

**DPW – Dispatch
Gameshow**
Palmer Parker
Dispatch Manager

OPTIONAL QUESTIONS (FOR THOSE WANTING A MORE STRUCTURED FORMAT):

1. Briefly describe your role working for Burning Man this year.
DPW Dispatch Manager ~ hire and schedule Dispatch staff, distribute/track/collect radios, radio batteries, and pagers, etc.
2. In your opinion, what worked well and what didn't this year.
What worked well:
The remodel of 4508 was muchly appreciated. The windows into the lockup are very helpful and it's a pleasure to have a sweepable floor!
The new brick radios are good and robust. It was also really nice to have so many of them in the fleet.
Having all of the rental radios in Gerlach prior to my (delayed) arrival was GREAT!
New refer in Dispatch ~ gorgeous, clean, AND doesn't have running water in the bottom of it!
We brought in two new Dispatchers, Shop B and ArtArtArtArt who dove in and swam well.
The Tech team (Kat, PornStar, Taz) supported us very well yet again.
Comm guys Jafar (last year and this year) and Big Mike (this year) being present on the day radio equipment needed to go into the Dispatch office.
Collaboration between Depot staff and Dispatch was better than ever.
Firm yet warm 'n fuzzy support from those higher up the food chain such as Coyote, Playground, Chaos, Cobra, Kimba (YAAAY to 2011 Rookie of the Year!!!), and HazardousMathew, as well as a host of others.
Yet another repeat, Dispatch crew living in the back of the Depot area. Makes for quiet daytime sleeping not to mention a nice commute time and good blend of convenience, availability, and electrical power. Very helpful with our kidlets as well.
Dispatch and Khaki communicated more than ever before which was helpful for both departments. By Khaki I mean the folks who answer the radio calls for Khaki such as Tool and Backbone.

What did not work well:
I arrived a day later than planned (Sunday with Fence day being Monday), I thank Goddess for Pillow Talk who was already there and stepped up magnificently to distribute radios in my absence.
Radios. Some points will be discussed here, much more detailed information including videoed examples will be provided to a smaller number of folks than EMBERS are distributed to because in draft form the notes run over 16 pages of 10 point type... If you

would like a copy please email me: gameshow@burningman.com and I'll send it to you.

- The four-channel console installed in the Dispatch office never worked well or reliably. It was a safety hazard.
- Site 4 channel VERY rarely performed satisfactorily. It was a safety hazard.
- Dispatch 1 and Gerlach Office 10 did not perform consistently.
- Tattletale was again incorrectly programmed and never completely fixed. It is most useful before trunking channels are operational.
- Radio users were confused by zonally varying locations of their version of Channel 9.
- Rental radio batteries exhibited foreshortened charged life and ability to fully charge. This resulted in an increased number of staff with dead batteries who were unable to communicate until they acquired another battery.
- Only one of the four to six rental battery bank chargers in Dispatch provided charging information. Given the batteries' shortened ability to take a full charge my staff distributed many batteries which showed solid green in a charger that had only indicator lights but died very shortly thereafter. We came up with two solutions: 1) do not give out a battery unless it had been successful through the charger which provided charging information and 2) having each user install the new battery before leaving Dispatch to be sure it had full-charge indication (four bars).
- Connection between rental radio and rental radio hand microphone had an unacceptably high incidence of failure (sometimes could be heard but could not hear, sometimes could hear but could not be heard). I was informed by B1 that this had never been reported before and could not be replicated reliably. DPW was by far the largest user of rental radios at the time I first reported the problem and we documented a range of 20 to 80% of this failure type. The failure was not always immediately obvious to the user until they tried to talk or realized their radio was unusually quiet. This resulted in safety hazards and added to user frustration.
- If at all possible rental radios should have a clock function and an infinitely rotating channel selector knob as did 2010 rental radios. The latter allowed the radio, when switching back to a previous bank (aka zone) you land on the channel you were on before you switched. These were by far the two most common user-requested radio features.
- A radio call for medics and rangers to respond to the Man Base fire was made on the Sunday night/Monday morning that DPW moved back to Gerlach. All on-duty rangers were in Gerlach and they never heard the multiple calls. Medics and Gameshow and Katy did respond, SpaceBag was already on scene and helping with Random.

This year, as in years past, there were several occasions in which better communication between ESD, Khaki, and DPW during the event may have improved the efficiency with which certain problems were resolved. Examples include weather reports, missing children/parents/crew, gate closures, and equipment/safety needs. There were several instances this year in which informing DPW Dispatch, and hence potentially all DPW crew with working radios, may have helped us resolve things more quickly.

