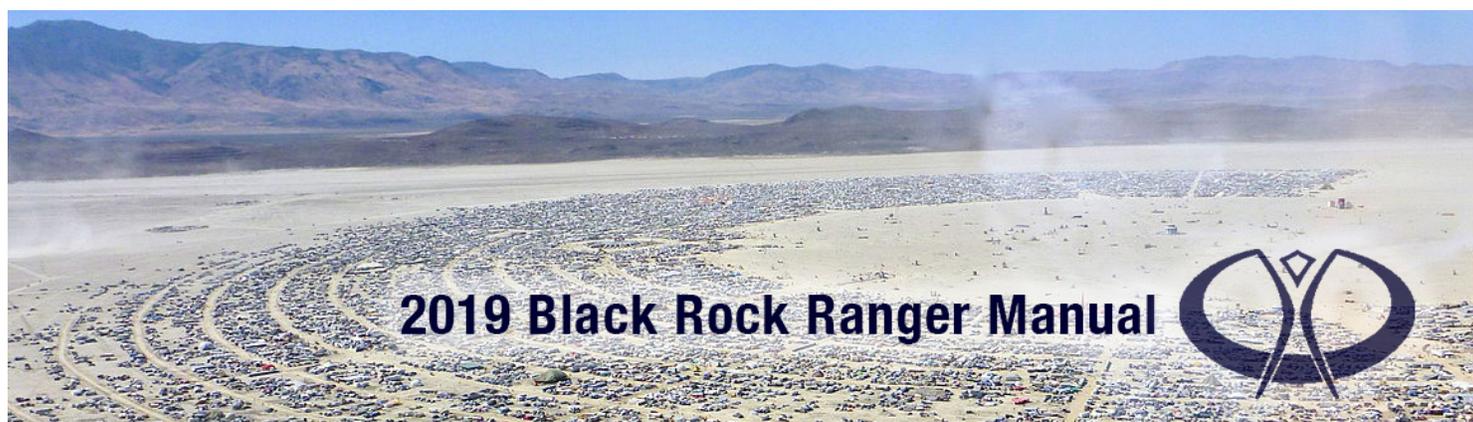


# 2019 Black Rock Ranger Manual



"...I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around—nobody big, I mean—except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff—I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy. But that's the only thing I'd really like to be."

—J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*

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# About The Black Rock Ranger Manual

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 particular circumstances to choose a different course of action, and Rangers are expected to use their best judgment in determining what to do.

The photographs in this document are used with permission of the original photographer. Rangers who are not pictured are noted by the citation “<sup>NP</sup>” after their name. Any questions or concerns about any of the photographs used in this manual should be directed to [Ranger Saturn](#)

This document is written and produced by the Ranger Training Academy.

Editors: Ahimsa, Roslyn, Saturn, & Stegosaur | Layout: Saturn

All inquiries, questions, and comments should be directed to [ranger-trainingacademy-list \(at\)](#)

burningman.org.

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**v16.0/0422FG3.0**

# Black Rock Ranger Organization

## 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 Organization. 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 at [<handle>@burningman.org](mailto:<handle>@burningman.org) (for example, contact Roslyn for anything communications-related).

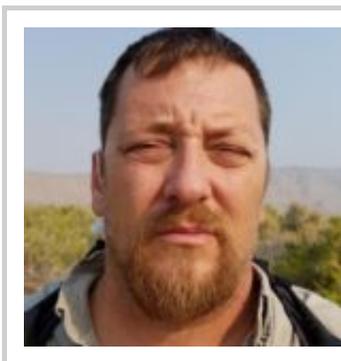
## 2019 Ranger Council



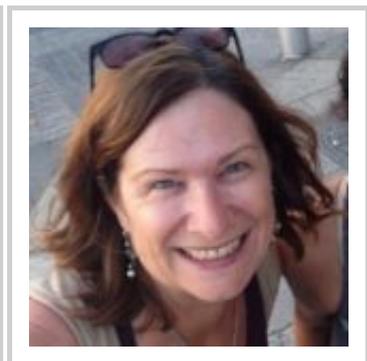
*Tool*  
*Department Manager*



*Safety Phil*  
*Deputy Department  
Manager*



*Crow*  
*Operations Manager*



*Peaches*  
*Operations Manager*



*Wavelet*  
*Intake Manager*



*Chameleon*  
*Logistics Manager*



*Roslyn*  
*Communications Manager*



*Flint*  
*Personnel Manager*

### **Ranger Operations Team**

Various teams within the Ranger Organization require year-round coordination to administer, plan, and carry out their work at the event. These leadership groups are generally called Cadres, and are made up of experienced Rangers from the team.

The Ranger Ops Team is comprised of representatives from each Ranger Cadre. The mission of the Ops Team is to align with the Council on strategic, budgetary, and event-wide issues. The Ops Team allows representatives from Cadres to connect and consult with each other on operational issues to maximize effectiveness, ensure transparency, allow for checks and balances, and ultimately foster a sense of teamwork through information sharing and mutual support. Contact the Ops Team Chair (Zeitgeist) if you are interested in sitting in on an Ops team meeting with any questions about the Ops Team at [zeitgeist@burningman.org](mailto:zeitgeist@burningman.org).

### **2019 Ranger Ops Team Reps**



*Zeitgeist*  
*Ops Chair, Regional Ranger  
Network*



*Uncle Dave*  
*Burn Safety*



*Easy E*  
*Command Cadre*



*Mankind*  
*Gerlach Patrol*



*Tribeca  
Green Dots*



*Boiler  
Echelon*



*Socrates  
HQ*



*Grooves  
Intercept*



*Pocketpunk  
Law Enforcement Agency Li-  
aision (LEAL)*



*2Step  
Mentors*



*SlipOn  
Officers of the Day (OODs)*



*Sundancer  
Rapid Night Response (RNR)*



*Sinamox  
Sandmen*



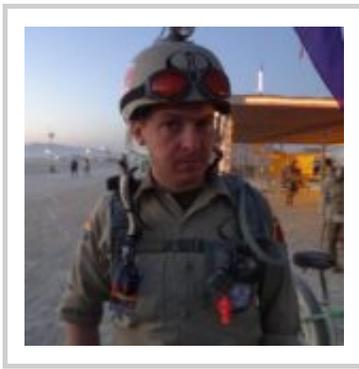
*Santa Cruz  
Setup, Infrastructure, Tear-  
down, Egress (SITE)*



*Young Frankenstein  
Tech*



*Saturn  
Training Academy*

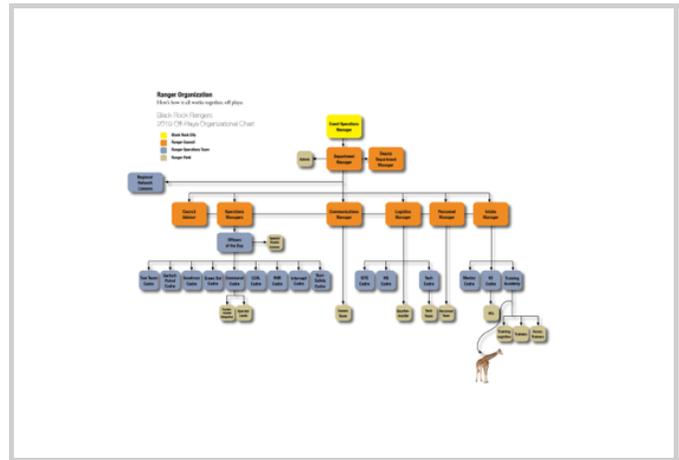
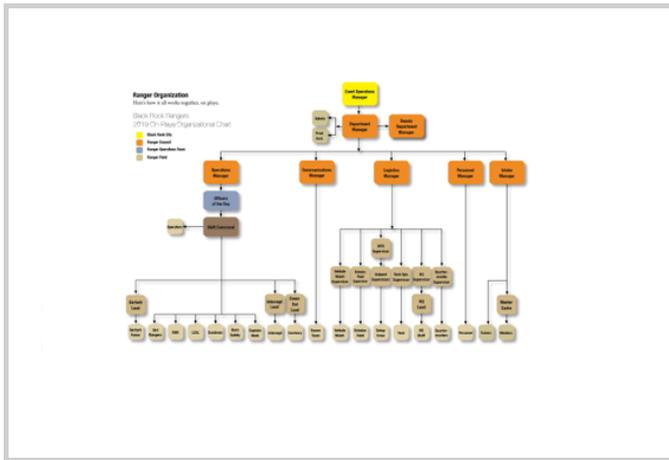


*Threepio*  
Volunteer Coordinators



*Tranquillea*  
Ops Scribe

### On and Off-playa Organizational Charts (click to zoom in)



### Ranger Cadres and Teams

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 (e.g. 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 the Ranger Special Teams document on the homepage of the Secret Clubhouse, contact the Cadres, or get in touch with the Ranger Volunteer Coordinators to see what opportunities are open.

**All email addresses below are @burningman.org.**

#### *Burn Safety Team*

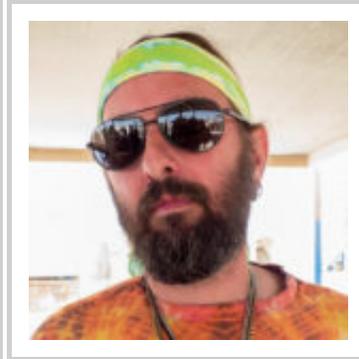
The Burn Safety Team coordinates with the BRC Fire Arts Safety Team and Emergency Services department to help deal with all large burns. We wrangle all Ranger burn perimeters as well as providing advice and support for individual artist burns when requested. If it is on fire, odds are we are there. For 2019, the Burn Safety Cadre is Fuzzy, Uncle Dave, and Rooster. Contact: ranger-burn-safety-cadre-list@

#### *Art Car Wranglers*

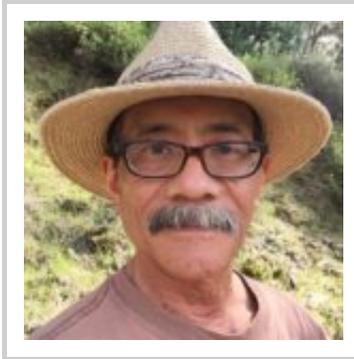
A subteam of Burn Safety, Art Car Wranglers are bike-mobile Rangers that set and maintain a safe perimeter for all art cars attending major burn events. The essential elements of every Wrangler are great situational awareness, a willingness to actively engage participants, and an ability to be Ranger-calm and creative in the midst of real chaos. The Art Car Wranglers are managed by Rooster. Contact: [ranger-burn-safety-cadre-list@](mailto:ranger-burn-safety-cadre-list@).



