

## **RADIO DAY CELEBRATES ISAR AND AUXILIARY'S 66TH ANNIVERSARY**

On October 1, 2005, US Coast Guard Auxiliary amateur radio operators from across the United States joined forces to commemorate the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Auxiliary. The commemoration has been coupled with the International Search and Rescue (ISAR) event and these radio operators also communicated via amateur radio with Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary members located at the ISAR 2005 site in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Since the inception of this event in celebration of the Auxiliary's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the number of stations participating has grown substantially. The total number is now over 23 stations from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Maine to the U.S. Virgin Islands. These trained amateur operators contacted hundreds of radio stations from all over the world during this event. Many of our stations were able to contact directly, via high frequency radio, the ISAR 2005 station in Canada.

During the ISAR event Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary amateur operators were transmitting from the CSS Acadia. For more information on the Acadia go to:

<http://museum.gov.ns.ca/mma/atoz/acadia.html>

What are the objectives of the International Search and Rescue competition, commonly called ISAR?

- First, it demonstrates the skills of our volunteer lifesavers through a major search and rescue exercise.
- Second, it provides a way to increase *esprit de corps* and exchange information and ideas between the United States and the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliaries.
- Third, the competition provides a forum for the participants to be recognized for their work as dedicated volunteer lifesavers.

Thus, in the October 1, 2005 special radio event, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary amateur radio operators were, not only commemorating the 66<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Auxiliary, but also supporting ISAR 2005.

### **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- **Radio Day**
- **Managing A Bridge Program Part I**
- **Fire Extinguisher Use**

Last year our Special Event stations contacted 1,466 other radio stations in all 50 states and made direct contact via high frequency radio with 44 countries including Finland, Gibraltar, Japan, Sweden, Italy, Peru, England and Antarctica.

Many thanks to the following USCG Auxiliary members for operating Special Event Radio Stations:

N3IO, Vic Tenaglia, DE;  
K4CC, Cary Carender, FL;  
K3CGA, Joe Rzucidlo, PA  
NP2DJ, Deborah Thomas, Virgin Islands  
N2CGA, Robert Witte, FL  
K18AF, Greg Hanson, MI  
WB2JAU, David Stroup, OH  
WB4DHU, Dan Caywood, Loran Station, NC  
K3UAL, W. Joe Saunders, MD  
W1NDH, Keith Morton, ME  
K2KGB, Larry Cohen, NY  
KB5YAM, Donald Mathis, TX  
W4WLZ, Angus MacIvor, FL  
KE8CR, James Folk, MI  
KG4VIB, Albert Miles, GA

*Continued on Page 2*

## UP TOP IN OPERATIONS

### RADIO DAY

*Continued from Page 1*

W5BLV, Glover Hayden, MS  
AB4U, Richard Cook, VA  
KA2G, Eric Glascott, GA  
K0UXZ, Richard Hallberg, NC  
KB2UB, Gordon Sammis, NY  
KN6PR, Joe Terrazas, CA

Special thanks also go to the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary amateur radio operators who made the effort to set up and operate VA1ISAR during the 2005 International Search and Rescue competition.

**Dan Amoroso BA- OTU,  
ADSO-CM Central, 5NR**

### MANAGING A BRIDGE PROGRAM PART I BUILDING A BRIDGE DATABASE

*Editor's Note: Building a Bridge Database begins a series of articles which are parts of Managing a Bridge Program.*

The Bridge Program in First Northern has evolved in a manner that is typical of program evolution. It is hoped that this brief description of some of the First Northern District experiences will save YOU time in devising a plan for bridge management in your Area of Responsibility.

The ultimate goal of the bridge program is defined as supporting the Coast Guard's need for information about the condition of the safety equipment on bridges over navigable waters. It was learned that this goal had been established for the Auxiliary for many years. With the goal defined, a myriad of other questions presented themselves, such as: What bridges? Is there a priority on what bridges should be checked first? Where are these bridges? What items should be checked on a bridge? What is the proper procedure for checking a bridge? Do some bridges have a history of problems? Who can check a bridge? ...and on and on! Where does one find these answers? How does one begin to resolve such a complex problem?

#### The Bridge Database

It was immediately apparent that a list of bridges was needed that included as much information as possible about each bridge. Auxiliary checkers often couldn't locate a bridge or they reported information about the wrong bridge.



