

CERT Communications Accessories

By: William P. Flinn

Whether on CERT Search and Rescue duty, severe weather spotting, or even just out doing training, good communications is important. I'm a HAM radio operator, and a member of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), so being able to perform double-duty as a CERT Team member and an emergency radio operator in a disaster is a possibility for me. Having the ability to integrate hands free radio operations into my other CERT gear, as well as having the flexibility to use this gear in a standalone configuration was one of the key things I was looking for when assembling my deployment gear. The images you see in this album are just some of the ways that I was able to accomplish this with good equipment, but without breaking the bank.

I can quickly turn my CERT helmet configuration into a HAM radio configuration just by taking off my electronic ear pro featured in my CERT Helmet review album, and putting on my HAM radio headset gear:



This particular comms headset pictured is a Coodio Tactical Earpiece Headset Mic [Heavy Duty PTT] [Boom Microphone] [Noise Cancelling] For 2 Pin Midland 2 Way Radio Walkie Talkie. However, this same pin configuration also fits my Baofeng UV-5R5 dual band FM transceiver (handheld HAM radio):



The Coodio headset can also be used with other "pigtail" cords to adapt the headset and push to talk (PTT) switch to other types of radios:



The Coodio Tactical Earpiece Headset without the helmet. I can wear this as a standalone unit, or if I just want to wear a hat in situations where bump protection is not necessary and I don't want to wear the helmet:



This particular headset was made for my Yaesu VX-7R. Unfortunately, it does not fit under my helmet very well. I would mainly use this while driving so as to have hands-free while driving or doing weather spotting from the vehicle:



Some of my radio options: From left to right: 1) Baofeng UV-5R5 dual band FM transceiver - handheld HAM radio. Very inexpensive, but very durable and reliable. Also picks up the severe weather broadcasts, GMRS, and FRS bands. 2) Yaesu VX-7R multi-band HAM handheld. Completely waterproof and submersible. More expensive. The Yaesu radios are very high-end HAM radios. 3) A set of Midland GXT GMRS/FRS walkie-talkies. Very durable and reliable, and inexpensive. They also pick up severe weather broadcasts. Not pictured is my mobile rig, which is a Yaesu FT-2900, 75-watt mobile VHF HAM radio mounted in my vehicle:



The Midland GXTs come with a variety of hands-free devices:





The hands-free headset for the Midland GXT is very light and thin, and fits under my ear pro very comfortably. I would use this configuration if I still need to have full hearing protection. This little headset is also compatible with the Baofeng UV-5R5 and various other handheld radios:



Close-up of the hands-free headset for the Midland GXT. Very light, and fits under my helmet very well. The ear-piece is an "in ear" unit with a clip that secures it to your ear. Can be worn on right or left side:



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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