A Look Back
By Robert Stoffel

As we bring 1999 to a close and welcome the year 2000, I would like to reflect on our busiest year ever. 1999 saw a little of everything for OCRACES. We conducted our usual drills, bringing back the popular "Operation Boysenberry" in March, Field Day in June, and our annual City/County RACES exercise in October. We also had orientation to two new radio systems at Loma Ridge, the new 800 MHz CRT radio consoles and the ReddiNet II system.

Our members provided public relations for the Amateur Radio hobby by providing RACES specific activities at the Orange County Fair in July, Command Post testing for the Orange County Fire Authority in May, and showcasing our RACES operations at Loma Ridge for the California Public-Safety Radio Association in August. Activations included the Persian New Year in April, Baker-to-Vegas in April, the CPRA dispatcher banquet in April, Christmas in April and the Y2K activation on December 31st.

Our members also provided ongoing support for in-house projects as well as assisting other RACES organizations. Most notable was the support from our ATV team to other cities, the EDIS project which remains a work in progress, the DF committee working a special project and the addition of an OCRACES specific web page to the County's Volunteer Web Site.

Last but not least, our members donated a total of $200 to the 1999 Holiday Hope program. This money was used to provide food certificates to needy families throughout Orange County. It was a busy year for all, and I would like to offer my sincere thanks on behalf of the Sheriff's Department for your contributions!

Happy New Year!

January Meeting
The January 3rd meeting will feature a review of OCRACES activities for 1999 and allow our members to set goals for our organization for the year 2000. This special meeting will also feature our annual OCRACES appreciation and awards ceremony! The meeting will start at 1930 hours at 840 N. Eckhoff Street in Orange.

Inside This Issue:

Upcoming Events

Date	Event
December 31	OCRACES Y2K Activation, EOC and other sites
January 3	General Meeting, Alternate EOC, 1930 Hours
January 31	City/County RACES Meeting, 840 N. Eckhoff, 1930 Hours
February 7	OCRACES General Meeting, 1930 Hours
February 12	City County ATV Communications Exercise, 0830-1200
March 6	OCRACES General Meeting, 1930 Hours

Training
By Lt. Mike Krueger, OCRACES Training Officer

A Communicators guide to the Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) is widely used by police and fire agencies to manage emergency incidents and non-emergency events. Due to it's vast internal flexibility, ICS can be scaled to fit the size and scope of each incident to provide a cost effective and efficient management system. As communicators, it is important that we be familiar with the organization and implementation of ICS, as we may be called upon to work at various levels of this rather complex system.

This article will give you a brief introduction into ICS and how the system is implemented and expanded as needed to fit an incident. This information is from the National Training Curriculum, ICS Module 1 I-100 and I-120. Some OCRACES members may have these documents, and may wish to refer to them, and the ICS definitions from previous NetControl editions.

ICS was developed by a multi-agency, cooperative effort known as FIRESCOPE. It is part of the National Inter-Agency Incident Management System (NIIMS), which was developed to provide a common method for fire protection agencies to utilize local, state and federal resources. NIIMS consists of ICS and the National Inter-Agency Fire Qualifications System (NIFQS). NIFQS sets the standards for qualifications and certification, focusing mainly on wildland fire training. ICS is the incident management component of NIIMS, and can be used within that system, or "stand alone" for any type of event.

There are five major management activities upon which the Incident Command System is built:
Command: Sets objectives and priorities, has overall responsibility at the incident
Operations: Conducts tactical operations, develops and implements the tactical objectives, directs all resources
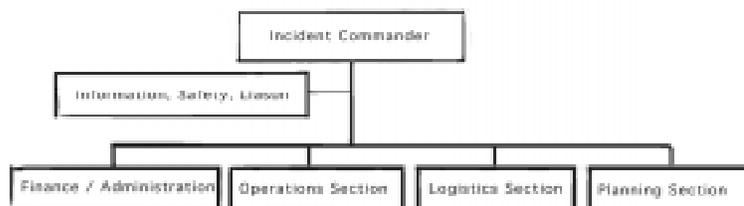**Planning:** Develops the actions plans to accomplish the objectives, maintains lists and status of resources
Logistics: Provides resources and all other services needed to support the incident
Finance/Administration: Monitors costs related to the incident, time recording and cost analyses

The Incident Commander may be able to handle two or more of these positions depending on the size and scope of the incident. Should the needs of the incident dictate; the Incident Commander may establish a Command Staff and a General Staff. The Command Staff includes Information, Safety and Liaison Officer positions. While there is only one Command Staff position for each of these functions, each can have one or more assistants, such as Information Officer Assistant. These assistants are sometimes called "Aides".