3. What improvements would you like to see? How should these improvements be implemented?

Dispatch Manager – hey, that’s me! – should be in Gerlach on the Friday before Fence Day if not earlier for radio distribution.

Radio-specific items

- DPW analog radio channels needs to be clear and reliable.
- Tattletale programming should be checked before radios are delivered for use.
- Each radio zone (including trunked zones) should have an emergency channel (9-1-1 or 9-1-2) and that channel should appear in the ninth position of each radio channel selection knob.
- Regardless of make/model of rental radio, batteries should be more robust. Confirm that batteries will charge and will last through at least a 10 hour work day before rental.
- Rental battery bank chargers should have a digital screen for each battery slot which provides detailed charge-related information (battery capacity and current percentage of that charge level) rather than just having indicator lights.
- Security of successful connection between rental radio and microphone should be affirmed prior to rental. Rental contract possibly should have large penalty clause for such equipment failure. The only successful remedy we found required approximately 20 minutes PER RADIO of cleaning contacts and adjusting the “fit” of the connect. Even with that, the fix did not always last. . .

Perhaps a meeting with DPW Dispatchers, ESD, Khaki, and related/associated Senior Staff early on would help with cross-pollination and increased communication. Dispatch is more than happy to be as helpful and useful as possible for all crews.

Dispatch plans to create laminates providing radio zones, channels, and related info to be offered with each radio distributed.

Dispatch is mulling over the possibility of incorporating radio distribution with Roundup form and laminate photo processes. We’ll be talking further with Cobra, OMG, and others.

Dispatch is also thinking about creating one or more radio training meetings early on with a Comm person or two and access to Bruno’s most likely. This would take the place of the incorporate-with-Roundup idea and would be more of a this-is-when-you-get-yer-radio-and-learn-about-it.

Dispatch requires four mobile radios with desk mics and external speakers, a deep cycle 12volt battery, and appropriate charging equipment to be available for installation prior to the Dispatch trailer arriving on playa. The mobiles must have 2010 code plugs or better already installed.

Do you feel that you have the tools, resources, and training that you need to do the job you need to do? If so, how? If not, why not?

With the exception of the quality of radio transmission this year, largely yes. Please also see Dispatch’s radio requirements at the end of the prior section.

Tech has said next year will bring a more modern computer (we were running out of firewood to stoke it’s boiler) and a printer we don’t have fantasies of blowing up.

Repeatedly.

4. Any other burning thoughts you'd like to share?
The console dispatching radio system is not welcome in Dispatch.

Quote of the day 2011

A short list this year, another unfortunate victim of the radio difficulties ~ people weren't feeling playful there this year. Which also explains the inordinately large number of entries caused by Dispatchers, many of which occurred within the office rather than on radio.

Would it help if I just opened the window and yelled?! ~ Hormel

It's such a big black box of fail that we don't want to embrace it. ~ Pillow Talk

It's a finicky screw ~ Unknown attribution

You know what sucks about being drunk in the desert? Nothing. ~ FStick

We're not getting drunk, we're getting awesome! ~ Gate radio

"Jesus, Jesus, Oh My God" – "God go for Jesus" – "Jesus, this is God. I just wanted to call you on the radio." ~ OMG calling Jesus

My body is a Pilates machine.!~ LoDog

"She's a great little dictator." in reference to Katy taking dictation. ~ Detour

It's the everything and then it finally works... ~ Katy

Stole your lighter; suck your dick. ~ Detour

Moms are the original gift economy. ~ Hayseed

You're the whitest thing I've ever seen and I've been to Antarctica. ~ Fletcher

Please come home to the Bunny Hut. ~ a page sent to Mike Nash in Accounting

It only happens one week a year. ~ Detour

Repeat. ~ JAR

I'm moving off water/sanitation for the duration of the plague uhh parade. ~ MOQ to Dispatch

"I'm here and I'm drunk" – female voice

"I like here and I'm drunk" – male voice ~ during parade

I will MRSA all over your ass, wait 'til I start drippy. ~ LoDog

He doesn't need to get his radios in a knot. ~ Paws Off to Katy regarding Gameshow's driving

I like your nose! It's aerodynamic. ~ Eskimo Love to Chaos at lunch

It really IS a kinder & gentler DPW. ~ Khaki on channel 9 before redneck soccer at Trashman

I'd rather have fuckin Andy than a ranger. ~ Kitchen Shelly to crowd at lunch

I'm in the Heavy Equipment and Transportation office otherwise known as I'm in HEaT. ~ Aristotle

Can I come around back and sniff you out then? ~ Mr. Kuby

Word of the Day 2011

Tutorage ~ Ghost Dancer

Busified ~ Unknown attribution

Potta Porties ~ Katy