



# RANGER ACTIVITIES INFORMATION EXCHANGE



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## Chief Ranger's Comments

It seems as though the 025 study is taking a lot of my time and that the discussion of various aspects of the study is taking a great deal of space in my notes in these issues. That's probably appropriate, as it is my top priority. One disadvantage to the project as it evolves is that it is hard to explain the whole by looking at the individual parts.

Some of you have responded to the request for comments on the classification handbook and the investigative survey. In the case of the former, the charts of possible career paths are meant only to be illustrative of individual possibilities based on the needs of park management. It is not a suggestion that there should be many new specialists; if a specialist is needed, however, there should be no reason why a position should not be filled accordingly.

The "professional/non-professional" issue keeps coming up. The term professional in relation to a series, according to OPM, is a position for which there is a "positive" (i.e., specific) education requirement. For example, a GS-460 forester must have a degree in forestry. The park ranger series does not have a specific educational requirement in that degrees from many different fields will qualify a person for employment. OPM therefore defines the series as non-professional. The terms have nothing to do with performing a professional job or otherwise being a professional park ranger.

While working on this project, I've been asked many questions about and have heard many misperceptions concerning the number of rangers in the 025 series, their grade spread, and the turnover rate at various grades. The chart below provides some factual information on the subject:

### 025 Turnover for CY 1985

	To Federal Agencies	Private Sector RIF's, Death	Retired	Total Separations*	Total 1985	Total 025 1986
GS/GM-15	0	0	1	1 (2%)	49	48
GS/GM-14	0	0	4	4 (5.7%)	70	70
GS/GM-13	0	1	10	11 (6.8%)	160	158
GS-12	1	3	8	12 (4.5%)	264	270
GS-11	2	5	10	17 (4%)	424	409
GS-9	5	8	7	20 (3.2%)	609	609
GS-7	3	5	3	11 (2.6%)	415	450
GS-6	6	1	4	11 (8.2%)	134	110
GS-5	48	38	8	94 (11.7%)	799	885
GS-4	-	-	-	-	214	309
GS-3	-	-	-	-	35	84
<b>Totals</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>3,173</b>	<b>3,415**</b>

\*1985 figures and percentages \*\*1986 totals (as of 6/21) do not include 10 executive service, 2 GS-8, and 1 GS-2

It is immediately apparent from these statistics that the real turnover problem is at the GS-5 level. About 160 positions have been upgraded to GS-7 since the release of the latest 025 standards, but these have mostly been from the GS-6 level. The turnover rate is very low from GS-7 up, which is one of the main reasons why we have problems with upward career mobility in the Service. Unlike many other agencies, people do not leave the Park Service. These turnover rate figures include retirements, deaths, promotions and transfers to other agencies.

Members of the 025 work group have been invited to present two workshop sessions on the study at the ANPR Rendezvous in Jackson Hole in October. We look forward to the opportunity to talk about the group's findings to those attending.

#### Part Four Update

Steve Shackleton of Hawaii Volcanoes will be working with Andy Ringgold this month to sort out the comments received on the proposed Part Four regulations. Ranger Activities received about 150 responses from interested parties - a fairly low number when compared with the volume of comments received on other regulations. The objective is still to have the final version out in print by the end of the year.

#### SET Review

The Washington office will be conducting a review of the outdated SET operations manual in the near future, and is looking for your comments on ways in which special event operations can be improved in the future. There have been some inconsistencies and shortcomings in the employment of SET's in the past, and the Park Service will be dealing with a large number of special events in the next decade - 125th anniversary dates of Civil War events, the bicentennial of the Constitution, the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, and so forth. Please send your comments to the Ranger Activities office.

#### Chief Ranger Directory

The Ranger Activities office has completed a directory of all regional office ranger activities staffs and chief park rangers in the Park Service, along with their principal phone numbers. Rangers in Southwest, Western and Pacific Northwest regions can get copies of the directory through their regional chief rangers; rangers in other regions can obtain a copy by contacting Bill Halainen in this office.

#### Revising Annual Reports

The Ranger Activities Office is planning on revising the annual law enforcement and search and rescue statistical reports this fall or winter, and would very much like to hear your thoughts and suggestions on how they can be simplified, clarified or otherwise altered to make them less time-consuming in preparation and more useful to the field. Since the search and rescue summary is an in-house report, it can be revised in any way that we see fit. It will be harder to change the law enforcement report, since much of it is mandated by the Department of Justice, but an initial, exploratory discussion with a Department of Interior representative suggests that there is some room

for revision. In either case, your suggestions should be submitted to Bill Halainen in Ranger Activities by late October. Present plans call for the creation of two small working groups to meet and revise these reports this winter. That means that you'll have to live with the present system for one more year, but that you have an opportunity to change future reporting requirements and make these two summaries of use to the field.

