

June 2022



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**OCRACES Meeting**  
 Online on Microsoft Teams  
 Monday, June 6, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.

Orange County Sheriff's Department  
Emergency Management Division



Newsletter of the County of Orange Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

# CRO's Nest

by Ken Bourne, W6HK, OCRACES Chief Radio Officer

## City/County Drill on May 7th

Simulating repeater outage, a City/County RACES & EmComm ACS exercise was held on Saturday, May 7, 2022, on 2 meters simplex, 60 meters SSB, Winlink, and AREDN mesh. OCRACES and OCHEART net controls were at the Orange County EOC at Loma Ridge. The drill began at 0900 hours with each agency calling its members on their primary 2-meter or 70-centimeter simplex frequencies for the first half hour, and then reporting to OCRACES net control on 146.595 MHz simplex how many had checked in on their primary frequencies. Participating OCRACES members included Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ, Ken Tucker, WF6F, Ken Bourne, W6HK, Scott Byington, KC6MMF, Randy Benicky, N6PRL, Steve Livingston, NJ6R, Scott MacGillivray, KM6RTE, and Fran Needham, KJ6UJS. Besides OCRACES, other participants (their unit check-ins in parentheses) included RACES units from Anaheim (5), Brea (6), Costa Mesa (15), Cypress (6), Fountain Valley (5), Fullerton (4), Huntington Beach (5), Irvine (26), Laguna Niguel (7), Laguna Woods (5 + 3 guests), Mission Viejo (12), Orange (13), and Westminster (4), plus Newport Beach Repeater Club (5) and OCHEART (9). The 60-meter portion of the exercise began at 1000 hours, with 34 check-ins, including stations throughout Orange County plus San Diego County and Ventura County.

The article on pages 4-5 covers the Winlink portion of the exercise, and the article on page 6 covers the mesh portion.



Steve Livingston, NJ6R, operates on 146.595 MHz simplex at the EOC RACES Room during the City/County ACS Exercise.



Ken Bourne, W6HK, at the 60-meter position during the ACS Exercise.



Chi Nguyen, KE6MVS, operates OCHEART net control at the OC EOC during the May 7th ACS Exercise.

## OCSD K9 Team Displays at OCRACES Meeting



OCRACES members, city RACES and EmComm unit members, and other PSRs gathered for this photo taken by Sgt. Kyle Sheek, who spoke at the May 2nd OCRACES meeting about his experience on the OCSD K9 team. Also shown here are Deputies Mark Vanderkreek and Maurice Bonilla with their patrol K9s.



During the May 2nd OCRACES meeting at the Sheriff's Academy, this very alert K9 quickly located a dangerous drug that had previously been hidden.

Sergeant Kyle Sheek, with Deputies Mark Vanderkreek and Maurice Bonilla, gave an exciting presentation on the Sheriff's Canine Services Section (K9 Teams) on May 2, 2022, to members of OCRACES, other PSRs, and some city RACES unit members. Included was a demonstration by one of the K9s in the Sheriff's Academy classroom on quickly locating a dangerous drug. Sgt. Sheek is wrapping up his responsibilities with the K9 Unit, as he assumes his PSR administration duties in the OCSD Mutual Aid / Reserve Bureau. His beloved K9 companion Iggy, who served with Sgt. Sheek, is now enjoying a well-deserved retirement as he lives full time with the Sheek family. As Sgt. Sheek administers the RACES PSRs, we admire his almost 10 years of service in the K9 program as a Decoy, Handler, and K9 Team leader. We grieved with Kyle during his presentation as he fondly remembered his partner K9 Arco (End of Watch: January 12, 2019), and we rejoiced with him as K9 Iggy now lives in retirement with him and his family. Sgt. Sheek and his K9 partners Arco and Iggy assisted with numerous K9 apprehensions, surrenders, narcotics finds, and firearm seizures over the course of hundreds of K9 deployments.

The Sheriff's Department established the K9 program in February 1985. This program significantly reduces the man-hours required for searching for suspects, evidence, and narcotics. The safety of OCSD deputies has been increased with the ability to locate dangerous suspects with the use of the K9s. Nine deputies and their K9 partners currently provide coverage for the entire County. Their high visibility acts as a powerful deterrent for criminal activity. High levels of training and commitment of the canine deputies has established the K9 Unit as one of the most highly respected in California.

With just one K9 team, OCSD is able to reduce the man power needed to search large buildings and open rural areas by over 50 percent. K9 teams also reduce property loss and injuries to deputies, and increase the number of arrests of subjects in the act of committing crimes.

OCSD K9 teams are trained in drug detection and regularly assist patrol and investigations with K9 drug sniffs. The teams are proud members of the Orange County Police Canine Association.

This May 2nd OCRACES meeting at the Sheriff's Academy was the first time we met in-person since the COVID-19 pandemic started. We hope to resume in-person meetings on at least a quarterly basis, while continuing online Microsoft Teams meetings during other months. The June 6th meeting will be on Teams. ■



Sgt. Kyle Sheek (previously Deputy Sheek in the OCSD K9 Unit) with his faithful partner Iggy.

