

SATERN History

The Origins of SATERN



Major Patrick McPherson (R) WW9E SATERN Founder

SATERN started as a result of my desire to build an amateur radio presence for **The Salvation Army**. I had thought of it for years, however, the catalyst was leaving command of Dubuque, IA, where I had an established EDS team with amateurs and feeling perhaps they would be lost without support, since I was gone.

I had been appointed as the Disaster Services Coordinator for Heartland Division (Central Illinois and Eastern Iowa) and had decided to start an amateur radio network that would include the fellows on the Dubuque team and build a system for the entire division and solicit help from others on the amateur radio bands. The date of the first net was June 26, 1988 and we had about four people on the net, VE3BIX, VE3NKU and KA9KLZ.

Providentially, then Major Robert Bonfield, the Territorial Community Relations and Development Secretary, asked me a couple weeks later to develop a system that would help the Army in off the continent and national disasters for Central Territory. Captain Herbert Fuqua, was one of the primary people supporting the effort in the early days and presently Major Steven Harper has run very hard for the program at Metropolitan Headquarters. The Program exploded after the Plainfield Tornado disaster in which we used approximately 60 operators per day to provide communications for the Army's effort in a catastrophe that claimed 29 lives. The communication effort lasted 11 days with nine of those days running 24 hours.

Amateurs realized that the Army needed their help and ran to assist. In succeeding years, **SATERN** has assisted in numerous disasters including:

- **Hurricane Andrew**
- **the Midwest Flood**
- **the Lemont Tornado**
- **the Kobi Earthquake**
- **Hurricane Marilyn**
- **the Rose Lawn Air Crash**
- **the Yucca Valley/Big Bear Earthquakes**
- **the Northridge Earthquake**
- **the Fort Smith, AR Tornado**
- **the US Air Crash in Pittsburgh**
- **the TWA Flight 800 Air Crash**
- **the Grand Forks Flood**
- **New York City Ground Zero**
- **the 2004 Florida Hurricane**
- **the 2004 Sunami**
- **2005 Hurricane Katrina - Locating 25,000 + people through Ham Radio**
- **2010 Haiti Earthquake**
- **2010 Chile Earthquake and the list continues**

SATERN has provided the most consistent disaster training for **The Salvation Army** the past few years and it has now been sanctioned as an official program of The Salvation Army. **SATERN** spans the North American Continent, and has spread to other countries including, South America, Great Britain, Japan, India, Peru, Trinidad, Mexico, Australia, Nassau, St. Croix, Germany, Netherlands, Honduras, Hong Kong and Russia.

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