*Uncle Dave*



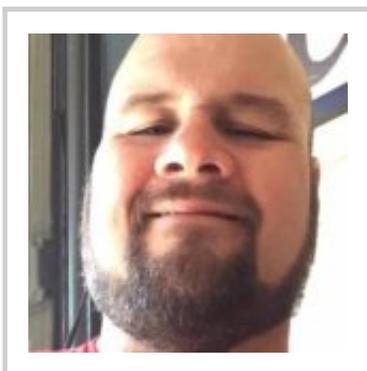
*Fuzzy*



*Rooster*

### *Captain Hook*

Captain Hook is the group call sign of the team that operates 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 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 direct to Captain Hook unless Khaki advises you to do so. The 2019 Tow Truck Cadre is Creech and Po-Boy. Contact: [ranger-tow-truck-cadre-list@](mailto:ranger-tow-truck-cadre-list@).



*Creech*



*Po-boy*

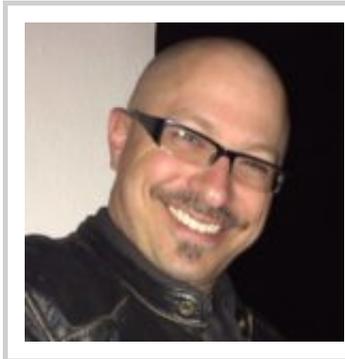
### *Ranger Shift Command*

Ranger Shift Command is comprised of Officers of the Day (OODs), Ranger Shift Leads (RSLs), Operators, Troubleshooters, and RSCIs. These teams are responsible for the smooth running of on-shift operations and supporting Rangers in the field. The Shift Command Team is managed by the Command Cadre, that

works year-round to develop and implement policies in an iterative process involving the Cadre, the Ops Team, and the Council. The 2019 Command Cadre is Beast<sup>NP</sup>, Crow, Easy E, Foofurr<sup>NP</sup>, Judas, and Librarian. Contact [ranger-command-cadre-list@](mailto:ranger-command-cadre-list@).



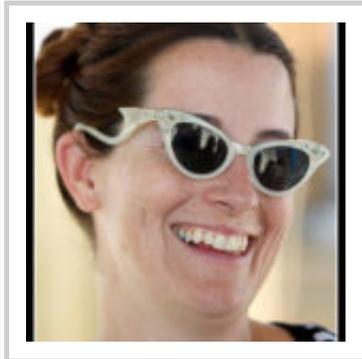
*Crow*



*EasyE*



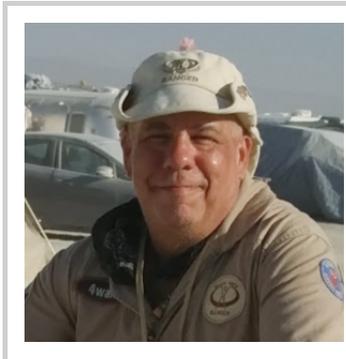
*Judas*



*Librarian*

### *Gerlach Patrol*

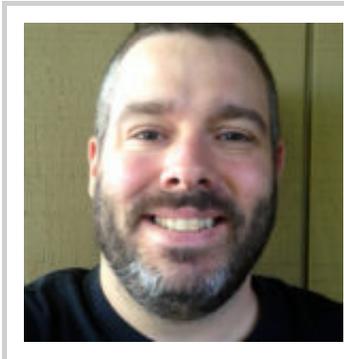
Gerlach Patrol leaves the event to perform Ranger skills and de-escalate situations in Gerlach, thus building Social Capital in the Gerlach community. The Gerlach patrol is a very unique ranging opportunity that will challenge even the most seasoned Ranger with its diverse spectrum of cultural convictions. The 2019 Gerlach Patrol Cadre is Forward, Frosty Paws<sup>NP</sup>, Hobbit, Limoncello, Mankind, President, and Pucker-Up. Contact [ranger-gerlachpatrolcadre-list@](mailto:ranger-gerlachpatrolcadre-list@) with questions or comments.



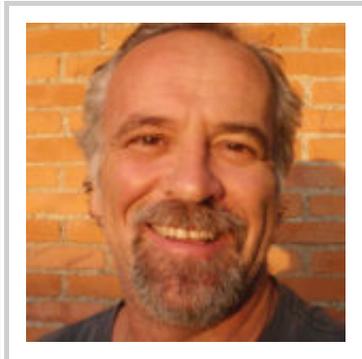
*Forward*



*Hobbit*



*Limoncello*



*Mankind*



*President*



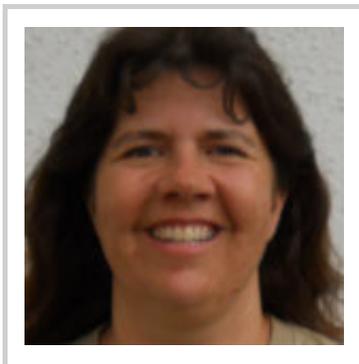
*Pucker-Up*

### *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 which 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.

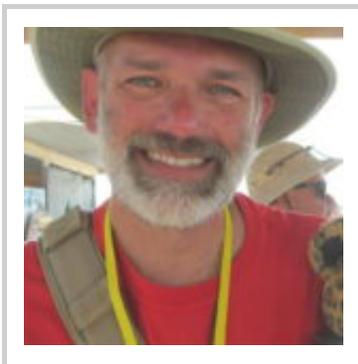
For 2019, the Green Dot Cadre is Esoterica, Monkey Shoes, Mendy, Nobooty, and Tribeca. Contact: [ranger-greendotcadre-list@](mailto:ranger-greendotcadre-list@).



*Esoterica*



*Monkey Shoes*



*Mendy*



*Nobooty*



*Tribeca*

### *Hot Springs Patrol*

As part of Burning Man’s agreement with the Bureau of Land Management, the hot springs sur-

rounding the Black Rock Desert must be protected from overuse.

For many years now, Black Rock Rangers have partnered with Earth Guardians as drivers of the Hot Springs Patrol van. We travel out of the city into the open playa to deliver volunteers to Double Hot, Black Rock, and Trego hot springs, three times a day, every day the event is open. If you would like to become a Hot Springs Patrol driver, please contact wunderpants at burningman dot org.



*Wunderpants*

*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. For 2019 the Intercept Team is Beast<sup>NP</sup>, Buick<sup>NP</sup>, Buzcut, Bystander, Crow, Grooves, Mailman, Nosler<sup>NP</sup>, Reno, and Tahoe<sup>NP</sup>. Contact [ranger-intercept-list](#) comments or questions.



*Buzcut*



*Bystander*



*Crow*



*Grooves*



*Mailman*



*Reno*

## LEAL

LEAL is the acronym used to identify Rangers who work as Law Enforcement Agency Liaisons. On the radio, the on-duty LEAL lead is Zebra 1, with other LEAL teams Zebra 2, 3, etc. As Black Rock City has grown in size and Burning Man has grown in visibility, working with and having a positive relationship with Law Enforcement has become more important. The LEAL team plays a crucial role in this area. LEAL Team members work with law enforcement and agency personnel to attain the best possible alignment between the needs of the Burning Man Project and the citizens of Black Rock City. For 2019, the LEAL Team is Action Jack, Chilli-dog<sup>NP</sup>, Lady Frog, Pocketpunk, and Rat Bastard. For questions about LEAL, Contact [ranger-leal-cadre-list@](mailto:ranger-leal-cadre-list@).



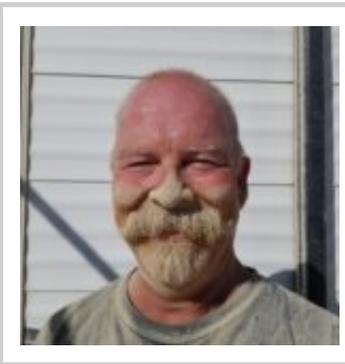
*Action Jack*



*Lady Frog*



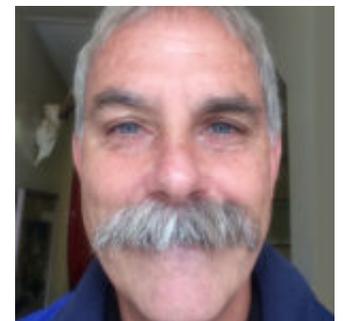
*Pocketpunk*



*Rat Bastard*

## Leave No Trace

LNT deals with environmental compliance issues. If you like geocaching, hide & 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. Contact [indiapale](mailto:indiapale@burningman.org) at [burningman.org](http://burningman.org) with any questions.



*India Pale*

## Logistics

The Logistics Team supports the logistics of Ranger field operations. These Rangers attend to Ranger infrastructure and support needs before the event, during the event, after the event, and in the year-round planning season. The tasks performed by Logistics are time-sensitive, behind-the-scenes, fun, chaotic, and sometimes surreal. Rangers



*Chameleon*

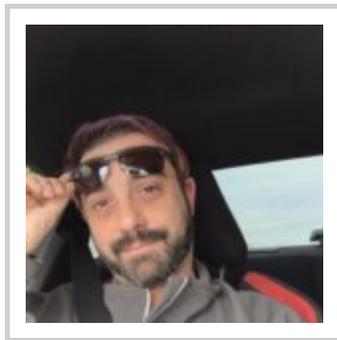
working Logistics will interact with other Burning Man departments, connect with the community, and gain insight into the inner workings of Black Rock City. Logistics is comprised of five sub-teams: HQ Echelon, Field Echelon, Vehicle Maintenance, Quartermaster, and SITE (Setup, Infrastructure, Teardown, Egress). The 2019 Logistics Team is led by Chameleon (chameleon at burningman dot org).

### *Echelon HQ*

The HQ Echelon Team serves many vital functions, including working in the HQ Office to provide event and shift check-in & check-out, HQ operations, scheduling, database updates, reporting, and a fair amount of Rangering from the window. The HQ Team is also responsible for distributing Rangers their radios and BMIDs. HQ Echelon is located at Ranger HQ. For 2019, the HQ Cadre is Abakus, Codec, Grofaz, Homebrew, Mailman, Nobooty, Socrates, and Tranquillitea. Contact [ranger-hq-cadre-list@](mailto:ranger-hq-cadre-list@) with comments or questions.



*Abakus*



*Codec*



*Grofaz*



*Homebrew*



*Mailman*



*Nobooty*



*Socrates*



*Tranquillitea*

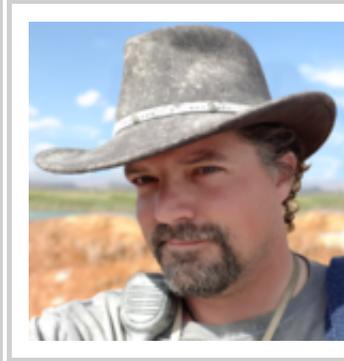
### *SITE*

The SITE Crew is responsible for marshaling resources from within the Ranger department (as well as other Burning Man departments) to ensure that the physical plots of Ranger HQ and Outposts are constructed, operate properly during the event, and then disappear into the dust (well, back into the containers) after the event, leaving no trace that the Rangers were there. The Logistics office is located at Outpost Tokyo, though during the event many Logistics

services operate out of HQ. The 2019 SITE leads are Chameleon, Corax, Kermit, Lodestone, Santa Cruz, and Saudade. Contact [ranger-site-list@](mailto:ranger-site-list@) with questions or comments.