## OCRACES Activates for Coastal Fire

At 1444 hours on Wednesday, May 11, 2022, a small wildfire was reported in the area of Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park, near the South Orange County Waste Water Authority (SOCWA) Water Treatment Plant near Laguna Niguel, and swept rapidly up steep terrain in windy and dry conditions. The Orange County Fire Authority responded at approximately 1500 hours. The fire burned about 3 acres as of 1530 hours. Rotary and fixed-wing aircraft were on scene. At 1615 hours, the County of Orange activated and staffed the EOC with County agency representatives. The Public Information Hotline was staffed and ready to accept calls of inquiry in regard to the Coastal Fire. By about 1645 hours, flames had crossed an access road and began moving toward homes. At 1736 hours on Wednesday, Assistant Emergency Manager Lee Kaser, KK6VIV, called OCRACES Chief Radio Officer Ken Bourne, W6HK, to activate RACES the next morning for auxiliary communications support to the EOC because of the Coastal Fire in Laguna Niguel. Up to five members were needed in the RACES Room at Loma Ridge by 0700 hours on Thursday. In less than an hour, Ken had contacted most OCRACES members and several were able to commit to be at the EOC at 0700 hours on Thursday. Some members, who lived near the incident, committed to report conditions while driving to the EOC through safe areas and out of the way of responding emergency vehicles.



**Chuck Streitz, KK6HFS (left), and Scott MacGillivray, KM6RTE, in EOC RACES Room during Coastal Fire activation.**

The Coastal Fire continued to spread and grew to consume 200 acres by about 1930 hours on Wednesday. It destroyed 20 homes and damaged 11 more. About 100 homes were potentially in the path. The hilltop neighborhood of Coronado Pointe along the eastern slope of Aliso Summit, just west of Pacific Island Drive, overlooks Aliso Creek. The Coastal Fire swept up a steep hillside from the bottom of that valley on Wednesday. As the blaze crested the hill, embers fell like rain over the area, as described by *The Orange County Register*.

Multimillion-dollar homes on Coronado Pointe Drive, Vista Court, and Via Las Rosa, as well as The Ranch golf course and resort, were evacuated. In Laguna Niguel, mandatory evacuation orders were in place for areas north of Flying Cloud Drive and Pacific Island Drive, to Highlands Avenue and Pacific Island Drive. Residents near Moulton Meadows and Balboa Nyes (Portafina) neighborhood in Laguna Beach were advised to be prepared to evacuate quickly, but warnings were lifted late Wednesday. A temporary shelter was set up at Crown Valley Community Center on Crown Valley Parkway. The Mission Viejo Animal Services shelter helped with pet evacuations. Ground and air crews from OCFA, Cal Fire, the Laguna Beach Fire Department, and other city fire agencies were working into the night to extinguish the flames. They were in Unified Command, with the Incident Command Post at Laguna Niguel Regional Park. Most of the 20 homes lost in the Coastal Fire were on Coronado Pointe.

On Thursday, the County of Orange proclaimed a local emergency, which allowed the County to fully deploy all available resources, actions, and measures deemed necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of Orange County residents and property. Assistance from other local agencies in the Southern California area supplemented local resources.

Before 0600 on Thursday, Lee advised Ken that the fire had significantly diminished overnight with remaining structures in the area protected. Evacuation orders had been extended for about 900 homes. Lee said that only Scott MacGillivray and Ken were needed at the EOC. Chuck Streitz, KK6HFS, had already committed for 0700 and, as a relatively new member, had not previously been at the EOC, so we encouraged him to report to the RACES Room. This was a good opportunity for Chuck to get oriented on some EOC operations and to become acquainted with the equipment in the RACES Room. Scott gave him a thorough introduction to Winlink and mesh operations, while Ken received reports on road closures and evacuations via the 2-meter OCRACES repeater from John Pilger, K6PIO, who was at a joint news conference at 0830 hours in Laguna Niguel by OCFA, OCSD, and the Laguna Niguel Mayor. John's reports were forwarded to the EOC Operations Center. Also prepared to respond to the EOC while observing conditions on the way were Randy Benicky, N6PRL, driving from Rancho Santa Margarita, and Eric Bowen, W6RTR, driving from Laguna Woods. Joe Selikov, KB6EID, was going to call in mid-morning from Laguna Hills, but, by then, not as many OCRACES members were needed at the EOC, and Randy and Eric were advised to stand down as well. OCRACES secured at 1315. ■

# Winlink in Orange County

by Scott MacGillivray, KM6RTE@gmail.com

## Results from Winlink Portion of the May 7th Countywide ACS Exercise

The goals for the Winlink Exercise portion of the Spring 2022 Countywide ACS Exercise were:

- a) To provide Winlink operators the opportunity to gain experience and demonstrate operation of their Winlink stations by transmitting a message with an attached Check-In form.
- b) To assess the level of Winlink usage across the county and identify current Winlink operators.

As described in the Winlink exercise portion of the countywide ACS exercise instructions, operators were to prepare a message with an attached Express Check-In form and send it to OCRACES tactical and member addresses. The Winlink exercise was open to all licensed amateur radio operators that have Winlink stations in Orange County, California, and not exclusive to just the city agencies.

