

2021 Whirlwind Boom Disaster Communications Exercise
March 19, 2021
Jacksonville, FL
Participation Overview and Outcome

On March 19, 2021 FL Baptist DR Comms (FBDR) team participated in Whirlwind Boom 21 a regional disaster communications exercise. This exercise was developed and managed by Dr. Gordon Gibby and sponsored by the Florida Baptist Disaster Relief Communications Ministry. The exercise and exercise plan were developed to meet the requirements of a Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Plan (HSEEP) for exercises of this type.

FBDR goals for this exercise:

1. Provide notice of arrival in a communication deficient disaster area to our warehouse and home office
2. Provide notice of our ability to serve food to State EOC and local EOC
3. Provide information on how much food we need to our Food Vendor
4. Check into SHARES to utilize that method of passing needed messages
5. Check into the HF Nets to utilize that method of passing needed messages

STARTEX. The exercise was scheduled to run from 1900-2100, Friday evening, 19 Mar 2021. Followed by a Zoom hot wash. The local exercise plan beginning simulated conditions:

1. No landline or cellular telephone service.
2. No internet capability
3. No commercial electricity. (Simulated, EOC has backup generators and battery backup capability was available.

Prior to the exercise, all our systems were check and verified to operate as expected, with the exception of HF radio. In the location where we were placed to service the Training Sessions tomorrow we had substantial noise, We were unable to move and did not have the manpower to put a station elsewhere and use a relay system with our V/U simplex abilities/

We also were unable to make any connections with our satellite, again due to our location.

Exercise Locations & Manning:

All four participants were located at the San Jose Baptist Church in Jacksonville

Exercise Play

We responded to the inject as we transferred and answered the messages as described above.

We did lose power BEFORE the Inject directed to it and brought in a backup generator and resumed full operation. HF on WINLINK was NOT interrupted.

EOC HF Exercise Participation

None on SSB due to noise levels, WINLINK was quite effective.

Was able to use VHF local emergency powered repeater to converse with local EOC

ASSESSMENT

Ref	Goal	Assessment/Comments
1	Provide notice of arrival in a communication deficient disaster area to our warehouse and home office	Partially Achieved. Worked perfectly on WINLINK VARA, wanted to use SHARES as well
2	Provide notice of our ability to serve food to State EOC and local EOC	Achieved. Worked perfectly on WINLINK VARA, wanted to use SHARES as well Also use VHF for local successfully
3	Provide information on how much food we need to our Food Vendor	Achieved. Were able to WINLINK a significant spreadsheet of items and quantities to SYSCO, received confirmation and doubled the order
4	Check into SHARES to utilize that method of passing needed messages	Failed: No sure if propagation or what but we did not get a connect on WINLINK FACTOR SHARES
5	Check into the HF Nets to utilize that method of passing needed messages	Failed: Noise level was excessive, we never connected

Improvement Plan

1. **Training:** Continue to refine WINLINK operations
2. **SHARES.** Work on systems to confirm it was not on our end
3. **NOISE:** Train on ways to verify presence of HF noise BEFORE locating unit
4. **Strengthen our DC system,** as it was DARK when the power went out.