

EOC / Disaster Management Center

Tactical Trailer Hitches Up With Federal Funding

Jasper Police Department Chooses Zetron Console for Interoperable Communications

With Homeland Security an ever present concern, increasing numbers of law enforcement and emergency management agencies are recognizing the flexibility and utility of mobile communications posts. Able to function as forward communication posts in the event of a large-scale natural or man-made disaster, such vehicles can also serve as fallback dispatch if the primary dispatch facility is knocked out of service.



The ERT trailer features a rear cargo area designed to carry the SWAT team's tactical equipment. The first third of the trailer houses a dispatch area.

TOW THE LINE:

About three years ago, the Jasper Police Department (JPD) in Jasper, Indiana acquired an ERT (Emergency Response Team) trailer from a neighboring force. The 28' long vehicle houses a self-contained dispatch area in the first third of the trailer, with the remaining two-thirds used to

store on-scene equipment such as batteries, lights, mobile radios, ropes, writing boards, heaters, fans, etc. Also on board is spare tactical equipment that may be needed by the ERT team.

"The trailer is primarily used by the SWAT team during incidents such as barricaded gunmen and hostage situations," explains Communications Chief Jerry Gagne. "It typically gets used three or four times a year."

Gagne adds that the ERT trailer can also be used as a forward communications post for other large-scale incidents such as chemical spills, large building fires, or any type of disaster where an on-scene mobile command post would be an asset.

CABLE-READY:

In its original configuration, the ERT trailer's communications capabilities were somewhat limited. That, however, was recently remedied when Homeland Security grants became available. **Advanced Radio Communications** of

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Huntingburg, Indiana already maintains the Jasper Police Department's radio equipment, so they were the logical choice to help upgrade the ERT trailer's communications equipment.

But as company owner and president Charlie McIntyre points out, there was a catch: "In order to use the money for radio equipment, the JPD had to demonstrate that the equipment would be interoperable with a new 800 MHz Motorola trunking system being installed in the northern part of the state. We installed a Zetron Model 4020 Common Control Unit and a Model 4018 Radio Console, as well as an ICRI radio patching bridge. That satisfied the interoperability requirements."

Advanced Radio Communications also ordered a set of cables, so the ERT trailer could function as a back-up dispatch center should either the Jasper Police Dispatch or the Dubois County dispatch were knocked out of commission.

"Now we have it set up so we can park the ERT trailer at our radio tower, or at the county communications tower, and plug in." explains Gagne. "The trailer has its own generator, or it can hook up to existing AC."

TRAINING:

When the trailer was finished, Advanced Radio Communications provided six days of training at their shop, with dispatchers from both the Dubois County 9-1-1 and the Jasper Police Department attending. Many county law enforcement and fire department officials also showed up for training and orientation on the new Model 4018 console, including the Mayor of the City of Jasper.

For the event, McIntyre's company put on a buffet complete with food and snacks and tables for dining. They even had a drawing for a 16 Channel Portable VHF radio. Now that's a way to motivate students!



Advanced Radio Communications' Charlie McIntyre (standing) and the Jasper Police Department's Communications Chief Jerry Gagne (seated) check out the Model 4018 Radio Console in the ERT trailer dispatch area.

ANOTHER SUCCESS STORY:

Advanced Radio Communications has performed a number of successful installations of Zetron consoles in the past, and looks forward to doing many more in the future, as company president McIntyre explains:

"Within the past two years we also installed Zetron consoles at the Martin County 9-1-1, Washington Police Department, and the Crane Naval Weapons Center. Our technicians are very happy with the ease and simplicity of servicing the equipment, as well as Zetron's prompt technical support when needed."

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