

## After Action Report

DATE: March 1, 2009

SUBJECT: After Action Report – Cochise Smile

FROM: Robert Hollister

TO: Mike Evans, CC Emergency Services

CC: RACES Team

### 1. PURPOSE:

This report briefly describes the support provided by the ARES/RACES Communications team to the Cochise County Health Department for Exercise Cochise Smile. It does not address any Health Department or other agency specific operational issues.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The ARES/RACES unit was asked to provide communications support to an event sponsored by the Cochise county Health Department and designed to exercise procedures and protocols to be used in the event medical supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile were to be distributed within the county. Two primary command elements were to be set up, one at the Point of Distribution (POD) at Buena High School, and a second at the County Health Department office on Foothills Drive. Sierra Vista Police Department positioned there Mobile Communications Van at the POD and the County positioned there unit at the County Health Department. Our radio operators operated the amateur gear at both locations.

### 3. LESSONS LEARNED/ISSUES –

Communications Link with SV PD Comm Van – We initially had a problem with the SVPD van hearing us on the simplex channel. After checking all of our gear and putting up the Big Stick Antenna for increased antenna gain we were able to establish a clear link. Later it was determined that the problem was probably at the SVPD end. They will have their comm maintenance support check it out.

MCU Jack Stands – It appears that the jack stands are not fully retracting. This caused a problem while deploying them on the pavement. We will need to clean and lubricate to ensure they can retract properly.

Hotmail Account Familiarity – Since many of our operators infrequently have the opportunity to check into the MCU account they are not very familiar with the idiosyncrasies of this account. It was suggested that MCU operators sign up for their own FREE Hotmail account and practice using it at home to become more familiar with the characteristics of this account such as: adding email addresses, drafting messages, printing messages, making folders for an incidents, etc.

Shore Power at Health Department – We had anticipated using shore power to power the van during the exercise. Unfortunately, the GFCI circuit on the building did not like our truck and "fired" the interrupt. Perhaps we had too much leakage in the MCU. Recommend that an RV type 30 amp circuit be installed at the Health Department. We have frequently deployed to this location in the past year or so and this would save considerable diesel fuel as well as reducing fumes in the area.

Dual Logs - It should be standard practice for one of the MCU operators to keep a paper log (309) as well as the computer log in the event of power/generator outage. This happens frequently on many missions but should be reemphasized in future training sessions.

Radio Watch – We have two primary missions in the MCU, provide radio communications and provide copies of the communications log. During this event, it appeared that no one was assigned the primary task of monitoring the primary radio channel. Consequently, there were occasionally delays in answering the radio when called. It was critical during this exercise because the primary radio was physically further away from the log scribe. All operators present in the van should be attuned to monitoring the primary channel and listening to the activity and be prepared to write down the activity as it occurs. The closest assigned operator should quickly respond to the radio traffic as it occurs.

#### 4. COMMENTS

Despite the few issues uncovered during this exercise, the ARES/RACES team did an outstanding job and accomplished the mission. Exercises such as this provide great opportunities to practice our skills and discover potential problems as well as honing our skills.

For example, we used this exercise to test the various Internet and Winlink software messaging procedures. The MARS WinLink "ini" file was updated. The crew at the SVPD van (re)familiarized themselves with the equipment in that van. Personal contact was made with other players building upon trust and establishing points of contact with other agencies.

#### 5. ACTION ITEMS:

- Clean and service pneumatic jacks
- Ensure training on procedures is repeated
- Check with Facilities to request power outlet at Health Department

#### Appendix – Participants

Cochise County Health Department  
Cochise County Emergency Services

Cochise County Risk Management  
Cochise County CERT  
AZ Department of Public Safety  
SV Police Department  
Wal-Mart  
Yavapai County Health Dept (Evaluater/Observer)  
RACES Team  
RB Rice SVPD Van Operator  
Mike Bales SVPD Van Operator  
Mike McNeill SVPD Van Operator  
Lee Ilse – MCU Operator/Driver  
Roger Peters – MCU Driver/Operator  
Juanita Portz – MCU Operator  
Rob Cass – MCU Operator  
Dale Chidester - MCU Operator  
Wendell Carter – MCU Operator/Observer  
Bob Hollister - MCU Operator/ /Chase

*Bob*

Robert L Hollister

Thought for the day:

*"When we love anyone with our whole hearts, life begins when we are with that person; it is only in their company that we are really and truly alive."*

*William Barclay*