

During rescue operations, all over the world, also radio amateurs are involved in emergency communications. About these activities of the radio amateur service in Italy, during threats to life and property and during organisation of emergency communications, we are talking during the Ham Radio 2014 with the President of the National Association of Emergency Communications RNRE (Raggruppamento Nazionale Radiocomunicazioni) – Alberto Barbera (IK2YLO, SO5BZO).

How has it happened that you are often in Poland and you have the SO5BZO call sign?

R. Poland has been since 1980 part of my working life, first with Olivetti Company in quality of Commercial Director, later with my own companies up to 2004.

Poland is now the destination of periodical visits because of the relationship established and as I like to follow the cultural activities in Warszawa.

What does the RNRE deal with and what belongs to your duties as President of this organisation?

R. I have created RNRE 6 years ago after L'Aquila earthquake associated all groups dealing in radio emergencies activities in cooperation with National Department of Civil Protection.

In my present role my main duties are to give a common way of operating for our volunteers, to manage central organisation and to realize the projects under financial Government support in order to have an efficient structure covering all Italian territory.

What are the legal aspects of associations of civic protection and volunteer activities within the framework of the Italian government organization?

R. In Italy there are several laws covering the activities and the different aspects of voluntary associations.

The significant laws are referred to warranty work place and salary for volunteers and the rules for receiving financial supports.

Financial supports are vital for all volunteer groups in order to survive.

Supports are coming:

- from local and central Government in order to finalize projects but covering about 75% of the total cost
- from banks as Casse di risparmio (Kasa oszczednosci) that are obliged to devolve 50% of the profits to no profit activities
- privates
- from Financial Dpt. allowing the possibility to devolve 5x1000 from personal taxation in favour of no profit associations

Each association is obliged to pay an insurance covering the risks of volunteers during activities.

How does in Italy the civil defense system and the structure of voluntary work for emergency affairs DNPC function?

R. In Italy we have a civil protection system involving all national structure, starting from the small municipalities up to central Government, to manage 3 levels of emergencies as follows:

Level A : regarding local emergencies : solved with local voluntaries structures

Level B : involving bigger area : solved with regional voluntaries support

Level C : with larger area dimension and /or very high risk the responsibility is passing under central control : solved with national voluntaries associations using also National Mobile Task force of 11 national organisations (as RNRE)

A system running H24 composed by a central headquarters in Rome +20 regional centers in each one of the Regions is available.

In case of emergency we are opening in each town specific emergency center connected with the regional center.

In case of Level C a structure called "Sala Italia" becomes operative.

In this center all responsible of civil activities, army, scientific teams for the different risks, nuclear, seismic, hydrogeologic, health etc including volunteers associations are working together. From this point are coming the requests to single volunteer association with the specific needs in terms of number of volunteers, location where to send, type of support required.

In normal time the responsible of each national associations are obliged, at least once a month, to participate in Rome in a working meeting called Consulta, for studying and planning the strategies.

How many associations and volunteers are currently operating in Italy, and which specialised communication equipment they have at their disposal?

National associations are more than 20 covering different areas, health, fire, logistic etc. with 11 national task forces.

For emergency communications support we have now 3 different groups:

- FIR/CB : offering volunteers for radio transmissions operating with CB or civil frequencies at first level as municipalities communications
- ARI : offering radioamateurs working with ham frequencies as requested but without mobile task force
- RNRE : working with ham and civil frequencies on digital (pactor .echolink etc) and voice mode and from now also with satellite transmissions

What are the structures of regional groups led by a coordination center and to whom they are subject?

RNRE is operating under request of national center "Sala Italia "in Rome and we are in touch with regional administration asking support.

We have at the moment

- 7 mobile structure located U.M. in north ,center ,south Italy and Sicily,ready to be activated in short time . Each one is composed by Rover defender +Caravan both equipped as radio stations and logistic.
- a national net composed of 5 headquarters activated in case of emergency and connecting different teams in HF,VHF,UHF .
- an EMCOMM net on Winlink 2000 composed at the moment of 2 RMS Hybrid in north and Sicily
- About 500 repeaters VHF/UHF interconnected

Can you remember involvement and active contribution of radio amateurs in actions during selected emergency situations?

We were and we are involved not only during emergencies but also in specific situations for example the celebration in Rome this year for the two Popes Giovanni XXIII and Giovanni Paolo. As well during the funeral of the last Pope Giovanni Paolo when about 1 millions of pilgrims were coming in Rome.

These case are considered exceptional situations and it is necessary to organize different radio nets ,in some case done directly from the voluntary associations involved as health groups Misericordie (more than 1500 ambulance in Italy...and the first voluntary association created in the world ,since 1200 DC in Florence..)

Of course we were involved in L'Aquila earthquake from 6th April up to middle of October.2005 ,.for winter emergencies in Italy like on 2011 and 2012 or for hydrogeological emergencies ,unfortunatly more and more common in Europe..

On the local territories we are involved also as support for specific activities when we are required specifically from government administrations.

How often training courses or competitions within the framework of emergency communications exercises are organised?

Normally we are receiving financial support from National Civil Protection every year in order to organize 2/3 national meeting during a week-end for the responsible of CMN (our national task force) .

This year we will have one in October specific for upgrading of Pactor net and satellite transmissions operations.

In addition we are also arranging at least one net on voice and one in digital Pactor during a Saturday for testing the main radio stations and mobile teams.

What parts and information does the emergency radio communications manual, elaborated by yourself, contain?

Together with Marco IK5BHN ,having very large experience in the world from Sri Lanka,up to Kosovo etc,we decided to write a radiocommunications on emergencies manual ,considering the only well know manual was done in USA from ARRL but specific for this country and very different from european needs.

Our manual is splitted in two part as follow:

First part

dedicated to

1. emergencies analysis
2. Italian Civil Protection organisation
3. international organisations
4. psicological aspects on emergencies

Second part

1. RTX and antennas (including NVIS)
2. Radiocommunication systems (HF-VHF/UHF,repeaters,pactor)
3. Power supply
4. Mobile units
5. Mission readiness- Guide lines for operators

Of course we are now thinking with Marco to update this manual considering the changes in italian organisation ,RNRE presence ,new thecnologies.

Does it include information that, in your opinion, would be worth popularising in Poland (translating into Polish)?

In my opinion you can create similare manual but taking in considerations:

- emergencies in Poland
- Polish national structure
- updating our second part and adapting to thecnical needs

From my side as president of RNRE I will be always available to support PZK if it will be necessary informing about our activities or developments.

My best 73 to all polish ham !

Alberto IK1YLO/SO5BZO

