

# About The Manual

Welcome to the Ranger Manual. Read it, love it, know it. This manual is your guide to how the Black Rock Rangers approach problems, work toward solving them, and help the participants of Black Rock City.

As used in this manual, the words “must” and “must not” indicate a required course of action, one in which Rangers have no discretion. In contrast, the words “should” and “should not” indicate a recommendation rather than an absolute requirement. In such cases there may exist valid reasons in some circumstances to choose a different course of action, and Rangers are expected to use their best judgment in determining what to do.

This document is written and produced by the Black Rock Ranger Communications Cadre and Team. Please direct all inquiries, questions, and comments to the Ranger Communications Team: [ranger-comm-cadre-list@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-comm-cadre-list@burningman.org).

A PDF version of the Manual is available [here](#).

Edited by: The Ranger Council and Ranger Communications, with assistance from Fortress, Factotum, and Trap Door.

**© Black Rock City LLC and Burning Man Project. No portion of this document may be reproduced in part or in whole without written permission from Burning Man and the Black Rock Rangers.**

# Table of Contents

<b>About The Manual</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>History</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Danger Ranger.....	7
<b>Today</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Social Capital</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Adding to or Subtracting from Our Social Capital.....	10
<b>Ranger Culture</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Ranger Council</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Ranger Cadres and Teams.....	12
Art Car Wranglers.....	13
Burn Safety Team.....	14
Communications.....	14
Deep Desert Patrol.....	14
Field Support Team.....	14
Gerlach Patrol.....	15
Green Dots.....	15
HQ Window.....	15
Intercept.....	16
Leave No Trace.....	16
Logistics.....	16
Logistics Coordination.....	17
Mentors.....	17
Officers of the Day.....	17
Operators.....	18
Quartermaster.....	18
Radical Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (RIDE).....	18

Rapid Night Response (RNR).....	19
Regional Ranger Network.....	19
Sandmen.....	19
Shift Command Team.....	19
SITE.....	20
Tech.....	20
Tow Truck.....	20
Trainers.....	21
Troubleshooters.....	21
Vehicle Fleet.....	21
Vehicle Maintenance.....	22
Volunteer Coordinators.....	22
WESLs.....	22
<b>Culture of Feedback.....</b>	<b>23</b>
The Gift of Feedback.....	23
Giving Feedback.....	23
Receiving Feedback.....	24
Escalating Feedback.....	25
Hard Conversations.....	25
Who to Talk to.....	25
<b>Ranger Shift Command Structure and Expectations.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Ranger Shift Command Structure.....	27
Signing Up for Shifts.....	27
Special Teams.....	28
Who's Khaki?.....	28
Cruise Direction.....	29
Tips for Cruise Direction.....	29
Zoned and Unzoned Shifts.....	30
Shift Summary and Responsibilities.....	30

Incident Reports.....	30
Leaving Shift Early or Extending a Shift.....	31
Things You Might Do On Shift.....	31
Developing Awareness.....	32
Ranger Uniform.....	33
Ranger Clothing Tips.....	33
Duty While in Uniform.....	33
Intoxicants While in Uniform.....	34
Food and Drink Safety.....	34
Un-Rangerly Behavior.....	35
Compassionate De-Shifting.....	35
<b>Ranger Facilities.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Ranger HQ.....	35
Sanctuary.....	36
Ranger Outposts.....	36
10-7 Lounge.....	37
Bunkhouses.....	37
Ranger Camp Moscow.....	37
Ranger Camp Geneva.....	37
Commissary.....	38
<b>Radios.....</b>	<b>39</b>
All the Resources in Your Hand.....	39
Initiating a Call.....	39
Effective Radio Use.....	39
Five key steps to making a good radio call.....	40
Resource Request Protocol.....	41
Being Clear on the Radio.....	41
NATO Phonetic Alphabet.....	42
Radio Protocols.....	43

Radio Channels.....	45
Checking Out Your Radio From HQ.....	46
Care and Feeding of Your Pet Radio.....	47
Event Radios.....	47
<b>Ranger Approach.....</b>	<b>48</b>
Arriving on Scene.....	48
Tips for Being on Scene.....	49
Special Circumstance: Law Enforcement.....	50
<b>Must Reports.....</b>	<b>52</b>
How to Report.....	54
Domestic Violence.....	54
Sexual Violence.....	55
Child or Elder Abuse.....	57
Lost Children.....	58
Protocol For Reporting A Lost Child.....	58
Found Child.....	58
Medical and Psychiatric Emergencies.....	59
Something else?.....	62
<b>Other Situations You'll Encounter.....</b>	<b>63</b>
Catastrophic Events.....	63
Blocked Streets and Intersections.....	63
Breakdowns and Lockouts.....	64
Differences, Disagreements, and Disputes.....	64
Distressed and Disoriented Participants.....	64
Drone Protocol.....	66
Evictions.....	67
Found Animal.....	68
Lasers.....	68
Law Enforcement.....	69

Lost and Found Items.....	70
Media and Cameras.....	70
Missing Adults.....	71
Noise Complaints.....	71
Property Issues: Theft and Theft Prevention.....	73
Vehicle Issues.....	74
Vehicle Safety.....	74
Vehicle Education and Escalation.....	75
Vehicle Stickers.....	75
Weather Event.....	77
Where Are the Porta Potties?.....	77
<b>Burn Perimeter Protocol.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Basic Burn Perimeter Know-How.....</b>	<b>79</b>
What To Bring.....	80
Overall Structure.....	80
At Your Position.....	81
Pro Tips for Dealing with Your Crowd.....	81
Once the Festivities Start.....	81
Handling Runners.....	82
Winding Down.....	82
<b>Communication, Mediation, and Conflict Resolution Strategies.....</b>	<b>84</b>
F.L.A.M.E.....	84
Active Listening.....	86
Nonverbal Communication (Body Language).....	86
Open and Closed Questions.....	87
Paraphrasing.....	88
Interest versus Position.....	88
Observation and Inference.....	88
Assumptions and Bias.....	88

Empathic Attunement.....	89
Emotional Flooding (Triggers).....	89
Conflict Resolution and De-Escalation Tips.....	90
Self-Care and Responder Trauma.....	91
Open and Closed Questions.....	92
Paraphrasing.....	92
De-Escalation.....	93
Transcending the Model.....	93
<b>Behavior Standards.....</b>	<b>95</b>
Harassment.....	95
What should you do if you feel you are being harassed?.....	95
What happens if I make a report?.....	96
Will my report be kept confidential?.....	96
Off-playa Un-Rangerly Behavior.....	96
De-Shifting, De-Lamming, and Removal from the Rangers.....	97
Removal from a Shift (De-Shifting).....	97
Removal from Rangering the Event (De-Lamming).....	98
Removal from the Ranger Organization.....	98
Ranger Disciplinary Protocols.....	98
<b>Ranger Policies and Procedures.....</b>	<b>99</b>
Training.....	99
Ranger Status.....	99
Returning to the Rangers after an Extended Absence.....	100
Ranger Social Media Policy.....	101
Ranger Logo Usage Policy.....	102
Wearing the Black Rock Ranger logo (in general):.....	102
Wearing the Black Rock Ranger logo at events:.....	102
Communication Within the Rangers.....	103
Ranger Applicant News (RAN).....	103

Rangers Announce Email List.....	103
Ranger Allcom Email List.....	103
Contacting Individuals and Teams.....	104
Joining Ranger Special Teams.....	104
<b>The Ten Principles of Burning Man.....</b>	<b>105</b>
Radical Inclusion.....	105
Gifting.....	105
Decommodification.....	105
Radical Self-Reliance.....	105
Radical Self-Expression.....	105
Communal Effort.....	106
Civic Responsibility.....	106
Leaving No Trace.....	106
Participation.....	106
Immediacy.....	106
<b>The Black Rock Desert.....</b>	<b>107</b>
The Playa.....	107
General Orientation.....	107
The Granites.....	108
Old Razorback.....	108
The Black Rock.....	108
Rendezvous Point.....	109
Dog Camp.....	109
Steamboat Mountain.....	109
<b>Glossary.....</b>	<b>110</b>



# History

Traditionally, rangers protect life and natural environments. They patrol an expanse of land, and are members of one or more regional communities. Historically, rangers were an alternative to local or federal law enforcement who patrolled vast, sparsely-populated territories (such as the Texas Rangers, Arizona Rangers, and so on).

## Danger Ranger

In 1992, cacophonist Michael Mikel (aka “Danger Ranger”) founded the Black Rock Rangers. The Rangers initially served as a search-and-rescue function in the Black Rock Desert when Burning Man had no fences or streets, finding lost participants and returning them to their camps.

As the event grew in size, so did the need for Rangers. The search-and-rescue function expanded to include life-safety issues in Black Rock City. Since the beginning of the event, the city has grown in size and complexity. In 1996, this growth seemed to reach a tipping point, and several accidents and incidents gave rise to concerns about community safety. One person was killed and two were badly wounded in vehicle accidents. One result was the establishment of new community standards in 1997 regarding citizen behavior (especially around motor vehicles and firearms). As the population of BRC grew larger and more diverse, the role of the Rangers became more critical than ever before.

Three distinct mentalities surfaced: Idealists pushed for not betraying their uncompromising anti-authoritarianism; Realists pushed for a shutdown of the event, because it would never be possible to make it safe; and the visionaries around Larry Harvey pushed for a new, participant-driven society.

They conceptualized gate, boundaries, streets, and 10 basic rules to prevent people getting injured or killed by others. They transitioned the gathering into a community with a “better” approach to authority and rules.

Once again, the Rangers were at the heart of Burning Man's transition. They were tasked with being the human hinge explaining the abstract concept to the people. On one hand was the need to accommodate the artistic, creative, strong willed burners with often anti-authoritarian lifestyles being the heart and soul of this event. On the other hand, basic safety rules were needed.

The Rangers took the role of making our self-regulating society a reality; To inform, explain, convince, and facilitate freedom loving burners to be good citizens of Black Rock City.

This was, is, and may likely be our task for the foreseeable future.

# Today

Today, the Black Rock Rangers are a broad cross-section of the Burning Man community who volunteer some of their time in the role of non-confrontational community mediators. They are empowered by the community and the Burning Man Project to address safety concerns, mediate disputes, and resolve conflicts when they cannot be resolved by the persons involved. Rangers encourage a community of shared responsibility.

Responding to the ever-changing environment, Rangers address situations within their community that might otherwise require outside intervention. By encouraging and facilitating communication, Rangers promote awareness of potential hazards, from sunstroke to tent fires. Through their 2-way radios and shift briefings, Rangers carry the latest information to the citizens of Black Rock City. The Rangers' primary concern is the safety of people, not property.

# Social Capital

Social capital describes the trust and confidence that participants, staff, law enforcement, and medical personnel have in the Rangers; this is our “street cred.” Social capital is a key source of authority in the city. Without the confidence of participants and staff, we would be unable to function effectively.

The Black Rock Rangers have cultivated and built up social capital over time with participants and staff through our reputation, credibility, and effectiveness. We do this by helping participants in trouble, treating everyone with respect, and acting professionally and with integrity.

Because of the Rangers’ social capital, participants and staff will listen to us in a way that they would not listen to a random participant offering advice or asking them to change their behavior. Law enforcement, medical, and other departments will often seek our assistance and pay attention to our input.

When Rangers are perceived as helpful, effective, collaborative, professional, and impartial (in other words, depositing social capital), we will be listened to, taken seriously, and trusted.

When Rangers are perceived as authoritarian, uptight, entitled, unprofessional, or incompetent (that is, withdrawing social capital), we will be ignored or resisted.

## Adding to or Subtracting from Our Social Capital

Social capital is like a bank account: every good interaction you have with a participant or staff member makes a deposit into our social capital account, and every bad interaction withdraws from it, often out of proportion to deposits. Unfortunately, bad interactions with Rangers often make good stories, so participants will tend to tell all their friends when they’ve seen a Ranger acting unprofessional or authoritarian.

When you do good, you make a small deposit in our account; when you do bad, you make a huge withdrawal. We expect every Ranger to act as an ambassador and an educator, both to participants and to other staff. When out in the city or on a call, talk to participants and staff about what we do and why we do it. Let them know we are participants and we’re here for them; show them by example that we are a resource they can trust.

# Ranger Culture

When we asked Rangers to describe Ranger culture, most of the answers we got back were from the perspective of how we might be perceived in the community of Black Rock City. For example:

“I give my time, offer my presence, and use skillful means to nudge my beloved Burning Man community toward the actual fulfillment of our stated Ten Principles.”

Other examples included being a sober friend at the party, holding back your hair as you throw up, comforting you during heartbreak and sadness, de-escalating conflict, being your grounding influence when you are experiencing an individual reality, and, inevitably, helping you find your camp and/or the nearest porta potties.

These responses, in and of themselves, define one of the key characteristics of Ranger culture: “It’s not about us.” Ranger Stonebeard offered:

“I can think of pieces of Ranger culture. Direct communication. Strong work ethic. Friendliness. Kilts. Openness about feelings. Level-headedness. Bacon. Openness to newcomers. Fondness for gadgetry. Dislike of gopeds. Storytelling and keeping old anecdotes alive. These are all part of Ranger culture...”

There were numerous references to bacon, as well as “I’m not going to tell you ‘don’t do it,’ and I’m going to stand here with a fire extinguisher while you do it.”

Ranger culture also includes a certain amount of reflective navel gazing, and a consensus model of operating—sometimes this is a little opaque, but that’s why we need the navel gazing. To Stonebeard’s list, we can add a desire to improve, to get better at what we do and how we do it, and to see everyone in our Ranger family grow, learn, and get better at Rangering.

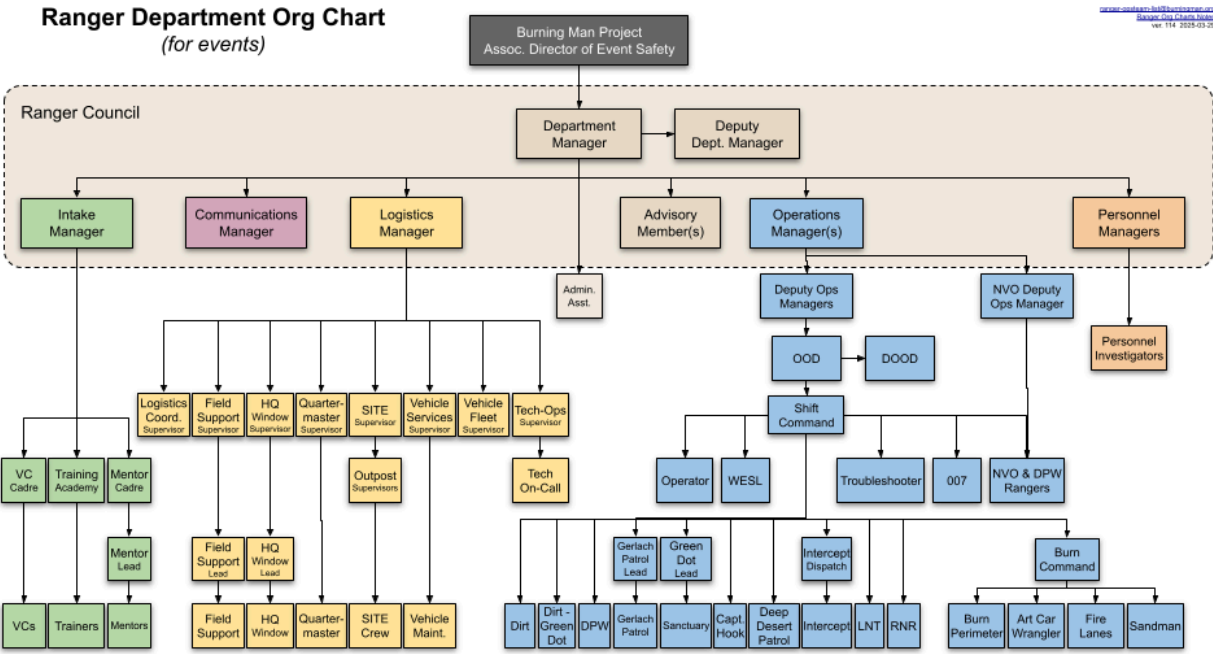
# Ranger Council

The Ranger Council is the governing body of the Black Rock Rangers. Its mission is to make strategic decisions, craft policy, manage the budget, and represent the Ranger Department and community to the Burning Man Project. While individual members of the Council may work more frequently with one team or another, all members of the Ranger Department ultimately report to the Council as a whole.

If you have questions about Ranger policies or have suggestions for how things could be done differently in the department, you can contact the Council at [ranger-council-list@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-council-list@burningman.org). You can also email individual Council members directly; most Council Member email addresses are <handle>@burningman.org (for example, contact Crow for anything operations-related).

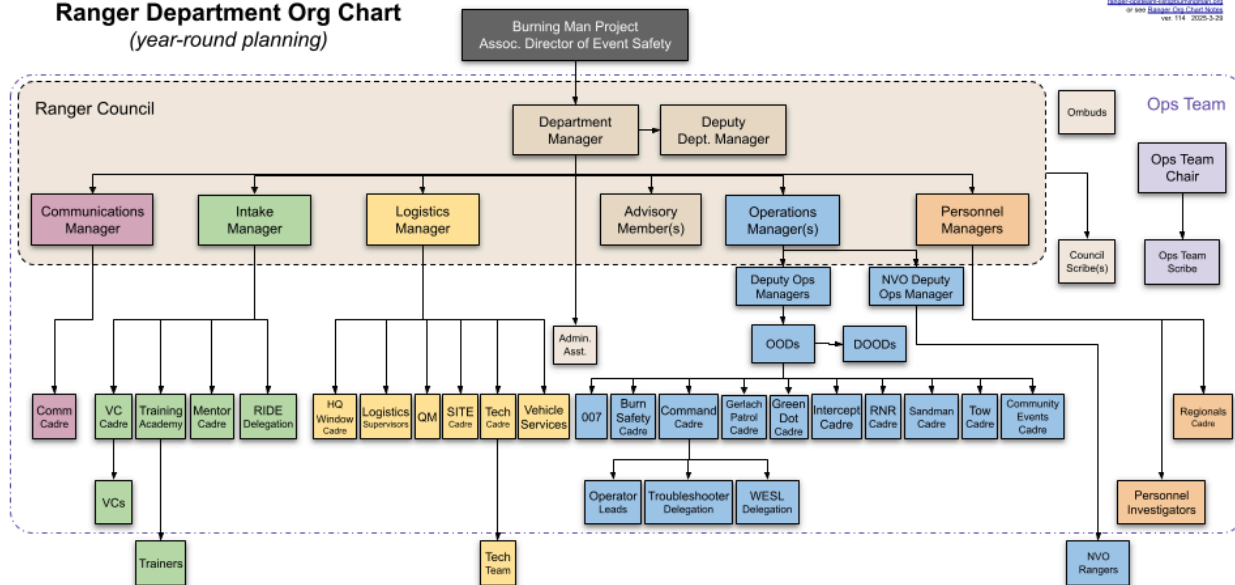
# Ranger Cadres and Teams

[On-playa Organizational Chart](#)



[Off-playa Organizational Chart](#)

## Ranger Department Org Chart (year-round planning)



Within the Black Rock Ranger organization, Cadres are the leadership groups responsible for recruiting, vetting, training, managing, and propagating an individual Ranger Team. Cadres are occasionally referred to using different terms (for example, Training Academy), but Cadre is the most common.

If you want to learn more about a Ranger Team or want to get involved in the Rangers' year-round operations, check out Ranger Special Teams and How To Join Them, available from your 'Dashboard' in the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#) if you're a Ranger. You can also contact the Cadres using the information in this section or get in touch with the Ranger Volunteer Coordinators at [ranger-vc-cadre-list@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-vc-cadre-list@burningman.org) to see what opportunities are open.

## Art Car Wranglers

The bike- and foot-mobile Art Car Wranglers set and maintain safe perimeters and fire lanes for Mutant Vehicles and bicycles at large burn events. The Wranglers' goals are to ensure that vehicles and clusters of bicycles are properly placed to facilitate open participant flow and that they have a reasonably clear view of the burn.

## Burn Safety Team

The Burn Safety team coordinates with the BRC Fire Arts Safety Team (FAST), the Burn Perimeter Support team (BPS), and Emergency Services Department (ESD) for all large burns; manages Ranger burn perimeters, including the Art Car Wranglers, Fire Lanes, and Sandman; and provides advice and support for smaller art burns with the Ranger Perimeter Jump Team.

---

## Communications

Communications works year-round to keep Rangers connected and informed through email announcements, town halls, and newsletters, as well as contributing mindfully to Allcom, editing materials and documents, and crafting and facilitating communications strategies.

---

## Deep Desert Patrol

Deep Desert Patrol assists with the safe travel of anyone traveling within the closure area but outside the bounds of the City and the Perimeter crews.

---

## Field Support Team

The Field Support Team provides a broad range of logistics support to the Rangers including, among other services, supplying and stocking HQ and the outposts with ice water and electrolytes, and delivering snacks and coffee to Rangers out on burn perimeters. Field Support is mobile and traverses the city and inner playa several times each day.

---



## Gerlach Patrol

Gerlach Patrol leaves the event to perform Ranger skills and de-escalate situations in Gerlach, thus building social capital in the Gerlach community. Gerlach Patrol is a very unique rangership opportunity that will challenge even the most seasoned Ranger with its diverse spectrum of cultural convictions.