*Chameleon*



*Corax*



*Kermit*



*Lodestone*



*Santa Cruz*



*Saudade*

### *Echelon Field Team*

The Field Echelon Team provides a broad range of logistics support to the Rangers including, among other services, stocking HQ and the outposts with water and electrolytes and delivering snacks and coffee to Rangers out on burn perimeters. Field Echelon is mobile and traverses the city and inner playa several times each day. The 2019 Field Echelon Team is led by Boiler. Contact boiler at [burningman dot org](mailto:burningman dot org) with questions.



*Boiler*

### *Quartermaster*

The Quartermaster Team stores and distributes a variety of items including: Ranger schwag, Ranger appreciation apparel, and Ranger apparel and BMIDs for the newly-minted Shiny Pennies. The Quartermaster also stores and distributes common supplies used by multiple Ranger teams. The Quartermaster is located behind the HQ Echelon Building. The 2019 Quartermaster Team is led by Miss Piggy

(misspiggy at burningman dot org).

### *Vehicle Maintenance*

The Vehicle Maintenance Team ensures Ranger vehicles are properly maintained and in peak operational performance. Vehicle Maintenance is located at Ranger Outpost Tokyo. The 2019 Vehicle Maintenance Leads are Curious George<sup>NP</sup> and Lapman<sup>NP</sup>.



*Miss Piggy*

### *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. The 2019 Mentor Cadre is 2Step, Brightheart, Siggo, and Sinamox. Contact [ranger-mentorcadre-list@](mailto:ranger-mentorcadre-list@) with questions or comments.



*2Step*



*Brightheart*



*Siggo*



*Sinamox*

### *Officers of the Day*

The Ranger 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). Contact [ranger-ood-list@](mailto:ranger-ood-list@) for more information. Our OODs are Beast, CCSallie, Crow, Keeper, Peaches, Safety Phil, SlipOn, Splinter, Tulsa.

*Deputy Officer of the Day (DOOD)*

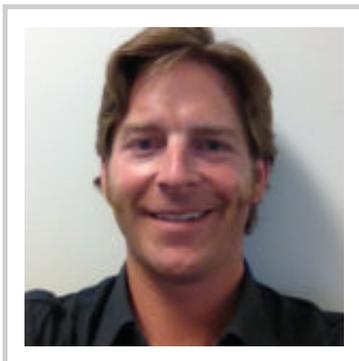
The DOOD acts as the OOD's partner during the regular course of the OOD's duties, answers for the OOD when the OOD is unavailable, and takes on various assignments from the OOD as needed. The DOODs are Apparatus, EasyE, Fuzzy, K8, and Tao Skye.

*Operators*

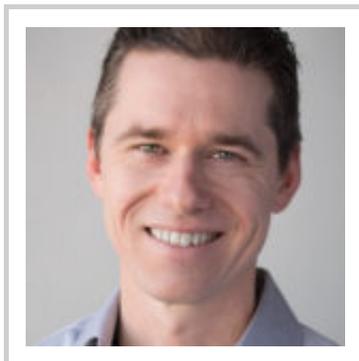
The Operator team monitors and logs Ranger radio traffic and keeps track of open incidents. One or more Operators are always on duty to assist the Shift Command Team with their informational needs and follow-through on incidents. The 2019 Operator Leads are Coal Smoke, Firefly, Librarian, and Smitty. Contact [ranger-operator-lead-list@](mailto:ranger-operator-lead-list@) for more information.

*Rapid Night Response (RNR)*

Rapid Night Response's role is to get qualified Rangers to serious situations fast, amidst the challenging and complex night-time environment of Black Rock City. Providing quick emergency responses, or even just being aware of where you left your beer, over a large area of intense activity like BRC is a unique challenge. In 2000, a team of qualified Rangers calling itself Rapid Night Response found that by incorporating the skills of the city bike messenger in coordinated patrols, they could respond faster and with an amplified degree of organization, filling a niche between the wandering Ranger and the wait for resources. Members of RNR are required to exhibit a high level of teamwork, endurance, and commitment. RNR kicks the helpful Ranger ethic into high gear when it is needed most desperately, concentrating the wide vision and light touch of the Rangers on situations that are quickly becoming "SITUATIONS!" The roving wheels and intuitive perceptions of the RNR team is embodied in the motto: "We were there ten minutes ago." RNR's Guiding Core is Farmer<sup>NP</sup>, Loki, Porcupine, Silent Wolf<sup>NP</sup>, and Sundancer. Contact [ranger-rnr-active-list@](mailto:ranger-rnr-active-list@) for questions.



*Loki*



*Porcupine*



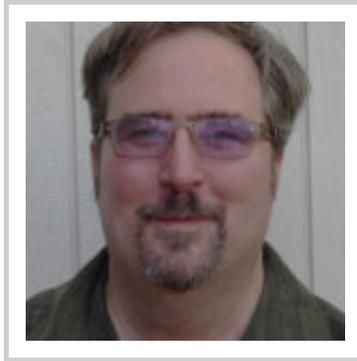
*Sundancer*

### *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. The Regional Ranger Network is managed by Diver Dave and Zeitgeist. Contact: [ranger-network-list@](mailto:ranger-network-list@).



*Diver Dave*



*Zeitgeist*

### *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. The 2019 Sandman Cadre is Dustoff, Lodestone, Roadrash<sup>NP</sup>, Sinamox, Urchin, and Vegas<sup>NP</sup>. Contact [ranger-sandman-cadre-list](mailto:ranger-sandman-cadre-list) for more information.



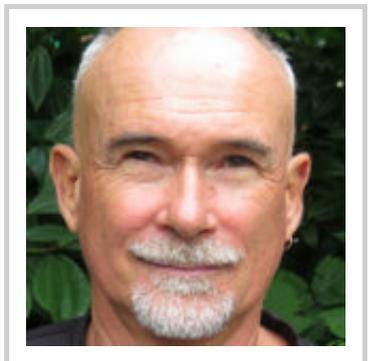
*Dustoff*



*Lodestone*



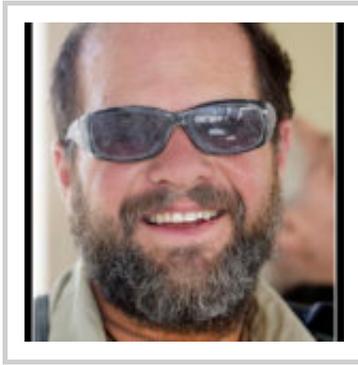
*Sinamox*



*Urchin*

### *Tech Team*

The Tech Team supports the Rangers’ geektastic needs. Obtaining, squishing about, 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. The 2019 Tech Cadre is Citizen, Corax, Safety Phil, Stonebeard, Tool, and Young Frankenstein. Contact [ranger-tech-cadre-list](mailto:ranger-tech-cadre-list) for questions.



*Citizen*



*Corax*



*Safety Phil*



*Stonebeard*



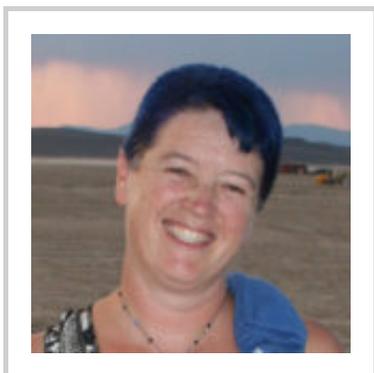
*Tool*



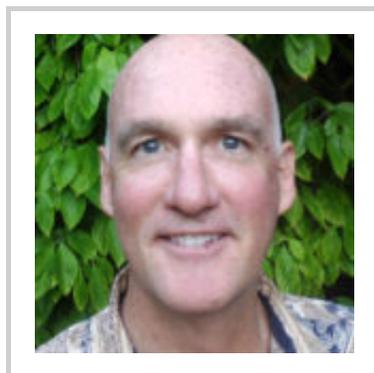
*Young Frankenstein*

### *Training Academy and Trainers*

All prospective and current BRC Rangers must attend a training each year that they intend to Ranger on play to refresh their skills and receive that year's updates. Black Rock Ranger Trainers deliver Ranger trainings across the country, from early May to late August. The Ranger Trainer 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 this manual, a short Field Guide, and self-study Advanced Ranger Trainings (ARTs). The Trainers and Training Academy are supported by the Training Logistics team. The 2019 Training Academy is Cobalt!, Fortress, Martin Jay, Roslyn, Saturn, and SciFi. Contact [ranger-trainingacademy-list@](mailto:ranger-trainingacademy-list@) for more information.



*Cobalt!*



*Fortress*



*Martin Jay*



*Roslyn*



*Saturn*



*SciFi*

### *Training Logistics Team*

The Training Logistics team assists the Training Academy by organizing and scheduling their trainings, managing printing, and shipping training materials to the sessions. The 2019 Training Logistics Team is Kimistry<sup>NP</sup> and Fishfood<sup>NP</sup>. Email [ranger-training-logistics-list@](mailto:ranger-training-logistics-list@) for more information.

### *Volunteer Coordinators*

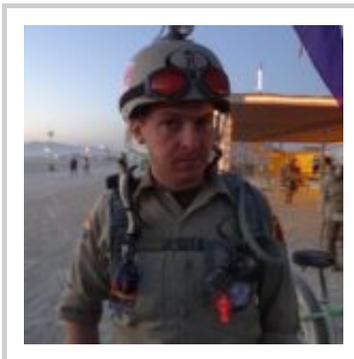
Volunteer Coordinators (VCs) are usually the first people applicants come into contact with, and are always available to veterans with ideas and concerns. VCs field inquiries from prospective Rangers and get them started with the process of becoming a Ranger. In addition, VCs manage a broad and diverse number of projects and off-playa functions such as staff credentials, tickets, early arrival, and parking passes, Thank You cards, radio handle assignments, and Ranger schwag. 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 most active pre-and post event. The VCs are quite often where Ranger volunteers first start contributing back to improving the overall Ranger organization. The VC Cadre for 2019 is Hold Me Closer, Miss Piggy, and Threepio. Contact [ranger-vc-cadre-list@](mailto:ranger-vc-cadre-list@) with questions or comments.



*Hold Me Closer*



*Miss Piggy*



*Threepio*

# Who We Are and Where We Came From

## *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 (e.g., the Texas Rangers, Arizona Rangers, etc.).

In 1992, Danger Ranger founded the Black Rock Rangers. The Rangers served a search-and-rescue function in the Black Rock Desert before Burning Man had fences or streets, finding lost participants and returning them to their camps. This 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 population. In 1996, several accidents and incidents gave rise to concerns about community safety. 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 grows larger and more diverse, the role of the Rangers is becoming more critical than ever before.

## *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 board 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 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.

Rangers work with all participants, as well as emergency services and law enforcement agencies, to help facilitate a positive experience. When needed, Rangers support the tenets of the community and help participants remember their obligation to each other by enforcing its principles. Rangers use non-confrontational communication whenever possible to encourage cooperation and help create a safe environment.