### Field Incidents

**San Juan River:** Ranger David Fonseca, who was an interpreter at Grand Canyon, disappeared while on a rafting trip on the San Juan River near Mexican Hat, Colorado. He had been with a group of Grand Canyon employees, but stayed alone in their campground while the others went swimming. When they returned, he was gone. Extensive searches of the turbulent river proved fruitless.

**Shenandoah:** A painter from the Washington, D.C., area was found shot to death near his paints and easel on August 23rd. The Park Service and FBI conducted a joint investigation, and arrested a local man a week later. The suspect had been living in the park for long periods of time over the previous year, and kept a rifle at his camp. According to a diary found with him, the suspect was suicidal and had determined to "take someone with him" when he killed himself.

**Jefferson National Expansion:** While working at the Veiled Prophet Fair late on the evening of July 5th, members of the Rocky Mountain Region's SET team were pursuing a gang which had committed numerous assaults and larcenies in the crowd when they approached an altercation. Two gunshots were heard, and rangers observed a civilian, who appeared to be a gang member, pointing a handgun at one of two people lying on the ground. Three rangers drew and aimed their weapons at him, and one shouted "police officer!" At this point, the man with the gun identified himself as an undercover St. Louis PD officer, and the rangers went to his assistance. The Service had not been informed that the PD was going to have undercover officers in the area.

**Yosemite:** As a result of an investigation into drug abuse conducted by the park over the last three years, grand jury indictments have been returned on 87 persons for 160 counts of felony drug trafficking and one person for 14 counts of embezzlement. They have also resulted in the seizure of over \$80 million in cocaine and methamphetamines, the seizure of the largest lab for those drugs found so far in the United States (it was capable of producing 100 pounds a day of methamphetamine), and the asset forfeiture of real and personal property in excess of \$5.6 million.

**Zion:** In early July, an anonymous call was made to the park in which the caller demanded \$250,000 and threatened to explode bombs located in Zion if the money was not delivered to a specific location that day. The Washington County sheriff, a deputy and park rangers evacuated several buildings briefly while unproductive searches were conducted, and a phony drop, which noone claimed, was made at the arranged location. Based on tips and a subsequent investigation, a local man was arrested and charged with terrorist threats and extortion.

### Hat Cleaning

Chief Ranger Chuck Rafkind of Richmond National Battlefield has written to the Exchange with the name of a reputable hat restorer for those of you with

sagging stetsons. They are called BMS Enterprises and are located at 721 North Meadow Street, Richmond, VA 23220; (804) 359-5217. They clean and block hats for \$20 (plus \$3 for shipping) and offer a number of other repair and restorative services.

### Fish and Wildlife and Forest Service Seek Authorities

As of this writing, the Forest Service is in the process of introducing legislation to give them Title 21 authority to enforce narcotics violations, and is also seeking forfeiture authority whereby any property seized in arrests will be returned to the Forest Service. The Fish and Wildlife Service is introducing a general authorities bill which is modeled on ours and would provide enforcement authority and concurrent jurisdiction on refuges. No further details are available at present.

### EMS Update

There have been a few recent developments in EMS which should be of interest:

- The Service will be establishing a registry of First Responder, EMT-A and EMT-Park Medic instructors in the near future. There'll be more info on this shortly.
- If you have state EMT-A's who need to be NREMT certified, your park EMS coordinator may contact the NREMT directly for the exams. You don't need to go through your state for these, nor do you need a medical sponsor - though we highly recommend that you have one. Your medical sponsor must handle park medic and paramedic exams, as they will not be sent directly to the parks. Call John Chew, the Service's EMS coordinator, for more details. He can be reached at Shenandoah (703-999-2243).
- Photo EMS ID cards similar to law enforcement commission and hospital ID's are now available for First Responders and all levels of EMT's. They can be laminated and clipped on your uniform or lab coat when working in your local ER. Please contact John for a supply of these.

### Film on Yosemite Rangers

Philbin Films has produced a fine documentary on protection rangers in Yosemite which presents a balanced and provocative overview of the evolution, impact and present state of law enforcement in both Yosemite and the National Park Service. The half-hour film, entitled "The Law Of Nature: Park Rangers in Yosemite Valley", has appeared on public television and will soon be available from the producer. If you're interested, the half-inch video cassette sells for \$50, and can be obtained from John Philbin by calling him at 312-383-3312 after October 15th. It was on public television in Los Angeles and South Dakota in early September, and will be broadcast in Idaho and Pueblo, Colorado later in the fall.