---

## Green Dots

Green Dots are Rangers who ride the edge of “inner” chaos. When the counseling required exceeds your Dirt Ranger training and comfort zone, Khaki can dispatch a Green Dot Ranger to assist you with the situation. Some Green Dots bring training or certification in fields like psychology, psychiatry, sexual violence peer counseling, or substance abuse. Others simply bring their own life experiences and willingness to listen.

Green Dots are first and foremost patient listeners who are present for participants who are distressed or disoriented. Green Dots, like other Rangers, do their best to stay out of the way and keep participants safe. Green Dot Rangers patrol in the field, working as Dirt Rangers with a Ranger partner, until a situation that calls on their additional skills arises. Green Dot Rangers also staff Sanctuary.

Green Dots are also available to support individual Rangers’ internal work even when they aren’t in crisis.

---

## HQ Window

HQ Window team checks fellow Rangers in and out of shift, distributes radios, meal pogs, and BMIDs, and supports Rangers with administrative tasks like scheduling. HQ Window also helps participants who walk up to the window needing assistance.

---

## Intercept

Intercept addresses vehicle safety concerns within Black Rock City. Intercept's patrol focus is on inner and outer Playa during Swing and Grave shifts (4 p.m. until 4 a.m.). Intercept Rangers frequently come across situations where they are a first responder on Playa; it's often a lot more than just directing Grandma's RV off the Esplanade! Intercept uses both vehicle- and bicycle-mobile Rangers to achieve its mission.

The core of Intercept are bike-ready Rangers, as bikes are the fastest way to respond to events in Black Rock City. Intercept works closely with Khaki, Dirt Rangers, other Ranger teams, and the DMV on vehicle safety issues.

---

## Leave No Trace

LNT deals with environmental compliance issues. If you like geocaching, playing hide and seek, or a good old Easter egg hunt, then you'll love being part of the LNT team as you cruise the city in the comfort of a golf cart in search of grey water, black water, and other liquid spills, all the while interacting with participants and spreading the word on how to keep BRC MOOP-free.

---

## Logistics

Ranger Logistics supports the infrastructure, material, and service needs of the Ranger Department by tending to Ranger infrastructure and support functions before, during, and after the Burning Man event as well as year-round planning, coordination, and preparation. Rangers working in Logistics interact extensively with other Burning Man departments, such as DPW and BMIT, and gain a different perspective on the inner workings of creating Black Rock City. Ranger Logistics consists of the following teams:

- Field Support
- HQ Window
- Logistics Coordination
- Quartermaster
- SITE
- Tech Ops

- Vehicle Fleet
- Vehicle Maintenance

The Logistics office is located at Outpost Tokyo, though during the event many Logistics services operate out of Ranger HQ.

---

## Logistics Coordination

Logistics Coordination helps coordinate various cross-functional Logistics responsibilities such as receiving and distributing radio equipment, helping with driving authorizations, developing guidelines, documenting processes and procedures, and stepping in and providing support to other Logistics teams as needed.

---

## Mentors

Mentors are responsible for the assessment and selection of new Black Rock Rangers. Volunteering as a Black Rock Ranger requires a delicate and complex set of skills. Our role has been described as “riding the edge of chaos,” and has been referred to as our art, our contribution to Black Rock City. The basic elements of Rangering are best taught by example. We have learned over the years that it is necessary and appropriate to evaluate prospective Rangers before bestowing the khaki shirt and hat that identifies them as Dirt Rangers. Not everyone is cut out for Rangering, and after their first shift, not every applicant will feel that Rangering is right for them.

The final step on the road to becoming a Ranger is the responsibility of Ranger Mentors. Ranger Mentors are chosen because they demonstrate the characteristics and attributes that define the essence and diversity of Black Rock Rangers. These experienced Rangers are open, fair, informative, and resourceful. Each Ranger Mentor shares a common goal of supporting the on-playa mission of the Black Rock Rangers. The Mentor Cadre handles year-round organization of the Mentor Team.

---

## Officers of the Day

Officers of the Day (OODs) are experienced Rangers who advise the Shift Command Team on complex issues and keep the Operations Managers informed of relevant information during the event. OODs have 24-hour shifts and are responsible for understanding the larger context of Ranger operations on that day and making sure the operations of the Rangers as a whole stay consistent. The OODs also represent the Rangers to other departments and outside agencies, and are responsible for organizing the 007 group and the DOODs (Deputy Officers of the Day).

---

## Operators

The Operator Team monitors and logs Ranger radio traffic and keeps track of open incidents. One or more Operators are always on duty to assist the Shift Command Team with their informational needs and follow-through on incidents.

---

## Quartermaster

The Quartermaster Team stores and distributes a variety of items including: Ranger swag, Ranger appreciation apparel, and Ranger apparel and BMIDs for the new Ranger volunteers. The Quartermaster also stores and distributes common supplies used by multiple Ranger teams. The Quartermaster is located at Ranger HQ behind the Mentor Office.

---

## Radical Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (RIDE)

At our collective best, Burning Man is a multicultural, open, inviting, and inclusive community. The RIDE Delegation interfaces with all aspects of the Ranger Department to ensure we uphold [these ideals](#) both within our department as well as how we support the citizens of Black Rock City.

---

## Rapid Night Response (RNR)

RNR was born out of the realization that responding to a call before the initial transmission was finished makes for the quickest response time. RNR is a bike-mobile team that anticipates and responds to calls we think might benefit from our help. Our primary objectives are to render necessary immediate assistance until more specialized help arrives, support Rangers already on the scene, and ensure that Khaki has accurate information.

We occasionally engage in special projects. We are a small team who ride in pairs, know each other well, and believe good judgment and a broad array of skills and experience make for good teammates. Diverse personalities and approaches allow us to creatively solve problems on the fly; we have learned there is no fixed description of the ideal next member of our team.

---

## Regional Ranger Network

The Regional Ranger Network is a coalition of Regional Ranger Leadership, including Black Rock Rangers. They provide peer support and materials for the formation, training, and growth of Regional Ranger teams. The group also facilitates Regional Rangers attending events across regions. The group is global and has a number of working committees.

---

## Sandmen

Sandmen and Sandwomen maintain safety inside the inner perimeter of the Man and Temple burns. While the role is mainly one of prevention and dissuasion, Sandmen are on occasion called upon to subdue “runners.” Sandmen receive special training in minimally harmful physical intervention. As with all Rangers, participant safety is their goal.

---

## Shift Command Team

The Shift Command Team consists of all the Ranger Shift Leads and is overseen by the Command Cadre. Shift Leads are responsible for the smooth running of on shift operations and supporting Rangers in the field. The Command Cadre works year round to develop and

implement policies in an iterative process involving all stakeholders from the Operations Branch and the Council.

---

## SITE

The Setup, Infrastructure, Tear-down, & Egress (or 'SITE') team is a group within Ranger Logistics responsible for planning, coordinating, preparing, securing, implementing, installing, setting up, servicing, and tearing down of Burning Man-provided infrastructure and resources within the Ranger Department. It also works with other Burning Man departments such as DPW to ensure Ranger HQ, outposts, and Ranger camps are safely constructed, operated properly during the event, and then torn down after the event.

---

## Tech

The Tech Team supports the Rangers' geektastic needs. Obtaining, maintaining, and sharing data about Rangers is a primary goal of this team. This includes pre-event application development, moving the database to and from the playa, and on-playa administration and troubleshooting.

---

## Tow Truck

Captain Hook is the radio handle of the person operating the Ranger tow truck. This resource is used when a vehicle is blocking access to roads or otherwise causing a safety hazard, and for removing repeat-offending mutant vehicles from the event. Captain Hook is never called for courtesy tows, jump-starts, or (except in an emergency) lockouts; these calls go to Lockout/Tow.

Rangers requesting tows must stay with the vehicle and/or participants until released by Captain Hook or Khaki. Requests for tows are made to Khaki; do not go directly to Captain Hook unless Khaki advises you to do so.

---

## Trainers

All prospective and current BRC Rangers must attend training each year that they intend to Ranger on playa to refresh their skills and receive that year's updates. Black Rock Ranger Trainers deliver Ranger training events in the U.S. and Europe, from early May to late August. The Training team is coordinated by the Ranger Training Academy. The Training Academy develops and produces Ranger training materials for new and veteran Rangers, as well as a short Field Guide, and self-study Advanced Ranger Trainings (ARTs).

---

## Troubleshooters

Troubleshooters are experienced, specially trained Rangers with proven judgment, dispatched by Shift Command to support and mentor Rangers on the scene with incidents that warrant extra attention. In 2022, the Troubleshooter Team welcomed Law Enforcement Agency Liaisons (LEAL) integration. These LEAL Rangers are now a part of the Troubleshooter group, and bring with them their training, experience, and skills at interfacing with Law Enforcement.

The Troubleshooter Delegation manages the Troubleshooter Team, provides input for command training, and collaborates with Shift Command on formulating the procedures that keep Rangers effective on playa.

---

## Vehicle Fleet

Vehicle Fleet oversees the rental vehicle fleet on playa; interfaces closely with DPW Fleet Managers in securing and returning Ranger rental vehicles; and ensures the Ranger Fleet vehicles are properly permitted. Also handles personal vehicle-use approvals and permitting on playa, and coordinates the process for Rangers to become authorized to drive.

---

## Vehicle Maintenance

Vehicle Maintenance maintains the Ranger vehicles at the Vehicle Maintenance bay at Outpost Tokyo and applies vehicle permits and logos to vehicles, washes windows, checks fluid levels, blows out engines and generally keeps the Ranger vehicle fleet running. When not actively servicing vehicles, assist participants that walk up to the Tokyo shade.

---

## Volunteer Coordinators

Volunteer Coordinators (VCs) are usually the first people Ranger applicants come into contact with, and are always available to veterans with ideas and concerns. VCs field inquiries from prospective Rangers and get them started with the process of becoming a Ranger. In addition, VCs manage a broad and diverse number of projects and off-playa functions such as staff credentials, tickets, early arrival, parking passes, thank-you cards, radio handle assignments, and Ranger swag. They also work to connect volunteers with off-playa tasks.

The VCs work year-round to ensure that individual Rangers' opinions and suggestions are considered and that Rangering continues to be a rewarding activity through assessing recruitment and retention issues. The Volunteer Coordinators are active year-round and during the event. The VCs are quite often where Ranger volunteers first start contributing back to improving the overall Ranger organization.

---

## WESLs

The WESL (pronounced "weasel") Team monitors Ranger radio traffic and acts as an interface between Ranger Shift Command and non-Ranger resources, such as the Emergency Services Department (ESD) and Law Enforcement (LE). Being located in the dispatch center allows WESLs to reduce emergency response time.

---



# Culture of Feedback

## The Gift of Feedback

The Ranger Department strives for open and honest communication and a culture of feedback. This applies to both how we learn from each other and how we interact with the rest of the community.

Feedback is best when given and received graciously. Think of it as a gift. The giver must carefully select the feedback to be given. This takes courage! It can be tough to give feedback to someone who may get defensive or argumentative. It can also feel hard to give honest feedback to someone you perceive as more senior or “above you in the food chain.”

To help ensure confidence in the giver, the receiver should also receive it as a gift. Think about when grandma gave you a sweater for your birthday. Maybe it didn't fit so well, or was ugly as sin. Whether you like it or not, it was well-intentioned. Like that sweater, you have the option, as the receiver of feedback, to use it, set it aside for later consideration, or ignore it completely. You should, however, receive the feedback graciously and accept the gift in the spirit that it was intended.

## Giving Feedback

In the interest of creating a culture of feedback, we need to ensure that we are following the SAFE-T model when giving feedback:

- Specific – is it clear what the feedback is about?
- Actionable – is it something the person can change?
- Factual – is it objectively true?
- Empathetic – is it given with the best intentions to help, not hurt?
- Timely – is it soon enough after the incident that it's relevant? Is the timing appropriate to ensure the receiver is mentally ready to accept the gift?

There are a lot of discussions to be had around the concept of each of these terms. Keep in mind that feedback must be about something that the receiver can change, delivered with careful thought (“how would I want to hear this?”), and given soon enough that it is relevant.

A very fine template for delivering feedback is:

- This is what I observed
- This is how it made me feel or how it affected the situation
- This is what I'd suggest doing differently in the future

Some people have been taught to use a “feedback sandwich,” cushioning negative feedback between two pieces of positive feedback. In some people, this can cause a conditioned reaction to positive feedback. They tend to shut down and not hear the positive because they are bracing for the negative that’s about to follow. (“You did that one thing really, really well, but...”)

Therefore, speak straight. While following negative feedback with something positive is a wonderful thing, don’t delay giving negative feedback while you look for something positive to say.

It is also prudent to consider the location or environment when giving feedback. When giving unsolicited feedback, a public forum, or within earshot of others, may be less effective than a private face-to-face conversation, phone call, or email.

## Receiving Feedback

First, remember that just like giving feedback is a gift, so is receiving it. Like grandma’s sweater, it’s not always what we want or look for, but remember that the giver is trying to help. Whether you take it or leave it, please appreciate that someone is paying attention to what you are doing and taking the time to hold up a mirror for you and offer you some heartfelt, empathetic advice.

Second, ask clarifying questions to get the most out of feedback. You can ask for examples, interpretations, details, and so on. The key when asking clarifying questions is to make sure that you are not being defensive. Stick to the facts and see what you can glean from the other person’s perspective.

Third, and possibly most importantly, don’t offer justifications or excuses. Receiving feedback is a chance to hear someone else’s take on what you did. It’s not your job to convince them that their perspective is wrong or flawed. If you find yourself starting to justify, make excuses, or correct your feedback-giver, it’s time to walk away and reset. Then maybe sleep on it for a day or two and see how it sits with you in the morning.

Finally, be gracious. There are few opportunities in our adult lives to get input from a peer, so be sure to appreciate the person who took the time to thoughtfully provide you with feedback. And

as mentioned above, the simple act of giving you feedback about something may represent a courageous effort on the part of the person giving it. Please respect and acknowledge it with a genuine “Thank You.”

## Escalating Feedback

Sometimes, you may not wish to deliver your feedback directly. Did your partner engage in some un-Rangerly behavior (See “[Behavior Standards](#)”) and you’re uncomfortable discussing it with them? Is your shift over and now you feel that some act or behavior was inappropriate? It is always acceptable, for any reason, to seek out a Shift Lead or a Personnel Manager to give your feedback or to fill out a [Ranger Feedback form](#). These discussions are taken very seriously and are kept confidential. Of course, it’s always great to give good news to Shift Leads and the Personnel Manager too!

If, after the event is over, something occurs to you, whether positive or negative, please contact the Personnel Manager at [ranger-personnel@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-personnel@burningman.org).

## Hard Conversations

Rangers embrace open and clear communication.

### Who to Talk to

*I need to talk to someone about an issue on playa. My issue is about...*

*...someone on my Ranger shift:*

Talk to a Shift Lead, an OOD (after shift or at HQ), a Green Dot Ranger, or a Personnel Manager.

*... someone on my Alpha shift:*

Talk to the Mentor Cadre (after Alpha shift or at HQ) or a Personnel Manager.

*... someone at my training:*

Talk to the Training Academy (after training or via email) or a Personnel Manager. On playa, the on-duty Personnel Manager is available by email, on the radio, or can be paged by the HQ Window in an emergency.

*I would like to give written feedback or talk to someone when I'm off-playa:*

- Fill out the [Ranger Feedback Form](#).
- Email Ranger Personnel ([ranger-personnel@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-personnel@burningman.org)).
- Email the relevant Cadre (see the [Black Rock Ranger Organization](#) section for a list of Cadre email addresses).

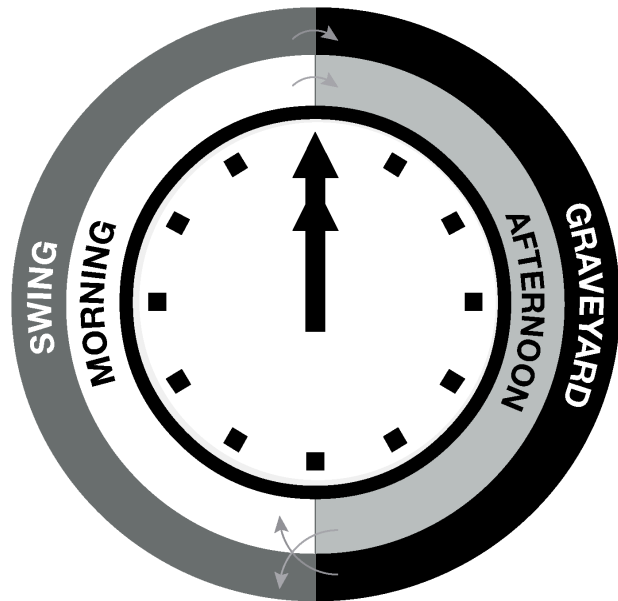
# Ranger Shift Command Structure and Expectations

## Ranger Shift Command Structure

Rangers patrol Black Rock City 24 hours a day, before, during, and after the event. A day in the Ranger Department is organized into four six-hour shifts:

- Morning: 06:00-12:00
- Afternoon: 12:00-18:00
- Swing: 18:00-00:00
- Grave: 00:00-06:00

Graveyard shifts and shifts later in the week are often hard to fill. If you can work some of these shifts, please do so. Working them earns you more credits towards tickets and staff credentials.



## Signing Up for Shifts

Returning Rangers should sign up for shifts in the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#) scheduling system. Ideally, your schedule should be finalized before you hit the playa. If you need to adjust your schedule or want to add some more shifts, you can do this on playa at the Kiosk building at Ranger HQ, or through the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#) if you have Internet access. Please avoid making any schedule adjustments less than an hour before your shift begins. Note that some shifts might already be filled, in which case you will be asked to choose other times when we have a greater need for your assistance.

Alphas cannot sign up for regular dirt shifts until they have passed their Alpha shift, which means they will need to sign up for such shifts at the Kiosk building at Ranger HQ while on playa.

Upon arrival in Black Rock City, set up your camp, get acclimated, meet your neighbors, and relax—you have probably been traveling for some time. Do not sign up for a shift two hours after your expected arrival, as this could result in added pressure on the road or upon your arrival.

After you're situated, check in at Ranger HQ near Center Camp. Check the information boards at Ranger HQ at least once a day, even if you are not working a shift. Ranger meetings may be scheduled as needed during the event and will be posted at HQ.

After you have signed up for a shift, keep your commitment. You must be sober, well-rested, and have your food, water, and clothing needs for your shift met or planned for before checking in for your shift. Including check-in and check-out time, Ranger shifts are generally 6 1/2 hours long. Show up at HQ at least 20 minutes before the scheduled start of your shift to check in, get a radio, find a partner, and attend the shift briefing. You should also expect to stay in the dirt 15-30 minutes after the shift is over while the next shift is briefed and sent out.

## Special Teams

Special teams generally follow the same shift structure, but may have different start and end times and report to the special team lead rather than Khaki. Make sure to reach out to the team lead for any questions about how that team may operate differently from the Command shift structure.

## Who's Khaki?

Khaki is a collective radio call sign for Ranger Shift Command Team (the on-duty Ranger Shift Leads). There are usually between two and four Shift Leads on at any given time, so expect to hear a number of voices answering to that call sign. The Ranger Shift Command for any Command shift can be found at the ROC (Ranger Operations Center) behind HQ. Khaki will generally be available after the end of the shift if you would like to debrief. This is a great practice to get into and a great time to ask questions and get advice.

Most of your radio traffic will be between you and Khaki. If you need something while on patrol, call Khaki on the radio. If Khaki needs something from you, Khaki will call you on the radio.

# Cruise Direction

At the beginning of every shift, one or two of the Shift Leads performs a process called Cruise Direction. This usually occurs under the shade structure immediately in front of Ranger HQ.

Cruise Direction is when Rangers are paired, assigned a section of the city, and sent out on patrol. There may also be a short briefing if a shift change occurs while something eventful is happening in Black Rock City.

Each Shift Lead performs Cruise Direction in a slightly different manner. Typically it begins with a short shift briefing, in which Khaki introduces the other on-duty Shift Leads (Khakis), Troubleshooters, and Green Dot Leads, and provides information for any ongoing issues of which Rangers need to be aware. Khaki sometimes has special projects and coverage needs, which will be assigned during Cruise Direction.

Cruise Direction is usually very fast-paced, so it's important to pay attention and take notes as necessary. The goal is to get the oncoming shift partnered, prepared, and out on patrol, and to get the previous shift back to HQ as quickly and efficiently as possible, with minimal interruption in the coverage of Black Rock City. Other goals include ongoing mentoring of less-experienced Rangers, so 1- to 3-year Rangers are often paired with more experienced Rangers. It's best to stay flexible during this process. Just because you're assigned to do one thing in Black Rock City doesn't necessarily mean you'll be doing the same thing by the end of your shift.

## Tips for Cruise Direction

- Rangers always patrol in pairs, never alone. The safety of you and your partner are always your top priority. Use your time at HQ before your shift to meet somebody new and partner with them for your shift. Partnering isn't a necessary step; Khaki will make sure all Rangers are partnered as part of the Cruise Direction, and sometimes you may end up with a new partner.—It's Burning Man; anything can happen.
- It's very helpful to Khaki to have Rangers bring bikes on shift so that they can respond to situations more quickly. During Cruise Direction, we will generally ask bike-mobile Rangers to pair with other bike-mobile Rangers and foot-mobile with foot-mobile.
- Rangers are especially encouraged to pair up with a Ranger they don't know. Remember from the training, our diversity is one of our strengths, so take advantage of the opportunity to make a new Ranger buddy and learn.
- When you and your partner are assigned to a particular area, please don't "re-assign" yourself or chase calls that are outside of your designated area of the city. If you feel that you may be more valuable in another area, state your concerns to Khaki and understand that they may need you to stay where you are.