*Danger Ranger, Photo by*

# 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 the entire time you are doing it.”

Other pieces of Ranger Culture include a certain amount of reflective navel gazing, and 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.

In the spirit of growth and getting better, we invite feedback on defining Ranger Culture (email [ranger-trainingacademy-list@](mailto:ranger-trainingacademy-list@)).

# Social Capital

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

The Black Rock Rangers have cultivated our social capital 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, thus we have, over time, built up a lot of social capital.

Because of the Rangers’ social capital, participants and staff will listen to you 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 your assistance and pay attention to your input.

When Rangers are perceived as helpful, effective, collaborative, professional, and impartial (i.e., high social capital), we will be listened to, taken seriously, and trusted.

When Rangers are perceived as authoritarian, uptight, entitled, unprofessional, or incompetent (i.e., low 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. 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 that we're here for them, and show them by your actions that we are a resource they can trust.

*Previous:* < Home | *Next:* Shift Structure and Expectations >

# Ranger Shift Structure and Expectations

## Ranger Shift Structure

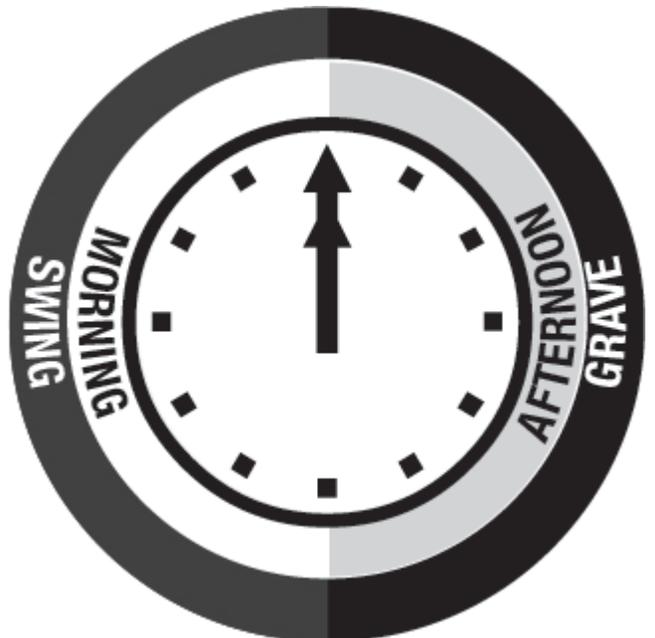
Rangers patrol Black Rock City 24 hours a day, during, before, and after the event. A Ranger's day is organized into four six-hour shifts:

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

Graveyard and morning shifts are often hard to fill, while afternoon and swing shifts fill up easily. Also, shifts later in the week tend to be harder to fill than shifts earlier in the week. If you can work a graveyard or morning shift, or shifts later in the week, please do so.

### 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 HQ window, at the ROC kiosks, or via the Clubhouse if you have internet access. Please do any schedule adjustments at least an hour before your shift begins. Note that some shifts may 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 HQ window while on playa.

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

Once situated, check in at the Ranger HQ in 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. Schedules for daily shifts are posted at Ranger HQ, along with any changes in protocols or procedures.

Once 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.**

### **Who's Khaki?**

Khaki is the collective radio call sign of the Ranger Shift Command Team (the on-duty Ranger Shift Leads). There are usually between two and eight 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 given 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.

Almost all operational 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 is where Rangers are paired, assigned a section of the city, and sent out on patrol.

Rangers always patrol in pairs, never alone. **Your safety and your partner's safety are always your top priority.** Use your time at HQ before 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 cruise direction, and sometimes you may end up with a new partner in the moment—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 pair with other bike-mobile Rangers and foot-mobile with foot mobile.

Rangers are especially encouraged to walk a shift with a Ranger you 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.

Each Shift Lead performs Cruise Direction in a slightly different manner. Typically it begins with a short shift briefing, in which Khaki introducing the other on-duty Shift Leads (Khakis), Troubleshooters, and Green Dot Leads, and lets the Rangers know about any ongoing issues of which they 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 Black Rock City. Other goals include ongoing mentoring of less-experienced Rangers, so often 1-3 year Rangers are paired with more experienced Rangers. It's best to stay flexible during this process. Just because you start doing one thing in Black Rock City doesn't necessarily mean, you'll be there at the end.

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 shift.

### **Shift Summary and Responsibilities**

When on shift, you are not off-duty until released by Khaki. Circumstances may 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 and with Khaki, 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 notepad paper that you hand to the Operators, or a typed report at the IMS kiosk at the ROC.

Good incident reports should include the "Big Picture" elements such as:

- Background, what lead up to the incident?
- What happened
- Real and playa names of participants and staff involved

- Where and what time did this happen?
- What actions you and others took
- Where things were left (e.g., if promises were made to check in on the camp in 24 hours or any arrangements or agreements made)
- Descriptions of individuals involved, if relevant (e.g. 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 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 may 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:**

- 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 citizens 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 may either provide advice on how to handle a situation or, if the situation warrants it, may 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 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 explodes with color and variety, the tan colored Ranger uniform stands out by blending with the playa. New Rangers will be issued a wide-brim hat, a khaki shirt with Ranger insignia, and a Burning Man ID (BMID) laminate upon passing their Alpha shift. These clothing elements, along with your shift radio, make up the Ranger uniform which serves to identify you to the citizens of Black Rock City as a Ranger resource. Rangers must be in uniform (hat, logoed shirt, BMID, and radio) while on duty.

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 own 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.

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 (e.g., camouflage) is not appropriate. Rangers on duty should not dress in a sexually provocative manner: it's not about you.

**While in Uniform:** A Ranger in uniform, visibly displaying Ranger logos on their person or property (e.g., 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 as well.

Note that the ability for Rangers to be effective relies on the social capital they 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 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 the 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 makes 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 in Uniform*

All 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 & 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 from 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.

### *UnRangerly Behavior*

The Ranger Department takes incidents of unRangerly behavior, in and out of uniform, very seriously and the Shift Lead Team and Ranger Personnel Manager will follow up on any reported incidents.

UnRangerly or questionable behavior may also result in a Ranger being removed from shift duty, or from Rangering the event. Please see the [UnRangerly Behavior](#) section for more information.

### *Compassionate De-Shifting*

Being relieved from shift duty sometimes occurs when a Ranger (generally one that 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 situation, and is more of a health and safety one.

## Ranger Resources

### **Ranger HQ**

Ranger HQ is comprised of several buildings and structures, including the Echelon office, a shaded area in front known as the “Hat Rack”, the Green Dot Sanctuary domes, and the Ranger Operations Center, aka the ROC, consisting of the Khaki shack, the Operator container, and the Officer of the Day office, as well as a kiosk for entering incident reports for lengthy or complicated calls. HQ is the first and last place you’ll visit during a shift. For participants, HQ is a convenient place to find Rangers. HQ is located at 5:45 and Esplanade.

### *Ranger Kamp Moskow*

Ranger Kamp Moskow, located at 5:30 and B, is a working camp for Rangers who choose to gift enough shifts (generally 40+ hours) that being basically co-located with HQ helps them to help the department.

Please keep the noise down when going through Kamp Moskow—it’s full of exhausted workaholic Rangers.

### *Ranger Outposts*

Tokyo and Berlin are Ranger Outposts. These are places where participants can go to find Rangers without going all the way to Ranger HQ. Each Outpost consists of a public lounge area, shade structure, burn barrels and a water supply. Outposts also have a supply of fresh radio batteries and copies of personal-use camera

agreements, law enforcement feedback forms, and incident reports.

Tokyo is located at the “top” of the city at the 9 o’clock plaza, and Berlin is located at the “bottom” of the city at the 3 o’clock 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 participants 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.

### *Bunkhouse*

The Ranger Bunkhouses are located at Ranger Kamp Moskow at 5:30 & B, Outpost Tokyo and Outpost Berlin. Ranger Bunkhouses are available for Graveyard shift Rangers to get some sleep before or after their shift in a quiet cool place—bring your own pillow and blanket. Other Rangers may use the Bunkhouse, as long as space remains available for Graveyard shift Rangers, in the following priority order:

- Rangers after or prior to other Ranger shifts.
- Rangers needing a quick nap.
- Rangers needing a temporary place to sleep upon arrival or prior to departure from Black Rock City.

### *Commissary*

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

### *Sanctuary*

Sanctuary is a safe haven for individuals who need a calm place away from the high-stimulus environment of Burning Man. Sanctuary is located directly behind Ranger HQ and staffed by Green Dot Rangers. Sanctuary’s services are confidential and its 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, in most Green Dot calls, not a necessity. Use your discretion when suggesting or accessing Sanctuary as a resource. Sanctuary should not be used as a “drunk tank.”

[Home](#)

# Radios

Rangers have radios to connect them with the Ranger Shift Command Team, with other Rangers, and with 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 work 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 quickly develop the ability be aware of your surroundings in Black Rock City while simultaneously following Ranger 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 acknowledgment, it means that Khaki did not hear you, or is not ready to take your call. Wait a moment and try again before proceeding with your traffic.

## *Effective Radio Use:*

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



Five key steps to making a good radio call:

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

**LISTEN** 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 once, 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** Push the button on the side of your radio or shoulder mic to let the system know that you want to transmit.

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

**TALK** Speak 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.

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.

#### *Resource Request Protocol*

In a situation where you have requested a resource or called in due to some extended situation, Khaki needs to know the situation has 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 has 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. Err on the side of over-enunciating 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, Delta, Echo, Foxtrot, Golf, Hotel, India, etc.; see glossary for the complete alphabet), 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.

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, stop transmitting for a couple seconds and take your finger off the button, to let other urgent traffic break in. If nobody jumps in with something urgent, continue your message.

**Break Break Break:** 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 offender.

**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 one-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 going 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. A general rule is that we don't say anything on the radio that we wouldn't want to see on the front page of the *New York Times* the next day. That said, whenever possible we use plain English to improve the clarity of our communications.

Avoid saying 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** a participant's condition. Instead, describe symptoms and severity.
- **Drugs** (by name or generically), "overdose," or "high." Again, 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 Khaki. See the section on evictions for more information on evictions.
- **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: they probably don't want their name on the front page either.



**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 may be assigned to one channel and Rangers in the other half may 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 staff to use to get in touch with Ranger Management, someone from Ranger Logistics, or specific Rangers by name. If a staff member 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.

**CSD Placement:** 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 Dispatch 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 help them out by contacting 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 fill out a form stating 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 single 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 out 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 certain Rangers for the duration of the event (based on the number of hours worked 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.

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, we do hope that Rangers will, within their discretion, act appropriately.

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# Situations You'll Encounter

## Arriving on Scene

The first Ranger on scene will often be in the best position to start defusing the situation. Usually, the very first thing to do is NOTHING. In Rangering, "doing nothing" is a verb. It is not a passive acceptance of a situation unfolding. Rangers often see a situation and see nine different ways that it might be resolved right off the bat. However, based on the way the situation unfolds, dictated by the participants involved, a tenth resolution can be divined that everyone involved can agree to.