In order to maximize the delivery options with the OCRACES Winlink RMS Gateways currently offline and the limited (but growing) number of gateways available in Orange County, the Winlink message could be sent using any communications mode, including Telnet (i.e., direct connection to internet).

A detailed compilation of the messages received by operator KM6RTE were recorded in a spreadsheet as they were being received during the event, as well as documented in the IC-309 Communications Log generated by Winlink Ex-

Parameter	Value	Details / Comments
Total number of messages sent and received during the 24-hour exercise.	91	This quantity is 9 more than the Oct 2021 ACS exercise.
Messages received from unique Winlink accounts.	31	Many operators sent multiple messages from same Winlink account. Some sent messages on behalf of other operators (no credit though)
Types and number of communication modes used Based on self-reported information Some sent multiple messages using different comm modes	Telnet (19) Packet/VHF (10) Mesh (2) VARA FM (1)	61.3% 32.3% 6.5% 3.2%
Incomplete messages	Unclear location (5) Unclear role (4) Full name not provided (12) No Email (12)	- "Home," "Office," "QTH" not clear - Unclear if representative or member - Some just provide first name - New request for this exercise
City / MOU organizations represented Some operators reported membership in multiple organizations	37 instances of membership identified 16 different organizations	OCHEART (6) MV RACES (5) IDEC (4) LNACS (3) Fountain Valley RACES (3) Laguna Woods RACES (2) COAR (2) MESAC (2) Huntington Beach RACES (2) American Red Cross (2) OCRACES (1) OC Fire Watch (1) SOARA (1) Newport Beach Repeater Club (1) Fullerton RACES (1) Anaheim RACES (1) <b>- Did not specify (3)</b>
Total data transferred during 24-hour period by gateways KM6RTE-10 and KM6RTE-12	57,138 Bytes	Vast majority of traffic was directly in support of Winlink exercise

press. A summary of key information is provided in Table 1.

In summary, a total of 91 messages were sent and received, with messages sent from 31 unique Winlink operators. The majority of operators (61.3%, 19 operators) used telnet communications mode. The next most used communications mode was packet on VHF band (32.3%, 10 operators). With the large number of operators opting to use telnet, it is apparent that Orange County needs more operational Winlink RMS gateways and/or more radio experienced Winlink operators.

Information was requested about the Winlink operator's role in their city or MOU organization that they were participating on behalf of.

Table 1. Summary of Winlink activity during ACS exercise.

## Winlink in Orange County *Continued from page 4*

In total, 16 organizations were represented and the operators identified a total 37 instances of membership with these organizations. Refer to Table 1 for details on the organizations identified.

In support of the first objective, the exercise demonstrated that the Winlink operators in Orange County can proficiently support ACS EmComm needs. However, only 13 (41.9%) of the operators provided a fully compliant Express Check-In form. This is a significant drop from October's countywide ACS drill, which had over 90% fully compliant messages received. The main areas that operators were not fully compliant were in providing their full names (12) and/or email addresses (12).

In support of the second objective, and based on ongoing correspondence with many Winlink operators in Orange County, it is suspected that the 31 participating operators represent only about one-third of the total current Winlink operators in Orange County. Future exercises will focus on how best to inform Winlink operators of the countywide exercise, as well as encourage greater participation.



**Scott MacGillivray, KM6RTE, at EOC Winlink position during May 7th ACS exercise.**

Some observations:

- a) While it seems that many of the operators had difficulty with providing their names and email addresses, no one seemed to have any issue with providing a correctly formatted GPS location. 100% of all operators provided their GPS locations. Wow, very impressive.
- b) Since the October 2021 ACS drill, there are three additional Winlink gateways around the county (NJ6R-10, W6HBR-10, and KM6RTE-12). With these new gateways, it was hoped that more operators would have taken advantage of them and sent messages via radio. However, the results show that the opposite happened. There was a 19% increase in the number of operators that used telnet mode (41.9% last October versus 61.3% for this drill). Future Winlink exercises will need to encourage sending messages via radio.
- c) With the "Introduction to Winlink Express" classes offered in March of this year, there are approximately 35-40 additionally trained Winlink operators available across Orange County. It appears that this had minimal impact on the participation in the countywide drill. Nuts.

### Upcoming Winlink Peer-to-Peer Practice Drill June 11th

This quarter's countywide Winlink Peer-to-Peer (P2P) drill is scheduled for Saturday, June 11th. This drill will expand on the P2P drill held on March 12, 2022, by needing to attach an Express Check-In form to your message. This Express Check-In form is identical to the one used as part of the countywide ACS drill.

Additionally for this drill, a second channel (i.e., frequency) will be utilized. This change is based on the increase in congestion encountered during last March's drill. Communications with "Drill Ops" located at Loma Ridge will be organized so that Winlink operators south (east) of the 55 Freeway are encouraged to use 145.090 MHz, and operators north (west) of the 55 Freeway are encouraged to use 144.970 MHz. Drill ops will operate on both channels concurrently. This is only guidance and if an operator needs to use a local Winlink gateway as a relay in order to reach Loma Ridge, then the frequency of that local gateway relay can be used, so long as it is 145.090 or 144.970.

