



ART of Black Swan

Welcome to the ART of Black Swan. This Advanced Ranger Training (ART) will introduce you to:

- What Black Swan does
- How it is done
- Specific skills as Black Swan

Pre-reading this document will give you a better understanding of how Black Swan works and their role in the Jilakin Rock Rangers. It will also provide some inkling of whether you are interested in taking on a shift or two at the Blaze.

Please note, though, that completing this training module requires attendance at a face to face training event run by the Lead Ranger where you will have an opportunity to respond to some scenarios and practice a few of these skills.

Reading this document neither demands nor guarantees your involvement as Black Swan. Rather, it is a first step into a mutual journey to find a great place for you to contribute to the Jilakin Rock Rangers. If nothing else, we hope that understanding a bit about how the Ranger Team works will make you a better Ranger.

At the end of the training, if you think you want to participate on some level as Black Swan, flag this with the Lead Ranger. If accepted, you will be provided with an opportunity for shift sign-up and provided with a mentor shift...and gifted a Black Swan patch for your Ranger shirt.

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Introduction to Black Swan

Black Swan is the radio handle of the Ranger shift coordinator. In Black Rock City (Burning Man) they are called Khaki, in Red Earth City (Burning Seed) they are called Red 5. Black Swan supports Rangers on shift. They secure resources and communicate with other departments to ensure timely response to incidents. They monitor radio channels, ensure 'Must Report' incidents are dealt with promptly, manage incident reports and offer face-to-face advice to Rangers in the field.

Ranger Shift Command

As a Ranger in Jilakin Rock City, you probably think of Black Swan first when thinking about Ranger Shift Command. As a Regional Burn, Black Swan is our Khaki, the voice at the end of the radio. However, shift command more accurately includes the Ranger Lead and the Event Manager. Black Swan is part of a team of three who manage Ranger Shift Command throughout the day, ensuring 24/7 continuity for incident management and resolution with Rangers, Emergency Services (medics, fire or police) and other Blazing Swan crews (DPW, Safety, Gate, Greeters, Theme Camp & Art Leads and Mutant Vehicles).

Ranger Shift Command Team Roles

Black Swan: Handles the majority of radio traffic matching resource requirements to needs identified by Rangers on patrol and is the first point of contact for Rangers on shift and participant walk-ins at Ranger HQ.

Ranger Lead: An experienced Ranger who can take on various roles during their shift and provides support to Black Swan during busier shifts. On quieter shifts, Black Swan and Ranger lead may be the same person.

Event Manager: The person who holds end-of-line responsibility at Blazing Swan. All the serious shit ends up here! Generally, Black Swan and Ranger Lead seek to FLAME everything and shield the Event Manager from operational matters...however, anything of a serious nature involving; must reports, safety and organisational risk are reported directly to the Event Manager.

Black Swan is located at Ranger HQ in Camp Hart. The Ranger Lead and Event Manager are generally highly mobile but always on radio.

Additional resources available to Black Swan are Green Dot Rangers and the Sanctuary.

Green Dots are Jilakin Rock Rangers who support participants having an emotional, mental, or spiritual crisis that goes beyond the capacity of their local community and less-specialized Rangers to support, but which does not yet need professional services.

Sanctuary is a temporary space for participants who have been identified by Green Dots as needing a calm and quiet place for respite and support. The Sanctuary host will be able to identify the current capacity for placing such participants and deal with triage and medics.

What Black Swan does

Black Swan shifts tend to 'pulse'. They will have periods when it is intensely busy with important, urgent and complex issues, interspersed with quiet and non-eventful moments when you draw breath, catch-up on administrative tasks and wonder 'what was that!'

Some of the personal qualities which we seek to nurture in our role as Black Swan include:

- Tolerance of ambiguity and an ability to remain calm, composed and steadfast during; storms, emotions, and crises;
- Displaying confidence and functioning in an orderly and purposeful manner in situations of uncertainty;
- An ability to think analytically;
- Strong communication and listening skills;
- Effective working relationships;
- Understanding of and ability to maintain various administrative processes and
- Good organisational skills.

No...we are not saints nor are we perfect! Rather, we are prepared to provide leadership in a highly dynamic and complex setting working

in a team to ensure the wellbeing and safety of both our Ranger crew and fellow participants.

