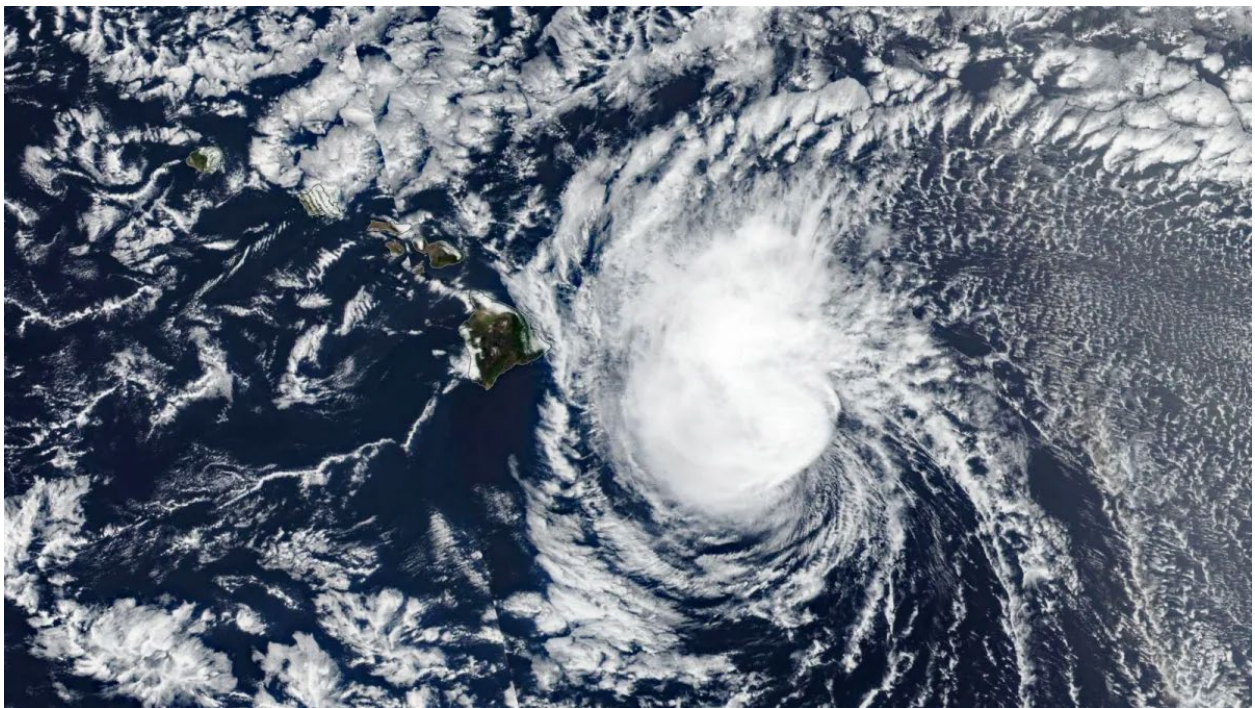


Hawaii ARES Steps Up During Tropical Storm Calvin

On July 12, 2023, the first major Pacific hurricane of the season, Hurricane Calvin, activated the readiness of Amateur Radio operators across the state of Hawaii. As it approached the Big Island, the hurricane weakened, evolving into Tropical Storm Calvin and delivering heavy rain, flash flooding, dangerous surf, and damaging winds in its wake.



Visible VIRRS satellite image of Tropical Storm Calvin approaching Hawai'i at 7 p.m. EDT July 18, 2023. NASA WorldView

Daily briefings were convened by the [Hawaii Emergency Management Agency](#), with representatives from all major island emergency management departments and the governor in attendance. [Hawaii's ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service \(ARES®\)](#) members from various parts of the state attended these

briefings leading up to the landfall of Tropical Storm Calvin. Some were there as part of their regular jobs in disaster readiness and response, and others as volunteers. These meetings featured updates and forecasts from the [National Hurricane Center and Central Pacific Hurricane Center](#), providing valuable insights for all in attendance.

Anticipating the looming threat, the [Hawaii County Civil Defense](#) engaged several volunteer groups, including the ARES. Under the leadership of ARES Assistant Section Manager Tony Kitchen, WH6DVI, the group was galvanized into action. As Hawaii County developed its Incident Action Plan (IAP) under the frameworks of NIMS/ICS, with Tony contributing to four ICS forms related to Amateur Radio.

Stationed at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Hilo for a cumulative 23 hours across Tuesday and Wednesday, Tony managed the incoming Winlink reports and directed them to the appropriate County Defense staff. Despite the relatively light number of Situation Reports (SITREPs), they resulted in consequential actions such as a welfare check by a police officer and direct communication with HELCO Power and Spectrum Internet provider points of contact concerning outages.

Reflecting on the experience, Tony noted, "It's in times like these that the value of diverse communication methods, such as Amateur Radio with [Winlink Radio Email](#) and voice traffic on HF and VHF, becomes vividly clear. When internet or telephone service goes down in a community, it is helpful for agencies involved in emergency management and mitigation to find out

about it as soon as possible. The Amateur Radio Service may be the only means available to achieve this objective. Real time detection of problems helps everyone involved coordinate an appropriate response."

As Tropical Storm Calvin unfolded, Amateur Radio operators ran nets on 7.190 and 146.760 MHz ([Kulani Cone repeater](#)) to receive voice reports. Stations established their ordinary hub nets at 1800 on Tuesday, processing these reports from the spokes via the typical frequencies and modes they had previously practiced.

Tony further emphasized the importance of readiness and adaptability in Amateur Radio, stating "This event underscores the importance of practicing and maintaining our skills regularly, even in times of tranquility with voice traffic and Winlink Radio email ."