Detailed instructions are being finalized and will be distributed through the OCRACES Groups.io mailing list prior to the drill. ■

## Next OCRACES Meeting: June 6th on Teams

The next OCRACES meeting will be on Monday, June 6, 2022, at 7:30 p.m., online on Microsoft Teams. All city and county RACES and EmComm members and PSRs are invited. At this meeting we will review the May 7th City/County RACES & EmComm ACS Exercise, with discussions of 2-meter simplex, 60-meter SSB, Winlink, and AR-EDN mesh components. Suggestions are encouraged for implementing in the next City/County exercise on Saturday, October 1st. At the June 6th meeting we will also cover the May 12th RACES activation for the Coastal Fire in Laguna Niguel. John Pilger, K6PIO, who relayed road-closure and evacuation information to Loma Ridge via the OCRACES 2-meter repeater, will give some insights on the value of RACES observations from the field during emergency activations, while following policies and procedures. ■

## City/County ACS Drill Includes AREDN Mesh

by Bob Pestolesi, KE6GYD, IDEC Operations Lieutenant

The AREDN mesh network was incorporated into the City/County RACES & EmComm ACS Exercise on May 7, 2022, for a second time, due to its growing use around the county as well as the greater Los Angeles area. This network utilizes commercial Wi-Fi devices (nodes) converted for use on amateur radio frequencies. It offers internet-like data services to send files, make VoIP phone calls, stream video, and utilize instant messaging. The network is designed to be independent of the internet and utilize backup power in the event of the loss of commercial power.

The drill focused on three main objectives in order to demonstrate the network's capability and assess its functionality. The objectives were:

- 1) Utilize an application called "MeshChat" for stations to check in and indicate when a participating station was activated. As part of the check-in, stations were also asked to list specific information about their station. At the end of the drill, stations were to utilize MeshChat to indicate the results of the next two objectives.
- 2) As posted in the MeshChat messages, utilize the station's listed VoIP phone IP address and make a phone call to at least three stations, including the VoIP phone at Loma Ridge.
- 3) Each station will deposit and retrieve a file from an FTP file server on the network to demonstrate the ability of the network to transfer files typically sent over the internet as attachments to email. These files could include .docx, .xlsx, .jpg, and .pdf. An FTP client installed on the station's local computer is required to deposit/retrieve files. The recommended client is "FileZilla."

Most operators used an RF connection to the network. Some station nodes were permanently installed at the operator's home or at participating agencies' EOCs. Others were portable stations and three were "tunnels" that utilized an internet connection from remote locations. A total of 15 operators checked in on MeshChat, representing the following eight agencies or organizations:

- OCRACES (operator KM6RTE)
- IDEC (operators KN6BMO, N6AWQ, K6BAT, N0ZL, and KN6KCE)
- Mission Viejo RACES (operators WA6RUZ, KE6BXT, and KJ5KG)
- Laguna Niguel ACS (operators KK6LZB on behalf of WE6ACS, and KK6BML)
- MESAC (operator KN6SUZ)
- Anaheim RACES (operator KM6ZPO)
- Fountain Valley RACES (operator KK6OEX)
- OCHEART (operator KK6LZB on behalf of OCHEART)

There were 17 successful VoIP phone calls.

There were 25 files totaling 24 MB of data successfully transferred to the FTP file server. The files included were documents, spreadsheets, pictures, and PDFs.

There were 14 successful retrievals and opening of a PDF file from the FTP file server. The file was a fillable ICS-213 that asked participating stations to give a "Status Report" for an imaginary incident.

Some issues during the drill mainly dealt with the quality of the VoIP calls. Some experienced dropouts, but overall, the majority of the calls that were answered were of good quality. The issues may be due to a less than optimum RF signal-strength connection to the network. This can vary depending on distance and objects between nodes. Additionally, the quality of the VoIP call can also depend on how many hops between nodes the signal makes and if any relaying node sends and receives on the same frequency band.

No station who had the appropriate FTP client indicated they could not deposit or retrieve a file from the FTP server.

Final Evaluation: The transferring of files and coordinating station status via MeshChat would be considered reliable. While mostly good, some VoIP phone calls did not go through or were intermittent. Further testing and troubleshooting is recommended to resolve VoIP issues. ■

## OCRACES Remains Active on HF Nets

An OCRACES designated member typically checks into the California Emergency Services Net (CESN), run by Cal OES, on Mondays at 2000 hours on 3992 kHz (75 meters) and on Wednesdays at 1000 hours on 7192 kHz (40 meters). Most check-ins are from the OC EOC RACES Room. On Saturday mornings at 1000 hours, OCRACES conducts an ACS net on 5371.5 kHz upper sideband (dial frequency) (60 meters). Many city RACES members are active on this 60-meter net, as well as other radio amateurs throughout southern California and southern Nevada. ■

## 800 MHz Talkgroups in Orange County (Part 4)

### by Robert Stoffel, KD6DAQ

As RACES members, we are sometimes called upon to operate on public safety radio channels, either from the Orange County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at Loma Ridge, in the field with the Control 7 communications response vehicle, or using a radio at the scene of an incident or special event. In this continuing series I am sharing information and providing our members with a better understanding about these channels and how they are used.