Time is on your side. Observe, listen, and get a feel for what is going on. Assess the situation: is the scene safe? If medical assistance is needed, or if there is a safety issue, notify Khaki. If safety is not at issue, the first step of dealing with a critical situation is cooling things down.



**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.**

The Ranger, who may look from the outside like they are "doing nothing" is actively engaged in re-framing the situation by being aware, empathic, creative, and honorable.

*"Don't underestimate the value of doing nothing, of just going along, listening to all the things you can't hear, and not bothering." – Winnie the Pooh.*

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 necessary, advise Khaki, and additional Rangers will be sent as available.

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 affected 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 as discussed in the Ranger Training. 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.

#### *Tips for Being on Scene in a Conflict*

If two participants are yelling at each other, consider asking them to separate; you can talk to one, and your partner can talk to the other. Once separated, keep your partner in sight at all times.

Ask the person if they feel okay. If the answer is no, then ask them where they would like to go, or what they would need to feel okay. Try to accommodate them. If necessary, use your radio to clear the location you want to move to. 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 say “No” to any offer you make, including food or drink. Allow the person to maintain as much control as they can over themselves and the interaction. Generally the more in control a person feels, the better they are at coping with the situation.

One-on-one interaction with the person is important. One Ranger speaking with one participant at a time is less threatening. Introduce new Rangers into the situation carefully and by their Ranger name. Keep bystanders away, especially from behind the participant involved.

One of the worst actions a Ranger can take when entering a situation, whether on first contact or as back up, is to run in and try to take over. Also counterproductive is multiple Rangers arguing 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.

Defer to a more experienced Ranger, Troubleshooter, or a Shift Command Team member if requested. They are there to help; we are all on the same team with the same goals.

Whenever dealing with a naked participant in a crisis or compromising situation, a Ranger of the same gender as

the participant should be present. If you need a Ranger of another gender, ask Khaki to send someone to your scene.

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.



**IF THE SITUATION ESCALATES, DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT KHAKI FOR ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT. NEVER FORGET TO MAKE YOUR 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.
- For your own safety—surprising someone with a sidearm 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, in case they get spooked by anything.

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, LEAL (Law Enforcement Agency Liaisons) Team members, 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.**

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

## Intervention and Escalation

We talked about "first do nothing." But sometimes we need to do something. In general, we start with the least intrusive intervention (unless it's an emergency) and move to more direct interventions if/when it becomes necessary.

There is a spectrum of intervention techniques, from less intrusive to more intrusive like this:

- Do nothing, say nothing, quietly observe.
- Say hi and/or introduce yourself. (This can be a very subtle intervention; just by calling attention to your presence you can influence things.)
- "Sorry to bother you, are you doing ok? Do you need any help?"
- "Hey, could you do me a favor?" (A very polite request; makes it clear it's strictly optional for them to comply. It's a favor, after all.)
- "You should know that if you do this..." (Explain consequences)
- "Please don't do that." (Directly request action)
- "I need you to stay back / slow down / not drive here." (Demand action)
- STOP!" (Urgently demand action in a dangerous situation)
- Physical intervention for safety if necessary and all else fails.

## Reporting/Radio Contact

It is imperative that you maintain radio contact with Khaki, as your radio is your link to the rest of the Rangers. Your safety and your partner's safety are always your top priority. Do not put yourself in harm's way. In hazardous situations, backup will be sent if requested (including law enforcement personnel if required). Most likely, Khaki will ask you to simply stand at a safe distance and observe/report while Khaki coordinates the response. However, if you become unable to step back from the situation due to sudden changes in circumstances, report that you have become involved and then move in and attempt to address the situation.

Before leaving the scene, make sure that all parties understand the resolution. You might need to keep Ranging in order to arrive at an ending place.

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.

## Must-Reports — 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 (generally to Khaki who is part of the Shift Command Team) for assistance when appropriate. There are, however, situations in which the Ranger Department requires that Rangers report what they observe to the Shift Command Team immediately.

The requirement to report is in place to ensure that the Burning Man organization 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 Command Team. 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 LE or medical.

*Must-Reports:*

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

**Reporting requirements apply at all times to any Ranger while on duty in any role within the department.**

*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.

In all other cases, use plain English to clearly explain what the situation is, and, if you know them, what 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 UN-RANGERLY BEHAVIOR AND CAN RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION, UP TO AND INCLUDING PERMANENT REMOVAL FROM THE RANGER DEPARTMENT.**

***Lost and Found 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. Immediately call in that a child is missing. Use “**break break break**” to interrupt other radio traffic if necessary.
2. While Khaki is notifying other departments on different radio channels, gather essential information from the reporting participant:
  - Name, age, height, weight, eye, hair, and skin color and clothing worn
  - Location and time last seen
  - Names of parent/guardians and their camp location (if known)
  - Relationship of reporting participant to child (if not a parent/guardian)
3. 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.
4. Clearly and slowly transmit essential information to Khaki.
5. Stay with the parents/guardians and stay available on the radio for Khaki.
6. All other Rangers should keep the channel clear except for emergencies.
7. All other Rangers should write down the info and 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.
9. **Rangers may not release a child without the okay of a Ranger Shift Lead and Law Enforcement on scene.**

### *Found Children*

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.” 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. Examples of situations that require intervention: the unaccompanied child appears to be lost, 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.

Try to gather the following information from the child:

- 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.

When handling a found child episode, a **Ranger must never be alone with the child**. Make sure that the child is always with a pair of Rangers; if you don't have a partner (are off-duty, separated from partner momentarily, etc.), enlist a nearby participant to hang out with you until you can get a Ranger partner.

### ***Domestic Violence***

You may encounter situations in which:

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

### **Any of these are must-report situations.**

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 even dating, or
- If they are family, or
- Are or have ever been roommates.

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

If you suspect a domestic violence situation but are not able to make a positive determination, call Khaki and say that in plain English. Likely this means a Shift Lead or Troubleshooter will come to you to help you make a determination.

Once you have satisfied yourself that you are dealing with a domestic violence situation, then, after making sure that the scene and the victim are safe, you must 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 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 victim 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), de-

scription (physical and clothing), current location, and camp location.

5. Do not ask the victim to tell their story, as that can be traumatizing. If the victim *\*wants\** to tell their story, listen and take notes.

If you are at the scene where the incident occurred, do not touch or disturb the scene.

6. 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 our location.
7. Make sure the scene is safe and stay with the victim 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 victim.

Remember that ANY physical assault 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.

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-report situations.** In such situations, after making sure the scene and victim are safe, you must follow these steps:

1. Ask if anyone needs medical.
2. Ask if the victim would like to speak with Law Enforcement.
3. Let the victim know you would like to bring a member of the Survivor Advocacy Team (SAT) to the scene.
4. Call Khaki and request a Sexual Violence or SV response at your location: "Khaki, I need sexual violence response at <Location>". 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. Request medical if needed, and Law Enforcement if the participant would like to speak to them.
6. Do not ask the victim to tell their story, as that can be traumatizing. If the victim *\*wants\** to tell their story, listen and take notes. If you are at the scene where the incident occurred, do not touch or disturb the scene.
7. Khaki will activate the sexual violence protocol, which will result in a member of Shift Command and the Survivor Advocacy Team rolling to your location, as well as medical and Law Enforcement, if requested.
8. Make sure the scene is safe and stay with the victim 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 victim.

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

When caring for the victim, some tips:

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

### ***Medical Emergencies***

Rangers who encounter participants having medical 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 (**regardless** of their off-playa certifications), **ESD does** . Think of calling for medical as if you would call for 911 in the default world. If a participant can walk to a medical station (escorted or otherwise), they don't need medical rolled. 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:

1. When you arrive and assess that medical is needed on scene.
2. When medical arrives.
3. When medical has released you and you are ready to continue your patrol.

**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 treated at home (band-aid, etc.).**

Rangers may administer first aid until medical arrives at the scene, and will not terminate care, but will hand over care to medical. CPR and rescue breathing are considered first aid. So in an emergency situation, while waiting for a medical response team to arrive, you can provide these services if you're trained to do so.

When calling Khaki to requesting 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:

- Severe 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., golf cart or 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**, please 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 both ESD and 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 can easily see 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. Describe what is happening in terms of symptoms (dry skin, lowered level of consciousness, burns) rather than making diagnoses (dehydration).

# Other Situations You'll Encounter

Oh, the places you will 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 which 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. Rather, 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.

## ***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 section on Captain Hook).

When dealing with blockages, always call the Operators and ask them to 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 or use the radio to request assistance for the participant on the Lockout/Tow channel on the Ranger bank. 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 critical medications in the car). In such situations, call Khaki and explain what's going on.

## ***Catastrophic Events***

In the 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.

## ***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
- Allowing them 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” in order 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 necessitate spending more time than you might normally expect to. 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 someone who is distressed or disoriented 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 dealing with these participants, use the Ranger skills. Finding out and Listening become incredibly 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.
- Maybe ask if they are actually 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, or if after trying, you don’t feel like you are able to handle the situation, we have your back.

Get on the radio and tell Khaki that you would like Green Dot support at your location.

Green Dot Rangers may give you some advice, work with the participant at your location, or walk them back to a dome behind Ranger HQ called Sanctuary that provides a quiet space to 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 is there to support you.

- 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, on the controller, and on the operator's person. 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 and 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 it in to Khaki so that we can note it in the Incident Management System. Permit numbers, operator names, and location and nature of the incident or concern are all useful information to collect.

It's important to report drone-related Ranger interactions to Khaki, so that we can gather data as we respond to and refine our policies around these important safety issues.

### ***Evictions***

Occasionally, a situation arises in which 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 the only group in Black Rock City empowered to evict participants. (Evictions of staff members, vendors, or volunteers go through separate processes involving their own department managers.)

Some examples of such 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 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 they both agree that the only (or best) solution is eviction from Black Rock City, the participant will be evicted.

### ***Found Animal***

We field a surprising number of “found animal” calls every year, and we have specific staff resources to deal with them. Please note that not all animals need rescuing: there are a number of critters native to the playa, and flying animals (e.g., birds and bats), unless they are in distress, are quite capable of relocating themselves. There are also 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. If you are not currently vaccinated for rabies (and you would not usually be, unless you are a veterinarian or an animal researcher), do not handle any wild mammals. Found animals should be called in to Khaki before taking any action.

### ***Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Spectrum***

By using problematic language you hurt real people and allow others to think it’s ok. That’s what keeps the cycle of violence going. Terms like tranny, she-male, he-she, it, trap, hermaphrodite, T-girl, and boi are generally derogatory or imply that someone isn’t “real.” That includes prefixes like real, bio, genetic, natural, or bornwoman/man. Don’t use them.

**Be an Active Bystander:** When you hear others saying things in hurtful ways, making a joke, snickering, or fetishizing trans people, start a conversation. Share what you know and how it affects you and people who matter to you. Let others know you don’t want to live in a world that makes it ok to demean groups of people. Share options about other language to use.

