

Net Notes for November 11, 2009

News and Announcements

1) Upcoming Events

- 11/19 Ft Huachuca Safety Day
- 12/5 Sierra Vista Christmas Parade Support
- 12/5 Mesa Community College Hamfest & ARCA Meeting

2) Veteran's Day – I just want to say a heartfelt Thank You to all of the veteran's in our midst, tonight, those who went before us, and those who are still serving for your dedication and service to our country. We should never take our freedom for granted. We owe a great debt to you all.

3) Ft Huachuca Safety Day - The Search and Rescue folks are setting up a small display at the Fort Huachuca Safety Day on November 19. I will not be available to participate but Dale (NJ7C) has agreed to honcho this event. Please contact him if you are able to assist at this Public Service Event.

4) SV XMAS Parade – We have been asked by the Chamber of Commerce to assist them at the annual XMAS parade during the staging & line up of the participants. This is a great opportunity for us to build links to the community. Our commitment will be from about 14:30 – 18:00. We are likely to set up the MCU near the intersection of Wilcox & Buffalo Soldier Trail and have several of our volunteers between the Start Line at the BST & Fry intersection down to Golf Links. Final details should be available on our next net on 25 November, the day before Thanksgiving. We are looking for volunteers with handhelds to assist relaying questions back to the command post as the participants are lined up before the parade. If you do not have a handheld radio, we have a small cache of 10 radios in the MCU and can check one out to you to use on the day of the event. If you think you could assist in this event, let me or Charles Campbell (K4AFN) know as we start filling the various control points.

Training – We have had several questions concerning the two Public Service Radios in the MCU. We have both a Tait & and a Motorola that we use in support of Search and Rescue and other events. One of the more common questions is how does an operator find the right channel to use. During the recent club meeting I gave a brief presentation describing "zone operations" and compared that to how we typically have our ham radios set up. Most ham radios memory banks are set up so that the channels you are looking for are sequential one (1) through however many channels you may have programmed in your radio. If you only have a few channels, for example 16, it does not take long to search through them one at a time to get to the channel you wish to operate on. Most of our public service radios may have upwards to 128 or more channels. To search through these sequentially can take considerable time. So how do we make it easier to find the right channel?

If you can visualize breaking the 128 channels down into logical groups of say 10 or 12 groups like chapters in a book, you should be able to locate your channels much quicker. Well we call those chapters "Zones". One zone might have all the Sheriff's Department channels in it, another zone might be all Fire and EMS, another might have all the Interoperable channels such as the VTAC or AIRS or Mutual Aid Channels. Another might have Law Enforcement and yet another local amateur radio channels. Using this model, you know that County SAR is affiliated with the Sheriffs Office so you would expect it be found in the Zone called CCSO. Now you only have to search through about 10 channels to find it, not the full 128.

Now your only problem is how to find the buttons to push on the two radios to change the Zone. I am attaching a file this evening that includes a small, 4-slide, PowerPoint Presentation. This file contains diagrams and photos for each of the two radios to help you identify the appropriate buttons to push or turn to first select the appropriate zone and then the appropriate channel. The Kenwood radios in the ACU stack are not currently organized into zones so you just have to keep pushing the channel button until you get to the channel you want.

Another part of the problem is knowing what channels/frequencies are loaded into the various zones. With the efforts of a couple operators we have compiled a list for each radio and printed it out. These lists are normally located in the form tray hanging on the wall near the Public Service Radios. We have done the same with the Kenwood radios in the ACU stack. We have a couple more to finish but will eventually have a printout for each radio. So, the next time you are in the MCU, look for that list and become familiar with it. Then when the Incident Commander asks you to dial up a particular channel, you will be able to do so fairly quickly.

Anyone wishing to get some hands on practice button pushing just needs to contact me to set up a time to get some practice. We also need to have more operators familiar with using the programming software for both the handheld radios in the cache and the Kenwood radios in the ACU stack. You never know when you may be asked to reprogram one or more of these radios to meet the needs of a particular mission.

If you do not have PowerPoint on your computer, I am also including in the net notes a link to a free PowerPoint Viewer that will allow you to view PowerPoint presentations. Just copy and paste this link into your browser window.

http://download.cnet.com/PowerPoint-Viewer-2007/3000-18483_4-10742145.html

That's all the training for this evening. Are there any late members or visitors wishing to check in at this time? OK, let's start down the roster for comments.

Don't forget our next Net will be on November 25th at 2000 Hrs. Don't forget the CARA net on Thursday evening at 1900 hours on the 146.76 repeater. Talk to most of you on Saturday. The net is closed.

Bob

Robert L Hollister

Thought for the day:

Life Lesson # 16. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.