES Teams and Nets was also tested, proved, and improved in 2015 during the recent ARES activation in response to the tornadoes which ravaged north Mississippi during the week of Christmas. After Action Reports reveal that Mississippi ARES played a significant and vital role in warning, response and recovery before, during and after this emergency event. If you would like to receive a more detailed report on how the above two events tested, proved, and improved the State of Amateur

Emergency Communications in Mississippi in 2015 and/or a detailed report on the results of the 2015 Mississippi ARRL/ARES SET, please send a request to the ASEC at K1REZ@ARRL.Net

Chairman K5RDA reports that the Pearl River ARC hosted another great Poplarville Hamfest. The highlight was as a successful VE Test Session with several new Hams. Roger notes that his Hamfest Helpers were N5ELI, K5SCW, KC5EAK, KF5UUG, KF5ZQM, KE7BUD, and KF5YTL.

.... and don't forget the next big event on the Mississippi Ham Calendar, the Capital City Hamfest on Friday Jan 29 th from 5:00 PM - 8:00PM and Saturday January 30 th from 8:00 AM to 5 PM. More information can be found on hamfest.msham.org. Our ARRL Guest will be Sean Kutzko, KX9X, who is the ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager. Sean came to ARRL in 2007 as the Contest Branch Manager and was promoted to PR in June 2013. First licensed in 1982 as KA9NGH, Sean's ham radio interests include HF and VHF contesting and DX'ing, portable operating, and working the Amateur Radio satellites. He enjoys mentoring and Elmering newer Hams. 'Several Old Timers took the time to teach me how to be a good operator; now it's my turn to give back.' Outside of Ham Radio, Sean enjoys playing drums in blues and jazz groups, following major league baseball, and making artisan breads and pizza. He lives in West Hartford, Connecticut, just five minutes from ARRL Headquarters, with his cat, Aja.

EC WM5A reports the Rankin County ARES Leadership Team tested their ONeCall call system to announce their Year-End Net on December 31, 2015

Lee County EC WA5TEF reports that at 1000 hours December 1, ARES held another test with Memphis NWS. Corey, N0VDR opened the WX4MEM station and they were able to communicate barely on 3862 KHz. They switched to 7238 KHz and signals were much better. Hams participating in Lee County were KE5UFZ, W5STV, WA5CYR, K2OWK, AF5OH and WA5TEF. All stations were successful in communicating with WX4MEM on 40 Meters. This is similar to the test ARES conducted last summer.

Welcome to the following new Hams in Mississippi in December: KG5KOE, Jesse – Gulfport; KG5KQG, Michael – Hattiesburg; KG5KQH, Jesse – Corinth; KG5KQS, Danette – Hurley; KG5KRU, Richard – Sontag; KG5KSB, Danny – Ocean Springs; KG5KSQ, David – Ocean Springs; KG5KSR, John – Ocean Springs; KG5KSS, Samuel – Biloxi; KG5KSW, James – Olive Branch; KG5KTW, Michael – Jackson; KG5KTX, James – Jackson; KG5KTY, Nichols – Hazlehurst; KT5KTZ, Dale – Jackson; KG5KUA, Penny – Philadelphia; KG5KUB, John – Louisville; KG5KUJ, Jarred – Florence; KG5KUK, Naomi – Moss Point; KG5KWG, Garet – Ocean Springs; KG5KWL, William – Kiln; and KG5KWM, Joseph – McHenry.

Also welcome to the following new ARRL Members: KG5HGS, Warren – Madison; KF5IMF, Fred – Meridian; KC5JCL, Matthew – Lucedale; KL2JF, Allan – Brooklyn; KG5JMN, David – Tishomingo; K5JNE, Jimmy- Oxford; KF5KP, Carl – Purvis; KG5KUA, Penny – Philadelphia; KF5LHX, Robert – Vancleave; KC5OEO, Mark – Vicksburg; KF5PLO, Kathy – Pelahatchie; K5RKU, Terry – Ripley; KF5UUG, Vernon – Picayune; and WA5ZLX, Cecil Potts Camp;

As of December 31 ARRL Membership in Mississippi was 1,150 up 4 from last month. Thanks to all who promote ARRL Membership!