**Names:** The name a trans person gives you IS their real name. Questioning it takes away a person’s agency and buys into the myth that trans\* people are deceptive. Some people don’t want to be called Jimmy if their name is James. Give everyone that same courtesy.

**Pronouns:** They replaces a person’s name when talking in the third-person. You have pronouns too, we all do! You might prefer cake to pie, but a person’s pronouns are not up for debate. Even if they are new to you. Even if you were taught different grammar rules. While pronouns imply something about gender, they don’t declare someone’s gender identity. Introduce yourself with your name and your own pronouns. This makes it safe for others to do the same. Someone’s pronouns might be different than what you assume, so it’s best to ask, “What pronouns should I use for you?” Then use that pronoun and encourage others to do the same if you have permission.

**Outing:** Trans people have lost homes and jobs, friends and family, and have been assaulted and murdered when others revealed their trans status. Remind others who ask or gossip about a person they know or think is trans. Get permission before sharing information about a trans person. Just because they trusted you does NOT mean they want to disclose their identity, name, pronouns, medical choices, etc. to anyone else.

**Sexual Orientation:** Being gay doesn't mean you're trans and being trans doesn't mean you're gay. Sexual orientation is about who we're attracted to. Gender identity is how we see ourselves. Trans people can identify as gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer, etc. just like cisgender people.

**What if I make a mistake?** Apologize briefly, correct yourself, and move on. Then remember it for next time. You might need to slow down while you talk so that you think first. You might also try practicing talking about a person in your head or out loud when you're alone.

### ***Laser Protocol***

Starting with the 2015 event, personal hand-held lasers are not allowed in Black Rock City. If you encounter a participant with a hand-held laser, engage the participant in a conversation. Education is key here: let them know about the policy, and WHY we have that policy. 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, and will have been inspected by the Safety Team. If you have concerns about a mounted laser, by all means engage the operators in conversation. 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 provide notes to the Operators on the interaction after your shift) so that we can note it 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 Sheriffs (PCSO) and law enforcement personnel from other counties under contract with Pershing County. These 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 Sheriffs (not active in BRC, but active in Gerlach)
- Nevada State Health Department (enforces food safety issues)

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

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 LEAL (Law Enforcement Agency Liaisons) Team members, 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.**

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

The Law Enforcement Agency Liaison (LEAL) team (aka “Zebras”) is the Ranger team that provides response and support for any situation that has law enforcement implications. They are experienced Rangers who are on duty 24/7, have specially marked vehicles, and are ready to interface with Law Enforcement at any time.

If you see LE on scene with participants, do not approach. They are trained to keep a scene under control and treat anyone approaching as a potential threat. Stay away from the scene, and 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 and you may be contacted by a member of the LEAL team for a quick debrief.

If you believe you have information that could be useful, or if you feel there is something about the situation that triggers your “Spidey Sense” (i.e., something doesn’t seem quite right), call Khaki and report the situation. Do not request LEAL directly, just report what you see or advise that there is a LE situation that you have information regarding and suggest that either Khaki or LEAL response would 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 we can get. Make sure your Shift Lead or OOD has any pertinent information during your shift, or fill out a [Law Enforcement Feedback form](#) yourself at any of the ROC kiosks. You can also pick one up at Ranger HQ or at any outpost during the event.

### ***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 does have Embassy contact information in case of a lost/missing passport.
- Individuals who have misplaced necessary medicines should be directed to the medical tent.

Participants with found items should be directed to Playa Info, except for bicycles which 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:

- Maximum amplified sound power of 300 watts
- Sound must be less than 90 dBA when measured at 20 feet
- Speakers must be elevated off the playa
- Speakers must be backed by truck, RV, or large, solid object to reduce sound going backwards

Mutant Vehicles are subject to similar standards. All vehicles must be mindful of their volume and surroundings, especially in quieter areas of the city or later at night.

Mutant vehicle sound systems can be classified into three levels:

**Level 1:** Normal car stereo / average living room (under 90dB at 30 ft)

**Vehicles with Level One** systems may play anywhere on the playa, but the operators will be told by to be mindful of their volume and surroundings, especially in quieter areas in the city or later at night.

**Level 2:** Dance Club or Theatre (90dB and up at under 100ft)

**Vehicles with Level Two** systems may only play at high volume on the open playa (not in or pointing right into the city streets) and must be mindful of where they are playing—e.g., around art pieces, burns, etc. — and turn it down when appropriate.

**Level 3:** Large Dance Club, Arena, Stadium (100dB or more at 100ft or more)

**Vehicles with Level Three** systems may only play at high volume at 10:00 and 2:00 by the Large Scale Sound Camps, with speakers pointing out to the deep playa.

The important thing here is the impact of the sound itself. The numbers (dB) are guidelines: the important thing is the impact the sound is having.

If a Mutant Vehicle gets more than two warnings about its sound system, it can lose its DMV license and the 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.

Rangers will not (generally) be measuring the sound with dB meters, nor will we be waiting for someone to make a complaint. If you encounter a mutant vehicle and the sound seems to be 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.

### ***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 camp mates or between camps. In some sense this is the classic Ranger scenario, the bread and butter of what we do. Please see the [Conflict, Mediation, and Conflict Resolution Strategies](#) section for more info.

### ***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 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. 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
- 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 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.

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 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 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. 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 stickers are posted at Ranger HQ for your familiarization and reference.

### ***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 the Personnel Manager (Flint). 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. 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.

### ***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: porta-potties are located on every radial street between C & D and between H & I. The exceptions to this are 6:00, which has banks between F & G and I & J, and 3:00 and 9:00, which has their inner bank between E & F. There are also banks on the open playa on either side of the Man and along 2:00 and 10:00.)

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# Basic Burn Perimeter Protocol

All Rangers are encouraged to sign up for at least one Burn Perimeter shift, as this is one of our biggest needs.

Rangers support the Man and Temple Burns (Saturday and Sunday of the event), major art burns (generally, Wednesday-Sunday of the event), and several smaller art burns. Sign-ups are available through the Secret Clubhouse, though the smaller burn sign-ups may not appear until closer to the event.



## Basic Burn Perimeter Protocol

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 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 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. Leave your mini-mag at camp.
- Dust mask
- Small food items (optional, but recommended)
- Kneepads (optional, but you'll be glad you did)

Please make sure you are on time, fully fed, hydrated, rested, sober, and ready to be standing 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 a burn perimeter 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 and assign you to a position. 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 come. Do that Ranger thing. Get to know them. Be a good host. Ask them to sit down and scoot 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** are the perimeter, not the tape and cones. 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.
- 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 pre-determined 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 shirt, 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 \(at\) burningman.org](mailto:ranger-burn-safety-cadre-list@burningman.org).

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# Culture 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.

If we are going to improve as Rangers and as people in general, we have an obligation to give feedback to others and receive feedback graciously. The best way to do this is to lay out a set of ground rules for both giving and receiving feedback.

An important concept about feedback is that it is a gift. The giver must carefully select the feedback to be given. This can take quite a bit of courage for some people. We've all dealt with giving feedback to folks who don't receive it well, get defensive, or become argumentative. Similarly, it can sometimes be tough to give honest feedback to somebody who you perceive as more senior or "above you in the food chain." This can create a situation where folks can be hesitant to give feedback to avoid conflict. And that's a bad thing.



In this light, we also need to ensure that when we're receiving feedback, we are receiving it as a gift. Think about when grandma gave you a sweater for your birthday. Maybe it fit perfectly. If so, great! But 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 is intended.

## **Giving Feedback:**

In the interest of creating a culture of feedback, we need to ensure that we are following a model of SAFETY. In

other words, when giving feedback, make sure that your guidance is:

- Specific – is it clear what the feedback is about?
- Actionable – is it something the person can actually change?
- Factual – is it objectively true?
- Empathetic – is it given with the best of 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 in a mental space to accept the gift?

There's a lot of discussion to be had around the concept of each of these terms. The important thing to keep in mind is 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 to do 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 any 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. In many cases, following negative feedback with something positive is a wonderful thing. On the other hand, don't delay giving the negative feedback while you look for something positive to say.

## **Receiving Feedback**

When receiving feedback, a few suggestions:

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

Second, ask clarifying questions to get the most out of feedback. You can ask for examples, interpretations, details, etc. 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 or cause to convince them that their perspective was 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, for some people the simple act of giving you feedback about something may represent a courageous effort on the part of the person giving it. Please be sure to 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 “[Un-Rangerly Behavior](#)”) 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 fill out the 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**

*Adapted from content by Shir Nir and Lauren Zander, Handel Group*

Good communication is what makes an organization work and in most organizations is insufficient. Most of us don’t communicate the most important things and don’t deal with the hard conversations. We choose to gossip or ignore or sweep things under the carpet. We get irritated and upset with people and that leads to a decrease in relationships, communication, and an ability to collaborate, be happy and produce results. We make excuses and justifications that it will not make a difference and tell ourselves that we can deal with it or that it will go away, but it never does and never works. At some point we may explode or leave, simply because we didn’t deal with the real problems. Since effective communication and relationships are the most important aspect of an organization, we have created a process to give people a way to have the hard conversations.

1. Create a script before having a conversation. Every conversation exists in a context/frame and if you don’t design and create it with the other person they might have a different one. The frame should include the following:
  - Identify the intention of the conversation and state it clearly; i.e. “By the end of this conversation...”
  - Get clear about why this is a difficult conversation for you. i.e. Fear you will be hurt or hurt the other person, scared you will be fired or retaliated against, worried the person will leave, etc.
  - Get clear about what you need to say and how you should say it.
  - Don’t assume you know the truth, they have theirs and you have yours.
  - Make it about how you feel not about what they did; they can’t argue about how you feel.
2. Ask for permission to have the conversation with them
3. Set up enough time and don’t have these conversations walking down the hallway
4. Don’t argue with them
5. Make agreements at the end and make sure you are resolved or ask to have another conversation
6. Make and get promises and consequences if appropriate.

7. Don't have this conversation unless you believe that it will work. If you have negative theories about it, you will fail.

## How to Talk About an Issue

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

*...someone on my Ranger shift:*

Talk to Shift Lead, OOD (after shift or at HQ), or any Green Dot Ranger, or Personnel Manager (ask HQ to page)

*... someone other situation:*

Talk to Shift Lead, OOD (after shift or at HQ), or any Green Dot Ranger, or Personnel Manager (ask HQ to page)

*... someone on my Alpha shift:*

Talk to the Mentor Cadre (after Alpha shift or at HQ) or Personnel Manager (ask HQ to page)

*... someone at my training:*

Talk to the Training Academy (after training or email) or Personnel Manager (ask HQ to page)

*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 at burningman dot org).
- Email the relevant Cadre (see the Black Rock Ranger Organization section for a list of cadre addresses).