# Zoned and Unzoned Shifts

Usually, one shift lead team will manage the entire city. On particularly busy shifts, Khaki may need to split the city into two or more sections in order to handle radio traffic and command functions effectively.

If that happens, Khaki will provide details at the shift briefing and might ask some Ranger pairs to switch to a different radio channel for the duration of the shift. Don't worry, Khaki is always available on the channel you're assigned, so you won't have to switch channels to make a call.

## Shift Summary and Responsibilities

When on shift, you are not off-duty until released by Khaki. Circumstances might dictate that you remain on shift for a short period beyond a scheduled shift change.

At the end of your shift, Khaki will call all Rangers back to HQ to check out. This is a chance to debrief with other shift Rangers, check out of your shift at the HQ Window, and get a meal pog. Khaki will be available post-shift, if you need to debrief, ask questions, or just say "hi."

## Incident Reports

If you had a particularly gnarly event happen on shift, or if you've encountered a situation that you think might come up again, please submit an incident report. This can be as simple as a sheet of paper that you hand to the Operators, or a report typed into the Incident Management System (IMS) at a kiosk in Ranger HQ.

Good incident reports should include big-picture elements such as:

- Background; what led up to the incident.
- What happened.
- Legal and playa names of participants and staff involved.
- Where and what time it happened.
- What actions you and others took.
- Where things were left (for example, if promises were made to check in on the camp in 24 hours or any arrangements or agreements were made).
- Descriptions of individuals involved, if relevant (such as assailants).
- License plate or mutant vehicle tag numbers, if relevant.
- Law enforcement officer names and vehicle numbers, if relevant.



Your report should be succinct and cover the relevant facts. Stay factual and avoid assumptions and speculations.

- Write as you normally speak; do not use fancy words or language.
- Whenever possible, write the report in chronological order. A timeline is helpful for longer incidents: “At 10:07 we arrived at the scene. At 10:45 LE arrived.”
- Imagine the parties involved looking over your shoulder. How would they react to what you wrote?
- Consider what you write to be part of a legal doc / evidence trail – because it is!

If you need help, ask your partner, an Operator, Troubleshooter, RSCI, Shift Lead, or OOD to help you.

## **Leaving Shift Early or Extending a Shift**

Occasionally, from illness, physical exhaustion, or other causes you may need to go off duty during a shift. If you need to go off duty before your shift time has ended, contact Khaki.

If you have completed your shift and still have the Art of Rangering flowing through your heart, you can volunteer to stay on duty. If you do, your extra level of commitment is appreciated. Tell the Shift Lead your specific time commitment so they can plan accordingly, and be sure to let Khaki know when you have gone off shift.

## **Things You Might Do On Shift**

Rangers are the eyes and ears of Black Rock City. Many shifts simply involve being present. In addition, you might:

- Mobilize medical, law enforcement, fire response, or other life-safety services.
- Assist participants in acclimating to the Black Rock City environment and community.
- Help out agitated and disoriented participants.
- Mediate situations and/or disputes between participants.
- Address and report any instances of non-consensual physical or sexual assault.
- Prevent vehicles from endangering pedestrians, bicyclists, and campsites.
- Keep roads clear for pedestrians, bicycles, and emergency vehicles.
- Inform participants of potentially hazardous weather situations.
- Observe interactions between participants and outside agencies.
- Maintain safety perimeters and scene control as needed.
- Provide other non-confrontational mediation and safety activities as needed.

We'll talk about some of these in the "Situations You'll Encounter" section later.

While on patrol, meet and greet your fellow participants. This is important. It will not only melt away the walls of "us and them," allowing a greater sense of community, but will also allow you to get a better sense of city dynamics and potential problem areas. If a problem occurs in your patrol area, you may have already developed a relationship with the participants involved or their neighbors. Keep in mind that every interaction is a chance to improve our social capital and educate participants about what Rangers do and why we do it.

As you move through the city, trust your gut. If something doesn't feel right, pay attention and follow up. If you think that an intervention may be necessary but are not sure, contact Khaki. Remember, always err on the side of safety—yours and the participants'.

Sometimes Khaki will dispatch an experienced, specially trained Ranger called a "Troubleshooter" to check in with you. Troubleshooters might either provide advice on how to handle a situation or, if the situation warrants it, might assume command of the scene. If a Troubleshooter is dispatched, you or your partner should brief the Troubleshooter on the situation so far, and follow the Troubleshooter's instructions.

If you think you made a mistake, telling Khaki about it as soon as you realize will go a long way toward making it right. A mistake you report is a learning opportunity for all of us; a mistake we find out about through other channels is a problem for all of us.

## **Developing Awareness**

In approaching any situation, a Ranger's initial default action is DO NOTHING (which is an active process in which you evaluate scene safety, whether the situation requires a response, and if so, what the response should be). If you decide that your presence would be helpful, engage by helping participants solve their own problems. If they are unable to do so, try to solve the problem for them. If the situation still needs attention, call Khaki.

Attempt to get the big picture: an awareness of the situation dynamics, safety issues, resources you have vs. resources you need, and what the situation might need from you. Work with your partner to develop a mental overview of where the other teams assigned to your area are and what they are involved in, adjusting your patrol pattern for maximum area coverage.

Awareness also applies to your partner and to radio traffic. Do not lose sight of your partner during your shift (with the obvious exception of using the "blue room" facilities) and always pay attention to radio traffic (including listening for your partner's name). Practice listening to the radio while being aware of the city at the same time.

# Ranger Uniform

In a city where clothing and costuming explode with color and variety, the khaki colored Ranger uniform stands out by blending with the playa. New Rangers will be issued a wide-brim hat, khaki shirts with Ranger insignia, and a Burning Man ID (BMID) upon passing their Alpha shift. These clothing elements, along with your shift radio, make up the Ranger uniform that serves to identify you to the citizens of Black Rock City as a Ranger resource. Rangers must be identifiable as a Black Rock Ranger while on duty. At a minimum: khaki-colored and Ranger logoed clothing, BMID, and radio.

Feel free to add ornamentation such as patches, pins, cloth, and other objects to make your Ranger gear unique. Accessories that are utilitarian or display humor and/or art are encouraged. When adding ornamentation to your outfit, please avoid zebra stripes and leopard print, as they denote special Ranger teams (LEAL and Mentors, respectively).

You are welcome to add your items of clothing, as long as your hat and shirt (and jacket, if you're wearing one) are khaki-colored and display the Ranger logo. Long-sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun during the day and additional covering for warmth at night. Pockets that have button or zipper closures will carry smaller items safely. Cotton clothing is comfortable and durable (and non-meltable) in the Black Rock Desert. If you are wearing a backpack or hydration pack, you must modify it to display a Ranger logo when viewed from behind.

## Ranger Clothing Tips

- Clothing or accessories that send a message of hostility or aggression are discouraged.
- Any article of clothing or accessory that might cause participants to confuse us with law enforcement, military, or security personnel (such as camouflage) is not appropriate.
- Rangers on duty should not dress in a sexually provocative manner: it's not about you.

## Duty While in Uniform

A Ranger in uniform, visibly displaying Ranger logos on their person or property (such as vehicle), or otherwise representing themselves as a Ranger, has a duty to act in a manner consistent with Ranger Department policies, including the reporting requirements described later.

If you wish to shed your responsibilities, or know you will be unable to meet the expectations of being a Ranger (for example, if you are intoxicated), be sure to shed your visible affiliation with the Rangers by removing Ranger-associated and logoed gear.

The ability of Rangers to be effective relies on the social capital we build, both as a group, and individually. If you act in a way that significantly damages your social capital in your community, whether on or off duty, it is likely to impact your standing with the Rangers. Please don't be a chooch.

When you offer your time volunteering for Burning Man, you help make the event possible. You also accept the responsibility that comes from being part of something greater than yourself. For some people, their only interaction with Burning Man staff will be with YOU.

Having an official department logo on your back is a visible symbol and implies authority. This marks you and your behavior as role models for Black Rock Ranger and Burning Man staff behavior. We do not take this responsibility lightly, and neither should you. (See "[Social Capital](#)".)

We are not more important than other participants. An "us and them" attitude is unprofessional and does not help or represent the Rangers—especially if it leads to outbursts that make us look strung out on authority and result in a huge withdrawal from our social capital.

No level of stress or tension is worth misrepresenting yourself to participants or your Ranger family. Take a break before taking it out on someone else, and help those around you do the same.

## Intoxicants While in Uniform

Rangers must be sober while on duty. When off duty and in uniform, there is no specific policy regarding indulging in intoxicants. However, it is important to remember that the Ranger uniform is a key identifier to participants that you are there to help; if you are unable to help, then it is time to change your shirt. We trust your judgment. We admire your discretion.

## Food and Drink Safety

Rangers are a respected part of the city and many participants offer to share their food and drink with them. The possible inclusion of psychoactive substances creates a risk that should not be taken lightly. These offers should be politely declined. If you are so inclined, offer to come

back when your shift is done. Be particularly wary of any consumable offered to you at night. Rangers should also decline when offered mists of cooling water by strangers. To be an effective team, all Rangers must “share the same reality.” Being aware of and in control of what you consume helps ensure this.

## Un-Rangerly Behavior

The Ranger Department takes incidents of un-Rangerly behavior, both in and out of uniform, very seriously. The Shift Command Team and Ranger Personnel Manager will follow up on any reported incidents.

Un-Rangerly or questionable behavior might also result in a Ranger being removed from shift, or from Rangering at the event. Please see the [Behavior Standards](#) section for more information.

## Compassionate De-Shifting

Being relieved from shift sometimes occurs when a Ranger (generally one who has been working multiple consecutive shifts) is told to take the rest of the shift off and go take care of themselves. This is not a disciplinary action or a reflection on you as a Ranger. When you're compassionately dismissed from a shift, it's for your health and safety.

# Ranger Facilities

The Ranger department builds and maintains several facilities throughout Black Rock City. Each facility is equipped with similar and unique resources described here. You are encouraged to visit your fellow Rangers at any of these facilities and ask how you can become more involved.

## Ranger HQ

Ranger Headquarters (Ranger HQ) comprises several buildings and structures, including:

- The HQ Window office, where Rangers check in and out of shifts
- Quartermaster office
- Mentors office
- Kiosk building where Rangers can use computers to modify their shift schedules
- A couple of shaded areas in front where Rangers can gather before and after shifts.
- The Green Dot quonset hut and Sanctuary dome.
- The Ranger Operations Center (“the ROC”), which consists of the Khaki shack, the Operator container, the Officer of the Day office, as well as a computer kiosk for entering incident reports for lengthy or complicated incidents.

Ranger HQ, located on the Esplanade, is the first and last place you’ll visit during a shift. For participants, HQ is a convenient place to find Rangers.

## Sanctuary

Sanctuary is a safe space for individuals who need a calm place away from the high-stimulus environment of Burning Man. Sanctuary is located in the back of Ranger HQ and is staffed by Green Dot Rangers. Sanctuary’s services are confidential and the staff is happy to help all participants and Rangers who need a friendly ear.

If you think a participant could benefit from some time in Sanctuary, call Khaki and request a “Green Dot consult.” Remember that Sanctuary is a limited resource and not a necessity for most Green Dot calls. Use your discretion when suggesting or accessing Sanctuary as a resource. Sanctuary should not be used as a “drunk tank.”

# Ranger Outposts

Tokyo and Berlin are Ranger Outposts, where participants can go to find Rangers without going all the way to Ranger HQ. Each Outpost consists of a shade structure, seating area, burn barrel, and water supply. Outposts also have a supply of fresh radio batteries, copies of law enforcement feedback forms, and computers on which to file incident reports.

Tokyo is located at the “top” of the city at the 9:00 plaza, and Berlin is located at the “bottom” of the city at the 3:00 plaza. Both Outposts are across the street from an ESD facility. Rangers, on patrol or off, are always welcome to stop in at Tokyo or Berlin to hydrate or get some shade.

Outposts also contain camping areas. Rangers should treat these Ranger camps as they would any theme camp and should respect the private space of Rangers camped there.

## 10-7 Lounge

The 10-7 Lounge is located at Ranger Outpost Tokyo. All Rangers are welcome here; stop in after your shift, share a drink with fellow Rangers, and be prepared to hear tall tales told around the burn barrel.

## Bunkhouses

The Ranger Bunkhouses are located at Ranger Camp Moscow at 5:15 & E, Outpost Tokyo, and Outpost Berlin. Ranger Bunkhouses are available for Rangers to get some sleep before or after their shift in a quiet cool place. Bring your own pillow and blanket. Rangers can use the Bunkhouses in the following priority order:

- Immediately after or prior to Ranger shifts, graveyard shifts in particular.
- For a quick nap.
- As a temporary place to sleep upon arrival or prior to departure from Black Rock City.

## Ranger Camp Moscow

Ranger Camp Moscow, located at 5:15 and E, is a working camp for Rangers who choose to gift enough shifts (generally 40+ hours) that being very close to Ranger HQ makes sense.

Please keep the noise down when going through Camp Moscow—it's full of exhausted workaholic Rangers.

## Ranger Camp Geneva

Camp Geneva is a camp that was founded by (and has largely been populated by) Rangers who work on the Gerlach Patrol, along with others that are Gerlach-curious. It is located in a spot that makes it easy to exit the city quickly if there is an emergency issue in Gerlach.

Camp Geneva is located around 7:15 and H, near the ESD communications tower.

## Commissary

The Commissary is located at 5:30 & E. A meal pog (available from Ranger HQ after you complete your full 6 hour shift) will get you a meal. Meal times are set by and posted at the commissary, or you can ask at HQ when you're checking out.



# Radios

## All the Resources in Your Hand

Rangers have radios to connect them with the Ranger Shift Command Team, other Rangers, and other Burning Man departments. Radios enable us to function as the eyes and ears of Black Rock City, allowing us to get assignments, report situations, request help, get advice, and kick things sideways when necessary.

Most of your radio conversations will be with Khaki. The Command Team is made up of multiple people, so don't be surprised if Khaki's voice changes during a shift or even in the midst of a radio conversation.

Dirt Rangers always Ranger in pairs, and no matter what the situation, at least one Ranger in a given pair (and preferably both) must always be monitoring the radio. Listen for your own call sign as well as your partner's, as a call could come in for either one of you. It takes some practice, but you will learn to be aware of your surroundings in Black Rock City while simultaneously following what's coming over the Ranger radio (called "radio traffic").

## Initiating a Call

To make a radio call to another Ranger, wait until the channel is clear and then call their handle twice followed by your handle. For example, if Hubcap wants to get hold of Khaki they should say, "Khaki, Khaki: Hubcap." Khaki will respond, "Hubcap, go for Khaki." If you do not hear that acknowledgement, it means that Khaki did not hear you, or is not ready to take your call. Wait a moment and try again. Don't proceed with your radio traffic until the party you're calling (Khaki in this example) acknowledges you.

## Effective Radio Use

**Think | Listen | Push | Pause | Talk**



# Five key steps to making a good radio call

**THINK** about what you need before you push the talk button.

**LISTEN** to make sure the channel is clear and that you're not interrupting something more important. Only one person can talk on the channel at a time, so if you try to transmit when somebody else is talking, Khaki will not hear you. Don't interrupt emergency traffic with low priority messages.

**PUSH** and hold the button on the side of your radio or shoulder mic to let the radio system know that you want to transmit.

**PAUSE** until you hear the beep from your radio that tells you it's ready for you to talk.

**TALK** calmly, slowly, and clearly. State what it is you need from Khaki or what you'd like Khaki to do about the situation you are in, where you are, and any other pertinent details. Our general mnemonic for good radio traffic is ABC, which stands for "Actionable, Brief, & Clear". Whatever you say on radio should follow this guideline for good communication.

The most important part of radio traffic is...

*...figuring out what you want to say.*



Khaki needs to know three things to be able to mobilize resources effectively:

- What do you need?
- Where do you need it?
- What do you need it for?

To get the maximum information across in a radio transmission in the shortest time, use your XYZs: “I need (X resource) at (Y location) for (Z issue).” If you can phrase your call in XYZ format, it pretty much ensures that you’re about to make a good radio call.

Don’t know what resource you need? Don’t worry! Asking Khaki is better than guessing. Take a moment to think about what you want to ask, then reach out with your radio to Khaki for ideas or answers. It always helps to know where you are, and who and what’s involved.

The Shift Command Team is there to support you, and will help you determine which resource is appropriate for your situation. Never be afraid to ask for help!

## Resource Request Protocol

In a situation where you have requested a resource or called in due to some extended situation, Khaki also needs to know the situation has been resolved, so remember...

1. Call for the resource you need.

Khaki, I need medical at 4:30 and Esplanade for a participant with...

2. Call when the resource arrives.

Khaki, medical is on scene at 4:30 and Esplanade.

3. Call when you are clear.

Khaki, medical cleared us from the scene at 4:30 and Esplanade and we’re resuming patrol.

## Being Clear on the Radio

The sound quality of calls on the radios we use on playa is about as good as a really bad phone connection. It can be very hard to understand what the caller is saying, especially in windy or noisy conditions. It can help to over-enunciate whenever possible.

Never yell into your microphone. That just causes distortion and makes it harder to understand your transmission. Speak loudly, but clearly. If it’s windy, you may need to turn away from the wind or shield your mic with your body or your clothing. If you’re in a noisy sound camp, you may need to walk a few feet away before transmitting.

When using the radio, it can be very hard to distinguish between street names: B, C, D, E and G all sound pretty much alike over a bad radio connection (as do A and H). Always use some kind of phonetic alphabet. The best is the [NATO phonetic alphabet](#) (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc.), but using any word that obviously starts with the letter you're trying to say is better than nothing (Avocado, Burrito, Car Wash, whatever). If you can remember all the street names at this year's event, by all means use those.

## NATO Phonetic Alphabet

A: Alpha	N: November
B: Bravo	O: Oscar
C: Charlie	P: Papa
D: Delta	Q: Quebec
E: Echo	R: Romeo
F: Foxtrot	S: Sierra
G: Golf	T: Tango
H: Hotel	U: Uniform
I: India	V: Victor
J: Juliet	W: Whisky
K: Kilo	X: X-ray
L: Lima	Y: Yankee

M: Mike

Z: Zulu

When reporting numbers, be aware that many numbers (e.g., “3:15” and “3:50”) are very difficult to distinguish on the radio. Call in numbers digit by digit (e.g., “five-one-five,” rather than “five-fifteen,” “seven-three-zero,” rather than “seven-thirty”).

Concentric street sides are either “man-side” (closest to the center of the city) or “mountain-side” (furthest from the center of the city). Radial streets should be called in as “between <letter> and <letter>” (e.g., “I’m on three o’clock, between Bravo and Charlie”). Esplanade is always called “Esplanade.”

An excellent radio call location, then, would be “Four-two-zero and Charlie, man-side.” Khaki will know exactly where you are if additional resources are needed.

## Radio Protocols

**Allcom:** Allcom is a call for “all stations” and is a clue to you that something probably important is about to follow. For example, Khaki might say, “Allcom, Allcom, this is Khaki, we have a lost child...”

**Break:** If you’ve been transmitting for longer than 15 seconds, say “BREAK.” Then, take your finger off the button and stop transmitting for a couple seconds, to let other urgent traffic “break in.” If nobody jumps in with something urgent, press the button again and continue your message.

**Break Break:** Saying “Break” twice is used to get into the conversation with clarifying information, especially if it will shorten the radio conversation or be faster than switching to another channel for a longer conversation.

**Break Break Break:** This phrase is used for reporting emergencies. We can be a chatty bunch, and sometimes it can be hard to get a word in edgewise on the radio. In emergencies only, if you have been unable to break into the channel, say “break break break” as soon as someone else has finished transmitting. Everyone will hear this and know it’s an emergency. Khaki will respond, “Breaking station, go for Khaki.” That’s your cue to identify yourself and let Khaki know what was so important. If you are not the breaking station, hold your call until the urgent communication is over and Khaki tells everyone it’s okay to proceed with non-emergency traffic. If there is no competing traffic, no need to use “break break break”, since there’s nothing to break into!

**Open Mic:** If somebody accidentally keys his or her radio, nobody else can talk. Try not to do this. When it happens, you will sometimes hear “Open mic!,” often said in a frustrated voice by a frazzled Khaki. If you hear “Open mic!,” check your radio and then check your partner’s radio to make sure it’s not you. Do not transmit during an open mic: it is Khaki’s responsibility to track down the offending radio, and if you transmit while Khaki is trying to track it down, it confuses the radio system and you may be incorrectly identified as the person responsible.

**Tailgating** (please don’t!): Tailgating is when you key up immediately following someone else’s transmission. Tailgating makes it difficult for emergency traffic to break in. Allow at least a two-second pause between transmissions, so that emergency traffic can break in.

**Ranger-to-Ranger Calls:** To speak to someone other than Khaki, wait for a pause in traffic and use standard Ranger radio protocol: say the call-sign of the person you’re calling twice, and your own call-sign once. To avoid clogging up Control 1, Ranger-to-Ranger calls should generally be taken to another channel (usually Ranger Admin).

“Hubcap, Hubcap: Bucket—Admin.”

“Hubcap switching to Admin.”

You do not need permission from Khaki to go direct to another Ranger, or to use the Admin channel.

**Calling other departments:** Occasionally, you may need to switch channels and speak to another department (e.g., Placement, DPW, Airport, ESD). When talking to another department, make sure you identify yourself as “Ranger [your handle].”