This month we continue our look at the 800 MHz Countywide Coordinated Communications System (CCCS), the trunked radio system shared between the County and its 34 cities. Last month we focused on talkgroups unique to the Fire Service; this article will discuss talkgroups used by the Lifeguard Departments in Orange County. Every city Lifeguard and Marine Safety Department uses the 800 MHz CCCS, along with the Orange County Lifeguards. City Lifeguard Departments are Huntington Beach, Laguna Beach, Newport Beach, San Clemente, and Seal Beach. The County calls its lifeguards OC Lifeguards.

800 MHz CCCS Lifeguard programming is set up so that any



**Lifeguard agencies use mobile radios when communicating from inside their response and rescue vehicles.**

Lifeguard Department can easily communicate with any other Lifeguard Department, as it is common for one agency to assist another agency. Aqua is the “color” used to designate Lifeguard talkgroups. Each Lifeguard Department has one talkgroup for dispatching and coordinating day-to-day operations. The talkgroup name is Aqua -1 and unique for each

agency. On the radio display a mnemonic abbreviation indicates the agency: Huntington Beach – Aqua-1-HTB, Laguna Beach – Aqua-1-LAB, Newport Beach – Aqua-1-NPB, San Clemente – Aqua-1-SCL, Seal Beach – Aqua-1-SLB, and Orange County – Aqua-1-OC.

Each Lifeguard agency provides their own dispatching, and uses their assigned Station Number to identify dispatch over the air. These designations are: Huntington Beach – Station 52, Laguna Beach – Station 55, Newport Beach – Station 53, San Clemente – Station 56, Seal Beach – Station 51, and Orange County – Station 57.

Two additional Lifeguard talkgroups are shared amongst all Lifeguard agencies and available for tactical communications. Aqua-2 is typically used for non-emergency coordination, and Aqua-3 is normally reserved for emergency responses. These two talkgroups may be used by a single Lifeguard agency, or by multiple departments when necessary.

California State Parks have 800 MHz CCCS programming for interoperability, and they are able to communicate on any Aqua talkgroup. Likewise, all Lifeguard radios in Orange County can communicate with the State Parks on its conventional channels. Many Lifeguard radios also have 800 MHz CCCS Fire programming, used when responding on calls with a Fire Department. Finally, a number of other disciplines can access the Aqua talkgroups, including the Sheriff’s Harbor Patrol and all Law Enforcement helicopters.

This completes our review of the 800 MHz CCCS talkgroups that are unique to Lifeguards. Next month we continue our journey by looking at 800 MHz CCCS talkgroups used by Public Works in Orange County. ■



**San Clemente Lifeguard using a portable 800 MHz radio for communications.**

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agency. On the radio display a mnemonic abbreviation indicates the agency: Huntington Beach – Aqua-1-HTB, Laguna Beach – Aqua-1-LAB, Newport Beach – Aqua-1-NPB, San Clemente – Aqua-1-SCL, Seal Beach – Aqua-1-SLB, and Orange County – Aqua-1-OC.

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**The 800 MHz CCCS provides communications between Lifeguards and the towers along the shoreline.**

## PSRs Become Actors by Eric Bowen, W6RTR

“Take this gun and go sit in the driver’s seat of the car and wait for the Deputies to arrive.” I don’t know about you, but that was a strange way to start off my day, as well as the other Professional Services Responders (PSRs) that participated in this training event as actors. And it just got crazier after that!

Last month, the PSRs were asked to be actors at the Tactical Training Center (TTC) on Katella. While I won’t go into details of the specifics of the training so as not to divulge any operational details or tactics, I will say that it was an honor to be asked to participate in this training. Please feel free to contact me if you want to find out more.

Doing these acting roles is really enjoyable. At times, I feel bad for doing some of the things that we are asked to do when playing the “bad guy,” but when you look at it from the other side, you realize that you are really helping these Deputies—whether it is presenting them with something that they don’t see on a regular basis, or have never seen, to reminding them of some of the small details that they might have forgotten or just don’t think about any longer.

At the end of the training, it is all worth it if I can help just one Deputy think about a situation differently. Or in a couple of cases, I did some things that the TTC Deputies commented on to the other Deputies where they could have taken that info to help with the situation or change what was going on and I didn’t even realize it. It was fascinating to see the “behind the scenes” stuff during the debrief and hear them going over the scenarios. Very few people get to see the great lengths that the Orange County Sheriff’s Department goes through to continually train its Deputies.

In the upcoming months, there are several more events that are requesting actors. These include the SRT Training, SRO Summit, and an Active Shooter Drill. I have intentionally left out the dates for security purposes, but please check the Tracker for the upcoming dates. The SRT training is a lot of fun. For this event, we are asked to be rioters. In past events, we were given items to throw at the Deputies and told to yell at the Deputies and say whatever you wanted to say. The Bomb Squad was there setting off explosive devices and creating lots of smoke. Some of us went all out and even dressed up like the rioters you see on TV. I haven’t done the other two events before, so I don’t know what to expect.