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# UnRangerly Behavior

## Harassment

Harassment, as defined within the Black Rock Ranger Department, is any unwelcome verbal or physical 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 in which another Ranger is interacting with you, for any reason, the best thing to do is F.L.A.M.E. the situation with that person, as soon as possible after the interaction. If you have been harassed, or have witnessed someone else being harassed, and F.L.A.M.E.ing the situation has not worked, you should report this to your Team Lead/Shift Lead. If you are working a dirt shift, request a face-to-face with Khaki. 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 are not comfortable reporting it to Khaki, contact the Officer of the Day or the Personnel Manager, Flint. The Personnel Manager works and is available to all Rangers year-round. The Personnel Manager can be paged from HQ, or reached by email at [ranger-personnel@burningman.org](mailto:ranger-personnel@burningman.org). If you do not need an immediate response, you can also fill out the Ranger Feedback form (available at all HQ kiosks and on the right sidebar of the Ranger website).

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 Manager 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 only shared with Ranger Managers on a need-to-know basis to complete the investigation. 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. The full text of the Burning Man Project's organization-wide conflict resolution protocol may be found [here](#).

## Off-playa UnRangerly 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 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 will 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 so many things in Rangers, this is a black-white-shades-of-grey kind of a thing, and Personnel handles these kinds of things on a facts and circumstances basis.

We're not going out of our way to look for problems, i.e., we're not "putting Rangers under a microscope." Examples of the types of bad behavior we're talking about include:

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

If you're trying to figure out whether something is bad behavior, imagine someone coming to you and saying, "Oh my god, Ranger Hubcap did \_\_\_\_\_. How can you have that person in your organization?" How would you answer that question?

## 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 necessarily a disciplinary situation, and is more often 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 allowing the Ranger to stay on duty is not in the best interest of that inquiry. Removal from a single shift need only involve the Shift Command Team.

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

De-lamming can be the result of a series of incidents or as a result of 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 will follow the on-playa chain of command to determine the appropriate Manager. For incidents that may also require the Ranger be removed from the event itself, the same staff removal process which applies to all staff members will be used. The staff removal process is available from the Personnel Managers.

### *Removal from the Rangers*

The removal of a Ranger from a department falls under the purview of the Ranger Council and occurs off playa.

## Ranger Disciplinary Protocols

The full Ranger Disciplinary Protocols are found in the Policies folder linked from the front page of the Clubhouse, and accessible to all current Rangers.

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# Communication, Mediation, and Conflict Resolution Strategies

## Communication

Rangers employ a number of strategies while interacting with participants and patrolling in Black Rock City. These skills and strategies are techniques employed when engaging in communication, conflict mediation and resolution.

**Communication is a complex process.** Differing perceptions may cause difficulties in the communication of ideas and information. Here are common problems in communication and ways to avoid them.

### *It's Greek to Me*

Your communication can be effective only when received in a language the receivers can understand. You need to speak not in your own language or style of thinking but in the language and style of thinking of the receivers. Understand their educational level and their demographics and communicate to them accordingly.

### *Overload*

Even when communicating in the language of the receivers, you can still lose them if you overload them with too much information or overly complex ideas. Use the KISS principle (Keep It Short and Simple).

### *Biases and Assumptions*

Examine your possible biases and personal assumptions about the issues you're communicating. Disclose your own interests and agendas. The receivers will quickly tune out if they suspect that you have a hidden agenda. By being authentic, you will gain credibility, which is essential for effective communication.

### *One-Way*

Communication is not just speaking; it's both speaking *and* listening. One-way communication is no communication at all. Make sure to listen and understand the others' needs and points of view.

### *"Yes, But..."*

Try to avoid using "Yes, but..." The word 'but' can negate everything that came before it. Instead, try using "Yes, and..." to connect ideas.

### *Ambiguity*

If your message is not clear, or if it can be interpreted in more than one way, it will leave

the receivers wondering about what you mean. Make sure that your message is clear and unambiguous.

### *Wrong Timing*

In effective communication, timing is critical. For example, a message of praise and recognition should not come too long after the fact or it will lose its effectiveness. "Better late than never" may be true, but a timely message is the best.

### *Negative Attitude*

Most people don't like negative communication and bad news. Passive, weak, or negative communication will turn people off. Even the most negative, critical, or difficult communication will be better received when presented in a positive, affirmative style. Instead of saying, "This is a terrible idea," try, "Tell me how we can make this idea work."



## **Active Listening and Nonverbal Communication**

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:

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

Tips for active listening:

- When listening, keep eyes on the speaker's eyes (or in the case of someone who's angry, the lower face, since too much direct eye contact can be perceived as a challenge).
- Nod, as appropriate.
- Use what are referred to as "minimal encourager" noises. These are the little words and noises you make to indicate that you're listening: uh-huh, okay, right, mmmm, etc.

## Body Language

Another very important thing to pay attention to is body language and other non-verbal communication. Humans are social creatures, and as such, 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.

Below are a few things to keep in mind:

- Use 45-degree stance versus being face-to-face. Make sure to leave sufficient personal space.
- Easy rule: Can I see your feet? If I can't, I'm too close.
- Touch: Be very cautious and use your best judgment.
- Touching a participant can calm them down or can make things much, much worse.
- Leave them an 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).
- Eye contact: As mentioned above, use enough to show you're paying close attention, but not so much that you seem threatening (especially with an angry participant).
- Writing down: Keeps your facts straight and lets 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."*

Finally, help to create more options. Often, when people get riled up, options seem to disappear. Offering more options (or helping them think of options themselves) can calm someone down. People without options can feel trapped.

Sometimes, the best way to communicate is by not talking. Silence can be comfortable or uncomfortable: both can

be useful in the right situation. Sometimes 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.

## Trigger Issues

A trigger issue is something that you react to from a place of deep emotion instead of from reason. Triggers are not minor annoyances or "pet peeves." Rather, trigger issues are things that make you lose objectivity and self-control, and therefore prevent you from Rangering effectively.

You can be triggered by:

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

Learn to recognize when you're being triggered and to acknowledge that you're losing objectivity. If you are aware of the kinds of words, actions, and situations that might trigger you, share them with your partner during 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.

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

**F** stands for *Find Out*. First, stand back and observe. Be aware of safety issues, both your own and the participant's. If there is a safety issue where you feel that you, your partner, or participants are in danger, call Khaki immediately.

When you have determined that it is safe to approach and that you are needed, find out the facts. What is the primary complaint? Who is involved? When did the conflict start/incident occur? Where did it happen?

There will always be at least three sides: the sides of the individuals involved directly in conflict (which may be two or more) and an impartial third perspective, when you can find it.

Add to these three sides the perspective you bring to the situation, which encompasses your experience, the general opinion of all the participants, and the ideology of the Burning Man Project.

**L** stands for *Listen*. Listen to all parties to ensure that all stakeholders have had a chance to be heard and give their input. Be aware that, at times, you may have to use your judgment as to who is really involved. Concentrate on the parties who need your direct assistance and make time for everyone who has legitimate input. Listening is

a powerful tool, not only for getting information and de-escalating conflicts but also for establishing a general rapport and social capital with your fellow citizens of Black Rock City.

**A** stands for *Analyze*. Once you have gathered all the information that you can, analyze it with your partner. Take all of the facts that you gathered during the **F** and **L** parts of the process and consider your understanding of the expectations of the citizens of Black Rock City, the policies of the Ranger Department, and the ideology and policies of the Burning Man Project.

Active deliberation and use of your best judgment is required at this stage in the process and is fully backed by the Ranger organization. You are an integral part of our team: we have faith in ourselves and in you. This is at the core of Rangering.

**M** stands for *Mediate*. Your primary role when you mediate is to make suggestions as a neutral third party. Mediation allows the participants involved to arrive at the best way to resolve their situation. Determine which participants involved may have room to budge and those whose interests are such that they cannot or will not give in. This is often not based on right and wrong.

Work with all parties involved until an outcome is reached that seems to function well. Whenever possible, facilitate the parties reaching their own joint solution. People are much more likely to stick to a solution when they feel ownership of the process and that the resolution came from them rather than from an authority figure telling them what to do.

**E** stands for *Explain*. Explanation completes your “flaming” of the situation. Explain the outcome of the mediation process to everyone involved, ensuring that all parties have come to a consensus that they can live with (...or at least live with for a week).

This is not always the end. Within the Burning Man event, while things change constantly, the explanations you give will be repeated and re-requested not only by the parties involved, but by other participants. You will often be asked by neighbors to explain the outcome, later that day, that evening, the next morning, even months after the event has ended. Do this while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved in any given situation. An ability to accurately recall and explain a situation after the fact is why it is important to take notes in your Ranger notebook throughout any mediation process.

- Notify Khaki of the what/where/when/how of conflicts and their outcomes during or immediately after your shift (you can drop written reports off at HQ at the end of your shift or fill out an incident report at the kiosk behind HQ).
- Always be sure to find out first.



- 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.

## Conflict Resolution Tips

- Remember that everyone thinks they have a good reason for what they do.
- 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 connection 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.
- The less ego you bring to the table, the more control you will have over a situation.
- Be aware of your trigger words and your trigger issues.
- Never lose self-control: walk away before you do and defer to your partner.
- Ask involved citizens 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 citizens or passionate observers have the last word, as long as you have the last act.
- 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.

### **Empathy and 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.

Your goal as a Ranger is to understand how someone is feeling without getting caught up in their emotions or taking sides.

- You don't have to agree with someone to understand what they're feeling.
- You don't need to like or love them to understand what they're feeling.
- Letting them know you understand them is not the same as telling them what they want to hear.

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.

A great way to build empathic attunement with another person is this three-step process:

**Step 1:** Notice the emotion the person is expressing.

**Step 2:** Look for the cause of the emotion.

Try to figure out what thoughts / beliefs are underlying the emotion.

- With angry people, look for perceptions of unfairness.
- With sad people, look for perceptions of loss.
- With anxious people, look for perceptions of danger.

**Step 3:** Validate the feeling (without necessarily agreeing with the assessment).

### **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."*

My 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 versus Inference**

What did you *actually* see or hear versus what you *believed* to be happening, based on what you heard or saw?

### **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 encourages 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 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 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 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 taught 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, but instead integrate the concepts of Rangering as your own. You are a Ranger, not a walking tool box.

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# Becoming a Ranger

The full process for becoming a Ranger is described on our [Application Process](#) page.

## On-playa Alpha Shifts

On-playa Alpha shifts are conducted Saturday through Tuesday of the event. Please don't attempt to do your Alpha shift immediately after arriving on the playa, but do try to complete it as early in the week as possible.

### *The Day of Your Alpha Shift*

Alpha shifts start promptly at the designated time—you should arrive 30 minutes early to sign in at Ranger HQ located on the Esplanade near Center Camp.

- Bring everything you need to be self-reliant for a very long day, including layered clothing (especially for the swing shift), comfortable walking shoes, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, lunch, snacks, water bottle (water refills available at Ranger HQ and the outposts), and most importantly, a pen/pencil and small pocket-sized memo-pad of paper. The Rangers will only provide you with a radio and an Alpha vest that identifies you as an Alpha.
- Allow sufficient time between your arrival on-playa and your Alpha shift to acclimate to the harsh playa conditions.
- The entire on-playa mentoring process takes about 10 hours. If you pass, you will be able to sign up for your Ranger shifts on playa at Ranger HQ.