Here is a probably incomplete list of some of the more important tasks performed by Black Swan:

- Manages Rangers time on a shift. Black Swan is responsible for making sure each Ranger's volunteer time is used carefully and respectfully, that Ranger morale is high, that Rangers are "doing what they're supposed to be doing" ;
- Makes initial Ranger assignments;
- Keeps track of where Rangers are in the city and what they're doing;
- Dispatches Rangers to incidents;
- Answers questions and provides advice to Rangers over the radio;
- Meets face-to-face with Rangers as requested or as the incident load permits;
- Monitors multiple radios (i.e., Rangers, General and UHF 13);
- Ensures lost property is logged and managed;
- Handles enquiries from walk-in participants at Ranger HQ;
- Communicates with Emergency Services Department to dispatch resources (fire, medical, etc.) to incidents;
- Provides consistency throughout the five Ranger shifts that happen during the day, passing on information to the Black Swan who comes after them;
- Handles Incident Command (IC) duties. Black Swan and the Ranger Lead respond to, take accurate notes about, and attempt to mediate incidents that happen in Jilakin Rock City and ensure that accurate notes on the incident are kept;
- Liaises with other Blazing Swan departments. The Black Swan is often the entry point for other Blazing Swan departments to the Rangers, and vice versa and
- Informs the Event Manager of pertinent situations as they develop.

Ranger Patrol

At the start of each shift, Black Swan is responsible for:

- Meeting and greeting Rangers before shift, ensuring they have signed-in;
- Noting any special skills or assets (e.g., Green Dots or First Aid trained);

- Asking each Ranger how many years they have Rangered;
- Pairing Rangers up and
- Assigning patrol areas when there are three teams.

A shift briefing and pep talk should be delivered by Black Swan before Rangers go on shift. It is important that all Rangers be informed of events that may be expected during their shift and any issues they should be on the lookout for, etc.

What makes this fun and challenging is that the above needs to be done fairly quickly, in sometimes chaotic circumstances. Remember, while you're stuffing around trying to figure out this stuff, there are tired, dusty Rangers out in Jilakin Rock City who are waiting to be called in!

There are a number of things to juggle when managing a Ranger shift changeover:

- Even coverage is the goal. If you have three teams, you can be much more specific about where they should be sent than if you have only one team;
- Newer Rangers (Shiny Pennies) are much better off paired with an experienced Ranger.
- Sometimes you will end up with an extra Ranger. Do not send them out solo. Instead, sending them out with another pair, or consider having them ranger walk-ups in front of HQ. That way when a late-to-shift straggler arrives looking for a partner, they already have one conveniently located at HQ.
- Pay attention and talk gently to any Rangers who don't appear prepared to walk a shift. As we know, dehydration and other issues can hit any of us at the event without regard to shifts we signed up for weeks in advance!

Handling Radio Calls & Radio Demeanour

In our trainings we have said that if you have any question about ANYTHING, "Call Black Swan". Well, great. When you are Black Swan you get every kind of question that comes in from all of the Rangers. Is there any chance in that you will be able to answer every question that comes in? No.

However, what you DO have to do as Black Swan is respond to each Ranger with respect no matter what their questions are.

Your primary job is to support the Dirt Rangers. No laughing on the radio at any question, no matter how weird/silly/obvious it is. And no yelling at Rangers either.

The best Black Swans aren't the ones who necessarily know the most information, but are more likely to be very good at getting information. Either from other Rangers, people around them, or anywhere else they can think of.

The most visible part of the Ranger Team's work to the majority of our volunteers (and to other departments) is the role of Black Swan. Black Swan's voice on the radio not only ensures that Rangers are dispatched where they are needed and those Rangers get the support they need to make Jilakin Rock City a better place for its inhabitants, but it also sets the tone and mood for the entire shift. The skill of Black Swanning is to gracefully direct the chaos that is Rangers and incidents on any given shift and isn't something any of us were born with. It only fully develops with experience.

Elements of a good Black Swan radio demeanour include:

- Answering calls in a timely manner - the definition of "timely" may vary based on how busy both you are at a given time, but a goal of answering within 5 seconds is a good rule of thumb, even if it's just saying "Last caller, standby for Black Swan";
- Listening to and taking notes on the content of calls - this prevents you from having to ask for things to be repeated multiple times. Your notes will also serve two other purposes: at shift change over you can review them and alert the next Black Swan to anything that remains unresolved and they will be invaluable when writing-up an incident report;
- Making sure the contacting Ranger feels heard - while you may not think the incident merits a radio call, the Ranger on the other end got over their fear of the radio and reached out to you. If a Ranger is calling every speck of dust they see in to Black Swan...you may want to curb their enthusiasm.
- Keeping channel traffic focused on operational issues - off-hours social planning, excessive check-ins on precise locations as Rangers move around the city during their shift, long conversations about complicated incidents — it's your job to make sure these kinds of calls don't suck up bandwidth;
- Respectfully coaching Rangers through mistakes or confusion - Most of us aren't on a radio the other 51 weeks of the year and don't have the Ranger manual memorised; be gentle and

respectful correcting missteps on the radio. If you see a pattern of misunderstanding developing during your shift, you can make an Allcom announcement clarifying or correcting the misunderstanding. This separates the issue from the individual(s) making the mistake and

- Understanding that there is a time and place for humour or other radio shenanigans - and a busy shift ain't it.

