

## **Appendix 19: Sample After Action Review (AAR) Format**

DATE: (Date prepared/submitted)

SUBJECT: After Action Report – (Event Title)

FROM: (Person Preparing report)

TO: (Primary Person in Chain of Command) CC:  
(Courtesy Copy to interested individuals)

### **1. PURPOSE:**

Establish the facts.  
What was the mission description?  
What did we set out to do?  
What were the key tasks involved?  
Define acceptable standards for success.

### **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Continue to establish the facts.  
What actually happened?  
Relevant times and dates  
Cause and effect, Why did it happen? Focus on the What not the Who.

### **3. LESSONS LEARNED**

What can we do better next time?  
Focus on items you can fix and try to suggest solutions to identified problems If you don't have a solution that's OK but you should try to provide some options.  
Identify successes to maintain those strengths

### **4. COMMENTS**

This includes good and bad performance, questionable actions. It can also include suggested changes in policy or really anything that the submitter wants the chain-of-command to know about. However, touchy or dangerous subjects such as potential disciplinary items are usually handled personally and not in a report like this that has general distribution.

### **5. ACTION ITEMS**

Develop a list of what actions to take to fix specific needs. Timelines and responsibilities

### **Appendix**

Who participated?  
Agencies/individuals

## Sample - After Action Report

**DATE:** December 31, 2006

**SUBJECT:** After Action Report – Carr Canyon Falls (McCarty Rescue)

**FROM:** Robert Hollister

**TO:** David Noland, CCSO SAR Coordinator

**CC:** Mike Evans, CC Emergency Services  
Roy Cook, CCSO SAR Coordinator

### **1. PURPOSE:**

This report briefly describes the support provided by the RACES Communications team to the Cochise County Search and Rescue Team on 30 December 2006. It does not address SAR specific operational issues.

### **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

At approximately 17:30 on 30 December 2006 hours the RACES team received notification by page of a technical rescue near the Carr Canyon Falls area in the Huachuca Mountains. It had been reported that two juveniles (Ages 13 & 17) were stranded on the side of the mountain. Apparently they started their exploration during daylight hours but recognized they were beyond their capabilities and required assistance once the sun dropped below the mountain and it got dark and quite cold. We arrived on scene at approximately 18:00 hours and set up operations at the lower parking lot. After an arduous effort by the SAR Technical Team, under the additional difficulties of cold weather and darkness, the young boys were safely and successfully pulled to the top of the cliff at approximately 22:00 hours. The SO SAR Team was augmented by the Fry Fire Technical Team. The mission was completed and the MCU returned to the Club Site by 22:30.

### **3. LESSONS LEARNED**

All systems were operational during this mission with the exception of the mission support laptop computer. The previously reported screen problem continues to be an issue. On this mission we basically had to use the mapping support computer for both mapping and to prepare the IC 309 Communications logs. Hopefully the long promised replacement laptop will be issued to us early in the new year.

During the long cold evening the coffee pot was a popular accessory and the MCU became a gathering point for people to stay warm and keep informed of the progress of the team on the cliff side. Unfortunately the abundance of people and their chatter trying to occupy the small operations area occasionally made it hard for the communications team and the IC staff to conduct the mission and hear what was going on.

The issue of co-channel interference was noted again. In this case the interference between the CC-SAR, AZ SAR and CMA channels was noticeable. It was partially

mitigated by moving the CC-SAR activity from the High Power Motorola to the Yaesu FT-2800 operating at a lower power level and the RACES Activity to the FT-2600. We need to continue experimenting with this to find the best mix of radio/antennas to resolve this on-going problem. The limits of physical space on top of the truck make this a challenge.

Each mission allows team members to learn new skills or refresh seldom used skills. This mission was no exception providing opportunities to work with the mapping software to learn additional features and learning how to quickly format the IC 309 Communications form.

#### **4. COMMENTS**

A family member related to the victims was also introduced into the communications van during the mission by a senior SO Officer and was allowed to remain. This is against our normal procedures and considered to be a bad idea to allow any family members or members of the press to remain in the communications van while we are trying to run operations. Fortunately the rescue went smoothly but I would ask the Sheriff's Office SAR Coordinator's assist us in keeping the communication van relatively free of non essential personnel. It gets pretty hectic in the van during missions and extended stays by non essential personnel adds further noise and confusion to the effort. I extend my thanks to Gene Wheeler for recognizing this situation and bringing the DUI van out from Sierra Vista and moving the crowd out near the end of the mission.

#### **5. ACTION ITEMS**

- 1 – Request that the issue of the laptop screen be moved up in priority.
- 2 – Refresh coffee supply

#### **Appendix - Participants**

- CCSO SAR Team
- CCSO Sheriff's Assist Team
- Fry Fire Technical Team
- AZ DPS Tucson Ranger
- RACES Team
  - Bob Hollister – Team Lead
  - Dale Chidester - MCU Operator
  - Lee Ilse – MCU Operator and Chase Vehicle
  - Pat Thies – Home Unit Monitor
  - Floyd Sharp – Home Unit Monitor