



# News Release

## WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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### **NEWS: Exercise puts different agencies on same wavelength**

By Tod Pritchard

Wisconsin Emergency Management

Getting information and data to the right people at the right time can save lives during a disaster. That's why more than 200 people representing two dozen federal, state, county, tribal, local and volunteer agencies — to include the Wisconsin National Guard and Wisconsin Emergency Management — gathered at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds May 31 to take part in "SIMCOM 2012."

The State Interoperable Mobile Communications Exercise, held the past few years in Madison, is designed to display, educate and test mobile emergency communications. The goal is develop relationships and understand the capabilities of other agencies before they are needed in a real emergency.

During the exercise, participating agencies worked together in four groups on practice exercises involving incident command structures and incident action plans. They also played out scenarios to simulate the challenges in emergency communications across different platforms.

"We had a lot of participation from different agencies with various communication platforms," said Donna Haugom, director of the Jefferson County Office of Emergency Management. "I believe this was a great learning experience, and hope it can continue with different counties throughout the state."

Agencies involved in SIMCOM 12 included ARES/RACES (HAM radio operators); the Civil Air Patrol; Dane County; Dodge County; Federal Emergency Management Agency; FBI-Milwaukee; Jefferson County; La Crosse County; Menomonee County; Milwaukee County; Minnesota Emergency Management; Ozaukee County; Shawano County; USA Disaster Relief Corps; U.S. Department of Justice; Washington County; Waukesha County; Winnebago County (Ill.); Wisconsin Emergency Management; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; Wisconsin National Guard; and the Wisconsin State Patrol.

Participating Wisconsin National Guard units included the Joint Operations Center, Joint Information Systems, 54th Civil Support Team, 128th Air Refueling Wing, 128th Air Control Squadron, 115th Fighter Wing, and the 724th Engineer Battalion serving as the National Guard

Reaction Force. The Minnesota National Guard's Joint Operations Staff also took part in the exercise.

The exercise was funded by a U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant through the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance. It was hosted by the Wisconsin National Guard's Joint Operations Center, Wisconsin Emergency Management, and Jefferson County Emergency Management.

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[Story online](#)

**120531-q-12103-001**

**CAPTION — Cyndi Skodinski of the Washington County Sheriff's Department takes part in the SIMCOM12 communications exercise May 31 at the Jefferson County Fairground. More than 200 people representing two dozen agencies took part in the exercise. Wisconsin Emergency Management photo by Tod Pritchard**

**120531-q-12103-002**

**CAPTION — Kent MacLaughlin, warning and communication officer with Wisconsin Emergency Management, conducts a radio check May 31 during SIMCOM 12 at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. More than 200 people representing two dozen agencies took part in the communications exercise. Wisconsin Emergency Management photo by Tod Pritchard**

**120531-q-12103-003**

**CAPTION — Members of the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing staff a communication cell at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds during SIMCOM12 May 31. More than 200 people representing two dozen agencies took part in the communications exercise. Wisconsin Emergency Management photo by Tod Pritchard**

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