But that is what makes these events so fun. The mystery of showing up to an event and not having any idea of what you will be doing makes these types of events really exciting. In some cases, you might have an idea, but others, like the training I participated in last month, you have no idea what to expect.

For anybody wanting to participate in the upcoming SRT training, I would recommend dressing the part of a rioter. I wore a black helmet, black-tinted goggles, black face mask, and a black backpack. This time, I will also be adding black clothing. It helps to add some realism to the training. You do not have to wear all of that the whole time. You can remove it and put it back on whenever we are needed.

I would recommend that if you have the time, and are available, to sign up for any of the actor events. It is a great way to really help the Department. Plus, you get to do some really crazy things! ■



**Eric Bowen, W6RTR, dressed as a rioter in black helmet, black-tinted goggles, black face mask, and black backpack.**

## Lee Kaser Promoted to EMD Deputy Director

Congratulations to Lee Kaser, KK6VIV, who has been promoted to the position of Deputy Director of the Orange County Sheriff’s Department Emergency Management Division (EMD). In this position, Lee will serve as the County Emergency Manager should EMD Director Michelle Anderson be unavailable for any reason.

Since joining the Emergency Management Division in 2019, Lee has led staff and working groups related to the Alert & Warning, Extreme Temperatures, Debris Management, Volunteer & Donations Management, Mass Evacuations, Rail and Air Accidents, Facility Planning, and Emergency Operations Center Technology. He also serves as the Vice Chair of the Local Emergency Communications Committee and as the RACES coordinator. Lee has served in positions throughout the EOC during incidents such as the COVID-19 Pandemic response, multiple wildland fires and subsequent flooding and debris flows, civil unrest responses, and the Pipeline Oil Spill. Lee brings over 22 years of Orange County supervisory and management experience from both the Social Services Agency and the Orange County Sheriff’s Department Emergency Communications Bureau, and its Communications and Technology Division where he managed 800 MHz Countywide Coordinated Communications System training for all law, fire, public works, and lifeguard users throughout Orange County. ■



**Lee Kaser, KK6VIV.**



## OC Sheriff's Citizens' Academy Starts July 6th

OCRACES PSRs and members of city RACES and EmComm units are urged to attend the 2022 OC Sheriff's Citizens' Academy, which will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., beginning on July 6 and ending on August 31. Application paperwork can be downloaded by clicking [here](#). The application period is now open.

The Orange County Sheriff's Department offers a countywide Citizens' Academy once per year. The Citizens' Academy is a 9-week informational series designed to give Orange County residents an inside, in-depth look at the daily operations of the Orange County Sheriff's Department. The academy class meets once a week for a 3-hour period. Most classes are held at the Orange County Sheriff's Regional Training Academy in Tustin, with the exception of a few field trip weeks. The first 8 weeks include interactive course instruction and field trips provided by a variety of Sheriff's Department personnel who are experts in their respective fields. The last week is a graduation celebration.

Some topics covered in the Citizens' Academy include:

- Recruitment/Academy Training
- Dispatch/Patrol Operations
- Investigations
- Use of Force Options Simulator
- Bomb Squad
- Forensics
- Car Stops
- Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center
- Orange County Jail Tour
- Coroner's Office Tour

The Citizens' Academy is intended for personal growth only, and does not qualify students for a career in law enforcement. Anyone who is at least 18 years of age, has no felony arrests, and is interested in public safety is encouraged to take part in this community program. Applications are given priority according to the order in which they are received and first priority is given to residents in Orange County Sheriff's Department contract cities. For further information about the Citizens' Academy, contact Public Affairs at (714) 647-7042 or email [info@ocsheriff.gov](mailto:info@ocsheriff.gov). ■

## Miniature Portable Power Box Charges Radios

Former OCRACES Assistant Radio Officer Ken Mirabella, KM6YH, advises that Powerwerx has added the PWRbox MINI portable power box to its line of PWRbox products. It is available in 10-Ah and 15-Ah versions. With 120 watt-hours (10-Ah version) or 180 watt-hours (15-Ah version), this portable power station is ideal for charging smartphones, tablets, fish finders, two-way radios, portable 12-volt refrigerators, and many other small 12-volt devices.

The side-mounted red backlit circuit-breaker switch is rated at 15 amperes maximum and turns on/off power to a blue digital voltmeter, two USB fast QC3.0 charging ports, and an automotive 12-volt socket. The dual USB outputs provide up to 2.6 A at 5 V device charging. They support QuickCharge QC3.0, QC2.0, BC1.2, Apple, Samsung Adaptive Fast Charge Protocol (AFC), and Huawei Fast Charging Protocol (FCP). The voltmeter and USB charger draw a small parasitic load on the battery even when not in use. Two Anderson Powerpole connectors, compatible with the PP15/30/45 series, provide high-current DC output, wired directly to the battery and protected by an inline fuse. A built-in LED work light with dedicated on/off button works as a flashlight. The PWRbox MINI includes an AC/DC battery charger with Anderson Powerpole connector. Output is 14.6 VDC, 2 A (CC/CV charge profile for LiFePO4 batteries).

