

RACE S Notes for 03/12/2008

News and Announcements

1) Upcoming Events:

4/26-27 – La Vuelta de Bisbee Bike Race
5/3 - CARA Hamfest
5/15 – Ft Huachuca Safety Day

2) MCU Status: The MCU is considered operational at this time. We will hopefully be doing some radio and computer upgrades in the near future. I am dependent on the County IT staff to assist in this work. Mike Evans said the Boom Microphone and Headset for the Icom 706 came in today. I should collect it next week. The replacement coffee pot is also on order and should be in next Wednesday.

3) SAR Training – First I want to say thanks to those who came out to the training. I think it went well and we gave the generator a good run all day. A couple things I need to remind everyone about. When shutting down after the mission, be sure to dump the coffee and the coffee grounds and wipe out the pot. When you return the MCU to the club site and plug it in, don't forget to turn the AC Main switch on and leave the battery charger switch in the "ON" position for it to charge the batteries.

Training -

On our last net we reviewed common procedure words or Prowords used in voice communications. Tonight I want to cover basic RACE S Net Protocols and net check-in procedures for emergency nets.

We have established protocols that we should use on the RACE S net and during emergencies. Some of these protocols are still formative and if you have suggestions please provide your recommendations during the comments portion of the net. Please remember that the RACE S net does not serve the same function as the more socially oriented nets such as the CARA net where the purpose there is basically news, announcements, and exchange of general information. Our net is primarily for training and practice of emergency communications skills.

The purpose of a net check in during emergencies is to quickly determine who is available for a mission or support role and if there is any traffic to be handled. For practice, I would also like to make "Traffic Handling" more of a part of our regular procedure in order for members to become familiar with and to practice handling and relaying information. We will be reviewing NTS procedures in the near future.

Our Net opening is already standardized to meet basic RACE S requirements to identify the net, the authority for the net, and the purpose. We use a net roster of recent check-ins to avoid stations checking in from talking over each other. Each participant should clearly identify their callsign and if they have any traffic. Further explanation is rarely required. For example:

(1) Stations with no traffic. **"THIS IS** (Station call sign), **NO TRAFFIC.**"

(2) Stations with traffic. Stations with traffic sequence it by precedence, then group by destination and report by transmitting **"THIS IS** (Station call sign), (list traffic by order of precedence and number of messages for each destination)." If the traffic is for the NCS, it is listed as "(NCS call sign), **THIS IS** (Station call sign), (precedence and number of messages) **YOUR STATION.**"

Other examples include:

"THIS IS N7INK, ONE ROUTINE, AMERICAN RED CROSS, DOUGLAS."

or

"THIS IS N7BIL, ONE PRIORITY, Cochise County Emergency Operations Center."

(3) Additional Information. In addition to traffic reports, stations may include additional information and requests as appropriate. Examples include:

"...REQUEST CONTACT WITH (other station call sign)"

"...INFORMATION FOR THE NET."

(4) During Directed Net Operations, stations wishing to enter a net after the initial net check-in should wait until the current net operation is complete or the NCS makes another call for additional participants. Net Controls should frequently call for additional check-ins during the course of net operations.

(5) The NCS of an emergency net should designate an alternate net control.

(6) If a member has an urgent emergency, the member may use the Proword "BREAK" to break into the net. Emergency traffic will take precedence over any other net activity. This is the primary use of the Proword BREAK. Using the Proword BREAK or RE SET to pause to allow the repeater to reset and avoid it timing it out is unnecessary. Simply release the microphone for a couple seconds and continue.

(7) For an emergency net to operate efficiently, the NCS needs to know at all times who is present and who is not. To assist the NCS, net participants should always remember to check out with the NCS before closing station. If you need to close, call the NCS and advise him/her "NET CONTROL, THIS IS N7INK, REQUEST PERMISSION TO CLOSE STATION". Unless there are unusual circumstances, the NCS will respond "N7INK, CLOSE YOUR STATION. OUT"

(8) If you are operating on HF or VHF simplex, I recommend the Proword "OVER" be added at the end of each transmission. During repeater operations it is rarely needed to inform others that you are finished talking and for another station to pick up the conversation.

That's it for training tonight, now let's go down the net for comments.

Bob

Robert L Hollister

Thought for the day:

I'm a walking storeroom of facts..... I've just lost the key to the storeroom door.