**What to avoid saying on the radio:** All Ranger radio traffic is recorded and may also be monitored by law enforcement or other outside agencies, as well as participants and other departments. For this and other reasons, radio traffic should be brief and informative.

Do not say any of the following on the radio:

- Profanity of any kind.
- “Death” or “dead.” Instead, request medical for a person who is “unconscious and not breathing” and request an immediate face-to-face with Khaki.
- Do not attempt to diagnose someone beyond the scope of your training. Instead, describe symptoms and severity.

- “Drugs” (by name or generically), “overdose,” or “high.” Do not try to diagnose; instead describe a participant as “altered,” “disoriented,” “unresponsive,” or “unconscious,” as appropriate.
- “Eviction.” If you have a situation that appears to violate or blatantly disregard Burning Man community standards, (e.g., repeated instances of vending), request a face-to-face with a Troubleshooter or with Khaki. See the section on evictions for more information.
- Full legal names or other identifying information of participants, other than when reporting a lost child, or when requested by Khaki. Be respectful of participants’ privacy.

***IN AN EMERGENCY, DO NOT HESITATE TO ACCURATELY DESCRIBE WHAT IS GOING ON. DO NOT BE VAGUE OR ASK FOR A FACE-TO-FACE. SAY WHAT YOU SEE, ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED, AND REQUEST AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE AS APPROPRIATE.***

## Radio Channels

The primary channels for Ranger Operations are “Control 1” and “Control 2.” Generally, all Rangers will share the same channel; however, on a busy shift Rangers in one half of the city might be assigned to one channel and Rangers in the other half might be assigned to another channel. Pay attention to the assigned operational channel for your shift and area of the city.

Because it is critical that the Control channels be kept available for operational and emergency traffic, we regularly use other channels in order to move traffic off of the Control channels. A few channels deserve special mention:

**BRC 911:** Dispatch channel for the Emergency Services Department (ESD), which handles medical, fire, and emergency calls.

*As a Ranger, you should generally report emergencies to Khaki on Control 1, rather than calling ESD directly. However, if you have an emergency and for some reason are unable to reach Khaki on Control 1, you should switch to BRC 911 and call Black Rock directly, identifying yourself as Ranger “[your handle].”*

**Ranger Admin:** Non-operational or other conversations that might tie up the channel for a while should take place on the Ranger Admin channel. You do not need permission from Khaki to use Ranger Admin.

**Ranger HQ:** This channel is for Burning Man staff to use to get in touch with Ranger Management, someone from Ranger Logistics, or specific Rangers by name. If a staff member

from another department would like to request a Ranger response to something, they should call for Rangers on BRC 911.

**Ranger On-Call:** We use this channel to ask for extra resources when things get heavy. If you have an event radio and are off-shift but willing (and able) to come on if needed, please monitor this channel.

**TAC 1-4, Local 1-2:** During specific incidents, the Rangers involved may be told to switch to a Tac ("Tactical") or Local channel assigned by Khaki. Local channels work without a repeater and have a short physical range. Do not use these channels unless directed to do so by Khaki.

**Place/Greeters:** Placement is the department that handles theme camp locations. You may need to contact them on the CSD Placement channel in cases of land disputes. You do not need permission from Khaki to call for Placers.

**DPW Dispatch:** DPW can be reached on the DPW Info 411 channel. Do not use this channel unless directed to do so by Khaki.

**Gate:** Gate staff can be reached on the Gate channel. Do not use this channel unless directed to do so by Khaki.

**Lockout/Tow:** If participants need lockout service, you can direct them to Playa Info, or you can help them out by contacting Lockout on the Lockout/Tow channel. As noted elsewhere, Rangers do not provide any non-emergency lockout service.

## Checking Out Your Radio From HQ

Radios are checked out from Ranger HQ. Prior to checking out your radio for the first time, you must read and agree to the Radio Equipment Checkout document which states that you will be financially responsible if your radio is lost or damaged. Radios cost a great deal of money, which is to say it will cost you a great deal of money if you lose or damage your radio. Always remember to return your radio at the end of your shift.

Certain Rangers are issued a radio for the duration of the event. If you have an "event radio," you do not need to return it to HQ when you go off-duty.



# Care and Feeding of Your Pet Radio

You should exchange your radio battery at the beginning of each shift or whenever you hear your radio “beep beep.” This ensures that your radio will not die when you really need it. Charged batteries are available at Ranger HQ and at Ranger Outposts Berlin and Tokyo.

Don't loan your radio to other people, but be willing to make a radio call on behalf of a Burning Man staff member if asked. Never carry your radio by the antenna or shoulder mic. Always remove your radio from your belt (heck, ask your partner to hold it) when using the porta-potty. If your radio seems to be malfunctioning or not transmitting clearly, first check to make sure that you have fresh batteries. If it still doesn't work, have your partner call Khaki and ask to exchange it at Ranger HQ. Do not put stickers or other adhesives on your radio; someone has to take the time to thoroughly remove them before we return them.

## Event Radios

Event radios are issued to some Rangers for the duration of the event, based on their roles and responsibilities, and the number of hours Rangered the previous event. Having an event radio carries with it additional responsibility. The intended purpose of issuing these radios is to extend the capabilities of the Rangers to provide assistance to the community by utilizing the “eyes and ears” of off-duty Rangers to inform the Shift Command Team when something warrants Ranger attention.

A Ranger unable or unwilling to provide assistance while off duty should decline an event radio if offered, and simply check out a shift radio while on duty. This frees that radio up for another Ranger to assist where able.

An off duty Ranger who has been issued an event radio is not required to monitor the primary channel 24/7. However it is not intended that these Rangers would leave the radio in their tent the whole time they are off duty, as this would be a waste of scarce resources. Rather, an off duty Ranger should consider bringing the radio with them, and if they do not want to monitor it they can leave it turned off in their pack. This allows for off duty Rangers to serve as eyes and ears and turn on the radio to call something in as needed, rather than leaving the radio back at their camp.

It is worth noting that Rangers are chosen in part for their character and their desire to help the community. While they are not required to act while off duty and out of their Ranger uniform, we do hope that Rangers will, within their discretion, act appropriately.

# Ranger Approach

## Arriving on Scene

The first thing to do when arriving on a scene is... NOTHING! In Rangering, “doing nothing” is an active process. It is not a passive acceptance of a situation unfolding. Time is on your side. Observe, listen, and get a feel for what is going on. Talk to your partner and see what their perspective is on what’s happening. Come up with a game plan before engaging with participants.

Assess the situation.

- Is the scene safe?
- Is medical assistance needed?
- Do you think this is a must-report?
- Is Ranger intervention needed or are participants solving their own problems?
- Would you or your partner be the best person to engage with participants?

Approach those involved in the incident slowly, visibly, and without getting too close. In most situations, one Ranger will stay back and monitor radio traffic, while the other Ranger moves in to take the lead in interacting with the participant.

Stand slightly to one side, rather than face-to-face. Introduce yourself (“Hi, I’m Ranger Hubcap”). Not all participants know who Rangers are or what we do, so you may have to explain this. Explain all of your actions before you take them. When entering someone’s camp, ask permission:

- “Hey, is it okay if I come in?”
- “Do you mind if I take a seat?”
- “Can I take my pack off and stay awhile?”

Respect the participants' personal space. Feeling trapped evokes a stress response. Be aware that entering their personal space could cause an uncomfortable or violent response. Be aware of your positioning skills and body language. Speak calmly and casually. Often people resort to agitated or violent behavior when fear leads to feeling overwhelmed or unable to cope.

Slow down the pace: this will help to reduce feelings of being overwhelmed. Defusing tense situations is a core Ranger skill. Slowing the situation down is one of the best ways to help overwhelmed participants calm down. Bringing things to a lower intensity level, a more casual sort of interaction, sets the stage for resolution. Applying additional pressure rarely facilitates a quick and calm outcome.

Protect the involved individuals and the scene from uninvolved participants. If you need more people to do this effectively, call Khaki. They will send more Rangers your way.

***FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF OTHER PARTICIPANTS, IF YOU SUSPECT THAT YOU ARE ENTERING A POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS SITUATION, OR RESPONDING TO A VIOLENT ACT THAT HAS JUST TAKEN PLACE, YOU MUST REPORT TO KHAKI BEFORE ENTERING THE SITUATION.***

## Tips for Being on Scene

### Do:

- Consider separating participants that are yelling at each other. Each of you can talk to the participants individually. Keep your partner in sight at all times.
- Accommodate when you can. Ask what they need. We have a number of resources at our disposal (including Sanctuary) where an individual can go to be alone or talked to, listened to, etc. Remember that in most cases a participant's own camp and friends may be a better choice.
- Allow the person to maintain as much control as they can over themselves and the interaction. Give them options, and the autonomy to say no. Generally the more in control a person feels, the better they are at coping with the situation.
- One-on-one interactions are important. One Ranger speaking with a participant can feel less threatening. Remember to keep your partner in sight!
- Introduce new Rangers into the situation carefully and by their Ranger name. Keep bystanders away, especially from behind the participant involved.
- Defer to a more experienced Ranger, Troubleshooter, or a Shift Lead if requested. They are there to help; we are all on the same team with the same goals.

- If you need a Ranger of another gender identity, ask Khaki to send someone to your scene. Whenever dealing with a naked participant in a crisis or compromising situation, it is best practice to have a Ranger of the same gender as the participant present.
- If a participant is making things worse, try to get them off the scene. If they won't back off, emphasize that you are trying to cool things down. Ask the antagonist questions, such as "Am I making sense?" but don't get involved in a fight.
- Maintain radio contact with Khaki, as your radio is your link to the rest of the Rangers.
- If you have called the incident in, remember to advise Khaki when you are done and what the outcome was: call it in, call it out.

### **Don't:**

- Run in and try to take over, on first contact or when called in as a backup.
- Argue with your partner about the resolution of the situation or what to do next. While you are arguing, nothing gets done, and no one is really paying attention to the situation, which may be escalating while you bicker.
- Tell someone to calm down.

***IF THE SITUATION ESCALATES, DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT KHAKI FOR ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT. NEVER FORGET TO MAKE SAFETY AND YOUR PARTNER'S SAFETY YOUR TOP PRIORITY.***

## Special Circumstance: Law Enforcement

It is generally better not to approach Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) when they are involved with participants unless LE has invited you into the conversation. Why? You don't want to interfere with them doing their job.

This is for your own safety—surprising someone with a firearm is probably a bad idea. You can remain in the general area of the scene in order to be available for LE in case they want assistance, or to wait for a good time to ask for their attention if you believe you have pertinent information.

Stay well back and be visible so you are not too close but are available if needed.

Any Ranger who encounters a situation where a law enforcement presence would be helpful should call Khaki. Any Ranger who encounters a participant requesting law enforcement must call Khaki and request LE at their location.

If you have concerns about an interaction between LE and participants, do not approach any officer(s) on scene. Instead, **call Khaki** and request advice. Depending on the situation, Khaki may call in Troubleshooters, Shift Leads, OODs (Officers of the Day, who oversee 24 hours of operations), or the Ranger Operations Manager (who oversees all Ranger operations).

***IF YOU WITNESS A LEO DRAWING A FIREARM, REPORT IT TO KHAKI IMMEDIATELY AND TAKE NO OTHER ACTION.***

# Must Reports

***Must-Reports are situations that must be called in immediately!***

Black Rock Rangers are entrusted with considerable flexibility in how they handle the situations they encounter in Black Rock City. Rangers are trained to rely on their own judgment and abilities, and to escalate matters for assistance when appropriate. There are, however, situations in which the Ranger Department requires Rangers to report what they observe to the Shift Command Team immediately.

The requirement to report is in place to ensure that the Burning Man Project is aware of events that are critical to maintaining agreements we have in place with other departments and agencies, our internal reporting metrics, or legally required or advisable record keeping and reporting.

It is important to note that this policy only requires that a Ranger escalate required information to the Shift Leads. The Shift Leads will then follow up with appropriate actions, which may be as simple as noting the event in the shift log, or may include further escalation. It is not the individual Dirt Ranger's responsibility to contact Law Enforcement (LE) or Medical.

The following are all Ranger must-reports:

- Any non-consensual violence
- Any situation that is likely to put a participant in non-consensual grave danger
- Any situation that is likely to put a Ranger in harm's way
- Child or elder abuse
- Domestic violence
- Sexual Violence or Sexual Assault
- Death
- Lost or found child
- Medical emergencies
- Psychiatric emergencies
- A drawn firearm

Non-consensual violence is a comprehensive heading for the most difficult situations a Ranger may encounter. The first two bullet points under non-consensual violence are deliberately broad, and encompass many of the serious incidents one may encounter in Black Rock City.

Any witnessed act or report of non-consensual violence (dosing, physical altercations, etc.) are considered to fit within one of these categories, and therefore constitute a must-report requiring you to report the incident to Khaki immediately. The protocol for reporting all incidents of non-consensual violence is similar and varies only with the specifics of the incident.

The remaining three non-consensual violence classifications are called out because the Ranger Department has specific protocols to follow when they arise.

The must-report policy requires a Ranger to report the required information to Khaki. The Ranger Shift Command Team will determine the appropriate next steps.

- As Rangers, our role is not to investigate or pass judgment on participants' interactions.
- Our goals are to support participants, and to decrease the risk of non-consensual interactions through education and by facilitating clear communication.
- If we learn that a non-consensual interaction has occurred, we must ensure Khaki has adequate information so that the appropriate resources are activated to address the situation, and support participants.
- Ensure the situation gets recorded in the Incident Management System (IMS).

What happens if you don't report a must-report situation?

- The possible ramifications of a failure to report are significant. Failure to report one of these situations can result in you being dismissed from the Ranger Department. This is no joke. They're called must-reports for a reason.
- If you realize after a shift that you probably should've called something in but you didn't, the best course of action is to report it (even way after the fact) to a Shift Lead.
- When in doubt, call it in. You're not going to get in trouble for reporting something that turns out not to be a must-report.

***REPORTING REQUIREMENTS APPLY AT ALL TIMES TO ANY RANGER WHILE ON DUTY IN ANY ROLE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND TO ANY OFF DUTY RANGER IN UNIFORM, VISIBLY DISPLAYING RANGER LOGOS ON THEIR PERSON OR PROPERTY (SUCH AS VEHICLE) OR OTHERWISE REPRESENTING THEMSELVES AS A RANGER.***

# How to Report

All reports begin by calling Khaki on the radio.

In the case of a medical emergency, request Medical response and give a quick description of the nature and severity of the injury to Khaki. If you believe someone to be dead, call it in as a medical for an “unconscious and not breathing” person and request an immediate face-to-face with Khaki.

In the case of a lost or found child, report the details per the lost child protocol. In the case of a sexual or domestic violence incident, follow the appropriate protocol.

## Domestic Violence

You may encounter situations in which:

- A participant tells you that they are the survivor of on-playa domestic violence
- A participant tells you that someone else is the survivor of on-playa domestic violence
- You have reason to suspect that someone is the survivor of on-playa domestic violence

**Any of these are must-reports.**

The two defining characteristics of domestic violence are:

- Violence or force has been used, and
- A domestic relationship exists, or has existed in the past, between the parties

The definition of domestic relationship is very broad. Two people are in a domestic relationship if they:

- Are or were ever married, living together, sleeping together, or dating, or
- If they are family (per NRS this means related by blood or marriage)

You will likely need to gently ask some questions to determine the above.



If you suspect a domestic violence situation but are not sure, call Khaki and explain what's going on. Likely this means a Shift Lead or Troubleshooter will come to you to help you make a determination.

Once you have determined that you are dealing with a domestic violence situation, make sure that the scene and the survivor are safe. Then follow these steps:

1. Ask if anyone needs medical attention.
2. Call Khaki and ask for a Domestic Violence or DV response at your location: "Khaki, I need a domestic violence response at <location>." If you believe that participants on scene might be freaked out by hearing you say "domestic violence," you can call it in as a "Delta Victor" or "DV." You must report a DV to Khaki whether or not the participant wants you to call it in.
3. Request Medical if needed.
4. Ask if the survivor is comfortable telling you about their assailant. If they are, begin gathering any information regarding the alleged perpetrator that the victim may have, such as their name (default and/or Playa), description (physical and clothing), current location, and camp location.
5. Do not ask the survivor to tell their story, as that can be traumatizing. If they want to tell their story, listen and take notes.
6. If you are at the scene where the incident occurred, do not touch or disturb the scene.
7. Khaki will activate the domestic violence protocol, which will result in a member of Shift Command, SAT (Survivor Advocacy Team), Law Enforcement, and medical (if requested) rolling to your location.
8. Make sure the scene is safe and stay with the survivor until all resources arrive and you are properly relieved. You may be asked to stay on scene to continue to provide support. Consider requesting Green Dot support for the friends or campmates of the survivor.

Remember that ANY non-consensual violence is a must-report situation, whether or not a domestic relationship exists.

## Sexual Violence

For reporting purposes, Sexual Violence is any unwanted, forced, or coerced sexual act. It includes inappropriate sexual contact or fondling, acquaintance rape, date rape, stranger rape, child sexual abuse, and incest, whether or not there was penetration.

Under Nevada law, sexual assault is narrower in scope than sexual violence and requires penetration to have occurred.

In all cases, our focus is on getting the survivor the best support possible.

For Sexual Violence (which includes sexual assault), this support resource is an advocate from ESD's Survivor Advocacy Team (SAT). If we are told or come to believe that a sexual assault may have occurred, per our agreement with law enforcement, we are also required to call LE.

You may encounter situations in which:

- A participant informs you that they have been sexually violated,
- A participant reports that someone else has been sexually violated, or
- You have reason to suspect that someone has been sexually violated

**Any of these are must-reports.**

Once you have determined that you are dealing with a sexual violence situation, make sure that the scene and the survivor are safe. Then follow these steps:

1. Ask if anyone needs Medical.
2. Call Khaki and request a Sexual Violence or SV response at your location: "Khaki, I need sexual violence response at <Location>".
3. You must also request Medical, if needed.
4. If you're not sure whether this was an SV, you can request advice or say "potential sexual violence." If you believe that participants on scene might be freaked out by hearing you say "sexual violence" you can call it in as a "Sierra Victor" or "SV."
5. If you are not sure whether confirmed sexual violence was in fact sexual assault, call it in as "possible sexual assault." Khaki will roll a sexual assault response in these cases, including SAT and LE.
6. Let the survivor know you will be bringing a member of the Survivor Advocacy Team (SAT) to the scene. If this is a sexual assault or a possible sexual assault, let them know that LE will also come (we can't avoid this), and that the survivor will be able to choose whether or not to engage with LE once they arrive.
7. Do not ask the survivor to tell their story, as that can be traumatizing. Ask the survivor to wait for SAT to arrive so that they are not asked to retell the story again. If the survivor tells any part of their story anyway, listen and take notes. If you are at the scene where the incident occurred, do not touch or disturb the scene.
8. Khaki will activate the sexual violence protocol, which will result in a member of Shift Command and a Survivor Advocacy Team rolling to your location, as well as LE (if a sexual assault) and medical (if requested).

9. Make sure the scene is safe and stay with the survivor until all resources arrive and you are properly relieved. You may be asked to stay on scene to continue to provide support. Consider requesting Green Dot support for the friends or campmates of the survivor.

Signs of potential sexual violence that you might encounter on playa could include signs of physical abuse (bruising, cuts, pains) or torn or missing clothing.

When caring for the survivor, here are some tips:

- Be sensitive and use appropriate language.
- Be careful not to stigmatize the survivor by speaking loudly or calling unnecessary attention to the survivor in any way.
- Offer the survivor a blanket or something to cover themselves to keep warm.
- Make no comments implying that the survivor “asked for it” or is lying. Let the survivor know that they are believed, that the assault was not their fault, and that they did not cause it to happen.
- Reassure the survivor that only the perpetrator is to blame for an assault.

**Any of these are situations you must report to Khaki, whether or not the participant wants you to call it in.**

## Child or Elder Abuse

Nevada law defines child abuse as willfully causing a minor to suffer unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering. The law recognizes five forms of abuse: physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, neglect, or endangerment.

Elder abuse is defined by Nevada law as the infliction of pain or injury on an older and/or vulnerable person.

The protocols for these kinds of incidents are similar to the DV and SV protocols: call it in, ask for what you need, and describe what you see.

Similar to the Lost Child Protocol, a single Ranger should not be alone with a child or elder at any time. And a Ranger cannot release a child to anyone without the OK of a Ranger Shift Lead and Law Enforcement on the scene.

# Lost Children

It is often said that nobody is really lost in Black Rock City until the event is over, but when a child is lost in Black Rock City, finding that child becomes our first priority. This is a very important issue to the parents, the child, the Rangers, and Law Enforcement. Note that a child is anyone under the age of 18.

## Protocol For Reporting A Lost Child

1. Stay with the parents or reporting party, and stay available on the radio for Khaki.
2. Immediately call in that a child is missing. Use “break break break” to interrupt other radio traffic if necessary.
3. While Khaki is notifying other departments on different radio channels, gather (and write down) essential information from the reporting participant:
  - a. Name, age, height, weight, eye, hair, and skin color and clothing worn
  - b. Location and time last seen
  - c. Names of parent/guardians and their camp location (if known)
  - d. Relationship of reporting participant to child (if not a parent/guardian)
4. Wait for Khaki to request info. Khaki will do so after contacting LE and Gate; in most cases the gate will be closed to outgoing traffic.
5. Clearly and slowly transmit essential information to Khaki.
6. All other Rangers should limit traffic on the channel until the incident is resolved.
7. All other Rangers should write down the info, and then look for the child.
8. After the child has been located, Khaki will arrange for Rangers with the child to meet with Rangers with the parents, and with law enforcement.