Alphas must pre-register in the Secret Clubhouse scheduling system for their Alpha shift, and come on time to their Alpha shift, or risk losing their Alpha status. Alphas may not “walk on” to shifts they are not scheduled for.

## ***The Alpha Shift***

The Alpha shift is divided into two phases: a two-hour orientation and a modified dirt shift.

**Phase One:** During Phase One of the Alpha shift, you will spend approximately two hours completing an on-playa orientation. Small group instruction and evaluation will remind Alphas of basic Ranger communication, radio skills, and protocols. This is also an opportunity for Alphas to decide if Rangering is really something they are fully committed to pursuing.

**Phase Two:** Phase Two involves walking modified dirt shifts with a group of other Alphas and Mentors. These short shifts are designed for Mentors to get an idea of how Alphas interact, both with participants and with each other, and how Alphas orient and handle themselves within Black Rock City. This is also an opportunity for the Alpha to practice applying real Ranger skills.

- Some of the skills your Mentors will expect you to be able to demonstrate include FLAMEing difficult situations, knowing the Must-Reports, ability to use the radio appropriately to communicate with Kha-ki, locational and situational awareness, ability to appropriately engage participants, good partnering skills, and displaying the burner spirit (rather than being a hall monitor).
- The Alpha shift is not training — you've already been trained! This shift is intended to see whether Rangering is a good fit for you, and whether you're a good fit for Rangering.
- Do not rely on your Mentor to tell you what to do. Your Mentor will provide feedback, but it is up to you to walk the shift as a Black Rock Ranger. However, feel free to ask your Mentors for pointers and tips on how you can improve your skills, or how a particular interaction could have been done differently.

At the end of Phase Two, your Mentors will meet as a team to discuss your shift. They will re-emerge after about an hour to inform you if you passed or not.

### ***Possible Outcomes of Your Alpha Shift***

**Outcome 1:** You are invited to join the Rangers ("passed" your shift). You may receive some advice from your Mentors on things to work on during your Ranger shifts.

**Outcome 2:** Your Mentors do not feel that you are a good fit for the Rangers, either for this year or in general (referred to as "bonked" in Ranger jargon). Your Mentors should explain what led them to this decision.

**Outcome 3:** You realize, over the course of your Alpha shift, that volunteering as a Ranger is not how you want to spend your time at Burning Man (sometimes called "self-bonking").

Regardless of the outcome of your Alpha shift, we really appreciate that you came out and gave Rangering a try!

If you pass, please stick around: you will be issued your Ranger shirt and hat and can sign up for shifts at the

Ranger HQ window. You are also encouraged to attend the Rebar Ceremony later in the week, during which the new Rangers are welcomed into the Ranger community.

If you did not pass, your Ranger Mentors will explain to you why they made the decision that this wasn't your year to join the Rangers. Remember that Ranger Mentors are instructed not to pass someone unless they are *absolutely sure* they're a good fit and are ready to Ranger immediately. Feel free to ask them questions about your experience. Think about what your Mentors cited as reasons for being bonked, and consider trying again next year. Finally, enjoy your time in Black Rock City! There are lots of ways to volunteer and participate, and we hope that going to a Ranger training and walking with a Ranger Mentor will add to those experiences.

If you have not passed your Alpha shift twice in back-to-back years and have been advised to receive additional training or experience on playa before trying again, you must take a year off before re-applying to join the Rangers. Go enjoy being a Burner for a bit (it's fun out there!) or explore other volunteer opportunities. If, after taking a year off, you return and do not pass Alpha shift again, you will need to take yet another year off before making further attempts to join the Black Rock Rangers.

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# Ranger Policies and Procedures

Ranger Policies 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 Black Rock Rangers and Prospective Rangers must attend an annual training session in order to Ranger on playa that year.
- Prospective Rangers, Active Rangers who have Rangered on playa for less 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 binary Rangers (Rangered 0 or 1 years 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. 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 handles:** After displaying extended commitment and dedication to the Ranger department, a Ranger's handle will be designated vintage, making it 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 Rangers with vintage handles just like they do to all Rangers.

## Returning to the Rangers after an Extended Absence

The Rangers have implemented the Cheetah program to review Rangers who wish to return to active volunteering in 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 walks 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 effective 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 next year.

## Ranger Social Media Policy

As Rangers, we witness things during shift that are not meant for public consumption. We are expected to be discrete 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 about things you encounter on shift that are not public knowledge, or about sensitive or privileged information to social media, or discuss them outside of the Rangers. Please 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., the Clubhouse or the 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 equate that you are 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 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 the Ranger Personnel Manager. The Ranger Personnel Manager is 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

### **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 New Volunteer Announce Email List

New-Volunteers-Announce is the list for prospective new Ranger volunteers. 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 receive an invitation to join Allcom in September.

### Getting in touch with individuals and groups

Rangers can directly contact other Rangers through the Secret Clubhouse by using the Contact Ranger feature.

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. Contact info for the Cadres is listed in the Black Rock Ranger Organization section of this manual, as well as in the "How to Join Special Teams" document, linked from the home page of the [Clubhouse](#).

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

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# 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.

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# 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 vast expanse in which Burning Man is situated, is just one small part of the NCA. The Black Rock playa 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.

## **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! 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 (coming off of 7:30 and accessed from inside the city through Point 1) is used by vendors, law enforcement, and the DPW for BRC access. Ranger vehicles with a logo can also use this road if needed. All other traffic through Point 1 requires a credential/wristband.

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 run off 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**

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, gold, etc.

### **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.

### **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. Rangers often use this site for the 4th of July ROM. Dog Camp is easily identifiable by the striped hillside behind it. The stripes (three major stripes are easily visible) run horizontally and appear purple in color.

### **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 Rd. 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.

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# Glossary

Despite our fondness 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:** Ranger radio channel used for lengthier, less-urgent conversations. "Take it to Admin."

**Adopt-a-Grave:** Started in 2008, a program where sub-groups of Rangers agree to staff a graveyard shift (e.g., New York Rangers, Women of Khaki, Pacific NW Rangers) to help ensure adequate coverage of graveyard shifts.

**Allcom:** [1] Used to indicate that a department-wide radio broadcast is about to happen and you should stop and listen (e.g., "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 Prospective Ranger who has passed training.

**Art car:** A highly decorated car, truck, or bus. Also, mutant vehicle (q.v.).

**Art of Rangering:** The set of mental awareness & 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:** 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 o'clock side of Black Rock City (B for bottom).

**Bio-break:** (also, bio) A trip into a **blue room** (q.v.), during which one will be off-com.

**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.

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

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

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

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

**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.

**Bunkhouse:** A quiet and cool place 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] A jerk, especially one who is narcissistic or

entitled: "Don't be a chooch."

**CIT:** Crisis Intervention Team, the radio call sign of ESD's Mental Health Branch (MHB).

**Com:** (sometimes plural: coms) communication, or the radios by which such communication is transmitted.

**Commissary:** The central cafeteria where Burning Man staff eat, usually unmarked and located on the 5:30 spoke. Meal pogs are used here to get food.

**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 & 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 Gate team.

**Danger Ranger:** Founder and icon 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 end of the 5:30 road.

**Dig, The:** The morning-after ritual of excavating smoldering Burning Man artifacts.

**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:** Annual award given to the 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 springs 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 & F.

**DV:** (or delta victor) domestic violence.

**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 road facing the Man in BRC.

**Fire jumping:** A technique of jumping over a burning fire, sometimes with negative results when two opposing jumpers collide in mid-air.

**Field Echelon:** Provides a broad range of logistics support to the Rangers including stocking 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 in 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.

**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 lamppost 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.

**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 (e.g., "I've got a green-dot situation here."); [2] A cocktail made with vodka 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 HQ.

**Heat exhaustion:** A more serious form of dehydration.

**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](#). IS 700 and ICS 100 are great baseline courses.

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

**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, i.e., "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!

**LAM:** Old name for your BMID (your Ranger ID badge).

**LE:** Law enforcement.

**LEAL:** Law Enforcement Agency Liaison, a Ranger team that specialized in interfacing with Law Enforcement.

**LEO:** Law enforcement officer.

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

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

**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 is the legal entity that produces 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).

## **NATO Phonetic Alphabet**

B: Bravo	O - Oscar
C: Charlie	P: Papa
D: Delta	Q: Quebec
E: Echo	R: Romeo
F: Foxtrot	S: Sierra
G: Gold	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

**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:** Ranger stations located at the 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock plazas. See Berlin and Tokyo.

**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.

**Participant:** Everyone in BRC (cf. Spectator).

**Personnel Manager:** The Ranger Council member who is responsible for personnel issues, including harassment.

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

**Playa:** Spanish word for beach; refers to the black rock desert upon which BRC 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.

**Playa madness:** A mental condition that occurs after being out in the Black Rock desert for more than a week at a time.

**Pog:** Ticket that entitles the bearer to a meal at the commissary; each Ranger is entitled to one meal pog after completing a standard six-hour shift.

**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 exit controlled with exit wristbands.

**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, & 9:00 positions.

**Puppy:** Nickname for the old van that used to be Outpost Zero.

**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 nickname used by a Ranger for radio communications.

**Radio protocol:** A clear and simple set of rules to make radio communications flow, even in times of high usage.

**Ranger HQ:** The primary base of operations for the Rangers, located at Esplanade & 5:45.

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

**Rampart:** Main medical tent at 5:30 and Esplanade.

**Razorback:** see Old Razorback.

**Repeater:** A radio system that rebroadcasts the transmissions from your radio so that other Rangers on playa can hear you.

**RNR:** Rapid Night Response, a bicycle-mobile Ranger team specializing in getting qualified Rangers to serious situ-

ations 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 Crisis Intervention subteam that supports the survivors of sexual and domestic violence, and related situations.

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

**Scanner:** An electronic device used to listen in on radio communications.

**Shiny Penny:** Affectionate term for a first or second 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 is over.

**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 which 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 (cf. Participant).

**Speed bump:** A darkwad (q.v.) asleep on the open playa.

**Stick, the:** A large, wooden effigy at the center of the city, usually burned on Saturday night (often referred to as “The Man” [q.v.]).

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

**Survivally-challenged** politically-correct term for any participant whose judgment is impaired by drugs or alcohol.

**Swordfish:** see above, "Harvey, Larry."

**SV:** (or "sierra victor"), sexual violence.

**Ten-code:** see above, "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") [1] annual staff meeting at BMHQ about how things will work on playa that year; [2] a document distributed at that meeting that describes how things will work at the event. Available at HQ and distributed via Announce.

**Trigger words/Trigger issues:** Any word or situation that may result in a heightened emotional state (e.g., Bitch, stupid, lost child, etc.).

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

**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 (i.e., 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 which produces near-zero visibility.

**Yellow shirts:** Name used, either affectionately or derisively, for ESD personnel.

**Zebra:** Member of the LEAL team.

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