

After Action Report

DATE: 11 July, 2007

SUBJECT: After Action Report – Carr Canyon Search

FROM: Robert Hollister, RACES Coordinator

TO: David Noland, CCSO SAR Coordinator

CC: Roy Cook, CCSO Deputy Coordinator
Mike Evans, CC Emergency Services
RACES Team

1. PURPOSE:

This report briefly describes the support provided by the RACES Communications team to the Cochise County Search and Rescue Team on the evening and early morning of 11-12 July. It does not address any SAR specific operational issues.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At approximately 2100 hours on 11 July, 2007 the RACES team received notification by page of a search mission in the Carr Canyon area of the Huachuca Mountains. Callout was for an overdue forest service employee who had been conducting forest assessments with a partner. When the partner failed to arrive at the rendezvous point as scheduled, the remaining partner notified SAR for assistance. The missing victim was located in the late evening by AZ DPS helicopter during a flyover but was unable to land due to the steep terrain and darkness. The DPS team provided grid coordinates and a ground team was dispatched to the alleged location. Apparently the AZ DPS onboard GPS system lost satellite lock as the coordinates turned out to be incorrect by some distance. The individual was at least prepared with adequate food and water and remained on the mountain overnight without incident. Early in the morning he located a trail and walked into our staging area at the top of Carr Canyon. Mission was completed at approximately 0830 and the RACES team was released.

3. LESSONS LEARNED/ISSUES

Big Stick Mast Cable Problem – Once again we experienced signal reception problems while using the Big Stick antenna on the mast. Signals that were loud and clear on my personal truck radio using a ¼ wave antenna were either unreadable or barely readable on the Big Stick configuration. We switched to a different RF cable on the MCU (#2 vice #3) and reception improved. It is apparent that the #3 cable and/or connectors need to be looked at very carefully and perhaps refitted.

Mission Shut Down Procedures – It was noted again that the Master AC Power Switch had not been activated at the end of the previous mission. The battery charger switch was correctly positioned as was the Generator/Shore Power switch, only the main breaker switch was not properly turned on. Unfortunately, this does not allow the battery to remain charged using the onboard system.

Cell Phone Booster – Cell coverage is limited in the lower Carr Canyon area where we were. The replacement cell phone booster has still not been installed after the original was removed a few weeks ago.

4. COMMENTS

Our thanks to Dale Chidester and to Sandra Gore for the refreshments they provided to help keep our energy up through the morning and at the end of the mission. It was greatly appreciated

5. ACTION ITEMS

Repair/Replace RF connectors on Cable # 3 to see if that will resolve the problem.

Re-label Mast RFCable # 2, the original tag came off.

Reinforce Mission shut down procedures during training sessions.

Obtain and install the Cell Phone Booster Kit from CC IT.

Appendix – Participants

CCSO SAR Unit

AZ DPS Phoenix Ranger

RACES Team

Lee Ilse – MCU Operator/Driver

Pat Thies MCU Operator

Bob Hollister - MCU Operator/ /Chase

Dale Chidester - MCU Operator

Richard Hotchkiss

Ranny Burke

Home Unit Monitors

Barbara Heck

Juanita Portz

There may have been additional Home Unit Monitors, I just did not get them logged.

Bob

Robert L Hollister