**Rangers may not release a child without the OK of a Ranger Shift Lead or their designee and Law Enforcement on scene.**

## Found Child

Rangers encountering a child who is unsure of where their parents or guardians are should call in the incident to Khaki as a “found child.” **Note that a Ranger should not be alone with a “Found Child”**, so please request more Rangers from Khaki as needed, and enlist the help of other nearby participants if possible in the meantime.

A found child is less urgent than a lost child, but is still a serious incident.

Not every unaccompanied minor in BRC is a found child. One example of a situation that requires intervention:

- The unaccompanied child appears to be frightened, confused, or around something inappropriate for minors (sexuality, alcohol, etc.).

Examples of situations that do not generally require intervention:

- Children in groups
- Children who appear happy and healthy
- Children moving with clear purpose
- Children engaged in structured activities.

Use your best judgment, and always err on the side of making sure younger participants are having fun at Burning Man.

If it is indeed a found child, gather the following information:

- Names of parent/guardians
- Description of parent/guardian
- Name and location of their camp
- Location and time they last saw their parents

You can attempt to help the child find their parents, but be sure to check with Khaki before you do this.

## Medical and Psychiatric Emergencies

Rangers who encounter participants having medical or psychiatric difficulties on playa should engage the participants and call Khaki to request Medical response, or help the participant get to a Medical station. Rangers do not provide medical care beyond any first aid that is necessary prior to the arrival of Emergency Services Department (ESD), and Rangers must not “terminate care” (meaning that a participant with any serious injury must be seen by ESD before they are “medically released”).

After calling Khaki and requesting Medical, Rangers can administer first aid until Medical arrives at the scene and takes over. CPR, rescue breathing, and providing naloxone (Narcan) are considered first aid. You can provide these services if you’re trained to do so.

Rangers must call ESD to the scene or help the participant get to a Medical station if the injury is anything more serious than what might normally be treated at home (band-aid, etc.).

Think of calling for Medical as if you were calling 911 in the default world. If a participant can walk to a Medical station (escorted or otherwise), they don't need Medical dispatched to their location. Use your judgment on whether or not to call it in.

Medical emergencies are must-reports, but not all medical events are emergencies. As always, when in doubt, call it in.

If ESD is called, stay with the participant until ESD arrives and releases you and your partner from the scene. In any situation involving Medical response, there are three points at which you should call Khaki:

- When you arrive and determine that Medical is needed on scene.
- When Medical arrives.
- When Medical has released you and you are ready to continue your patrol.

When calling Khaki to request Medical, the focus of your radio call should be your location and nature and severity of complaint. This allows emergency services to send the right response at the right priority level.

Things you absolutely need to mention:

- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Difficult, uneven, or no breathing
- Unconsciousness

If you don't say any of these things, it will be assumed that the participant is conscious, breathing, and not bleeding heavily. ESD needs to know this in order to roll the right resource (i.e., a quick response vehicle, aka QRV, or an ambulance).

**Use "I need X at Y for Z."**

"Khaki, Khaki, Bucket"

"Bucket, go for Khaki"

"I need Medical at 7:00 & Golf for a leg injury with severe bleeding."

"Copy, rolling Medical to 7:00 and Golf for a leg injury with severe bleeding."

Occasionally, the radio can get so busy that you can't get through. If this is the case, and if Khaki is not responding to you on Control 1, switch to BRC 911 to request Medical directly from Black Rock, the ESD dispatcher.

After you make the call on BRC 911, remain on that channel until Medical arrives, and have your partner handle traffic on Control 1. Then let Black Rock know that you're returning to Control 1, as per normal radio protocol.

Here's how the conversation on BRC 911 would sound:

Bucket: "Black Rock, Black Rock, Ranger Bucket on 911."

Black Rock: "Go ahead, Ranger Bucket."

Bucket: "I need Medical at 4:20 and Bravo for a participant complaining of chest pain."

Black Rock: "Copy, rolling Medical to 4:20 and Bravo for a participant complaining of chest pain, Ranger Bucket on scene."

<Medical arrives>

Bucket: "Ranger Bucket clear, going back to Control 1."

You MUST stay with the participant until help arrives and you are cleared from the scene by ESD or by Khaki. At night, wave a flashlight in a circle to help ESD find you. Inform Khaki when ESD arrives on scene.

Medical personnel may request that Rangers on scene provide a perimeter to keep onlookers at a distance while they work. Stand so that you have a good vantage point on the whole situation, and maintain awareness of the crowd, the medics, the patient, and your partner. Recruit participants to help you with your perimeter; two Rangers is a weak perimeter, but two Rangers plus five participants is a strong one.

Be mindful of the environment around you. Make sure that the same thing that injured the participant doesn't injure you, and that well-meaning participants don't make the situation worse.

## Something else?

In all other cases, use plain English to clearly explain the situation. If you know, you can request the resources you think you need. Khaki may send other resources as well, and may roll to your location for a face-to-face.

If you are not sure whether something falls into the above categories, go ahead and report what you see. Let your Shift Leads figure out whether any follow up action is required.

***FAILURE TO REPORT A MUST-REPORT SITUATION IS A SERIOUS INSTANCE OF UNRANGERLY BEHAVIOR AND CAN RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION, UP TO AND INCLUDING PERMANENT REMOVAL FROM THE RANGER DEPARTMENT.***



# Other Situations You'll Encounter

Oh, the places you'll go! You will come upon many different situations as you wander Black Rock City as a Ranger. The following pages describe some of them, and in some cases, describe specific Ranger Protocols that **MUST** be followed. In other situations, this section offers guidelines for how to handle them. Please remember the guidelines are, for the most part, only guidelines. We cannot give you a cookbook or flowchart on how to handle every situation.

We expect Rangers to use their creativity and best judgment in any given situation. Moreover, two different Rangers might handle the same situation differently, and that's a good thing —our diversity is our strength.

## Catastrophic Events

In the extremely unlikely event of a really big bad thing (e.g., unplanned explosion or large fire, massive earthquake, plane crash), we'd like off-duty Rangers to go to the nearest Ranger facility (HQ, Tokyo, or Berlin) to check-in. This is both to let us know you're OK, and also to find out if the Rangers have any extra staffing needs. Obviously, if you're on duty when the big and bad thing happens, Khaki will tell you what to do.

## Blocked Streets and Intersections

All streets in Black Rock City are fire lanes and need to be clear at all times for emergency vehicles. Vehicles and piles of bicycles blocking the street need to be moved. This has been a particular problem with some of the larger theme camps and sound camps, where participants often drop their bikes in the street outside before entering.

It is the responsibility of participants to stow their bikes appropriately, and of theme camps to ensure that the streets outside their camps are clear. If you come upon a street blocked with bicycles, Ranger the situation to determine how best to proceed. In most cases, education of participants is all that is needed.

In the case of theme camps, also politely educate the theme camp leaders about their responsibility to keep the streets clear. If the theme camp has a sound system, getting the DJ or camp mayor to use it to request participants to clear the street is a great strategy.

Vehicles blocking streets may be subject to towing (see [Tow Truck](#)).

When dealing with large blockages, always log the incident so we can track repeat offenders.

## Breakdowns and Lockouts

We are often asked by participants to assist with broken down vehicles (e.g., flat tires, jump starts) and lockouts. Generally speaking, Rangers don't provide these services. Instead, encourage the participant to get assistance from their community, direct them to Playa Info, or use the radio to request assistance for the participant on the Lockout/Tow channel in the Ranger zone.

Since a response may take some time, we may be able to make an exception if it's an emergency (e.g., if a participant has locked a child or critical medications in the car). In such situations, call Khaki and explain what's going on.

## Differences, Disagreements, and Disputes

Burning Man is intense. Tempers often flare. Some of the most common situations you will find yourself Rangering are arguments, disputes, even fights among campmates or between camps. In some sense, this is the classic Ranger scenario, the bread and butter of what we do. Please see the [Communication, Mediation, and Conflict Resolution Strategies](#) section for more info.

## Distressed and Disoriented Participants

One of the most powerful things you can do for someone in a crisis is to let them know they are not alone. Your compassionate and attentive presence can make a world of difference to someone in emotional pain. This is just like what we do in "normal Rangering" except that we may have to do more of it with a disoriented or distressed participant.

Through your Ranger skills, determine if the participant is in an okay place, or if you can get them to one. Are they in a safe place with folks who can take care of them? Are they bothering

anybody? Do they have a support system back at their camp? Finding out the answers to these questions will likely present you with the best resolution for the participant.

One thing that is really useful to do when dealing with the severely distressed is “holding space.” Holding space for someone just means:

- Being with them—and making it clear that you want to be there
- Creating a safe space for them
- Not judging them

Allow participants to have whatever experience they are going to have

Another important concept is “being grounded.” Participants in crisis often reach out to anything they see as “solid” to reorient themselves in the world. By being attentive, calm, genuine, and present, you become that person’s solid object or anchor, which is all that many people in emotional crisis need.

Be patient. All of this listening and holding space and being grounded will take time. These calls often require spending more time than you might normally expect. Let Khaki know if it looks like you’re going to be dealing with a situation for more than 30 minutes or so. Remember that when someone is distressed or disoriented they might not perceive reality or boundaries the way that most people do. Be friendly and kind but aware.

Sometimes these situations present an opportunity to slowly work through your Ranger skills. When helping these participants, use those Ranger skills. Finding out and listening become very important.

Here are a few things that are particularly important to find out:

- What is causing the participant’s distress?
- Is it emotional? Drugs or alcohol? Psychological issues? Something medical?
- If they are coherent, ask them if they have any underlying medical conditions or if they are taking any prescription meds.
- Are they taking the meds they are prescribed?
- If they’ve taken recreational drugs, try to find out what kind, when, and how much.

There may be any number of underlying causes for situations like this:

- Emotional distress

- Mind-altering substances
- Underlying psychological issues (e.g., schizophrenia, depression)
- Someone who is off their prescription medication
- Underlying medical issues (e.g., diabetes, dehydration)

If you don't feel safe, ask for help by telling Khaki what's going on. If you don't feel like you can handle the situation, ask Khaki for Green Dot support at your location.

Green Dot Rangers may:

- give you some advice;
- work with the participant at your location; or
- walk the participant back to a dome behind Ranger HQ called Sanctuary.

Sanctuary provides a quiet space for distressed and disoriented participants.

If the situation seems to be related to a medical or mental health issue (e.g. someone has decided to stop taking their medications), the Emergency Services Department (ESD) is there to support you. In these cases:

- Call Khaki and request medical.
  - If it's a non-emergency, and you just want to consult with Medical, you can request a medical consult.
- State the nature and the severity of the situation.
  - If the participant is unconscious, bleeding heavily, or having difficulty breathing, make sure to mention this.
- Don't say "drugs" over the radio. Use "disoriented."

Remember, if it's an emergency and you can't remember the right words, just say it like it is.

## Drone Protocol

Only registered drones may fly during the event. Permitted drones will have a bright tag on the drone, the controller, and the operator. If you see a drone operating in what you believe is an unsafe or unapproved way, start by contacting the operator. Permitted operators should have an approved safety and operations plan and should be able to explain it to you.

If you encounter a drone operating in an unsafe manner, report it to Khaki. If you encounter a drone flying without a permit, educate the participant about this year's drone protocols. Do your best to convince them to put the drone away for the rest of the event. If they aren't cooperative, report it to Khaki.

If you have a safety-related interaction with a drone operator or interact with an unpermitted drone operator, call Khaki so that we can note it in the Incident Management System. Collect the following information:

- Permit numbers;
- operator names;
- location; and
- nature of the incident or concern.

## Evictions

Occasionally, participants are removed from the event. This occurs only when a participant acts in a way that directly contradicts or blatantly disregards the community standards. An eviction is a last resort and is not undertaken lightly.

**Dirt Rangers should never threaten a participant with eviction.** In the event of extraordinary or ongoing violations or blatant disregard of community standards, Khaki should be notified.

Khaki may mobilize a special team of Rangers called "007s" who are empowered to evict participants. Evictions of staff members, vendors, or volunteers may go through separate processes involving their department managers.

Some examples of situations in the past have included repeated instances of vending, or participants repeatedly losing their children. There have been instances of individuals and groups attending the event with the sole purpose of trying to see how long they can act against the community standards before getting evicted.

Once Khaki is notified, the Ranger Shift Command (RSC) team will work with the Rangers on scene to re-evaluate the situation. If the RSC team decides that all normal mediation efforts have been exhausted and the situation may require that a participant be evicted, two 007s will be called to FLAME the situation.

007s being called does not mean that an eviction is in progress. When 007s arrive on a scene, they FLAME the situation with a fresh perspective. Should the 007 team be unable to craft any other workable solution to the issue, and should they both agree that the only (or best) solution is eviction from Black Rock City, the participant will be evicted.

## Found Animal

Rangers field a surprising number of “found animal” calls every year, and there are specific staff resources to deal with them. Please note that not all animals need rescuing. There are many critters native to the playa, and flying animals (e.g., birds and bats), that visit the playa. Unless they are in distress, these are quite capable of relocating themselves.

There are some animals belonging to staff that have specific authorization to be on playa.

Animals that have been captured by participants can be taken to HQ if they are in a secured container.

Found animals should be called into Khaki before taking any action.

## Lasers

Personal hand-held lasers are not allowed in Black Rock City. If you encounter a participant with a hand-held laser, engage them in a conversation. Education is key here —let them know about the policy, and WHY we have that policy. Handheld lasers are dangerous and have very real-world impacts when used unsafely.

Get them to agree to put it away and not use it anymore. Do not confiscate lasers. If they refuse, or you have doubts about their sincerity, contact Khaki.

Lasers mounted on art cars or at camps are still allowed, if they have been inspected by the Safety Team. If you have concerns about a mounted laser, talk to the operators of the vehicle or camp. If you still have concerns, you can contact Khaki and ask for a representative of the Event Safety Team to come to your location.

Please call in any laser-related interactions to Khaki or write an Incident Report so that it is tracked in the Incident Management System.

# Law Enforcement

The Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) and other agencies you may encounter in Black Rock City wear various uniforms. Some may be undercover and do not wear uniforms. The Burning Man Project and the Black Rock Rangers have historically had a good working relationship with law enforcement on the playa.

The agencies you are most likely to encounter during the event are:

- Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Pershing County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) and law enforcement personnel from other counties under contract with Pershing County. They should all identify as PCSO officers.

We may also interact with:

- Nevada Highway Patrol (not active in BRC, but active on the highway)
- Washoe County Sheriff's Office (not active in BRC, but active in Gerlach)
- Nevada State Health Department (enforces food safety issues)

Law Enforcement (LE) often defers to the Rangers to handle situations on playa that LE might otherwise handle themselves. This is due to the relationship that Rangers and LE have developed over the years. To maintain this relationship, we need to keep our relations and interactions with LE positive and constructive. So, when you encounter LEOs in Black Rock City, always greet them in a friendly manner. Make interacting with a Black Rock Ranger a positive experience. If we treat them as welcome guests they will be much more likely to treat us as a resource they can rely upon.

If you see LE on scene with participants, do not approach. You may observe the scene from a distance and remain visible. If they need your assistance, they will approach you. If LE has requested your assistance as a Ranger, notify Khaki. After the situation is clear, report your status back to Khaki. You may be contacted by a member of the Troubleshooter team for a quick debrief. If you have concerns about a LEO's interaction with a participant, call it into Khaki and request advice.

If you believe you have information that could be useful, or if you feel there is something about the situation that sets off your "Spidey Sense" (i.e., something doesn't seem quite right), call Khaki and report the situation. Do not request a Troubleshooter directly. Report what you see and advise that there is a LE situation that you have information about that could be helpful.

If you believe that you are about to have a negative interaction with LE, politely excuse yourself from the scene and report your concerns to Khaki immediately. Do not try to “take on” LE, even if you feel they may not be observing protocol or law.

During the event, the Rangers need as much positive and negative information regarding interactions with LE as possible. Make sure your Shift Lead or Officer of the Day has any pertinent information during your shift, or fill out a [Law Enforcement Feedback form](#) yourself at any of the Ranger Operation Center kiosks. You can also pick one up at Ranger HQ or any outpost during the event.

***IF YOU WITNESS A LEO DRAWING A FIREARM, REPORT IT TO KHAKI IMMEDIATELY AND TAKE NO OTHER ACTION.***

## Lost and Found Items

Rangers do not deal with lost property. Any inquiries about lost keys, cameras, or other items except bicycles should be directed to Playa Info.

- Most categories of lost items can be self-searched by participants 24/7 on the computer terminals.
- There is a secure night drop which can be used any time.
- Playa Info has Embassy contact information in case of a lost passport.
- People who have misplaced necessary medicines should be directed to a medical station. Participants with found items should be directed to Playa Info. Bicycles, should remain (or be returned to) where found.

All found items should be taken to Playa Info, including medications and passports. Generally, medications or passports are contained in something; a backpack, fanny pack, or bag of some type. The person who lost the item will come to Playa Info looking for the item their stuff was in. Participants are asked to identify the contents of the pack. It would be very difficult to identify who the pack belongs to if important items like medications or passports are removed and stored at HQ.

## Media and Cameras

You can't help but see cameras everywhere on the playa, from cellphones and point-and-shoots to expensive and sophisticated digital recording equipment. Burning Man has separate standards for Personal Use Media and Professional Use Media. Participants engaging in Professional Use Media must apply as Professional Use Media for the Burning Man event and



are expected to register with the Media Mecca in Center Camp. The registration process is designed to protect the privacy and other rights of participants and to prevent commercial exploitation of Burning Man

Whether the participants are engaging in Personal or Professional Use, the photographer is responsible for respecting the participants they wish to record and seeking their permission before photographing or filming them. If a photographer is asked to stop filming, they must do so immediately. Photographers have the responsibility not to interfere with the immediate experience of other participants.

## Missing Adults

Rangers may receive reports from worried participants that an adult campmate has gone missing or “didn’t come home last night.” While this may be upsetting to the participant, adults are not considered lost in Black Rock City and Rangers will not search for missing adult camp mates. Search and Rescue missions are only conducted in the outlying desert by the BLM and other public agencies.

If a participant reports that a missing adult camp mate has seriously diminished mental capacity (e.g., Alzheimer’s) or suffers from a condition that would result in serious harm if they do not return to camp, report this information to Khaki. Khaki may decide to make an announcement to Rangers on shift requesting them to keep an eye out for this person during the normal course of their shift.

## Noise Complaints

Shockingly, Burning Man can be noisy. Loud music is a common source of friction between camps. To minimize this, Burning Man has some policies regarding amplified music in camps:

- Neighbors should talk to one another when sound becomes a problem and try to resolve the issue through direct communication. As a community, we need to work together to keep sound at desirable levels. This means that everyone is personally responsible for how they affect everyone else’s experience.
  - If your neighbor believes your sound is too loud, you must work with them to find an acceptable volume. You will need to check in with those you are camped near to find out what other events are planned and work with them to create a schedule. With these actions you should be able to handle all of your own sound issues.

- If everyone works together there will be no need for Black Rock Rangers to get involved. A community effort is needed to pull this off.
- Within the City, large-scale sound installations (colloquially known now as Sound Camps) are typically placed in the Large Scale Sound Zone (facing 2:00 and 10:00 avenues). They may express themselves unless community complaints persist. Camps on Esplanade may amplify sound 100' into the open playa before conversational levels are expected.
- Within the city, sound systems should point internally within the camp producing the sound. Sound amplification should only be loud enough so that people can speak at a conversational level at the border of a neighboring camp or at the center point of a street, whichever is nearest to the source of the sound.
- Conversational levels are defined as 60 decibels (dbA mid-range frequencies) at the border of a neighboring camp or at the center point of a street, whichever is nearest to the source of the sound. Bass level (dbC – low-range frequencies) shall be negotiated with neighbors.
- Any complaints about excessive sound will become the concern of the Black Rock Rangers. Concerns about excessive sound can result in:
  - Volume check and mediation between camps
  - Volume check and a final warning on complaints
  - Disabling of equipment
  - Notification of the Placement Team and possible impact to a camp's standing and future placement

Mutant Vehicles (MV) also have a [sound policy](#).

MVs can play music...

- While parked in camp in compliance with [Black Rock City's Sound Policy](#).
- As loud as they want while in-motion on the open playa.
- As loud and as long as they want within the DMZ (Deep-Playa Music Zone).

MVs can NOT play amplified music...

- While driving in the city streets between 2:00am and 10:00am.

If a Mutant Vehicle gets more than two warnings about its sound system, it can lose its DMV (Dept. of Mutant Vehicles) license to operate within BRC, and the thus right to drive it for the rest of the event. Please write down the DMV tag number and call it in to Khaki so we can track it.

The important thing here is the impact the sound is having on the surrounding community. Rangers will not (generally) be measuring the sound with dB meters, nor must Rangers wait for someone to make a complaint. If you encounter a mutant vehicle and the sound seems to be much too loud for the circumstances, you should engage the operators in a conversation. If a Mutant Vehicle is playing sound near an art piece and it sounds pretty loud, go talk to the artist and ask if the sound is a problem. In other words, Ranger it! You should call this in to Khaki (along with the DMV number).

Rangers strive to mediate sound conflicts to avoid extreme outcomes. As with mediating any dispute, compromise is usually required from both parties.

