

Earthquake Drill 10/19/2023



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When an earthquake or other major incident occurs, frequently the infrastructure in the surrounding area is knocked out. This creates a so-called “doughnut hole” where people in the most-impacted area cannot provide reports via internet or cell phones. Because of this, USGS partnered with Winlink to provide a way for “Did You Feel It” (DYFI) reports to be submitted via radio. When Winlink DYFI messages are received by USGS, these reports are parsed automatically, and the information is added to their database giving a near-real-time picture of the extent of damage. The SHAKEOUT exercise on October 19 will give USGS a good measure of how effective the Winlink radio reporting system is.

In addition to providing information to USGS, the SHAKEOUT

exercise also is being used by FEMA and other agencies to gauge the effectiveness of amateur radio at providing ground truth during incidents. This is from the September 26 FEMA bulletin, which went to all FEMA Regions for their stakeholders:

“Our primary aim of participating in the October 19th SHAKEOUT ‘Did You Feel It’ (DYFI) exercise is to underscore the remarkable proficiency of Winlink. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) will use this Winlink ‘Did You Feel It’ ground truth data to contribute to the calculations of their earthquake intensity assessments when modeling the Modified Mercalli (MMIS) Intensity Scale, a standard index used for earthquake severity (see Figure 1). This data will contribute to event response products, like PAGER, a system that provides fatality and economic loss impact estimates following significant earthquakes, worldwide, and is used by governments, agencies, NGOs, private companies, and citizens.

“A secondary and extremely important purpose for emergency management at all levels to participate in this exercise is to illustrate the capabilities of the Winlink system to provide situational awareness ground truth regardless of the specific information gathered.”

DYFI Winlink submissions will go to USGS, the Winlink team, and partner agencies. They will produce maps showing points of submission, and they will generate summaries for the AAR which will be sent to FEMA, DHS, SHARES, and other interested groups.

In addition to U.S. hams, Winlink DYFI reports will be sent by CISA SHARES members, Air Force MARS members, and hams in Europe, Scandinavia, and other parts of the world.

*You can find detailed instructions about how to fill out a Winlink DYFI report and send it via radio at this site. Note to specify **QUAKE-23 as a CC address to your submission.***

https://winlink.org/sites/default/files/ShakeOutWinlinkExercise_cm6.pdf