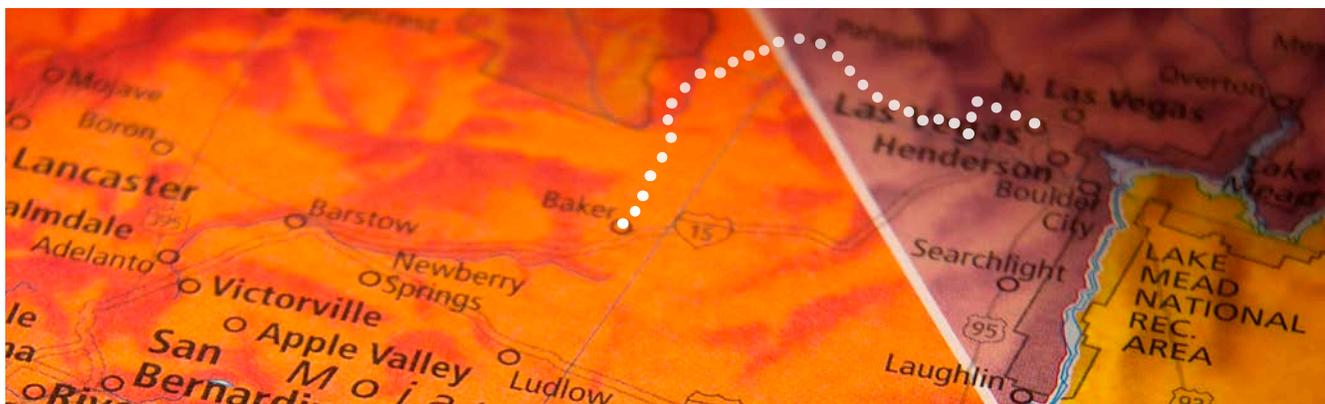


## KENWOOD NEXEDGE® Radios Perform in Demanding 120-Mile Two State Road Race



**PROJECT OVERVIEW:** KENWOOD NEXEDGE® digital radios and a custom system engineered and built by two KENWOOD dealers, Mobile Relay Associates and Rebel Communications, supported teams running the annual Baker to Vegas Road Race in the Mojave Desert.

The annual B2V Challenge Cup Relay Race, a prestigious and unique international foot race, attracts 8,000 participants on 127 teams, exclusively from U.S. and international law enforcement agencies. It's also one of the most demanding races held in the U.S., a 120-mile test of endurance through the Mojave Desert – an unpopulated and desolate corner of the Southwest.

The race is held in March, when the unrelenting and treacherous vastness of the Mojave is also a place of weather extremes, from bone chilling to sweltering in a single day. Adding to the danger is that early spring is when rattlesnakes start to stir from winter hibernation. It's fitting that the official race logo features a giant, red-eyed coiled Diamondback rattlesnake, fangs extended and ready to strike.

Each agency's team braves the Mojave's difficult terrain, unpredictable weather and desert creatures to field 20 runners, with each runner taking a 6-mile relay segment. Participants share a two-lane road with local traffic as they ensure twelve to eighteen hours of continuous racing from the start in Baker, California to the finish line at the Westgate Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Most of the route snakes through the moonscape of the Mojave Desert,

where cell phone coverage is practically non-existent. Lack of cellular coverage presents sharp challenges for teams that need moment-to-moment voice communications to effectively organize supply deliveries, coordinate team follow vehicles and precisely time the hand-off to a fresh runner for each stage of the relay race.

In 2016, more than 30 B2V law enforcement agency teams used over 200 KENWOOD NEXEDGE® digital radios for race coordination. The radios operated on a NEXEDGE system engineered and constructed by Mobile Relay Associates and Rebel Communications, two authorized KENWOOD dealers, combining their existing networks and temporary sites specially constructed for the B2V race. According to Mark Abrams,

*"I give the radios a lot of credit for how well we did in the race. I had the ability to communicate anytime, anywhere."*

– Sergeant Joe Settles, Huntington Police Department, co-captain, Southeast Cities team

President, Mobile Relay Associates, the system in place for the 2016 B2V had portable radio coverage over 90% and mobile coverage over 99% of the 120-mile course.

Sergeant Joe Settles with the Huntington Park Police Department, co-captain of the Southeast Cities team and one of the teams that used the NEXEDGE radios said, “I give the radio system a lot of credit for how well we did in the race. I had the ability to communicate anytime, anywhere. Our coordination efforts were so spot on that we placed 9th out of 127 teams. That was outstanding. We were totally in control.”

“Having a successful race is all about coordination. We’ve never had that before this year. It’s always been a fly-by-night, running blind kind of thing, just hoping that someone heard you. This is the first time we felt in control throughout the entire race. It was the most unstressful B2V race I’ve ever had. It was actually fun,” he added.

Al Lopez with the state of California DMV team echoed Sgt. Settles’ experience using the NEXEDGE digital radios, saying that “with the radios, I was able to get instant reports. With cell phones, we would be dead on the race course for 6-7 hours without a way to communicate. I had real-time information, so I knew when to send out runners. It made me feel more assured, more confident because I could always talk to my follow van.”

With the NEXEDGE radios, teams reported reliable communications back and forth between team members at the Westgate Hotel and the follow vehicles out on the course, assuring rapid response to unexpected developments such as a runner substitution and coordination of supply deliveries. As Lopez reported, “voice clarity was great. I was on the 4th floor of the Westgate and was able to reach out to anywhere on the race course, even without a base station. I was thinking there was no

*“Voice clarity was great. It wasn’t just good, it was flawless.”*

— Al Lopez, state of California DMV team





way I'd be able to get that kind of coverage from within the hotel out to the course. It wasn't just good, it was flawless. To be able to see GPS and tracking as well was amazing."

Settles has participated in the race since the 90's and Lopez has been affiliated with it for 25 years, and both stressed the importance of uninterrupted and real-time communications to a successful race outcome and the safety and comfort of the runners. As Settles pointed out, "the radios don't have legs and can't help you run faster. But in the past we had nothing but communications problems and it doesn't matter how fast you run, what's important is coordination. I could call from anywhere in the course back to the Westgate and ask people to bring ice, batteries, the little things you don't think about until you're there. I was ready for any emergency."

Lopez' team used to rely on texting, but the spotty cell phone coverage meant that text messages came in all at once, making it hard to know precisely what had happened and when. "Having the radios made me feel more assured and more confident. I could talk to my follow vehicle at any time and know precisely where they were and send out my crew or coordinate the positioning of runners," said Lopez.

He added, "They make these KENWOOD radios cop-proof. They're very durable. Plus, you know how cops are with their radios, they want to push all of the buttons. With these, everything was pre-programmed and it didn't matter what buttons they pushed, we didn't lose what we'd already pre-programmed."

"I definitely recommend these NEXEDGE radios and Mobile Relay's system. It's just the way to go."

**CUSTOMER:**

Teams participating in the Baker to Vegas (B2V) 2016 Challenge Cup Relay Race

**LOCAL DEALER PARTNERS:**

Mobile Relay Associates [mra-raycom.com](http://mra-raycom.com)

Rebel Communications [rebelcomm.com](http://rebelcomm.com)



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