Rangers may need to educate sound camps and vehicles about amplified sound policies and being good neighbors, and they may also need to educate the complaining camp(s) about the fact that Burning Man is a noisy place.

Rangers should avoid coming across as the “noise police.” Some Rangers have been known to carry spare earplugs to gift to participants so that they can solve their own noise issues without conflict with the neighbors.

If you have reason to believe that a noisy camp has turned down its sound system in your presence but is likely to turn it up again after you leave, call Khaki and report the situation; this will allow the Ranger Shift Command team to keep track of problematic camps.

## Property Issues: Theft and Theft Prevention

Our primary responsibility is to people, not property. Private property is the responsibility of its owner/artists. Rangers do not guard works of art, and recognize that the quality of art may increase or decrease with interaction of, and modification by, participants. The definition of art is very broad within Black Rock City.

Participants should be aware, by reading the Burning Man Survival Guide, of the potential for property theft from vehicles and campsites. Participants should secure their campsites and valuable items before leaving the area.

Reporting theft directly to law enforcement is the best option available to participants, and participants may visit the Law Enforcement Substation trailer (next door to Rampart) to make such a report. Significant property thefts reported by participants should be reported by radio to Khaki; examples might include stolen vehicles, art projects, art cars, or incidents in which Rangers have eyes on the alleged thief.

Encourage people to get to know their neighbors and look out for each other, this is the best way to prevent property crime. Be on the lookout for individuals or small groups who don't interact with the participants, those who just stand back and observe. As a Ranger, you can be a goodwill ambassador and introduce yourself.

People who don't feel involved also don't feel responsible; point out to participants that they are the people most likely to be aware of and present for incidents in their neighborhood. The time of highest risk for theft is Saturday night through Monday morning. On Sunday and Monday, when people are packing and leaving, be particularly alert for suspicious activity.

Encourage people to get to know their neighbors and look out for each other. This is the best way to prevent property crime.

## Vehicle Education and Escalation

Vehicle interactions typically go through a three-step process of escalation:

- Educate: Advise operators on the guidelines for safe operation and explain the importance of maintaining community safety.
- Escort: For repeat offenders or bad excuses, escort to the DMV for a sticker or back to camp for the night.
- Eject: Repeat offenders or serious violations of safety guidelines can earn a vehicle a trip to "Long-Term Parking" outside the city gates, where it can safely stay for the rest of the event.

Rangers do not chase vehicles. Instead, radio other Rangers with the location and trajectory of the vehicle to see if anyone else is ahead of it, or just yell ahead to participants to get them to stop the vehicle. This is the "intercept" concept.

Remember that nobody likes to be pulled over. To maintain our social capital, try to be polite and good-humored when dealing with vehicles operating unsafely. Emphasize education and assume good intentions; the participant may be a noob and not be aware of the rules, or may simply have gotten distracted by something shiny.

## Vehicle Issues

All Rangers should watch for vehicles operating unsafely in Black Rock City and attempt to Ranger such situations. While we have a special team, Intercept, which is focused on vehicle

safety in the inner playa, all Rangers are expected to address vehicle concerns within our bike- & pedestrian-focused city, and to educate the community about vehicle safety and community standards. Intercept is available to assist if needed for vehicles on the inner playa between 4 p.m. and 4 a.m.

## Vehicle Safety

Our most common vehicle safety interactions generally involve speeding vehicles and those driving out of place (e.g., driving on the Esplanade or open playa). Use your best judgment in determining whether a vehicle is posing a safety hazard. The guidelines, as published by the Department of Mutant Vehicles, are:

- Only drive vehicles licensed or allowed to drive in Black Rock City.
- Abide by all applicable federal and Nevada state laws, including all open container laws (no open containers within reach of the driver).
- Drive at a speed of 5 mph or less (less if kicking up dust, or in hazardous situations such as tight crowds).
- Give the right of way to pedestrians, bicycles, and emergency services vehicles.
- Follow the reasonable and applicable vehicle laws for road safety.
- Stop immediately upon being hailed by any BRC Staff member, Black Rock Ranger, or law enforcement officer.
- No driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- No driving on pedestrian-designated streets, such as A or Esplanade (see your map for details).
- No driving during whiteouts. Stop with your vehicle lights on during whiteouts.
- No driving on wet or freshly-watered roads.
- Any additional guidelines set forth by Burning Man.
- Obey sound policies.
- In addition to adhering to the driving rules indicated above, Mutant Vehicles must:
  - Create a clear field of vision for the operator, including rear and side mirrors
  - Have ground guides (walkers) if the vehicle is large, has a limited field of vision, or is dangerous to pedestrians
  - Have a safe access area and procedures for loading and unloading passengers
  - Clearly display the Mutant Vehicle license in a location specified by the DMV

# Vehicle Stickers

The Department of Mutant Vehicles (DMV) issues stickers to vehicles which permit them to operate on the playa. These are examples of some types of stickers from past years.

**DAY:** permits Mutant Vehicles to operate during daylight hours only

**NIGHT:** permits Mutant Vehicles to operate during night hours only

Some vehicles may have both of these and are permitted to operate both day and night. Additionally, Mutant Vehicles may have other designations:

**PLAYA:** (written on Day or Night sticker) permits open playa driving only, no operation on the streets of the city

**FLAME EFFECTS:** (an additional sticker attached to Day or Night sticker) permitted to operate flame effects

**TRAILER:** "T" in addition to a number on EVERY trailer; all trailers need a separate license

**STAFF:** For staff vehicles

**DISABLED:** Person holding disabled registration does not have to be driving the vehicle but must be in the vehicle when it's being driven

**ART SUPPORT:** The Artery issues paper permits to artists so they may service their art. These are designated either by days of the week or for all week operation. Artists are only permitted to drive to and from art installations, no joy-riding.

**VENDOR:** Permitted vendor vehicles are marked with a number in the upper corner of the windshield and on the back of the vehicle.

**Ranger and ESD vehicles with logos:** A staff vehicle displaying RANGER or ESD logo does not need an additional staff sticker to drive at the event, but should only be used for official business and should obey all BRC driving rules.

**Government Agency Vehicles With or Without Logos:** Vehicles from government agencies (including law enforcement agencies, BLM, Nevada Health Department, and others) also do not need an additional staff sticker to drive at the event. Some Law Enforcement vehicles may not have logos, but will always have markings on the windows.

While we hope and expect such vehicles to abide by BRC driving rules, Rangers should not interfere with law enforcement vehicles. Instances of unsafe driving by such vehicles should be reported to Khaki.

Copies of this year's sticker designs are posted at Ranger HQ for your familiarization and reference.

## Weather Event

Rain or shine, Ranger Operations run 24/7 in Black Rock City during the event (and a week before and after). There is just as much need, if not more, for Rangers to be on shift during a weather event. Please show up for the shifts you signed up for. In the event of a severe weather event (for example, persistent rain that significantly impedes your ability to walk or ride a bike), you can find out what's going on or jump in to help out by going to the nearest Outpost (Tokyo or Berlin) or Ranger HQ to check in. Our contingency plans call for us to distribute radios and information from these three locations.

## Where Are the Porta Potties?

The above notwithstanding, the reality is that life as an on-duty Ranger is often pretty mundane. You will do an awful lot of walking or bicycling around Black Rock City, meeting and greeting colorful characters, checking out fabulous and not-so-fabulous artwork, and answering lots of questions—the most common of which will be: “Where are the porta-potties?”

Enjoy this time! Give a hand to folks who need help setting up camp. Feel free to ask if you can join participants and borrow some of their shade. This is a huge part of our job as Rangers, functioning both as Ranger ambassadors as well as the eyes and ears of the community. And, for the record, as of this writing: Porta-potties are located on every radial street between C & D and G & H. The exceptions to this are:

- 6:00, which has banks at C and between H & I;
- 3:00 and 9:00, with banks at D, and between H & I
- 4:30 and 7:30 with banks between C & D and H & I
- 2:00 and 10:00 with banks at A & G

There are also banks on the open playa along the 3:00 and 9:00 promenades, at the Man and the Temple, in the Deep-Playa Music Zone, and near Point 3 in deep playa

*Unless they're not, because, Burning Man.*



# Burn Perimeter Protocol

All Rangers are encouraged to sign up for at least one Burn Perimeter shift. Burn Perimeters need many Rangers and take place during times when many people are otherwise engaged. We understand it's a big commitment—Burn Perimeters are one of the most important shifts you can work as a Black Rock Ranger.

Rangers support the Man and Temple Burns (Saturday and Sunday of the event), major art burns (generally, Thursday-Sunday of the event), and several smaller art burns. Sign-ups for these shifts are available through the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#); sign-ups for smaller burns might not appear until closer to the event.



# Basic Burn Perimeter

## Know-How

While on perimeter, you may be standing (or kneeling) in the same place for up to four hours (or more)! If you are unable to kneel, let your Quad Lead (they'll introduce themselves) know before you are deployed. They will find a standing or walking role for you. That new role may be in a different quad or elsewhere in the perimeter.

## What To Bring

- Long-sleeved cotton Ranger shirt, Ranger hat.
- Jacket/warm layers. Note: Artificial fibers can melt, so stick with natural fibers like cotton.
- Comfortable, insulating, protective footwear, like an old pair of boots.
- Clear goggles.
- Full water bottle.
- High-intensity flashlight.
- Dust mask.
- Small food items (optional, but recommended).
- Knee pads (optional, but you'll be glad you did).

Please make sure you are on time, fully fed, hydrated, rested, sober, and ready to stand in one place for hours after sundown without any chance to head to the portos. You can't swing by your camp on this shift.

## Overall Structure

The Rangers organize burn perimeters by quadrants, centered around the effigy. You will be assigned to one of these quads under the oversight of an experienced Quad Lead, who will normally have a helper, called a Second.

All communication goes through your Quad Lead or the Second. If you have an event radio, leave it on, but do not transmit. Your Quad Leads will be feeding you information about the burn as they receive it. If you need their attention, turn on your flashlight and point it at them.

Your Quad Leads will walk you out to the Burn, assign you to a position, and tell you your post-burn rally point. Once you are set on the perimeter, stay there. If you need to leave the line for any reason, tell your Quad Lead or Second.

## At Your Position

- Engage participants one at a time, as they arrive. Do that Ranger thing. Get to know them. Be a good host. Ask them to sit down and scooch together. Don't order anyone around.
- Be entertaining, informative, and approachable.
- Educate participants about who we are and why we are holding the perimeter.
- Try to get the front row to help in establishing the perimeter.
- Get the crowd seated on the playa for at least 5 rows deep, preferably 10+.
- No one without a burn laminate gets past the perimeter.
- Handheld laser pointers are not allowed at Burning Man.
- Keep tripping hazards out of the first five rows. Get bikes 100 feet out if you can. Photographers will be trying to set up tripods right on the perimeter; use your judgment with those. Small tripods that don't block the view of the crowd are fine. If someone is reluctant to move one of these items and doesn't seem a good sport, get one of your Quad Leads involved.

## Pro Tips for Dealing with Your Crowd

There are many, many creative and interesting ways of engaging your crowd that individual Rangers have developed over the years, from sing-alongs to trivia contests to simply chatting honestly and making new friends. Here are a few common pro tips:

- You aren't a cop or paid security. Don't act like it. Social capital is our currency.
- Engage everyone near the front personally. Be warm and welcoming.
- Ask for what you need from the crowd. Empower them to be part of the solution.
- Maintain situational awareness while engaging your section. Don't get tunnel vision.
- Explain to your first few rows that they, not the tape and cones, are the perimeter. They are helping keep everyone behind them safe and happy.
- Check in regularly with the Rangers next to you. Be brief and professional.

# Once the Festivities Start

At some point the effigy will catch fire. Don't look at the fire; look at your crowd. What you are watching for is runners or the crowd starting to surge forward.

- Take one knee as soon as the fire starts. This gives the crowd a good view and allows us to move rapidly.
- Don't sit all the way down, as you might need to stand in a hurry.

## Handling Runners

If you suspect someone is going to break through the perimeter:

- Be aware that someone is approaching the perimeter (which you should be, since you're watching the crowd!).
- Be creative: try waving your arms, asking politely and calmly, or just pointing back at the crowd.
- Get the attention of your Quad Lead, Second, or Troubleshooter, so they can assist you and the participant.
- Make the people on either side of you aware that someone is moving in. The nearest Rangers on the line should move closer in, making it more difficult for the runner to push through, should they attempt to do so.
- Hold out your hands, palm-outward, and loudly and clearly ask the person to return to their seat.
- Exercise your discretion to take the most appropriate action that you feel comfortable with, **up to and including**:
  - Simply stepping out of the way, or
  - Using your body to block their path forward, and placing your open palm where it will intercept the forward movement of the person attempting to cross the perimeter line.
- DO NOT physically engage the runner if you are uncomfortable doing so.
- No matter how comfortable you are engaging the runner, DO NOT tackle them or go beyond blocking their way with your body or your open palm.
- If the person breaks through the perimeter, do not give chase or leave your assigned perimeter location—this will leave a hole in the perimeter that could just tempt more runners.
- Stay in place and spotlight the runner with your flashlight. The Sandmen will take it from there. Keep the beam trained on the runner, not the Sandmen.

## Winding Down

- If/when the perimeter breaks, get yourself out of the way! Your safety comes first.
- Wait until given the “all clear” by perimeter leaders and then proceed directly to the predetermined rally point.
- If you have problems finding the rally point, wait for the crowd to thin and listen for your quad mates to start calling for you. Use your radio sparingly if you have one.
- No one can leave until everyone checks in. If you fail to check in, your entire quadrant will be stuck until you are located.
- Once everyone is accounted for, your Quad Lead will release you to clock out at HQ. If, at that point, you decide you want to stay on and do a dirt shift, let Khaki know!

You can find more information about the Man and Temple burns in the [Burn Perimeter Briefer](#).

If you have any questions about Burn Perimeters, email the Ranger Burn Safety Cadre: [ranger-burn-safety-cadre-list@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-burn-safety-cadre-list@burningman.org).

# Communication, Mediation, and Conflict Resolution Strategies

## F.L.A.M.E.

You have likely experienced some variation of this strategy. It is used in practically every encounter on playa. FLAME is a good foundational framework when used with other communication and mediation strategies.

### Find Out

- First, do nothing; observe the situation before jumping to conclusions.
- Be aware of scene safety, your body language, your mindset, and your assumptions.
- Be aware of the resources you have, and resources you might need.

### Listen

- Active listening.
- Keep in mind the old quote: "There are three sides to every story..."

### Analyze

- Gather information.
- Discuss with your partner. Compare notes and summarize.
- At this point, you should have enough information to begin mediating the situation.

### Mediate

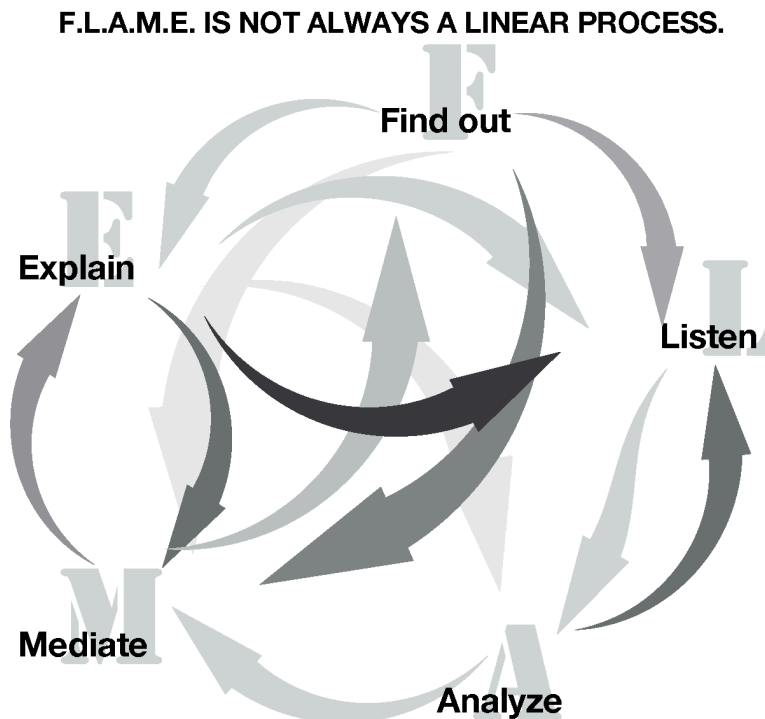
- Allow the participants to determine/decide the resolution when possible.
- Find out where there's wiggle room and point it out.

- You're the neutral third party.
- Do the best you can to guide, rather than direct.

## Explain

- Explain to the parties directly involved.
- This might include having the conflicted parties explain to you and to each other what the agreed solution is, or write down an agreement.
- Be aware that this process may take some time.
- Explain the resolution to Khaki.
- Create an incident report if needed.
- Keep personal information private.

New information and new perspectives can often send you back to find out more, listen to new stakeholders, or analyze facts that you didn't have when you began FLAME-ing the situation. FLAME isn't always a straight line and you will often find yourself moving back and forth from one letter to another as you find out more.



## Active Listening

After Finding Out, Listening is one of the first things we do once we determine that a situation needs Ranger intervention. The goal of active listening is twofold:

- To focus your attention as clearly and carefully as possible on what is being said, so that you understand what's going on.
- To convey to the person talking that you are listening to and understanding what they are saying.

## Nonverbal Communication (Body Language)

Another important thing to pay attention to is body language and other non-verbal communication. Humans are social creatures who evolved skills to communicate with our body long before we had language. Distress or undesirable behavior itself IS communication—the person in distress is providing physical and possibly non-verbal feedback.

Keep these things in mind:

- **Body Angle:** Use a 45-degree stance versus being face-to-face. Make sure to leave sufficient personal space.
- **Leave them a way out:** Never block someone's escape route. In an enclosed space, do not stand between an agitated person and the exit.
- **Mirroring/matching:** Use the speaker's tone, body language, and words (careful to avoid this turning into mocking).
- **Pacing and leading:** Match speaker's speed and energy, then gradually slow or calm down.
- **Break state:** Do anything else (e.g., go for a walk, smoke a cigarette, eat something, ask irrelevant questions).
- **Consensual Contact:** Touching a participant can calm them down or can make things much, much worse. Always ask first!
- **Eye contact:** Use enough to show you're paying close attention, but not so much that you seem threatening (especially with an angry participant).
- **Take Notes:** It helps you keep your facts straight and lets the participant know you're taking it seriously.



Responding without contradicting is the verbal equivalent of a “45-degree stance”: It avoids confrontation without conceding the point. Here are some tips for doing this:

“Yes, but ...” will lead to argument. Try “Yes, and ...” or just “Yes.”

- “*I love you but I’m upset with you*” is not as effective as “*I love you and I’m upset with you.*”
- Instead of “*I’m not going to do that,*” try “*You’re right, and I can’t figure out how to make that work.*” or “*You’re right. Can you show me how it could work?*”

Don’t contradict.

- “*Wait, I think I might have misunderstood you*” works better than “*No, you’re wrong.*”
- “*Hang on, maybe I wasn’t being clear*” works better than “*No, that’s not what I said.*”

Sometimes, the best way to communicate is by not talking. Silence can be comfortable or uncomfortable: both can be useful in the right situation. Often silent companionship is all that someone needs if they’re stressed out. Uncomfortable silence can be a useful tool for getting people to think about what they’ve been saying or get them to talk more.

## Open and Closed Questions

Open-ended questions invite more participation and detail from a speaker.

- “What are you up to today?”
- “How’s your Burn going?”

Closed-ended questions invite a yes/no or factual answer.

- “Do you understand?”
- “How old are you?”

Both are useful in the right context.

Open-ended questions encourage free communication, closed-ended questions can decrease the level of engagement, which can be useful if you want the person to focus, slow down, or be less chatty.

# Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is restating and summarizing what the speaker is saying without adding anything. This gives the speaker a chance to correct you if you've misunderstood something. It is a helpful tool for active listening.

# Interest versus Position

One of the most useful conflict resolution concepts is the difference between interests and positions.

An interest is someone's underlying need or want. For example:

- *"I've been up all night because the neighbor camp is playing loud music."*

The underlying interest is in getting to sleep.

A position is somebody's stated requirement of how they want to get that interest satisfied. For example:

- *"I need you jerks to turn off your stereo right now!"*

Positions are not always unreasonable, just a difficult place from which to negotiate. Identifying underlying interests can be powerful because it helps people generate more options, and thus makes it more likely that the conflict can be resolved. Focusing on positions leads towards an "I win or you win" situation," focusing on underlying interests leads away from that kind of conflict.

# Observation and Inference

What did you actually see or hear, and what did you believe to be happening based on what you heard or saw? What you "believe" to be happening may not fit the facts and can lead you to ask questions or communicate in a style which might make things worse. Inferences may not always be wrong, and being aware of them may lead to more positive interactions.

# Assumptions and Bias

Inferences can be significantly colored by assumptions and implicit and explicit biases. It is good to be mindful and informed of your biases and how your choices, opinions, and language may be impacted by them. Examine personal assumptions in your attitudes and communication with others.

Reflect and disclose, at least to yourself, your own interests and agendas.

The receivers will quickly tune out if they suspect that you have a hidden agenda. By being self-reflective, aware, and authentic, you will gain credibility, which is essential for effective communication.

Learn more about your implicit biases by [taking the tests from Harvard University](#).

## Empathic Attunement

“Empathic attunement” is understanding somebody else’s emotions and then communicating to them that you understand them.

This is important because feeling understood can be calming/de-escalating for an upset participant, and they are more likely to be open to your input if they feel understood.