Doing all of the above with a tone and demeanor that helps people remember they're appreciated - while it is important to maintain operational utility on your channel, being cold and mechanical or chewing folk out for having bad radio skills hurts the morale of every Ranger on your shift. It's important to convey, through your tone and word choice, that you understand that the Rangers on your shift are volunteering a chunk of their time to be part of the shift.

Incident Reporting

A crucial part of the Black Swan role is to ensure that incidents are recorded on the Incident Reporting Form. These are the how the organisation both captures relevant information and learns. While we have no desire to 'drown in paperwork' their intent is to capture information that may be relevant later...or allow repeat incidents from the same source to be noted (and possibly acted upon).

This is where your notes will come in handy. While your were scrawling brief details as an incident unfolded...this is where you can succinctly and accurately file details post-incident to ensure that there is a permanent record for review later if needed.

Every year, the stack of incident reports are reviewed and lessons are learned. Anything which requires post-event follow-up is logged and acted upon by the Blazing Swan Committee.

In the event of something serious which ended-up at a coroners inquiry, our Incident Forms would be how we evidence organisational response and protocols. They should be:

- Brief – a short description of the chain of events that were dealt with and the outcome;

- Factual – what was observed or said. If second-hand, get the Ranger(s) involved to complete one and attach them together and
- Accurate – time, place, names etc.

Protocols & Mandatory Reports

You'll have a pretty strong working knowledge of the Ranger Training Manual and know the Must Report situations. While you are not expected to know this stuff backwards...you at least know where to find out! Copies of these are on the Blazing Swan website, and hard copies are held at the event in Ranger HQ.

You can access the current version of the Ranger Training Manual here:

<http://blazingswan.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Blazing-Swan-Ranger-Training-Manual.pdf>

And the Black Swan manual for procedures, process and protocols here:

<http://blazingswan.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Black-Swan-Guide-Pt1.pdf>

These documents together provide the nuts and bolts of managing Must Report situations, responding to situations you may encounter, things to do at Ranger HQ and some useful details about off-site resources.

A final note, the Black Swan role carries with it a responsibility over and above that of a dirt Ranger. You are trusted by others to handle information, which is sometimes of a personal, private and confidential nature. Holding confidences is an ethical imperative implied by the code of conduct describe in the Ranger Training Manual and the 11 Points of Ranging. We model and uphold our Community Standards.

Gossiping about what occurred, posting about it on social media, or taking the matter outside the Rangers is counterproductive and does not ensure confidentiality. Black Swan understands the line between sharing personal experiences and not disclosing operational details.

Face to Face

During the face to face training, we will think through various scenarios introducing you to some of the specific skills you'll need as Black Swan, and give you a chance to practice them a little bit.

In each of these scenarios, assume you're Black Swan on shift.

Shiny Penny: It's 2 hours and 45 minutes into shift. A shiny penny Ranger shows up at Camp Hart. You and the Lead Ranger watch in disbelief as he checks in, gets a radio, and heads out, alone. WTF? You look at the Lead Ranger, who shrugs, grins, and says, "You handle it."

What do you do?

Very Thin Line: It's the start of the graveyard shift, just after the Duck has burned. You're Black Swan. A total of one Ranger has shown up for Dirt Ranger duty.

Whatchu gonna do?

Ranger your Rangers: A request comes in over the radio from a Ranger pair for a face-to-face. You hop into a quad with the Event Manager and head over. When you arrive, the Rangers who requested the face-to-face tell you they've been dealing with a participant who has set up in someone else's camp during the night. The camp is upset, the participant is being uncooperative, and the Rangers say they are at the end of their ropes.

What do you do?

If you enjoyed thinking through these scenarios and imagined at least a couple of possible responses to each of them...you'll love the face to face training happening soon which will complete this ART of Black Swan.

Thank you for your service Ranger, see you there...