ianews

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ianews, your connection to Icom America's Land Mobile Division! Keep up with the latest products, news and technical information in this newsletter.

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New F3011 Portable is Rugged and Simple to Use

Icom America is excited to introduce the IC-F3011 series portable radio, the newest addition to its land mobile product line. Scheduled to launch in September, the F3011 offers simple-to-use operation and rugged durability at an unbelievable price.

"The F3011 is designed for people who need a reliable entry-level radio," says Mark Behrends, National Sales Manager for Icom America. "It is durable, simple to use and offers a good set of features."

Compact and lightweight, the F3011 series is tested to MIL-STD 810 specifications and the IP54 rating for dust protection and water resistance.

"The F3011 is a great radio for businesses, schools, hotels and construction users who need durability but not the complex feature sets of high-end radios," Behrends says.

With only three buttons, one volume knob and one 16-position channel knob, the radio is easy to operate and does not require special training to use.

The F3011 series replaces the F11 portable, an entry-level radio popular for its simple operation and competitive price point.

Improvements include its sleek, modern design and enhanced durability. A high-capacity Li-Ion battery pack also comes standard.

"As the entry-level market has become more competitive, we needed to respond to competitors' offerings," Behrends says.

The F3011 offers wide frequency coverage and programmable wide/narrow channel spacing, making it a smart investment for businesses and organizations transitioning from 25 kHz to 12.5 kHz channels, as required by the FCC.

Additional features include built-in CTCSS/DTCS capabilities, priority scan and a rapid desktop charger.

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Nourisha Wells
Electronic Creative Specialist

August will be Nourisha Wells' one year anniversary as Icom's Electronic Creative Specialist. Nourisha works in the advertising department and maintains our corporate website and promotes Icom's products.

During her time here, Nourisha has worked on many projects including pioneering Icom's ventures into social media - check out our YouTube channel: http://www.youtube.com/icomamericainc She helped develop our IDAS site www.idas625.com where you can find case studies, information on IDAS, and super cool downloads such as wallpaper for your desktop. As if that weren't enough – Nourisha spent many long hours to get our Spanish website up and running!

Nourisha would like to let the dealers know that she is happy to help with recommendations for their websites – she can provide evaluations and give advice on how to improve their SEO and gain more traffic.

Nourisha moved to Seattle from Kansas City, MO just over a year ago. She loves Seattle and noted "The best thing about Seattle is that it sparkles like no other city when the sun is out!" – when it decides to come out, of course!

The Acid Test

Aksala Electronics, Inc. – Curtis Law

How can you tell if you have a good repeater or not? Service? Sales? Construction? Well this is a short tale of a disaster that recently happened.

Back in May of this year, Aksala Electronics, Inc. invested in a new FR6000 and a second RF module to replace two existing narrow band community repeaters. The little unit works just fine. We have both narrow band analog and 6.25 KHz sharing the repeaters. It replaced two rack mounted 50 watt repeaters of similar size, but only takes up one spot in our 19 inch rack.

Then came Thursday, 30 July 2009… We received a call from a customer who owns their own UHF repeater. The repeater was not working and was making things difficult for their construction company. At the same time I noticed a major alarm from our mountaintop DC to AC inverter. After confirming that the repeater was not working, we set out to the mountain top radio site. Upon arriving at the site and opening the door, there was a strong smell of sulfuric acid. Turning on the lights showed battery parts scattered all over the back half of the radio shelter. Aksala Electronics uses two 8D batteries in series to power an inverter that keeps critical equipment in operation between the time commercial power goes out and the generator starts and takes the load. One of the 8D batteries exploded, blowing the top off and emptying it of sulfuric acid.

A quick survey showed that three of Aksala's seven repeaters sustained damage from the acid. Two other private repeaters and two commercial FM translators were damaged or destroyed. Aksala's new FR6000 was three feet from the battery that exploded. When

we arrived, it was still operating, but was dripping with acid. The two FM translators below it were either badly damaged or destroyed.

I took the FR6000 out of the rack and packaged it for transportation back to the shop. We held little hope of being able to continue using the radio with so much acid hitting the radio. At the shop, I carefully cleaned off the excess acid with dry paper towels and then wiped the unit down with water and baking soda. Once this was done, the radio was opened. To my surprise, the two RF modules were dry! It looked as if the plastic separator between the front cooling vent had prevented the acid spray from hitting the RF modules. These were carefully removed and inspected. No damage found. The front casting was removed and acid poured out on the bench. We were hoping that the circuit board behind the metal plate was also spared. Carefully removing the metal plate, I was pleased to

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The Acid Test

find the rubber gasket had protected the top of the circuit board. Icom provides gaskets for the control knobs, and the tight fit on the button pads spared the bottom of this circuit board as well. The board and control cables were removed. The control cables were washed and set aside to dry. The board was untouched. All gaskets, seals, screws, washers, etc. were placed in a bowl with distilled water and rinsed of any acid. We then completely cleaned the chassis pieces in warm soapy water. Everything was left to dry over night.

The next morning, all washed parts were dried using an air hose. One last inspection was conducted and the repeater was reassembled and tested. In less then 24 hours, the FR6000 was placed back in service. The chassis parts show the signs of acid damage, but two repeaters are back in service. I can't say that for the two other repeaters I have on the bench.

Will I buy another FR6000? You bet! After this ordeal, my confidence in the little units is at an all time high. Thank you Icom for not skimping on the production of any of your products.

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