The point of empathic attunement is not to talk someone out of how they’re feeling, it’s to tune in to how they’re feeling so you can connect with them and thus deal with them more effectively.

## Emotional Flooding (Triggers)

Emotional Flooding is an experience that can cause a person to react from a place of deep emotion instead of from reason. These events are often referred to as “triggers.” Emotional flooding isn’t caused by minor annoyances or “pet peeves.” Rather, this phenomena can cause a loss of objectivity and self-control, and could therefore prevent you from Rangering effectively. You can be flooded emotionally by:

- Words (e.g., “bitch,” “stupid,” “cop”)
- Actions (e.g., physical violence)
- Situations (e.g., lost children, animal abuse)

Learn to recognize when this is happening, and to acknowledge that you’re losing objectivity. If you are aware of the kinds of words, actions, and situations that might cause you to feel emotionally flooded, share them with your partner at the beginning of your shift. If you find yourself unable to look at a situation from an objective perspective, remove yourself from the situation by kicking it sideways to your partner or to another Ranger team through Khaki.

Expanding your comfort zone is an important exercise, but our commitment to the community and the participants takes precedence over your personal growth. There may be another Ranger better suited to handling that particular situation.

## Conflict Resolution and De-Escalation Tips

- Start by de-escalating yourself.
  - “Am I feeling overwhelmed or charged by this? Did I just get a jolt of adrenaline?”
- When things get heavy, slow down instead of revving up.
  - “Let me breathe for a second and figure out what I want to do here.”
- Everyone thinks they have a good reason for what they do. Most people think they are “right.”
- Remember that there are generally at least three sides to every story; one side, the other side, and the “truth”.
- Use active listening skills.
- Never tell someone to “calm down”; calm them down by your presence and performance.
- When body language and words come into conflict, words will lose every time.
- Use “we” and “us” to generate connections with people.
- Separate arguing people if possible, so you and your partner can talk to them individually.
  - If you have separated participants, be sure to keep your partner in sight at all times.
  - You can separate the people who are arguing by having them face and talk away from each other. This can help calm things down by keeping them out of sight and earshot from each other, while also letting you and your partner keep an eye on each other.
- The less ego you bring to the table, the more control you will have over a situation.
- Be aware of words, issues, and situations that can cause you to feel emotionally flooded.
- Never lose self-control: walk away before you do and defer to your partner.
- Ask involved participants to think about possible solutions (and give them time to do so).
- You move a crowd one person at a time.
- Treat everyone with equal respect.
- Let involved participants or passionate observers have the last word, as long as you have the last action.
- Always keep our social capital in mind when dealing with participants, staff, and outside agencies.
- A useful follow-up: “If you need anything, come find us.” Assuring folks that we are, after all, on their side and that help is available if something important comes up.

Calm people with your presence and actions and example, not by telling them to calm down. It's hard to get people to calm down if you're acting anxious or angry.

A useful warning sign that you may need to kick it sideways, or call another Ranger pair is if you or the participant are starting to repeat yourselves. This may indicate something has gone wrong in the communication cycle. The speaker may feel misunderstood, or you may be getting overwhelmed or over-involved. If this happens, slow down and ask more questions, or kick it sideways to another set of Rangers.

## Self-Care and Responder Trauma

As a Ranger, you will see a side of Black Rock City that you never knew existed. Some of it is really cool, and some of it is very ugly. Mostly, we do nothing. Often, we do something. Rarely, we do very, very intense things. For example, we might deal with injury, sexual assaults, violence, even death.

Mostly, that's not a problem for the Rangers involved; sometimes, it can have unpleasant psychological effects. Having a very strong response to intensely stressful situations is common in people who deal with emergencies (EMTs, firefighters, ER docs, etc.) This is called "responder trauma."

Be aware of the warning signs of a traumatic response:

- *Re-experiencing:*
  - Intrusive, vivid memories of the situation ("flashbacks")
  - Nightmares about the situation
- *Avoidance:*
  - Avoiding things/places/people that remind you of the situation
  - Inability to remember important aspects of the situation
- *Hyper-vigilance:*
  - Unexplained anxiety, irritability, or anger
  - Being easily startled, or having trouble calming down after being startled
  - "Fight-or-flight" response that doesn't go away: sweating, shaking, nausea, increased heart rate

Responder trauma symptoms may be immediate, or you may only notice them after a few days or weeks.

What do you do if you're noticing these signs or symptoms?

- Practice self-care: eat, sleep, exercise, meditate, have a beer, whatever works for you.

- Talk it out (partner, friends, Rangers, Green Dots).

If it's not resolving, contact the OOD or one of the Personnel Managers, or request assistance directly from ESD. If you need help after the event, contact one of the Personnel Managers. There is no stigma attached to responder trauma in the Rangers: you will not get in trouble, and no one will think less of you as a result of talking about what happened. (In fact, it is just the opposite; we expect you to practice effective self-care, and to ask for help with what you need.) Intense situations are rare, and even very intense situations do not usually result in responder trauma. Most traumatic responses resolve on their own with time. However, if it's not getting better, there are simple, effective counseling interventions that can help. If things get weird, we're here for you.

## Open and Closed Questions

Open-ended questions invite more participation and detail from a speaker.

- Example: "What are you up to today?"
- Example: "How's your Burn going?"

Closed-ended questions invite a yes/no or factual answer.

- Example: "Do you understand?"
- Example: "How old are you?"

Both are useful in the right context.

Open-ended questions encourage free communication, while closed-ended questions can decrease the level of engagement, which can be useful if you want the person to focus, slow down, or be less chatty.

## Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is a critical skill that helps with active listening. Paraphrasing is restating and summarizing what the speaker is saying without adding anything. This gives the speaker a chance to correct you if you've misunderstood something.

# De-Escalation

We've already discussed two very powerful de-escalation techniques: listening and empathy. Here are some other tips:

- Start by de-escalating yourself.

*"Am I feeling overwhelmed or charged by this? Did I just get a jolt of adrenaline?"*

- When things get heavy, slow down instead of rev up.

*"Let me breathe for a second and figure out what I want to do here."*

- Separate arguing people.
- Ideally, get them out of each other's sight—while maintaining sight of your Ranger partner.

Calm people with your presence and actions and example, not by telling them to calm down. It's hard to get people to calm down if you're acting anxious or angry.

Never tell anyone to calm down. Ever. Seriously.

A useful warning sign that you may need to kick it sideways, or call another Ranger pair is if you or the participant are starting to repeat yourselves. This may indicate something has gone wrong in the communication cycle. The speaker may feel misunderstood, or you may be getting overwhelmed or over-involved. If this happens, slow down and ask more questions, or kick it sideways to another set of Rangers.

## Transcending the Model

The tools and concepts summarized here and more thoroughly explored in Ranger training stem from our department's ideas about what makes up a "model Ranger." However, it is not effective to have a "model" walking around the playa, thinking about all of their newly learned skills and trying to use them separately and individually.

A Ranger is more than the sum of a set of tools and concepts. A Ranger rises above the prescribed model, integrating and surpassing what they learned in training. By transcending the model, you will live and work within the boundaries of the tool set provided while finding your own style shaped by your gut, heart, mind, and training. You will become even more than the

model Ranger you aspired to be. Transcending the model happens over time. It cannot be forced and it takes practice. All you can do is be who you are and learn from the interactions you have. Be authentic, and Ranger with curiosity and humility. If you are relaxed and not thinking about every move you make, you will be better able to integrate the concepts of Rangering as your own. You are a Ranger, not a walking tool box.



# Behavior Standards

## Harassment

Harassment, as defined within the Ranger Department, is any unwelcome verbal, non-verbal, and/or digital conduct engaged in on account of a person's race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability status, gender, sexual orientation, gender presentation, or marital status, or the perception of any of these.

Sexual harassment, as defined within the Ranger Department, may consist of, but is not limited to, any unwelcome touching, stalking, repeated requests for a date after someone has said "no," continuing to engage in sexual discussion or banter after being asked to stop, or similar behavior. Harassment will not be tolerated, regardless of who engages in it.

## What should you do if you feel you are being harassed?

If you are uncomfortable with the way another Ranger is interacting with you for any reason, one option is to FLAME the situation with that person, as soon as possible after the interaction. In harassment situations, people often do not feel comfortable engaging a harasser directly because of fear, anger, embarrassment, hot button issues, etc. If you are not comfortable addressing the situation directly with the Ranger involved, report it to Khaki.

If you have been harassed, or have witnessed someone else being harassed, and FLAMEing the situation has not worked (or is not an option), you should report this to your Team Lead/Shift Lead. If you are working a dirt shift, request a face-to-face with Khaki.

If you are not comfortable reporting it to Khaki, contact the Officer of the Day or the on-duty Personnel Manager. Personnel Managers are available to all Rangers and work year-round. The on-duty Personnel Manager can be reached by email at [ranger-personnel@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-personnel@burningman.org). In more urgent situations, they can be reached on the radio or paged by HQ Window. If you do not need an immediate response, you can also fill out the Ranger Feedback Form, available via the computers located in the HQ kiosk building.

Gossiping about what occurred, posting about it on Allcom or social media, or taking the matter outside the Rangers is counterproductive and does not ensure confidentiality. You should be aware that anonymous reports are nearly impossible to investigate. Likewise, the Ranger

Leadership cannot take meaningful action when the person making the complaint does not identify the alleged harasser or provide details about what occurred.

## What happens if I make a report?

Reports of harassment are very serious. The Ranger Personnel Managers will investigate reports of harassment and will take remedial measures when appropriate. If you have made a report and are one of the principal people involved, you will be notified of the findings when the investigation is complete.

## Will my report be kept confidential?

Information about harassment reports will be kept confidential and will not be shared outside of the Ranger Council.

The Rangers' policy with regard to sexual harassment or violence in the workplace is one of zero tolerance. We strongly support and adhere to the Burning Man policy. Burning Man is founded on expectations set by the community standards inherent to it.

One such community standard is creating an environment that is free of sexual harassment and violence by volunteers, staff, or vendors. Any reported occurrences will be investigated and regarded with the utmost compassion and gravity. The investigation will follow the guidelines set by the Burning Man Board for conflict resolution. Violation of this policy may result in progressive discipline, up to and including counseling, eviction, termination, or legal action.

## Off-playa Un-Rangerly Behavior

The Ranger ability to get things done is a function of our social capital. Years ago, this social capital might have been predicated solely based on how Rangers conducted themselves on playa. But that has long since stopped being the case. Nowadays, Rangers bring their social capital with them to the playa.

How Rangers treat other community members on or off playa reflects on the Rangers as a whole and has a huge impact on our social capital. If a particular Ranger is widely regarded as a chooch\* in their community, that will be known on playa as well. The net result is a lowering of our social capital and our group ability to be respected, trusted, and taken seriously.

What are the implications of this?

- If someone tells the Ranger Department that one of our Rangers has done something especially choochy off-playa, our Personnel team may investigate and likely reach out for a conversation with the Ranger.
- If the issue is serious, or recurring, the conversation will take an increasingly serious tenor.

Like many things in Rangers, this is often not black and white, and Personnel takes care in handling these reports on a facts and circumstances basis.

We're not going out of our way to look for problems—we're not putting Rangers under a microscope. Most often reports of un-rangerly behavior come from other Rangers and concerned community members. Examples of the types of bad behavior we're talking about include:

- Harassing others online, despite being asked to stop.
- Threatening or assaulting someone.
- Maliciously damaging property.

If you have to pause and try to figure out whether something you are about to do or say might be considered un-rangerly behavior, that is probably a good indication you should refrain from saying or doing it.

## De-Shifting, De-Lamming, and Removal from the Rangers

### Removal from a Shift (De-Shifting)

There are a variety of reasons to remove a Ranger from shift duty. Being relieved from duty can occur when a Ranger is told to take a break and take care of themselves (“compassionate de-shifting”). This is not a disciplinary situation, and is usually a health and safety one.

Un-Rangerly or questionable behavior may also result in a Ranger being removed from shift duty. De-shifting can also happen when an incident has occurred that the Shift Lead, OOD, or Ranger Managers feel needs further inquiry and believe that Ranger should be removed from duty during that period. Removal from a single shift need only involve the Shift Command Team.

## Removal from Rangering the Event (De-Lamming)

De-lamming (removal of the BMID card) can result from a series of incidents or due to the seriousness of a single incident. De-lamming requires the consensus of at least one Ranger Operations or Logistics Manager and the Ranger Personnel Manager. The process follows the on-playa chain of command to determine the appropriate Manager. For incidents that may also require removing the Ranger from the event itself, the same staff removal process that applies to all staff members will be used. The staff removal process is available from the Personnel Managers.

## Removal from the Ranger Organization

The removal of a Ranger from the department falls under the purview of the Ranger Council and generally occurs after the end of the event.

## Ranger Disciplinary Protocols

The full Ranger disciplinary protocols are found in the Policies folder linked from the front page of the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#), and are accessible to all current Rangers.

# Ranger Policies and Procedures

All Black Rock Ranger policies and procedures can be accessed from the home page of the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#) and are available for perusal by all current Rangers.

We've called out some key policies and procedures in this section:

## Training

- All Rangers and Ranger applicants must complete an Online Training Course before being eligible to attend in-person training in a given year.
- All Rangers and Ranger Applicants must attend an annual in-person training session in order to Ranger on playa that year.
- Ranger applicants, Active Rangers who have Rangered on playa for fewer than two years, and Inactive and Retired Rangers need to take the full day of training.
- Active Rangers who have Rangered on playa for 2+ years need to attend the afternoon portion of the training.

For more information about Ranger training, check out our [Training](#) page.

## Ranger Status

Ranger "status" has implications for that individual's annual training requirements, access to Ranger email lists, and whether the Ranger Department will reserve an individual's handle. The Ranger Council reviews and updates the status for all Rangers after each event cycle (or as necessary). You can find a detailed Status Policy in the Policies and Procedures folder, but we wanted to call out a few key ones here:

- **Active:** Has Rangered on playa within the past three events. Active Rangers who have Rangered only 1 year on playa must take a full-day training each year. Active veteran Rangers (Rangered 2+ years on playa) may elect to attend only the afternoon portion of training.
- **Inactive:** Has Rangered on playa within the last 5 events but not during the past 3 events. Must attend a full day of training before returning to Rangering.

- Retired: Has NOT Rangered in the last 5 events. Must attend a full day of training and pass a Cheetah shift before returning to Rangering. The handles of Retired Rangers are returned to the handle pool, unless the handle is vintage.
- Vintage: Vintage is not a status (like Active, Inactive, Retired, etc.) but rather a designation given to a Ranger after displaying extended commitment and dedication to the Ranger Department. A Vintage Ranger's handle will be unavailable for use by others in perpetuity.

Any of the following qualify a Ranger's handle for Vintage status:

- Rangering at 10 events on playa
- Serving on the Ranger Council for at least one year
- Serving as a member of one or more Cadres for at least three years

In addition to the above automatic qualifications, the Ranger Council may designate a Ranger's handle vintage at its discretion.

Active, Inactive, Retired, and other statuses apply to vintage Rangers as they do to all Rangers.

## Returning to the Rangers after an Extended Absence

The Cheetah program reviews Rangers who wish to return to active volunteering with the Black Rock Rangers, either after they have gone into Inactive Extension or Retired status, or after a temporary disciplinary removal.

The Cheetah program is administered by the Mentor Cadre, functions much like Mentoring, and occurs during a regular dirt shift. A returning Ranger completes half the shift with one Cheetah and half with another.

At the conclusion of the shift, if both Cheetahs agree that the Ranger is good to go, the Ranger is returned to active status and can work shifts immediately. If the Cheetahs don't agree, the returning Ranger will be unable to work in the Ranger Department that year, though they may check in with the Ranger Personnel Manager about trying again the following year.

In the event of protracted absences, the Mentor Cadre may ask a Retired Ranger to work a complete Alpha shift before returning to Active status.

# Ranger Social Media Policy

(quoted directly from the Ranger Social Media Policy March 27, 2025)

As Rangers, we witness things during shift that are not meant for public consumption. We are expected to be discreet about them. This has always been a part of our ethos, due to the nature of our role in the community.

Part of our role is to act as rumor control, rather than churning the rumor mill. Even though we have information that others do not, we rarely have the entire story, and the story is often not ours to share.

Please do not post to social media, or discuss outside of the Rangers, things you encounter on shift that are not public knowledge or sensitive or privileged information. Note that social media includes the Black Rock Ranger Facebook group.

Example categories of information that is public knowledge are:

- Things that anyone walking down the street is able to see
- Things publicly available on the internet or in the news

Example categories of privileged information are:

- Information shared on an internal department email list that is not meant for general distribution
- Something you witness because you have special access or proximity to the situation as a Ranger
- Something that you got from the Ranger information systems (e.g., Clubhouse or IMS) that is not generally known
- Other people's personally identifying information

In addition, please be mindful of the fact that if people know you are a Ranger, they often have a tendency to think you're representing Burning Man or the Ranger Department. Anything you say may carry more weight than the average participant. "News" or controversy can be manufactured simply by prefacing any bit of information or opinion with the phrase "Hubcap, a Black Rock Ranger commented...."

Many of us process our personal experiences by posting narratives to social media. This is an area where we as Rangers need to be particularly careful. It can often be hard to disconnect our personal experiences and feelings at an event we witnessed from privileged operational information. Please use caution here before posting. If you need to process something that happened on shift and aren't sure of the best way to do this, please reach out to a Shift Lead, OOD, Green Dot Lead, or Personnel Manager. The Personnel Managers are available year-round at [ranger-personnel@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-personnel@burningman.org). We'll be happy to listen to your experience and help you through it.

## Ranger Logo Usage Policy

(quoted directly from the Ranger Logo Usage Policy March 27, 2025)

### Wearing the Black Rock Ranger logo (in general):

The Black Rock Ranger logo is a tool that signifies your affiliation with the Black Rock Rangers and allows you to dip into the pool of social capital that you and many who have gone before you created.

Because the logo signifies a set of expectations to the public, we expect that while wearing logoed gear you behave in a way that protects and enhances the pool of social capital the logo gives you access to (i.e., don't be a chooch).

### Wearing the Black Rock Ranger logo at events:

It is the policy of the Ranger Department that Black Rock Ranger logoed gear can only be worn during the Burning Man event and at year-round events that are officially affiliated with and sanctioned by the Burning Man organization.

Please don't wear your logoed gear at unsanctioned events where you could be mistaken for someone acting in an official Black Rock Ranger capacity.



# Communication Within the Rangers

## Ranger Applicant News (RAN)

Ranger Applicant News is the email list for Ranger applicants. This is where we post information and reminders about all the things you need to do to complete your Ranger Application Process. This is also a discussion list where you can ask questions that will benefit the entire group.

## Rangers Announce Email List

Rangers Announce is the place where you will get official updates, reminders, and information about stuff that's happening in the Ranger Department.

Once information is sent to the Announce list, you are expected to know it, so it is important to stay subscribed to Announce throughout the year. Shiny Pennies are added to Announce in September, after the event.

Most of the year, Announce is a relatively low-volume list. The traffic picks up a little in September with post-event announcements; around April, as training season begins; and in the summer, as we start gearing up for the event.

## Ranger Allcom Email List

Ranger Allcom is an optional list for Rangers who want to engage in year-round conversation about topics from "How do I Ranger that?" to "I need Rangers for [some Regional Event]" to "What's the best way to cook bacon while in the nude?"

You can unsubscribe from and re-subscribe to this list any time, as long as you remain a Ranger in good standing. **Please review the [Allcom Protocols](#) before subscribing to this list.** Shiny Pennies will be subscribed to Allcom in September. Anyone wishing to unsubscribe is welcome to do so.

## Contacting Individuals and Teams

If you're a Ranger, you can directly contact other Rangers through the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#) by using the Contact Ranger feature any time of year. If you'd like to get in touch with a special team (in general) or an individual on a special team whose handle you can't quite recall, a great way to reach them is to email the Cadre for that team—they're listed in the front of this manual, as well as in the "How to Join Special Teams" document, linked from the home page of the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#).

If you have a question about a policy or would like to talk to someone about changing something within the Ranger Department, email the Ranger Council at [ranger-council-list@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-council-list@burningman.org). To reach the Personnel Managers, email [ranger-personnel@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-personnel@burningman.org).

## Joining Ranger Special Teams

Interested in getting more involved with the Green Dots, Trainers, RNR, or any of our Ranger Special Teams? Check out the How to Join Ranger Special Teams document, linked from the front page of the [Ranger Secret Clubhouse](#).

# The Ten Principles of Burning Man

## Radical Inclusion

Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community.

## Gifting

Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

## Decommodification

In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. We resist the substitution of consumption for participatory experience.

## Radical Self-Reliance

Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise, and rely on their inner resources.

## Radical Self-Expression

Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of an individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

# Communal Effort

Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote, and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction.

# Civic Responsibility

We value civil society. Community members should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to other participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state, and federal laws.

# Leaving No Trace

Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

# Participation

Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work. Everyone is invited to play.

# Immediacy

Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience.

# The Black Rock Desert

The Black Rock Desert is part of the Black Rock Desert/High Rock Canyon/Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area (NCA), which encompasses about 1.2 million acres of protected land, including the 11 designated wilderness areas that surround the NCA.

## The Playa

The playa, the vast expanse in which Burning Man is situated, is just one small part of the NCA. It is about 32 miles long, stretching from Gerlach to the Black Rock. Because Black Rock City has grown tremendously in size since the inception of Burning Man, it can be challenging to see past the City into the Desert. Rangers have traditionally been caretakers of the land in addition to the people who inhabit it. Knowing your way around the desert can be a real asset even in the middle of the City. [This map](#) shows some points of Rangerly interest in the Black Rock Desert.

