ZerO Beat

Montgomery Amateur Radio Club Newsletter | Established 1938

SIMULATED EMERGENCY TEST!

In this issue:

The new ZeroBeat Newsletter, the official publication of the Montgomery Amateur Radio Club published on the first day of each month. Contents: Articles about new products - antennas - techniques and ideas – items for sale – humor - announcements and upcoming events – letters to the editor – articles about old products – profiles of club members – event pictures. No "Easter Egg" in this issue.

The ZeroBeat wants your contributions! Email articles to me at CASKYWARN@GMAIL.COM in Microsoft Word format or plain text. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome!

Your club needs you!

Help keep our repeaters on the air!
Support our mission!
Now with easy on-line renewal!
Go to w4ap.org click on JOIN/RENEW
Mobiles click top left menu button ≡

Join the Fun!

Help keep amateur radio flourishing in Central Alabama for
education, discovery, public service, and great fellowship!

FSQ: An Excellent Digital Mode for Nets
N4UZZ

A digital mode with ALE (automatic link establishment), SelCAL (selective calling), remote station activation, and mesh network functions? All without tens of thousands of dollars in equipment and without a central computer hub?

That is FSQ, the fast simple qso digital mode for HF NVIS, VHF, and UHF.

Let's just discuss in real terms what these capabilities mean. On an FSQ network, every station beacons. Each station maintains a list of other stations whose beacons they hear. This is the "Heard Stations" list. On FSQ I can send a query to any station I hear and get their list of heard stations automatically without operator intervention. I can relay a message to any station that is on the Heard List of the other station. This is a mesh network function.

I am in Wynlakes in East Montgomery and Mac KO4UWY in Montgomery is just to the west of a big hill that has the Perry Hill Veterans Administration Hospital on top of it. I cannot hear him. But Sparks, KK4IB can. I can send messages to Mac by relaying through Spark's station. I can even send a message to Jerome, W4IJG, in Pike Road, to be relayed to Spark to then be relayed to Mac. I can also send out a message to all.

SelCAL is a function that causes messages to print out on your computer only if they are addressed to you. This reduces screen clutter. Remotely, you can send an alert or a box that pops up with an important message. FSQ also has a monitor window where all traffic is shown for improved situational awareness.

ICS-213 formatted messages can be composed using FLMSG, saved to a file, and the file can be sent to any station you can hear.

This is the perfect mode for an emergency group network where it is important to maintain awareness of who is on the net. Best of all, it is all in FLDIGI, so there is no need to learn a whole new program.

A Brief FSQ Operating Guide
N4UZZ

"message" stands for keyboard message you type - will be received by other station.
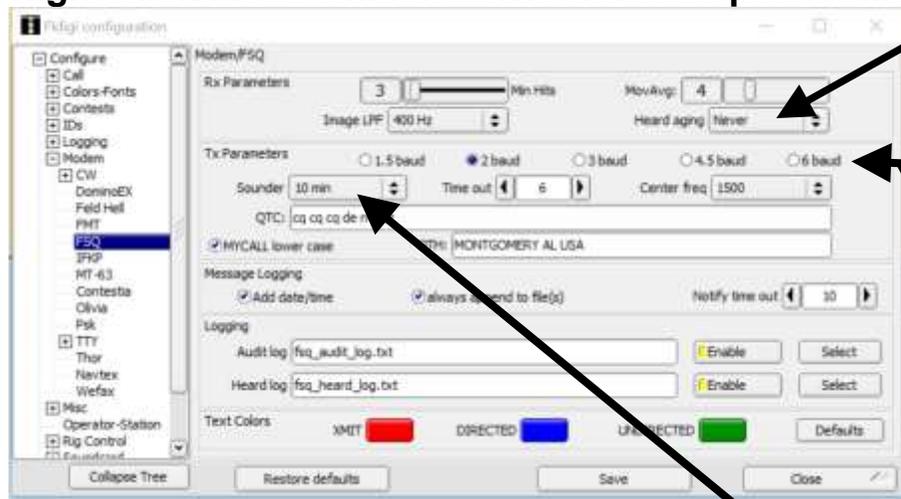
You type	Result
N4AA message	the message keystrokes are sent to N4AA
N4AA?	asking for Signal report from N4AA
N4AA$	Heard report (what stations are you hearing?)
N4AA*	activates the other station
N4AA|message	alert box with message
allcall message	sends your message to all stations in the network
N4AA N4BB message	sends your message from you to N4AA and N4BB
N4AA:N4BB message	sends your message to N4AA to relay to N4BB
N4AA N4BB#message	sends message and tells N4BB to save message
N4AA:N4BB#message	relay message to N4AA to relay to N4BB who then saves message

FSQ Setup Guide ---

Set FSQ as op-mode.
Right-click in bottom left corner for set-up screen.