Exterior dimensions are 10.75 inches long by 8.9 inches wide by 4.5 inches high. Weight is 5.4 pounds (10-Ah version) or 7.0 pounds (15-Ah version). Typical operation time for a QRP HF radio is 7-9 hours with the 10-Ah version and 12-16 hours with the 15-Ah version. For more information, see <https://powerwerx.com/newproducts>.

Other products in the Powerwerx portable power box line are the PWRbox for 12-40 Ah Bioenno batteries and the MEGAbx for 30-70 Ah Bioenno batteries. ■



Powerwerx PWRbox MINI portable power box.

# Countywide RACES/EmComm News

**"RACES/EmComm News" provides an opportunity to share information from all City & County RACES/ACS units and EmComm organizations and supportive amateur radio clubs in and near Orange County, as well as from Cal OES and federal agencies.**

**Please send your news to NetControl Editor Ken Bourne, W6HK, at:**

**[kbourne.ocsd@earthlink.net](mailto:kbourne.ocsd@earthlink.net)**

## Orange RACES (COAR)

The Orange Police Department (OPD) has appointed Gabby Cartwright as Emergency Manager, a new position.

The May 2022 issue of *RF*, the Orange County Amateur Radio Club newsletter, has an excellent article by Ken Konecky, W6HHC, about COAR's assistance to OPD's running team during the April 9-10 Baker to Las Vegas Challenge Cup Relay. (See <https://www.w6ze.org/Newsletter/RF-Newsletter-2022-05.pdf>.) Five communications centers were set up at Ibx Pass, Shoshone, Pahrump, Sandy Valley Road, and Las Vegas by COAR, which also provided mobile operators. The OPD running team finished in 16 hours and 52 minutes, to place 43rd out of 220 running teams and third in their class (police departments with 150 or less sworn officers).

## Westminster RACES

Dave Segura is now the Westminster Emergency Services Coordinator.

## Orange County Fire Watch

In preparation for the upcoming Santa Ana wind and wildfire season, Orange County Fire Watch will be conducting a fire spotting and reporting exercise on Saturday, June 4, 2022. This exercise is designed for responding Fire Watch Volunteers to check their gear and visit four specific Fire Watch locations. The locations will be Irvine Ranch Open Space #5 (Black Star Canyon), O'Neill Regional Park #2 (Arroyo Vista Gate), Peters Canyon Regional Park #1 (Main Parking Lot), and Yorba Regional/Featherly Park#1 (La Palma Ave). Volunteers will be arriving at the locations to spot the simulated fire identified by orange hazard fencing and will make a verbal report to an onsite evaluator or call the Fire Watch Hotline with the report. Fire Watch volunteers have been instructed to have volunteer identification, Fire Watch vest, and Fire Watch vehicle magnets so they are easily identifiable for the exercise. Volunteers may be visiting more than one location during the exercise time of 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and may not be staying at the location for the full shift assignment, to visit other locations that day. This exercise will also be used to implement and update the deployment communication

procedures. OCSO PSRs (including RACES) and Reserve Deputies participating in this June 4th Fire Watch Training may register on the Reserve Tracker Calendar, where the event has been posted.

## ARRL San Diego Section

On Saturday, May 14, 2022, the air temperature had climbed above 90 degrees and runners were dropping out of the rugged Pacific Crest Trail 50-mile, 10-hour mountain endurance race in droves when reports came into a remote aid station of a runner in distress a mile up the trail. The lead ham at the aid station, J Rollins, KM6NUY, handed an FRS (Family Radio Service) radio to the non-ham aid station captain who then sprinted up the trail to the distressed runner to evaluate his condition. Attempts to cool the runner failed, so the aid station captain used the loaned FRS radio to ask the ham team to summon EMS. With no cell phone service in that remote area, this request for aid was relayed from the aid station by radio operator Caleb Rollins, KN6ODW, through a Mountain Empire Amateur Radio Club (MEARC) 2-meter repeater in Campo, California, to the event net control near Buckman Springs, California, where net controls Gary Holmes, KM6LKP, and Lori Palmer, KE6ZLV, coordinated the emergency response. A few minutes after placing the call for aid, the responding medics called to ask for driving directions because they could not use the GPS latitude and longitude provided to find the location on the side of a mountain, far from marked roads. Local resident Craig Williams, W6CAW, provided driving directions for the responders. During the emergency, back at the aid station, Mark Warrick, KM6ZPO, and Julie Warrick, KN6AOC, continued to track runners passing through the aid station and explained ham radio to inquisitive onlookers while other hams dealt with the emergency. With the help of EMS, the runner made a full recovery. Lessons learned included the value of using FRS as a communications link for non-hams, depth on the bench, and the need to tabletop with emergency responders before an event. — *Thanks, Rob Freeburn, K6RJF, San Diego, California; and ARRL San Diego Section Manager Dave Kaltenborn, N8KBC; as reported in The ARES Letter for May 18, 2022.*