And last, but not least, welcome to AF5PO as new EC for Tishomingo County succeeding WX5N who moved up to DEC after 8 years of service as EC. (Rick will remain as EC for Prentiss County). And welcome to K5SCW as the new EC for Pearl River County succeeding KE5WJN after 7 years of service.

Congratulations to the following on their upgrades: KD9CRY, Kathryn – Jackson; KC5FMN, Larry – Union; KG5FRW, Isaac – West Point; KG5HAE, Robert – Philadelphia; KG5IXV, Dennis – Conehatta; KG5JKM, Gerald – Columbia; KG5JKN, Thomas – Monticello; KG5JKO, Tony – Columbia; KG5JQF, Talmadge - Corinth; KG5JTD, Anthony – Biloxi; KG5KSA, Michael – Ocean Springs; KD5QEO, James – Bassfield; KE5ULW, Charles – Poplarville; KF5ZFW, Morris – Vicksburg; and KC5ZIV, Laney – Collinsville;

ASEC/DEC/EC Monthly Reports for December 2015: WM5A (Rankin), WB5CON (Alcorn), K5MOZ (Jackson), WX5N (Prentiss/Tishomingo/NE MS), K5NRK (Warren), K1REZ (ASEC), WA5TEF (Lee), KD5VMV (DeSoto), KE5WJN (Pearl River), and KB0ZTX (NW MS).

Club Newsletter/Reports (Editor): Delta ARES (K5JAW) and Meridian ARC (W5MAV)

HF Net Reports - sessions/QNI/QTC (Net Manager)

Magnolia Section Net 31/992/9 (K5DSG)

MS Baptist Hams Net 3/17/0 (WF5F)

MS-NBEMS Net 2/7/2 (K1REZ)

MSPN 31/2393/9 (K5NRK)

VHF Net Reports - sessions/QNI/QTC (Net Manager)

Alcorn County ARES 5/55/0 (WB5CON) November 4/33/0

Booneville and Prentiss County Net 5/55/0 (WX5N)

Capital Area Em Net 4/55/0 (K5XU)

Chickasaw ARA 4/97/0 (N5PYQ)

Delta ARES Simplex Net 4/19/0 (K5JAW)

Hattiesburg ARC Emergency 2M Net 4/74/0 (K5TLL)

Hattiesburg ARC 10M Simplex Net 4/44/0 (K5TLL)

Hattiesburg ARC 2M Simplex Net 1/9/0 (K5TLL)

Itawamba County ARES 3/50/3 (WX5SE)

Jackson County Em Net 27/652/2 (K5MOZ)

Lowndes County ARC Net 5/46/0 (KF5AZ)

MDXA Net 5/58/0 (W5DAW)

Metro Jackson ARES Net 4/35/0 (AE5SK)

MS Coast Em Services, WX, Training, and Tech Net 5/72/0 (N5AHM)

Miss/Lou Em Net 4/22/0 (K5NRK)

MS Preparedness Project EN 5/44/0 (KF5RFB)

Northeast MS Skywarn Net 4/52/0 (WA5TEF)

Pearl River ARES Net 4/47/0 (KE5WJN)

Rankin County ARES Net 5/70/0 (KG5AVT)

Scott County ARES Training Net 4/46/0 (K1REZ)

Scott County ARES Simplex Net 4/18/0 (K1REZ)

Southeast Mississippi ARES Net 4/61/6 (KB5VE)

Stone County ARES 4/42/0 (N5UDK)

Tishomingo ARC Net 5/75/0 (WX5N)

UMARC UHF Net 4//?/0 (K5LMB)

UMARC VHF Net 4/19/0 (K5LMB)

PSHR – KA5DON 68.

Traffic: KA5DON 18 and KG5FRZ 10.

Compilation of Net Statistics net statistics provided by KB5RCJ.