

RACES Notes for 11/26/2008

News and Announcements

1) Upcoming Events:

- 12/06 – Hamfest/ARCA Meeting, Mesa Community College
- 12/13 – CARA Christmas Dinner
- 12/13 – SAR Christmas Dinner

2) Recent Missions - We have had two missions since our last net, one was the fuel tanker on last Wednesday (19 Nov) and more recently the Sheriff's Office support on Tuesday 25 November. The tanker mission primarily provided support to the effort to evacuate persons in an area considered to be a potential for an explosion during the transfer of fuel from the damaged tanker to a good one. The SAR team had the primary role of advising personnel of the danger and to voluntarily evacuate. The more recent mission in Whetstone involved assistance to the Border Alliance Group and the Special Weapons unit. Because information concerning this mission is still linked to an ongoing investigation, specific details can not be discussed at this time. We were in place primarily to assist if a situation worsened, fortunately it did not and we were released. We did provide some Google satellite imagery to one of the incident command staff members as they were planning their activities.

Training Subject: On some recent missions, there have been some minor glitches during and post mission and I would like to use those "glitches" as training points this evening.

Let's start with our post mission shut down procedure. As the MCU is returned to the CARA facility it is important to ensure certain things are accomplished. First I'll address general housekeeping and then a couple specifics. Unfortunately we are usually tired and in a hurry to put the MCU away and don't follow through with everything in our haste to get home.

General rule of thumb, anytime we complete an actual mission, as opposed to a training mission, we need to refuel and capture the fuel use information. This is critical for all SAR missions where the county is reimbursed by the state. We occasionally do not refuel upon return from a display or short training that uses a minimal amount of fuel. By minimal I mean there is no discernible movement of the fuel gauge from the full position such as short trip to Ft Huachuca and return.

MCU cleanliness. Try to remember to check the coffee pot for left over coffee grounds and the trash container for trash. A good quick sweep of dust, sand and trash is also appreciated in both the cab and the shelter. It builds up quickly. As you leave the cab, double check to be sure both the APRS Tracker and the Cell Phone repeater cords are unplugged from their respective cigarette lighter plugs.

One issue of continuing confusion is the Post Mission positioning of the electrical switches on the main electrical panel. I recommend the following sequence:

- 1) Reconnect the electrical shore power umbilical cord.
- 2) Switch the outside main breaker on the side of the building to ON. You should see a small green light come on next to the plug on the outside of the van.
- 3) Inside the van shelter, you should also see a small green light next to the switch used to divert between generator and shore power indicating power is available.

Put this rotating switch in position for shore power.

- 4) Turn the Main Breaker (extreme left location of the top row) to the ON (or up) position. The top row controls AC power.

5) The only other breakers that should be on are for the Battery Charger and Accessories (leaves the refrigerator operational). If one or more of the handie-talkies was used, place it in the charger under the cabinet and also leave the driver side electrical outlets on so that the radio can recharge for the next mission.

6) On the lower row (DC power), only the interior light switch should be in the on or up position. Occasionally, some one will leave the DC power to the radios switched on. This is a Push/Pull switch. In is ON, out is OFF.

I realize that when there is considerable time between when you last performed duties as Driver or Co-driver and a current mission it is easy to forget some of these steps. There is a lot of information to remember. I try to rotate these duties around to share the wealth but sometimes we don't have the luxury to do that due to limited availability of driver qualified personnel. I certainly want everyone who performs these duties to know how much you are appreciated for the time and energy devoted to performing these missions, even when they seem to be pointless. That can be frustrating but it is a part of what we do.

If you have any questions, please ask during comments. That's all I have for this evening, let's go down the roster for comments.

As we prepare for the Thanksgiving Holiday tomorrow, please consider that I feel blessed to know all of you and for your support over the past year. Thank You and Happy Thanksgiving to you all. The net is closed.

Bob
Robert L Hollister