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Other Districts were questioned about what they were doing and what data would be necessary for developing a computer database. Microsoft Access® was selected as the software for the database because of its availability and its relative ease of use. An additional feature is that Access® is portable to other software, some of which the Coast Guard uses. Access® allows changes, additions and deletions of fields, easy report writing, and forms creation. It is also available to many Microsoft® users, both in the Auxiliary and the Coast Guard. Using Access® has provided a means to generate a standard bridge reporting form that helps Auxiliaries find, review prior problems and report information about the correct bridge.

Over about four years, Auxiliary members in the First Northern District collected information needed for the new Bridge Database. One ATON Team member in Division 2 (in Maine) put the "D1 Bridge Database" on line.

*Continued on Page 3*

## UP TOP IN OPERATIONS

### MANAGING A BRIDGE PROGRAM *Continued from Page 2*

Prior to the decision to go on line, the plan was to use CDs containing the Bridge Database and to distribute them to each FSO-AN. At the time, this seemed to be a great way to eliminate the need for printing "Bridge Safety Check Survey Reports" and to avoid mailing such reports to Flotilla Staff Officers each year. Unfortunately, most PC owners didn't have ACCESS on their home computers and could not use the CD. Putting the database on line solved this problem. The "D1 Bridge Database" is now located at [www.uscgauxnh.org/aton/](http://www.uscgauxnh.org/aton/). This is a great example of a team solution, personal initiative, and perseverance in problem solving. Please visit.

As the Bridge Database began to be used in the field, the necessity for a few major corrections became evident. First, component numbers were assigned to each bridge to help end the confusion over bridge names. Bridges had not previously been numbered in First Northern. However, research indicated that other Districts were using bridge numbers. In fact, in one District, bridge lighting and

numbering is listed in the Light List. Bridge numbering was found to be a very successful solution for clearing up many reporting issues, and assigning numbers was simple using the database.

As bridge reports started coming back from the field, it became apparent that there was a great disparity between bridges, ranging from bridges that spanned large waterways servicing ocean-going vessels, down to culvert-like bridges crossing rock-filled channels. Analysis of bridge reports showed that about 65% of the 740 bridges in First Northern are over non-navigable waters. We also found out that the Coast Guard was only interested in receiving reports for the bridges over navigable waters. The solution was to develop a classification system that would isolate bridges over non-navigable waters from annual reporting activity and the Database provided a quick and easy method to do so.

### The Bridge Classification System

**Class 1 Bridges** are defined as spans across waterways that handle the transit of large ocean-going vessels. Auxiliaries are encouraged to check these bridges on every patrol and report every discrepancy

because every problem is considered critical. Class 1 bridges are about 4 % of the bridges in First Northern.

**Class 2 Bridges** are spans across waterways that handle small commercial traffic such as commuter boats, ferryboats and larger recreational boat traffic. Problem reporting for these bridges has been prioritized as critical, urgent or routine, depending upon the nature of the problem. Class 2 bridges are about 5% of the bridges in the District.

**Class 3 Bridges** are identified as those across waterways that handle the smaller recreational boat traffic and where maritime facilities exist upstream from the bridge.

*Continued on Page 4*

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## UP TOP IN OPERATIONS

### MANAGING A BRIDGE PROGRAM *Continued from Page 3*

Most of the bridges in Class 3 are fixed and have no lighting. They are the easiest to survey and check. All discrepancies in these bridges are treated as routine. Twenty-six percent of the bridges in the First Northern District are identified as Class 3.

**Class 4 Bridges** are those found over waterways that are not navigable to the sea, where there is no boating traffic or where no marine facilities are located upstream of the bridge. The Coast Guard is not interested in these bridges. Class 4 bridges were kept in the database to help reduce confusion and for verification when new observers think they have discovered a bridge that's missing from the database. However, these bridges are only checked at the request of the U.S. Coast Guard Bridge Branch. Class 4 bridges account for 65% of the bridges within the First Northern District. When Class 4 bridges were isolated, the annual bridge checking workload dropped significantly. This eliminated a ton of useless paperwork as well as increasing the Auxiliary's credibility with

the Coast Guard and with the Auxiliary membership.

**Frank Larkin, BC-ONI  
DSO-AN 1NR**

*See Part II, Training for  
Managing a Bridge  
Program  
In the November Issue*

### FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE

We all have fire extinguishers aboard our boats, BUT Do we know how to use them?

A small 2½ pound capacity dry chemical extinguisher will extinguish a five square foot fire of flaming gasoline in ten seconds or less. However, it has only 10 to 15 seconds of discharge time, so one must use it effectively.

The best way to learn how to use an extinguisher is to use one. Volunteer fire companies may, if asked, do some training. Fire equipment vendors often arrange training as a form of advertising.

**Charles Ford BC-OES**

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