Set time after which HEARD stations expire and are removed. We recommend 2 hours.

Set transmit parameter.
1.5 baud = slowest.
6 baud = fastest
(You and other stations need not be on same baud rate.)

Set Sounder interval – that is your beacon. For HF Net, set 10 min.

At the bottom of the FSQ Window where the Heard stations are listed (on the right side of the FLDIGI screen), be sure to click FSQ-ON, ACTIVE, and MON so that they are on!
In FLDIGI set RXID to OFF so that stray signals do not throw you out of FSQ mode.

The 2024 SET
Simulated Emergency Test

Objectives

The 2024 Simulated Emergency Test (SET) conducted jointly in Montgomery County and Elmore County, Alabama, (the "Joint SET") has the following objectives:

- test and enhance amateur radio operators' preparedness for emergencies including
  - digital emergency traffic handling
  - voice net procedures and traffic handling
- increase awareness of amateur radio emergency communications capabilities among staff at public safety agencies;
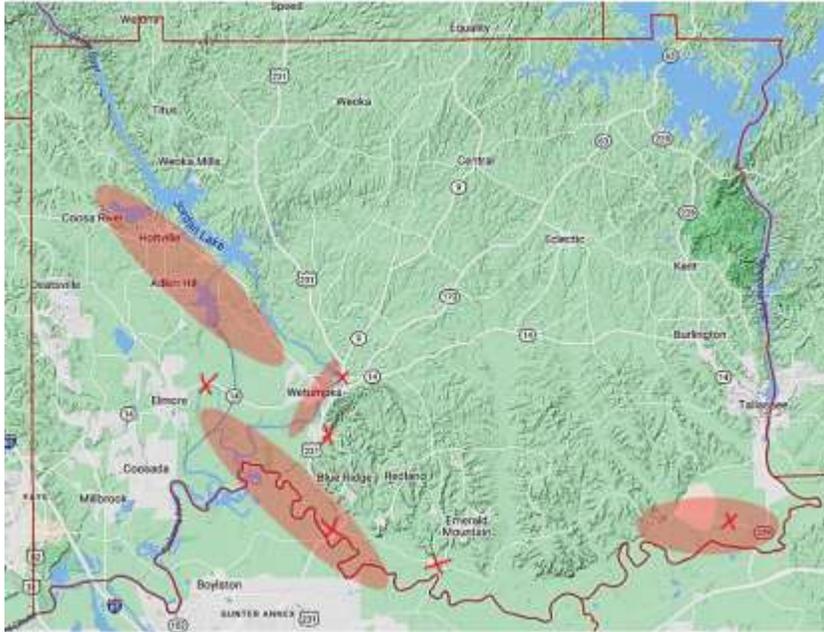- establish and refine protocols of cooperation with public safety agencies.

Details

The Joint SET will be conducted Friday, Oct 4 through Sunday, Oct 6, 2024, starting at 6:00 AM CT and ending at 10:00 PM CT on each of these days..

On these days, using the SET Scenario, we will do the following:

- announce the SET on the Alabama Day Net and take check-ins
  - 3965 KHz LSB
- Announce the SET on local repeaters, take check-ins, and collect simulated emergency traffic
  - 146.84 W4AP repeater FM voice
  - 147.18 W4AP repeater FM voice
  - 146.67 Ft. Deposit repeater FM voice
  - 147.310 KC4EMG Seaman, Elmore County, repeater FM voice
- Establish communication circuits for local emergency traffic using the CAADECS protocol of NBEMS digital emergency message handling on VHF Simplex frequencies and pass simulated emergency messages.
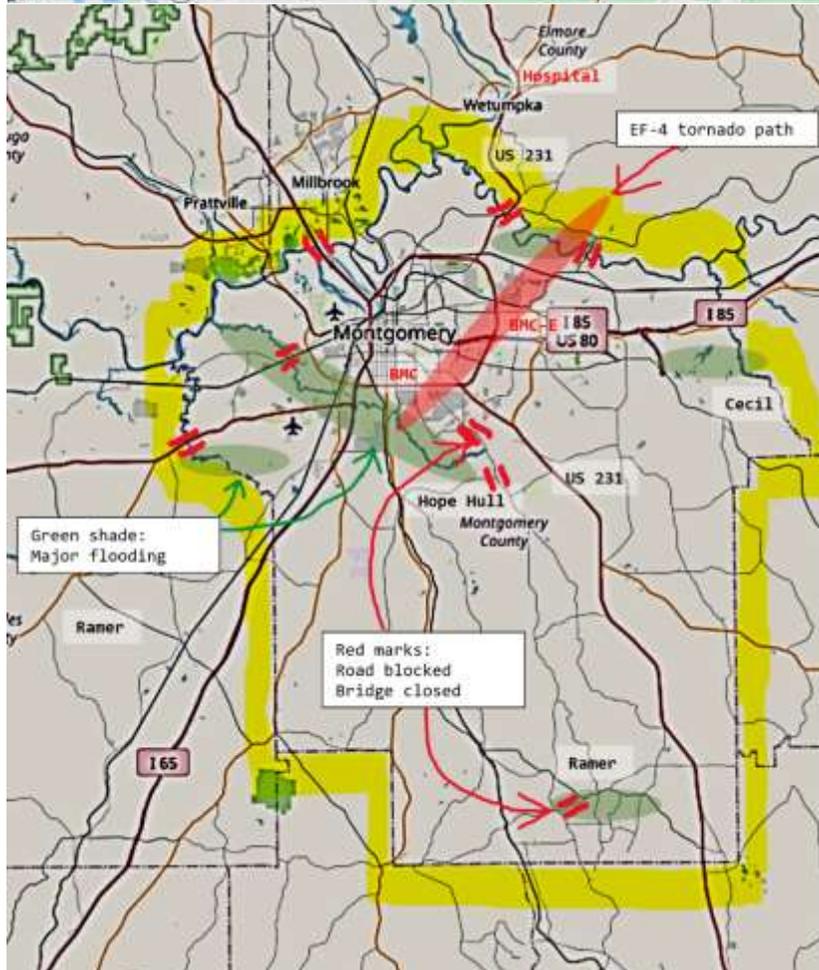- Call SKYWARN NET into session and collect simulated emergency reports

Scenario

For the Joint SET, we have chosen the disaster with the highest probability of occurring in the next ten years: a severe hurricane moving into Central Alabama with widespread flooding and several spin-off tornadoes that disrupt normal communications infrastructure.

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In the Elmore County map, red shaded areas depict major flooding with most roads impassable.

Red X marks show bridge or road closings.

In the Montgomery County map, green shading indicates major flooding.

Red marks show road closings.

The red shaded area shows the path of a tornado.

Detailed list of issues:

GENERAL AREA-WIDE:
- All communications infrastructure (public safety agencies trunking system) is completely destroyed. All P25 systems are non-functional.
- Internet and cellular services are down. There is no electricity.

ELMORE COUNTY:
- Roads closed and bridges out:
    - US 231 North from Montgomery County to Elmore County
    - Emerald Mountain Bridge between Wares Ferry Road and Rifle Range Road
    - Taylor Road approaching Hwy 229
    - Road leading to Harrow Springs
    - Hwy 14 east of Elmore
    - Intersection of Hwy 14 and US 231
- Major flooding:
    - Rifle Range Road
    - Taylor Road near Hwy 229
    - Downtown Wetumpka
    - US 231 near Redland Road
    - Holtville Road

MONTGOMERY COUNTY:
- Roads blocked and bridges out:
    - US 231 North from Montgomery County to Elmore County
    - US 31 North from Montgomery County to Autauga County and Prattville
    - Woodley Road near Snowdoun Chambers Road
    - Meriwether Trail between Grady and Ramer
    - Emerald Mountain Bridge between Wares Ferry Road and Rifle Range Road
    - OId Selma Road west of Hwy 31
- Major flooding
    - South of Ramer
    - Catoma Creek area from Snowdoun to Selbrook
    - Milli Creek area near Cecil
    - Cook Station area at Wares Ferry Road
- Tornado EF-4
    - From Narrow Lane Road south of South Blvd extending to the northeast near McGhee Road and South Blvd, East Blvd, Bellwood, Halcyon, and crossing Wares Ferry Road to the west of the Emerald Mountain bridge.
    - Buildings and communications infrastructure are completely destroyed.

Priority communication needs (both counties)

- Baptist East Hospital experienced major damage. Patients must be transferred to Baptist Medical Center South.
    - BMC must communicate capacity to BMC-E regarding beds and ICU
- Elmore Community Hospital needs to transfer patients to BMC-South
    - transports must use Hwy 14 East, 229 South, I-85 South
    - BMC-South needs to communicate acceptance of transfers
- Stranded persons need rescue from various flooded locations

A New Net:
The Montgomery County ARES Net

We are excited to announce a new net for the
newly organized Montgomery County ARES group.

