

Net Notes for March 10, 2010

News and Announcements

1) Upcoming Events

3/13 Scottsdale Hamfest/ARCA Meeting, Ft McDowell Casino

3/27-28 SAR overnighiter at the Cochise Stronghold

4/24-25 La Vuelta de Bisbee Bike Race

5/1 CARA Hamfest

2) Search And Rescue (SAR) Overnighiter – The SAR team is planning an overnight training event for the weekend of 27-28 March in the East Stronghold of the Dragoon Mountains. This is a great opportunity to deploy the MCU and provide some hands-on training of all MCU systems to our RACES members in a non threatening environment. The RACES team would deploy from Green Acres at approximately 0730 on that Saturday morning. Depending on volunteer availability, individuals can return at the end of the daylight training on that Saturday or spend the night and return on Sunday morning. SAR unit training will consist of sending SAR searchers out for tracking and victim location. RACES training will include providing radio contact to all deployed teams and system orientation. By system I mean, Satellite operations, computer map training, communications logging, and other MCU sub systems. If you have never participated in this type of training, it is a great opportunity to really get your hands dirty. If you are likely to participate, let me know. If you are staying for Saturday supper and or Sunday breakfast, let me know so that appropriate food supplies are available. The SAR unit cooks usually put together some really decent meals. Donations are accepted to defray the cost of the meals. You are responsible for your own lunch on Saturday.

3) Old Pueblo 50 After Action Report – By all accounts, there were only a couple glitches in runner accountability to be ironed out for next year. The organizers and several participants were pleased with our support. If you participated and have not turned in your After Action Report to Dale, please send it in as soon as possible so that we can send the overall AAR to the county and to the organizers. Be sure to identify what worked well as well as any recommendations for improvements, I know I have a couple items on my personal "action items" list for the next go around.

4) La Vuelta de Bisbee – We are only 6 weeks away from the annual Bisbee Bike Race. Please sign up with RB (K7HVV) so we can start filling in assignments. This is always a fun event and is scheduled this year on the weekend of 24 & 25 April. We need 2-3 volunteers in the MCU and at least six, preferably eight support vehicles and drivers for each day. Support vehicles generally carry either a Race official and or a medic. We also provide a SWEEP vehicle to pick up stragglers and their bicycles if necessary. Pickups or vans are best for that duty. If you a have an APRS tracker, that is also good so we can watch your progress at the finish line on the map. If you can work either or both days, please let RB know. Email: rb_rice@cox.net

Training – Tonight I would like to discuss some of the functions and roles of the MCU. One of more common tasks is providing a mini dispatch function such as during Search and Rescue missions. During this type of activity we keep the Incident Command Staff

apprised of what is going on and also relay directions or instructions to deployed teams. We routinely provide printed maps for teams as they prepare to deploy. We frequently keep track of team locations using various map products on board our computers. Did you know that we actually have five different map programs in the MCU. Do you know what they are and the advantages of each? They are:

Terrain Navigator – This is a specialized topographic map used primarily for most Search and Rescue missions. All the data is loaded to the hard-drive.

Delorme Topo – This map has Topographic information as well as more updated highway information than Terrain Navigator.

Delorme Street Atlas – This usually has fairly current highway information and can be used for route planning.

Precision Mapping – This is a specialized application and only used with the APRS software.

County GIS Mapping – This is also specialized and used for specific address identification. It is rarely used and most of the MCU operators have not been trained to use this one.

Currently the Delorme maps are not loaded to the hard drive and the appropriate CD-ROM needs to be in the D: drive of the mapping computer, you know the cute little one on the counter, in order to access the data. The CD-ROM discs are located in the basket in the overhead cupboard above the map support computer.

One of the more critical functions we perform is the creation and maintenance of the ICS Form 309 or Communications Log. One of the first things we need to do after the MCU is up and operational is to get the Laptop Computer turned on and a Communications Log initiated. Key entries include:

- Time MCU was Operational

- Name of the mission

- Identification of communications team members who are deployed

- Identification of the Incident Commander

- Location of the MCU / Incident Command Post

The Communications Log should be a written record of key events of the mission. This may include recording various reports from search and rescue teams as they conduct operations including locations of various items they have located or locations they have searched. On other types of missions it may include recording exchanges of information between other deployed elements that we hear on the radio. While it may not be a word-for-word record of what was said, it should be a fairly complete gist of what was said. We are frequently asked about past events and the log is the best source of what happened and when it happened. Finally, it is sometimes important just

to record events that are related to us, not necessarily something we heard off the radio. I typically take hand copy first and then type the information onto the computer when there is time.

If in doubt, write it down.

And finally, please use the "Read-Back" technique of any information when there may be a question about the accuracy of the information. This is particularly important when capturing numbers such as grid coordinates, addresses, and phone numbers. If you are unfamiliar with the technique, it is simply repeating the information you received or heard back to the originator and having them confirm you have it correct.

Don't forget our next Net will be on March 24 at 2000 Hrs. Don't forget the CARA net on Thursday evenings at 1900 hours on the 146.76 repeater. This is N7INK and the net is closed.

Bob

Robert L Hollister

Thought for the day:

My reading of history convinces me that most bad government results from too much government.

Thomas Jefferson