The following organizational chart shows the Command and General Staff:

 The General Staff is comprised of the heads of each of the primary management groups listed above. At the section level, the person in charge will always be designated Chief. For example, the person in charge of the Operations Section will be the operations Section Chief.

Depending on the needs of the incident, the Section Chief may assign one or more Deputy positions. The Deputy can be assigned several tasks, and should always be as qualified as the person for whom they work. The Incident Commander may also assign one or more Deputy Incident Commanders to work with him, or as a relief Incident Commanders.

Training cont'd on pg 5

Did You Know?

Y2K-One More Time!

by: Ray Grimes, W6RYS
      Chief Radio Officer, OCRACES

You no doubt have had enough of the discussions and doomsday predictions about Y2K. I promise though, this will be the last you'll hear from me about Y2K preparation this year (you may hear something about the Y2K aftermath, but that's another story for the February Net Control issue). Seriously, the information offered below may save the lives of you and your family. These survival items are equally useful for natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, firestorms, and tornadoes. This information was provided by a local disaster planning expert.

Pack a few party hats and confetti too. Y2K will be a celebration to remember. Enjoy!

FINANCIAL
10% of your savings should be placed in a savings account. Approximately 1% to 5% of your money should go to disaster planning. Keep $100 to $200 in small bills available (credit card systems may not function).

Did You Know cont'd on pg 4

Visual Communications

Coordinator: Jim Carter (WB6HAG)
Web Page: http://www.qsl.net/wb6hag/

Tri-Agency - The Tri-Agency program remains on hold, pending the outcome of LA County experimental video proposal to the FCC. A ruling is expected soon.

ATV Drill — February 12th at 0830 is the County and all Cities ATV visual communication exercise. It will be conducted on 426.25 MHz for the video and 144.345 MHz for our VHF communication/coordination channel.   A letter will be sent to all Orange County Cities this month outlining the details.

The objective of the exercise is to identify communication paths, limitations and means for multi-agencies to co-exist on a single ATV simplex frequency.

This exercise will enable Cities not having ATV capabilities to team up with those who do, in order to learn more about this fascinating mode of communications.
Visual Communications cont'd on pg 5

Captain's Corner

by: Ray Grimes, W6RYS
    Chief Radio Officer, OCRACES

This is a very special Captain's Corner moment for me as it is the close of another excellent year for OCRACES coupled with the end of a millennium and the beginning of a new one. OCRACES has set a tradition of excellence in providing local government emergency communications support. OCRACES is well known and widely respected thanks to its members efforts and dedication. The OCRACES web page has found its way to emergency personnel all over the world and is considered to be a significant disaster planning resource. The next decade will most certainly bring new challenges to Amateur Radio and to RACES organizations as technology changes and Amateur Radio spectrum is sought by commercial interests. Our challenge will be to publicize our accomplishments every chance possible, to inform the public that we are a free but valuable emergency communications resource made up of professional volunteers. Celfones and the Internet have the ability to provide some of the services we as Amateurs have traditionally offered for years, but when systems overload or fail, or special technical expertise is needed, no other service group can accomplish what we do.

In the years to come, expect to defend our rights and privileges as licensed Radio Amateurs, and to challenge proposals to replace Amateur Radio emergency communications support with public access systems. Frequent and effective publicity will help make our point, as will reminding our public servants that we are there for them, 24 hours a day, every day, for free!

I wish each of you the very happiest New Year and sincerely thank you for the hard work and personal contributions which have made OCRACES so successful. I also extend our thanks in the name of the County of Orange for the support of your families in understanding your dedication and commitment to the public good which sometimes takes a priority over personal matters.

Did You Know *cont'd from pg 3*

HOME PROVISIONS

One gallon of water per person per day for drinking, washing, and food preparation.
Food for one month for all members of your household (including rice, pasta, canned meats/fruits/dinners, and prepared fast foods such as power bars).
Canned and bottled juices.
Cooking utensils and durable dishware and drinking cups.
Paper towels.
Dishwashing soap, hand soap.
Tarps and heavy plastic sheeting for shelter and home repairs.
Staple gun or tacks and rolls of duct tape.
Hand tools.
Sterno type portable stove.
Generator to run basic lights, refrigerator, and microwave oven.
10 to 50 gallons of gasoline properly stored (gasoline has a limited storage life).