This net will be on every Thursday evening at 7:30 PM CT
on the 146.84 W4AP repeater. In the event that this repeater
is off the air, we will meet on the 147.18 W4AP repeater or
(if needed) on 146.400 simplex.

The net will have the following:

- Check-ins

- Announcements of up-coming training events, amateur radio events, equipment
  availability, procedural changes, or ARES developments

- Presentation of an ARES training topic (usually around 5 minutes long)
    - may include passing of simulated traffic
    - may include testing of simplex capabilities

- Discussion of the training topic or any other ARES related issue that members want to
  discuss.

All amateur radio operators in Central Alabama are invited to join us. You do not need to be a
member of ARES to participate.

Local Nets You May Want to Know About

Otto N4UZZ

NOTE: Technicians can participate in the nets on 10m.

➢ The Cradle of the Confederacy Net and 10-10 International Chapter meet weekly on 28.350 MHz on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM CT on upper side band.

➢ The QCWA (Quarter Century Wireless Association) meets for a rag chew following the Cradle of the Confederacy Net on 28.350 MHz upper side band. Any amateur radio operator who has been licensed 25 years or longer is invited to join the QCWA by going to QCWA.org. We are Chapter 40.

➢ Monday nights at 8:00 PM CT the UHF Net meets for ragchew and to answer questions about antennas, coax cables, and various other equipment. New hams and experienced hams are invited. The net meets on the 444.500 W4AP Bald Knob repeater.

➢ Central Alabama Skywarn Net, 7:00 PM CT on the 146.84 repeater.

➢ Montgomery County ARES Net 7:30 PM CT on the 146.84 repeater.

➢ Sunday night at 8:00 PM local time the Central Alabama 2m Net meets on the 146.84 W4AP repeater. This is a get-together that should not be missed.

➢ The Alabama Emergency Net Mike meets daily at 6:00 PM on 3.965 MHz LSB for statewide traffic handling. (This net requires General Class privileges.)

Do you want to look up events or nets?
The club calendar on the front page of our website
https://w4ap.org
is always up-to-date with the latest details.
Just click on an event to get everything you need to know.

MARC Happenings for August 2024

The Lunchbunch meeting schedule: all meetings at 11:00 AM

Aug 7, 2024	Pizza Perfect, 428 Coliseum Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36109
Aug 14, 2024	San Marcos, 61 N Burbank Dr, Montgomery AL 36117
Aug 21, 2024	Sommer's Place, 7972 Vaughn Road near Vaughn & Taylor
Aug 28, 2024	Full Moon Bar-B-Que, 7660 Eastchase Pkwy, Montgomery, AL 36117

To join the club or Lunchbunch email list, send request to CASKYWARN@GMAIL.COM

The MARC 2m Net   meets every Sunday at 8:00 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP
Skywarn Training Net   meets every Thursday 7:00 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP
MGM-ARES Net   meets every Thursday 7:30 PM CT on 146.84 W4AP
Club Breakfast   Chappy's, Carmichael at Perry Hill Road, 7:00 AM Aug 17, 2024
Club Meeting   **Mon, Aug 19, 2024, 7:00 PM, American Red Cross Building**
     5015 Woods Crossing, Montgomery, AL 36106
CAVEC Testing   Mon, Aug 12, 2024, 6:30 pm
     Community Room, Renfroe's Foodland,
     9168 East Chase Parkway Montgomery, AL 36117
ARRL-VE Testing   Sat, Aug 31, 2024 9:00 AM, Renfroe Food Market Chantilly Corner
     Pre-registration required   Lewin.nyman@gmail.com
Foxhunt   No foxhunt this month

Other regular club events:

Radio at the Park   No Radio at the Park in August

Club Station Operations   No club station operation in August

For details on all events: go to w4ap.org
     Scroll down to the club calendar

Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/1412939275643917/

Club Officers:

President:	**Otto Arnoscht N4UZZ**
Vice-President:	**Ken Brittin AK4KN**
Treasurer:	**Fidel Cintron KK4KGO**
Secretary:	**Dennis Egbert K4PDQ**
Public Information Officer:	**Jim Norris K4JLN**
Director 1:	**Trent Davis KV4UZ (2024 - 2028)**
Director 2:	**Philip Salley K4PO (2022 - 2026)**
Director 3:	**Fred Springall KR4YK (2023 - 2027)**
Director 4:	**Mac McWhorter (2024 – 2025)**