

**PSV-108**  
**WHAT IS A "SHADOW"**

Modified and updated by Earl Pack

Based on an article by John Galvin - N5TIM

A shadow is an Amateur Radio Operator who accompanies an official or important person during an event. A shadow operator may be on-foot, mobile, or both during their assignment.

**CONCEPT:**

- The purpose of the shadow operator is to allow constant contact with some person who is important to the event operation. Thus the amateur operator **MUST** remain in the immediate vicinity of the person shadowed **AT ALL TIMES**.
- The shadow must be vigilant of their assigned official because that official may quickly move to another location without warning. It is the Shadows job to keep up with the official and not lose them. It becomes difficult to reconnect with that official when they have no communications capability.
- It is possible the official may have an amateur radio license, but their job requires them to do other thing than to monitor the radio. The Shadow works as a filter to sift out the communications the official needs to hear.
- Because the person being shadowed will usually be involved in some important activity, the shadow should be mostly unobtrusive in the vicinity of the person, interjecting only when communications to the official or information the official should be made aware are needed. Also to provide communication as requested by their official. This unobtrusive responsibility will define the type of equipment needed.

**RESPONSIBILITIES/DUTIES:**

**Communications**

1. The shadow operator must remain with the person being shadowed at all times. In addition, the amateur must monitor the radio **AT ALL TIMES**.
2. The shadow operator is expected to take direction from the event communications coordinator during his shift.
3. The shadow may operate other radios as well: such as the event furnished radio and cellular telephone.

**Shift Duration:** Most event operations have duration's of 12 hours or less. This time may vary depending on the actual needs of the operation. A rotating shadow assignment which changes out every few hours may also be utilized.

The operator shall be in good physical condition. The amateur operator must be able to walk and sometimes run long distances with the official.

Dress for the assignment. You need to look respectable and be prepared for the potential weather conditions.

Build a good, respectable relationship with the official. A confrontational relationship will not work. Over the years may officials will request the same person shadow them each year.

Credentials: With increased security requirements, the amateur radio operator must have the same credentials as their official. Sometime the official can wave the credentials. But it is much easier to go through the vetting and background checks to obtain the credentials needed to accompany the official anywhere they need to go. This may also affect the type of bag used to carry your equipment.

#### EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS:

The shadow shall furnish the following equipment when reporting for duty:

1. A quality hand-held, dual band: 2 meter/70 centimeter, 5 watt output, synthesized transceiver with programmable CTSS tone encoder. (Note: Cross band may be required in the future.)  
Be aware that many of the cheap HT's are not suitable, potentially totally worthless for downtown operation due to their lack of input receiver filtering and noise rejection.
2. Ear piece or headphones for HT, or speaker-mike. This is important for two reasons:
  - a) to keep the shadowed official from being disturbed by all of the traffic on the radio, and
  - b) to endure the operator can continuously hear the radio communications in a very noisy environments.
3. 5/8-wave, mag-mount antenna with 15 feet coaxial cable, or extendible pull-up or high gain antenna for the HT, as well as the regular HT rubber duck antenna.
4. Mobile 2 meter/70 centimeter radio for easy installation in a vehicle, including mag-mount antenna. Be aware that many vehicles do not have magnetic surfaces so a ground plane and tape may be required to provide an adequate antenna installation.
5. Alternative: mobile booster amplifier. An external antenna with a long cord is also required. Some shadow functions may be mobile.
6. Large capacity battery power should be considered since some vehicles will not have access to vehicle battery.
7. Spare batteries for 12 hours operation.
8. Power adapter connectors -- both cigarette lighter and clip-lead for direct battery connection with cables at least 10 feet long. Recommended: Anderson Power Pole connector compatibility.