Did You Know cont'd from pg 4

Solar panel and regulator, deep cycle marine batteries.
Battery operated or alternate power AM/FM portable radio.
A non-cordless telephone (cordless telephones may fail when AC power is out for long periods).
Flashlights and other portable lighting.
Medicines and disinfectants.
Pet food, pet supplies, blankets, medicines.
Amateur Radio equipment, batteries, portable antennas.
Writing paper, pens.

AWAY FROM HOME
Backpack for every member of the family (kept in each vehicle).
Water-minimum of one gallon per person per day, several canteens to carry water.
Prepared food for 48 hours minimum (canned foods, packaged foods, power bars, etc.)
Walking shoes or boots and several pairs of clean, dry socks.
Poncho and warm jacket, Rain hat or wool cap.
Sun glasses and extra reading or prescription glasses.
Personal medication, sunscreen, aspirin or equivalent, Ace bandage, general first aid kit, rubber gloves.
Medical ""how to" books.
A whistle to call for help.
Flashlight and spare batteries, bulbs.
Compass, Signal mirror, Maps.
Battery operated or alternate energy AM/FM radio.
Small folding knife (multipurpose type).
Work gloves.
Butane lighters and wind-proof matches.
50 to 100 ft. of parachute cord.
Toilet paper in plastic bag.
Hand soap.
$100 in small bills.
Cellular telephone and spare batteries.
Amateur Radio equipment, spare batteries, portable antennas.
*Note: DO NOT let a backpack get over 50 lb. as the weight can be unmanageable if you have to abandon your vehicle and walk any distance.

BACK TO BASICS
Remember, we live in a desert.
Plan for all disasters (many require the same supplies and equipment).
Read disaster planning books before the disaster.
Network—
A man has to know his limitations.
Find friends, neighbors, co-workers who can lend support during a disaster and can offer knowledge and services (you need a village to survive).
Friends can cut the pain in half and double the joy.
There is safety in numbers.

Visual Communications cont'd from pg 3

Loma Ridge — A standard TV broadcast video feed was added to our RACES overhead monitor. This allow us to view Los Angeles TV stations during a major event in order to obtain news updates when the media is involved.

ATV Alert - ATV Committee members were alerted to be mission ready during the months of December and January. Equipment batteries were to be kept charged and other associated equipment were to be easily accessible when needed.

ATV Remote - Jack Barth (AB6VC), designed and assembled a small portable DTMF controlled ATV remote station. His system allows an unattended ATV transmitter and camera to be operate on location without human intervention. This allows camera positions to be controlled remotely by the Loma Ridge ATV operator or a field command post operator during an event. I guess you can say, Jack is cloning Visual Communication operators in order to increase our capabilities.

Training cont'd from pg 2

In large incidents, the use of deputy Incident Commanders from other agencies promotes `«re efficient inter-agency coordination.

Next month, we'll look organization of the Planning and Finance sections, and there roles in Incident Management.

by: Ray Grimes, W6RYS
      Chief Radio Officer, OCRACES

Barking Up The Wrong Tree?

by: Ray Grimes, W6RYS
      Chief Radio Officer, OCRACES

Just when you are saying you have seen everything, something new comes along! This also proves that "new" isn't necessarily "better".

Remember the Pet Rock and the Chia Pet which many lucky (or unlucky) people received as Christmas presents a few years ago? This may top them all. Two Japanese companies are working on what you might call a "pet project", literally. These are wireless devices which will allow pet owners the ability to communicate with their pets when they are away from home. While analysts say this is absurd, history has proven that people will buy most anything (particularly as gifts for others). Marketing analysts believe this idea may have a chance in Japan where new technology sells at an amazing rate, but not necessarily in the U.S.

In case you were wondering how all of this might work, a high-tech device is connected to a pet's collar. Somehow, when the pet misbehaves or enters an area where it isn't allowed, the system will automatically transmit an alarm and the owner can automatically or manually activate the "NO" button or respond with a voice command. NTT DoCoMo, a Japanese product developer, is also looking into an additional feature which could locate lost pets using GPS, thereby FAXing their owners with a map of the pet's present location.

 You could fully expect Animal Rights advocates to have an opinion about this. A certified Applied Animal Behaviorist (really) who is a senior advisor to the Amercian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) stated that "the disembodied voice of a pet's owner could be a problem, causing the pet to run around the house looking for its owner". Wireless Week took a small poll of pet owners and learned that most would not purchase a phone for their pet. Another pet owner thought it was a good idea, allowing the ability to randomly call their pets during the day and say "get off of the kitchen counter top".

This article is paraphrased from the November 29 Wireless Week trade magazine, P. 22, by Kristy Bassuener

(did you think I made this stuff up? -Ray).