## General Orientation

The playa has a few entrance roads from Hwy 34, interestingly, all of which are marked and named for their distance from Bruno's Restaurant in Gerlach, NV! There is a 3 mile entrance, which is closed to burner traffic during the event. Gate Road comes off of the 8 mile entrance to the playa. The 12 mile entrance (accessed from inside the city from 7:00 through Point 1) is used for BRC access by vendors, law enforcement, and the DPW. Ranger vehicles with a logo can also use this road if needed. All persons passing through Point 1 during the event require a Point 1 wristband or pass.

Black Rock City's 12:00 generally points northeast. Facing north, the mountain range to your right (east) is the Jackson Range. On the playa itself, there is a "desert highway" that runs north-south along the east side called the East Track. This is one of the playa highways used in the dry months for getting around the desert. Great care should be taken when traveling on, and looking for, the East Track. Due to water runoff conditions, the Jackson Range side of the playa is usually the softest and easiest to get vehicles stuck in. Next to the East Track are railroad tracks. The East Track runs nearly parallel to the railroad in this part of the desert.

On the other side of the railroad is the legendary Jungo Road. Though it would seem that it would be a good idea to head towards the railroad tracks and Jungo Road if you are lost on the playa, that is most often not the case, as you are more likely to get your vehicle stuck in soft playa, and if you are going to Gerlach or Empire, it is definitely the long way around. Heading

towards the Granites (see below) is a better course of action, as the playa generally is firmer on that side. Further, Jungo Road can be surprisingly dangerous if not driven with care; it is winding, bumpy, and tire-popping, and there have been many fatal accidents there.

## The Granites

If you stand in Gerlach and face toward Black Rock City, the range to your left (west) is the Granites, and the road running along that side of the playa is called the West Track. Take your time when traveling onto the playa as you cross the West Track. It is an old wagon trail that the pioneers used and is a very historically significant rut.

The tallest peak in the area is located at the southern (Gerlach) end of the Granites and is called Granite Peak, with an elevation over 9,000 feet. Granite Peak cannot be seen from the town of Gerlach because of other smaller mountains in the way. There is another smaller mountain range that is north-by-northwest from the playa called the Calicos, named for its incredible swirled colors of orange, yellow, white, and gold.

## Old Razorback

When looking at the Jackson Mountains (east), there is one mountain that stands out in the foreground. It comes to an even peak and is not attached to the rest of the range. This is Old Razorback, an excellent landmark indicating the 3:00 side of the City. At the base of Old Razorback, look for dark trees; they indicate the location of Frog Pond, one of the local hot springs. The north end of Old Razorback's base is where Trego (another hot spring) is located.

## The Black Rock

The namesake of the Black Rock Desert is actually one of the smaller landmarks in it. Look north, way out past the outer playa and you'll see a range of mountains. In the foreground, there is a shorter, smaller, darker mountain. This is the Black Rock, a volcanic hill on the edge of the playa and home to Black Rock Hot Spring, a popular stopping point for emigrants headed west on Emigrant Trail during the late 19th century. In fact, next to the hot springs lie the remains of an old shepherd's wagon from times past.

# Rendezvous Point

Rendezvous Point, where the Cassidy Mine Road from Soldier Meadows hits the playa, is about 3.3 miles north of the 12 Mile entrance at approximately 40.81685N, 119.22262W, or in degrees-minutes-seconds, 40° 49' N, 119° 13' 21" W. Rangers use this site currently for the 4th of July Ranger training.

# Dog Camp

About a mile north of the 12 mile entrance (on the west side of the playa) is a popular camping area called Dog Camp. Years ago, Rangers used this site for the 4th of July Ranger training. Dog Camp has a hillside behind it with three horizontal purple stripes.

# Steamboat Mountain

Further north than Dog Camp, also along the west side of the playa, is a free-standing hill called Steamboat Mountain, named for its resemblance to an old steam-powered riverboat. It sits alongside Soldier Meadows Road in a saddle between the Black Rock playa and the Hualapai flat. There is a large hump at one end, followed by a long, flat top that then angles down. Steamboat Mountain looks different depending on where you are on the playa, and its apparent shape from any particular vantage point can be helpful in determining location and orientation on the playa.

# Glossary

Despite our preference for plain English on the radio, the Rangers have a rich history of colorful slang. Below is a brief compendium of Ranger jargon, as well as a guide to some useful terms frequently used by Rangers and other departments.

**Admin (aka Ranger Admin):** Ranger radio channel used for lengthier, less-urgent conversations. “Take it to Admin.”

**Adopt-a-Shift:** Started in 2008 as “Adopt-a-Grave,” a program where sub-groups of Rangers (such as, New York Rangers, Women of Khaki, Pacific NW Rangers) agreed to staff a graveyard shift to help ensure adequate coverage. Over time, “Adopt-a-Grave” became “Adopt-a-Shift”, and now usually applies to afternoon and swing shifts adopted by sub-groups including “BIPOC of Khaki,” and “Afrikaburn Orange.”

**Allcom:** [1] Used to indicate that a department-wide radio broadcast is about to happen and you should stop and listen (as in, “Allcom, Allcom, we have a lost child”). [2] An optional email list for Rangers who want to engage in year-round conversation on a variety of topics.

**Alpha:** A Ranger applicant who has passed training.

**Applicant:** Any member of the public who has applied to be a Black Rock Ranger in the present event cycle.

**Art car:** A highly decorated car, truck, or bus. Also called a mutant vehicle.

**Art of Rangering:** The set of mental awareness and behavioral skills that enable one to function as a Black Rock Ranger.

**Agency:** [1] Law enforcement or other organization. [2] The ability of an individual to make his or her own choices.

**Announce (aka Ranger Announce):** Email list where Rangers receive official updates, reminders, and information about stuff that’s happening in the Ranger Department. All Active Rangers need to be subscribed to Announce.

**Baker Beach:** San Francisco beach where Burning Man originated.



**Berlin:** Name of the Ranger Outpost station on the 3:00 side of Black Rock City (B for bottom).

**Binaries:** Collective term for Ranger Applicants, Alphas, and Rangers with one year of experience.

**Bio-break (also, bio):** A trip into a “blue room,” during which one will be off-com (away from your radio).

**Black Hole:** Gate, Perimeter, and Exodus’s headquarters, bar, and camping area on playa, located near the commissary at 5:45 and D. See Lighthouse.

**Black Rock:** [1] A large dark rock formation north-east of BRC. [2] Call-sign for Emergency Services Dispatch, operated by ESD and available on channel BRC 911 (almost always contacted through Khaki).

**Black Rock Hot Springs:** Natural hot springs located near the Black Rock.

**BLM:** Bureau of Land Management, the federal government agency that administers public lands, including the Black Rock Desert.

**Blue Dot:** Archaic. Member of ESD, sometimes used to request medical assistance over the radio when discretion is required. (Even more Archaic: a Ranger with medical training, before ESD split off from the Rangers.) See also: Yellow shirts.

**Blue room:** Porta potty; a small, blue, prefabricated shelter containing toilet facilities.

**BMID:** The Burning Man IDentification card that all Rangers receive and wear while on shift.

**BMIR:** Burning Man Information Radio, 94.5 FM, Burning Man’s public service and emergency broadcast system.

**BMP:** Burning Man Project, the name of the organization that puts on the Burning Man event.

**Bonked:** Did not pass mentoring.

**BRAF:** Black Rock Arts Foundation, a non-profit supporting community-based art that generates social participation off the playa.

**BRARA:** Black Rock Amateur Radio Association, a non-profit that provides year-round ham radio access on the playa.

**BRC 911:** Radio channel used to contact ESD (though Rangers will almost always request ESD through Khaki).

**Bunkhouses:** Quiet and cool places for Graveyard shift Rangers to sleep prior to or after their shift. Located at Ranger Camp Moscow and Outposts Berlin and Tokyo.

**Burn, The:** [1] The burning of the man (q.v.), usually taking place on Saturday night, with one notable historical exception. [2] The Burning Man festival as a whole (see also TTITD).

**Center Camp:** Large circular area and structures located in the center of Black Rock City, extensively marked with colorful flags. It is considered impolite to laugh when people ask for directions to find it.

**Cheetah:** Member of the Mentor team who helps evaluate Rangers returning to active duty after a hiatus.

**Chooch:** [1] The entropic tendency for things to break, decay, or become disordered, which is often accelerated by conditions in the Black Rock desert: "My bicycle chain got chooched." [2] Jackass, jerk; a person who acts inappropriately, despite knowing better: "Don't be a chooch."

**CIT:** Crisis Intervention Team, the crisis professionals of ESD's Mental Health Branch (MHB).

**Comm (sometimes plural, comms):** Communication, or the radios by which such communication is transmitted.

**Commissary:** The central cafeteria where Burning Man staff eat, usually unmarked and located on 5:30 between 'E' and 'F'. Meal pogs are used here to get meals.

**Cruise Director:** Member of the Ranger Shift Command Team responsible for pairing up shift teams and deploying them to an area of the city for patrol.

**D-lot:** A temporary parking area near the gate. Used as a holding area for staff and participants who have issues with early arrival approval and as long-term parking of mutant vehicles who have lost the privilege of driving within the city. Staffed by the Gate team.

**Danger Ranger:** Founder of the Black Rock Rangers.

**Darkwad:** An unilluminated participant. When Rangers find darkwads, asleep or otherwise not moving in a vehicle or pedestrian area, they often mark them with spare or borrowed glowsticks.

**Depot:** DPW's material & vehicle staging area and home of DPW dispatch. Located at the outer end of the 5:30 road.

**DMV:** The Department of Mutant Vehicles (DMV) is responsible for licensing vehicles on the playa including staff, mutant vehicles, and for disabled persons. They perform year-round activities to support this function.

**Donner Award Candidate (AKA Darwin Award Candidate):** An individual or group who pushes the limits of personal survival through stupidity, inattention, or just bad luck during the Burning Man event.

**Double Hot:** A boiling hot spring located in the mountains beyond the north end of the playa.

**DPW:** Department of Public Works, the Burning Man department that builds the City's physical infrastructure.

**DPW Ghetto:** Where many of the DPW camp during the event, located at 5:45 & D.

**DV (or Delta Victor):** Domestic violence.

**Emotional Flooding:** A heightened emotional state resulting from a specific situation or word (for example, bitch, stupid, lost child, and so on.).

**ESD:** Emergency Services Department.

**ESD 911:** [1] Synonym for Black Rock, the callsign for the ESD Dispatcher on duty. [2] Prior to 2014, the name for the radio channel used to reach ESD Dispatch.

**Esplanade:** Innermost walkway facing the Man in BRC. Vehicles are not allowed to drive on the esplanade—the esplanade is only for pedestrians and bicycles.

**Field Support:** A Ranger team that provides a broad range of logistics support to the Rangers including stocking Ranger HQ and the outposts with water and electrolytes and delivering snacks and coffee to Rangers out at stationary positions like burn perimeters.

**First Camp:** Where members of the Org and some senior staff members camp, located near Center Camp behind the bone tree. First Camp is unmarked and not listed on maps available to the general public.

**FLAME:** The acronym used to describe the basic and essential Ranger approach and mediation framework: Find Out, Listen, Analyze, Mediate, and Explain.

**Frog Pond:** A warm water artesian pond where frogs were raised in the 1950s; also known as bordello springs by burners and the Gerrit Ranch by locals. Closed during the event.

**Fly Hot Springs:** A hot water geyser surrounded by several large man-made pools. Closed during the event.

**F.O.L. (“Friends of Larry”):** Participants who use (real or alleged) connections to senior staff to try to access perks (see above, chooch).

**Gate** (also, colloquially, “gayte”): [1] the entrance to Black Rock City. [2] The department that staffs that entrance (see also GP&E).

**Gator:** Four-wheeled vehicle used by Ranger teams to get around the city when pedal power isn’t enough. Part of a motor pool managed by the Shift Command Team.

**Greater Spire:** DPW-built, Lamplighter-hung lamp post with four lanterns (as opposed to the regular two-lantern spires). Greater spires are used only along the main processional between Center Camp and the Man, and are excellent navigational devices in whiteout conditions, when intoxicated, and after the Man is burned.

**GP&E:** Gate, Perimeter, and Exodus.

**Green Dot:** [1] A member of the Ranger peer-counseling team. Also used generically for “mental health problem” over the radio, to avoid freaking out participants (as in, “I’ve got a green-dot situation here.”). [2] A cocktail made with vodka or gin and limeade frequently served at the 10-7 Lounge (q.v.).

**Harvey, Larry:** Late founder & director of Burning Man, radio call-sign “Swordfish.”

**Hat Rack:** Ranger chill space located at Ranger HQ. Also where Alphas check in and start their Alpha mentoring shift

**Heat Exhaustion:** A condition when the body overheats. Symptoms may include heavy sweating and a rapid pulse. Heat exhaustion is one of three heat-related illnesses, with heat cramps being the mildest and heatstroke being the most serious.

**HQ Kiosk Building:** The building at Ranger HQ where Rangers have access to a computer and can sign up for shifts and confirm their schedules (See “Kiosk”).

**HQ Window:** The building at the front of Ranger HQ where Rangers check in and out of shift and receive their shift radio and meal pogs among other administrative services.

**ICS:** Incident Command System, an action plan to be used by the Rangers and other departments in the event of serious emergency. If you’re interested in learning more about the ICS, FEMA provides free training [here](#).

**Intercept:** Ranger team that focuses on vehicle safety.

**Intersectionality:** A concept that describes the ways in which systems of inequality based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, class, disability and other forms of discrimination combine, or “intersect,” to create unique dynamics in the spectrum of experiences between privilege and oppression in individuals and groups.

**Jackrabbit Speaks:** Internet-based newsletter produced by the Burning Man organization.

**Khaki:** [1] A member of the Ranger Shift Command team acting as dispatcher; monitors communications and coordinates Ranger activities throughout Black Rock City. [2] (Sometimes plural) The tan-colored clothing Rangers wear when on duty.

**Khaki Dot:** A mental point at which a Ranger understands the philosophy and concepts of being a Black Rock Ranger, that is, “Gets it.”

**Kidsville:** A theme camp that works together to take care of kids. All Kidsville kids are issued a wristband that helps in identifying them and who their parent/guardian at the event is. Kidsville is not a drop-off daycare center!

**Kiosk:** A workstation on playa where Rangers have access to a computer and can sign up for shifts, confirm their schedules, and make IMS entries. Kiosks can be found at Ranger HQ, Outpost Tokyo, and sometimes, at Outpost Berlin.

**LE:** Law enforcement.

**LEAL:** Law Enforcement Agency Liaison, a Ranger team that specialized in interfacing with Law Enforcement prior to 2022. Now part of the Troubleshooters Team.

**LEO:** Law enforcement officer.

**Leopard:** Member of the Mentor team.

**Lesser Spire:** DPW-built, lamplighter-hung lamp post with two lanterns; this is the most common style of lamp post.

**Lighthouse:** Perimeter's radar tower, located within the Black Hole. Useful as a landmark, since the rotating thingy up on top of it is quite distinctive.

**LLC:** Limited Liability Company; Black Rock City, LLC was the legal entity that produced the Burning Man event and is now owned by the non-profit Burning Man Project.

**Man, The:** The large, wooden, humaniform statue located at the center of Black Rock City.

**Meal pog:** See Pog.

**Mentoring:** The process by which Alphas are coached and evaluated prior to being invited to join the Rangers.

**Moonwalker:** A participant who walks out onto the playa, away from camp at night with no flashlight, usually in an altered state of mind; "wow-look-at-all-the-pretty-stars" is often heard from moonwalkers.

**Moscow:** Ranger camp near Center Camp (M for middle).

**Old Razorback:** Distinctively shaped mountain closest to BRC on the east side of the playa, and a handy landmark for navigation after the Burn when the signs are gone.

**Operators:** Rangers who monitor and log radio traffic during the event.

**Outposts:** See Ranger Outposts.

**Outpost Zero:** Intercept's command center, a khaki-colored shipping container located a few hundred feet off the promenade, halfway between the man and the temple, on the 10 o'clock side.

**OOD:** Officer of the Day. A very experienced Ranger who advises the Shift Command Team, represents the Rangers to other departments, and helps handle complex ongoing incidents.

**Participant:** Everyone in Black Rock City. (See also, Spectator).

**Personnel Manager(s):** The Ranger Council member(s) responsible for personnel issues.

**Playa:** Spanish word for beach; refers to the Black Rock Desert upon which Black Rock City is built.

**Playa Chicken:** A rare species of vicious, carnivorous chickens reputed to live in the Black Rock Desert. Strange or inexplicable phenomena are sometimes attributed to playa chickens.

**Pog:** A ticket that entitles the bearer to a resource such as a meal or a shower.

**Points 1-5:** Coordinates that describe the corners of the pentagonal trash fence around the city; used (especially by Intercept and Perimeter) to describe locations on the outer playa.

**Point 1:** Base of operations for perimeter; staff gate, controlled with wristbands, accessed by Haul Road from the 12 mile playa entrance.

**Project, The:** Term for the Burning Man Project; organization name.

**Promenade:** The spire-lined pathways that lead out to the Man from the Esplanade at the 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, and 9:00 positions.

**Quadrants:** Used by Intercept to describe areas of the inner playa. Also used to describe areas of the Man burn perimeter.

**Radio codes (also called 10-codes):** Numbers used to shorten and clarify radio messages. Rangers avoid using codes because they aren't known to all Rangers and because there are English terms ("copy," "say again") that are just as brief.

**Radio handle:** A pre-approved nickname used by a Ranger for radio and other communications. Also referred to as a "callsign".

**Radio protocol:** A clear and simple set of rules to make radio communications efficient and effective.

**Ranger HQ:** The primary base of operations for the Rangers, located on the Esplanade.

**Ranger Operations Center (ROC):** The primary location of Shift Command during the event, the ROC consists of the Khaki shack, the Operator container, and the Officer of the Day office, as well as a computer kiosk for entering incident reports for lengthy or complicated calls.

**Ranger Outpost:** A publicly accessible contact point for Rangers and participants; see Berlin, 3:00 and C, and Tokyo, 9:00 and C.

**Rampart:** Main medical tent on the Esplanade at 5:15.

**Razorback:** See Old Razorback.

**Repeater:** A radio system that rebroadcasts radio transmissions so that they can be heard by other Rangers on playa.

**RIDE:** Radical Inclusion, Diversity and Equity. Burning Man's commitment to expand the participation of BIPOC communities, and to foster diversity in the policies, programs, and processes within our organization and events.

**RNR:** Rapid Night Response, a bicycle-mobile Ranger team specializing in getting qualified Rangers to serious situations fast, amidst the challenging and complex nighttime environment.

**Rocket run:** Term used for a quick driving trip to the Black Rock Desert and then back home, usually within a 24-hour period.

**RSL:** Ranger Shift Lead.



**RSCI:** Ranger Shift Command Team Intern; pronounced “risky.”

**Rumor control:** The technique of managing and controlling information that may be false or harmful to the community.

**Runner:** Participant seeking to cross a burn perimeter to commune with the pretty flames.

**SAT:** Survivor Advocacy Team (previously called the Sexual Assault Team), a special Emergency Services Department subteam that supports the survivors of sexual and domestic violence, and related situations. A specialized part of CIT.

**Sandman:** A Ranger who is positioned behind the main perimeter line of a burn to stop runners.

**Shiny Penny:** Affectionate term for a first-year Ranger.

**Shift briefing:** A chance for patrol Rangers and the Shift Command Team to check in and communicate about city-wide issues at the beginning of a shift.

**Shift debriefing:** A chance for patrol Rangers and the Shift Command Team to check in and communicate about shift issues after a shift.

**SITE team (Set-up, Infrastructure, Tear-down, Egress):** The team that builds and tears down Ranger Outposts & HQ before and after the event.

**Solifuge:** A swift, non-poisonous, nocturnal insect that thrives on the playa during the dry season, taking refuge in the larger cracks during the day.

**Spectator:** A derogatory term for someone who has come to Burning Man to see things, rather than participate in the community. (See also, Participant)

**Stick, The:** A large, wooden effigy at the center of the city, usually burned on Saturday night (see “Man, The”).

**Stick duty:** Rangering the area immediately around The Man.

**SA (or “Sierra Alpha”):** Sexual assault.

**SV (or “Sierra Victor”):** Sexual violence.

**Ten-code:** See Radio codes.

**Ten-Seven Lounge:** Bar at Ranger Outpost Tokyo; name originates from the radio code for “out of service.”

**Trego trench:** A long, hot springs-fed ditch created by Southern Pacific with a backhoe in the 1950s.

**The Way It Is (“TWII” or “twee”):** [1] a document describing how things will work at the event. Available at HQ and distributed via Announce. [2] Archaic: a staff meeting to develop such a document.

**Tokyo:** Ranger outpost on the north side of Black Rock City (T for top). 9:00 and C.

**Troubleshooter:** An experienced Ranger who has demonstrated outstanding Rangering skills in a variety of situations, selected by the Command Team to receive additional training and assist with incidents.

**TTITD:** That Thing in The Desert (that is, the entire Burning Man Event).

**VC:** Volunteer Coordinator.

**Verbal judo:** A set of skills/technique to deflect verbal attacks and control verbal communications during an emotional situation.

**White-out:** A dust storm that produces near-zero visibility.

**Yellow shirts:** Slang term for ESD personnel (Emergency Services Department).