

**DATE:** December 15, 2010

**SUBJECT:** After Action Report – Sierra Vista Christmas Parade

**FROM:** Robert Hollister, RACES Unit Leader

**TO:** Diane Erwin, SV Chamber of Commerce

**CC:** Mike Evans, Cochise County Emergency Services Coordinator  
RACES Members

## **1. PURPOSE:**

The Cochise County RACES Unit was asked to assist the Sierra Vista Chamber of Commerce in maintaining reliable communications between Chamber of Commerce Staff members and the various support organizations during the staging of the various participants and execution of the 2010 Sierra Vista Christmas parade held on December 6, 2010. This report is a summary of the tasks and results of that mission.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

To accomplish the mission the RACES unit set up the County Mobile Communications Unit (MCU) at the Masonic Lodge parking lot at the corner of Willcox Drive and Buffalo Soldier Trail (BST) to act as the central communications point for the activity. Fixed assets were deployed at the following locations:

- Entry Point 1 (Willcox & BST)
- Entry Point 2 (Busby & BST)
- Entry Point 3 (Golf Links & BST)
- Control Point 1 (Willcox & Fab)
- Control Point 2 (Willcox & Carmichael)
- VIP Stand (Competition Tire on Fry Blvd)
- Transit Point (Willcox & Coronado)

There were also two "Shadow Teams" deployed to support the two mobile primary Chamber personnel designated as Incident Command One (IC1) and IC2).

The MCU was configured to monitor the primary & secondary command channels as well as the Law Enforcement frequencies. (See ICS 205 for details)

The RACES participants met at the Chamber at 1430 to receive their mission assignments and mission briefing. They then deployed to their assignments and were in place at 1500. They remained with their assignments until their specific assignment was complete at approximately 1900.

## **3. LESSONS LEARNED:**

**Antenna Configuration** – We initially put the amateur dual band antenna on top of the mast to allow for maximum coverage. It was quickly determined that reception was not what it should have been. After quickly switching back to the roof mounted dual band antenna reception improved. There is still some debate as to what the problem is. Some believe it is the "N" connectors on the coax and the patch panel at the patch panel, others believe, the RF cable. This still needs to be resolved. Bottom line for the parade was that the roof top antenna was effective and this issue was basically transparent for the parade activities.

**Frequency Selection** – A frequency utilization plan (ICS 205) was prepared in advance of the activities and provided the necessary coverage. Again, there was some discussion as to how it might be improved for next year. We use a "Cross-Band" (VHF/UHF) repeater setup at the Transit station to provide stronger signals from the area near Coronado & Fry back to the MCU. That seemed to be quite effective and improved the communications from that area. We did notice that we should probably add one additional simplex frequency to facilitate operations between the two operators providing coverage at Entry Point 3. They were coordinating the flow of traffic of the parade entries during the staging period and were basically only talking between themselves.

#### **4. OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Time Coordination** - By our MCU clock, the parade actually kicked off about 5 minutes early. This may have been the cause of traffic still coming down Fry Boulevard when the parade staff was attempting to get entries to start down the boulevard. Not all the staff had cones/barrier in place in time to keep the traffic off the road. Perhaps it would be useful to have all staff members synchronize their watches at the mission brief so that we are all "in-sync" at the time we want activities to start moving.

**Maps/Parade List** - A couple of the entry point staff members did not get their Entry Lists at the Mission Brief so they were confused when attempting to guide parade entries to their designated point. There was also some confusion when Entry Staff was trying to guide non-parade personnel around the closed streets. Having a printed map to show people alternative routes would have helped.

**Road Closures** – Once all entries had turned the corner onto Fry Boulevard, traffic started coming north-bound on BST. Unfortunately, some of them wanted to turn left into the Main Gate which was still closed. I directed traffic for a short period because we still had a broken down entry to be moved on the west side of BST. Once that was cleared, I did not understand why the MPs did not open the Main Gate to inbound traffic. There were a few other road closure/opening issues also relating to timing. I do not have the details of those issues.

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

- a. Continue refining our frequency assignments to optimize our assets.
- b. Continue to research the issues we have using the RF cables/patches used with the Mast unit.

## Appendix 1 – RACES Participants/Assignments

Assignment	Name	Callsign
IC-1	RB Rice	K7HVV (Mobile) (w/Susan Tegmeyer)
IC-2	Peggy Morris	KC7LCE (Mobile) (w/Diane Erwin)
MCU	Charles Campbell	K4AFN
MCU	Jim Lewis	WB0VYH
EP1	Bob Hollister	N7INK
EP1	Grant Hays	WB6OTS
EP2	Dave Bly	K7DTB
EP2	Greg Byington	K7GHB
EP3	Juanita Portz	KK7WA
EP3	Mitch Mitchell	KE7WWT
Ctl Pt 1	Tom Huntoon	KC7WKT
Ctl Pt 2	Ken Allen	KF7IYQ
Transit Station	Charlie Morris	N7DQS (Cross Band repeat)
VIP Stand	Vince Fero	AA7JB

## Appendix 2 - ICS 205 - Comm Plan

Provided under separate cover