# June 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 PSR Orientation	2	3	4 Fire Watch Exercise & Weekly 60 m ACS Net
5	6 Weekly 2 m ACS Net & OCRACES Meeting	7	8	9	10	11 PSR Prescreen & Weekly 60 m ACS Net
12	13 Weekly 2 m ACS Net	14	15	16	17 Orange County Amateur Radio Club Meeting	18 Weekly 60 m ACS Net
19	20 Weekly 2 m ACS Net	21	22	23	24	25 Weekly 60 m ACS Net & Field Day
26 Field Day	27 ACS Nets on 4 Bands	28	29	30		

### Upcoming Events:

- **June 1, 1830 hours:** Orientation for PSR Applicants, OC Sheriff's Regional Training Academy
- **June 4, 0900-1200 hours:** OC Fire Watch fire spotting and reporting exercise (details on page 10)
- **June 6, 1930 hours:** OCRACES Meeting on Microsoft Teams
- **June 11, 0900 hours:** Prescreen for PSR Applicants, OC Sheriff's Regional Training Academy
- **June 17, 1900 hours:** Orange County Amateur Radio Club Meeting on Zoom
- **June 25-26:** Field Day
- **July 4:** Independence Day (no net, no meeting)
- **July 11, 1930 hours:** OCRACES Meeting on Microsoft Teams



### County of Orange RACES Frequencies

60 m: 5371.5 kHz USB (dial) (Channel 4) (OC ACS Net—Saturdays, 1000 hours)  
 40 m: 7250 kHz LSB  
 10 m: 29.640 MHz output, 29.540 MHz input, 107.2 Hz PL (down for repair)  
 6 m: 52.620 MHz output, 52.120 MHz input, 103.5 Hz PL  
 2 m: 146.895 MHz output, 146.295 MHz input, 136.5 Hz PL\*  
 2 m: 146.595 MHz simplex  
 1.25 m: 223.760 MHz output, 222.160 MHz input, 110.9 Hz PL  
 70 cm: 446.000 MHz simplex  
 70 cm: 448.320 MHz output, 443.320 MHz input, 141.3 Hz PL (private)  
 70 cm: 449.100 MHz output, 444.100 MHz input, 110.9 Hz PL (private)  
 70 cm: 449.180 MHz output, 444.180 MHz input, 107.2 Hz PL (private)  
 70 cm: 449.680 MHz output, 444.680 MHz input, 131.8 Hz PL (private)  
 \*Primary Net—Mondays, 1900 hours

<https://ocraces.org>



### Mission Statement

County of Orange RACES has made a commitment to provide all Public Safety departments in Orange County with the most efficient response possible to supplement emergency/disaster and routine Public Safety communications events and activities. We will provide the highest level of service using Amateur and Public Safety radio resources coupled with technology, teamwork, safety, and excellence. We will do so in an efficient, professional, and courteous manner, accepting accountability for all actions. We dedicate ourselves to working in partnership with the Public Safety community to professionally excel in the ability to provide emergency communications resources and services.

#### OCSD RACES Coordinator

Lee Kaser, KK6VIV, (714) 628-7081

#### Chief Radio Officer

Ken Bourne, W6HK, (714) 997-0073

#### Radio Officer

Scott Byington, KC6MMF

#### Assistant Radio Officers

Jack Barth, AB6VC  
 Ernest Fierheller, KG6LXT (pending PSR acceptance)

### County of Orange RACES

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# County of Orange RACES

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**It's Where It's @!**

Questions or Comments?  
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**“W6ACS ...  
 Serving  
 Orange County”**

## Meet Your County of Orange RACES Members!

**Officers** →



**Ken Bourne** W6HK     **Scott Byington** KC6MMF     **Jack Barth** AB6VC

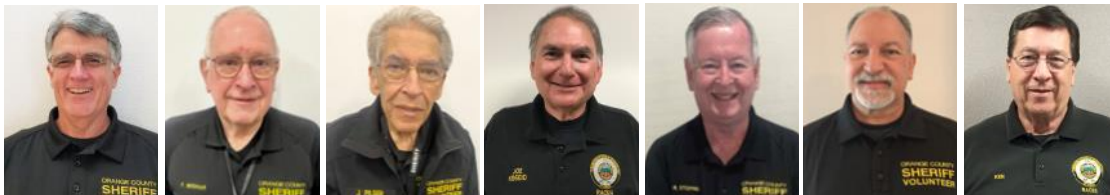
**OCSD  
 RACES** →  
**Coordinator**



**Lee Kaser**  
 KK6VIV



**Heide Aguire** K3TOG     **Randy Benicky** N6PRL     **Eric Bowen** W6RTR     **Ray Grimes** N8RG     **Peter Jimenez** K16UTE     **Walter Kroy** KC6HAM     **Martin La Rocque** N6NTH     **Steve Livingston** NJ6R



**Scott MacGillivray** KM6RTE     **Fran Needham** KJ6UJS     **John Pilger** K6PIO     **Joe Selikov** KB6EID     **Robert Stoffel** KD6DAQ     **Chuck Streitz** KK6HFS     **Ken Tucker** WF6F

**PSR** →  
**Applicant**



**Ernest Fierheller**  
 KG6LXT