

The New California Republic – Ministries, offices, and agencies

The New California Republic is no loose alliance between a few towns and cities and also not a great empire ruled by its military. Even though it was difficult (and often remains so, 50 years after the founding of the republic), from the beginning onwards, everyone tried for clear structures, checks and balances, transparency and – especially – a limited bureaucracy.

The following paragraphs present the ministries, offices and agencies of the New California Republic, their history, their composition and their method of working.

Crime fighting and justice

The Republic was founded in Shady Sands and has not changed its constitution in 50 years, but has embarked on its first and (proportionally speaking) biggest wave of expansion only in the following decades. The young republic had to convince very different cities and settlements like Junktown, Angel's Boneyard and the Hub, to affiliate *willingly* and give up a great deal of sovereignty to a rather young and foreign government. One of the most important points in the agreement, that formalized the annexation of the new territories into the NCR, was the assurance, that all settlements and towns and cities were allowed to maintain their own police forces that – apart from certain special circumstances – were responsible for maintaining law and order in their territories and had to prevent or investigate crimes.

The local police agencies have differing names (and variously good equipment, since they aren't paid for by the Republican government, but by their local one) but they wear the same uniform and insignia – and work by the same laws and protocols.

Crimes that cross the borders of the city states or districts, or that stand in connection to certain technologies or institutions that are of great import to the whole of the Republic, are investigated by the *New California Investigative Agency*, that is subordinate to the Republican Ministry of Justice. The agency consists of about 200 people and is allowed to investigate and punish everywhere in the NCR.

The New California Investigative Agency investigates, when asked to by the local police force or when the crime is directed against the transportation or communications ability of the Republic. Furthermore, counter-espionage falls into their bailiwick.

The constitution of the New California Republic guarantees every defendant a fair, and just, trial overseen by a judge and a jury of his peers, with a counselor that is well versed in the law and that is appointed by the state, should the defendant not be able to afford a lawyer. Both the judges as well as the prosecutors are subordinate to the Ministry of Justice. Both are educated and schooled in the Boneyard. Judge however, is not an office the Ministry may just appoint. Judges are elected in the NCR, however the details vary quite a bit within the Republic. In the Hub, for example, judges are elected for three years, whereas in Junktown, they are elected for life.

Finances, trade and taxes

Having a government and a true nation does have a lot of advantages. The streets are in a better state and securer to boot, raiders are less and in a worse state, sicknesses are less and the doctors are more and better and so on...

It's just that all those people that secure and repair the streets, shoot and bury the raiders and so on, would occasionally like to eat and really would enjoy a bed and a roof over said bed and all those other amenities. In other words, they want money.

That put the young republic before a problem, which solution was rather obvious. They solved it, as

did every other government before, with taxes. That however, was not that easily accomplished.

In 2196 bottle caps (or caps in short) were the common currency in the wasteland, but caps weren't really a satisfying form of money. The economy was based on trade, but how does one satisfy a tax collector that wants 10% of the value of every transaction, when the transaction was trading a Brahmin against a rifle, four magazines and three hundred rounds of ammunition? Does he receive 30 rounds, a spring from a magazine and the barrel? Or preferably a piece of the Brahmin? Maybe the horns?

What the republic really and urgently needed, was true money. Money that allowed not a trade of a Brahmin against a gun, but allowed the farmer to *sell* his Brahmin and with the money gained to *pay* for the gun. Compared to the trade system, there are many advantages to using a real currency, of which the possible taxation is only one. Of course, needless to say, taxation is not uniformly viewed as an advantage.

The NCR Dollar was introduced. Of course, most people eyed it rather skeptical. A green piece of paper with a number on it and a few pictures is a bit harder to gauge in value, than a Brahmin or a rifle. And even if the dollar was an improvement over caps, not everyone felt that way. Caps had been around for a long time, had proven themselves and were universally accepted.

For the first twenty years, the government guaranteed that it had a reserve of caps equal to every single dollar that it printed or minted, and the exchange rate was 1 to 1. After these twenty years, the system was changed. The republic was established, had won the biggest and most important cities in the south for itself and contained in itself untold wealth that had never sealed a Nuka Cola bottle. The government now no longer guaranteed that it had the same amount of caps as it was giving out in dollars, but that it had the same amount in available or intangible assets. What would have been ridiculed before, did hardly lead to any negative comments at the time. That was mainly due to a relentless PR campaign by the President and leading economy experts like the CEOs of *every* large trading house in the republic.

Now that true money existed, the prerequisites for true taxes were created. The NCR takes in twenty percent of the monthly income of all its residents. Furthermore there is a ten percent transaction tax on every transaction of wares or services. The governments of the city states and districts demand taxes of their own of their residents, but the taxation varies a lot between the local governments. Furthermore there are tariffs on certain goods and licenses that must be acquired from the state to be able to ply certain trades. Merchants need a license if they wish to trade inside the NCR; Doctors as well, but those must also take an exam with the *Ministry for Health and Social Issues*.

It probably does not bare mention that many residents don't pay all the taxes on their income. The *Ministry of Trade and Industry* that is, among other things, responsible for tariffs and taxes, knows this of course and also knows it can't be prevented. Most of its agents and collectors tend to look the other way with truly poor tax payers, since their few dollars a month don't make much of a difference anyway. On the other hand, there is a lot of control of the many stores, bars and other establishments as well as the great trading houses and even the constantly growing middle class. Their books get controlled a lot more and the ministry isn't shy about suing for tax evasion in their cases.

Protection and Defense of the Republic against interior and external threats

It had been John Aradesh, the first president of the Republic, that turned the Rangers into the official military of the NCR, after the so called year of Fire, 2204. The experiences gained in that most recent attack by plundering hordes were responsible for the republic not creating a Ministry of Defense but a *Ministry of War*.

In addition to the Rangers, the city states and districts maintain their own, small militias. Those militias represented a kind of insurance, at first, too, guaranteeing that the new government would

not be the only military power and giving the city states the feeling, that they wouldn't be completely without protection, should they wish to secede from the Republic again.

By 2247, the militias count little more than a thousand soldiers, that are spread all over the republic, too. They are regarded as a standing reserve for the Rangers, in case they're ever needed. In fact, the District Governors and Mayors of the city states are the commanders in chief of the militias. While the president of the Republic is the commander in chief of the Rangers, she can only order the militias after they have been placed under federal control – something that has never happened in the history of the Republic, since there had never been a crisis great enough to warrant it.

The ministry of war is responsible for the Rangers, the cooperation of the Rangers with the militias and it collects reports on the current capabilities of the militias, in case they're ever needed. Furthermore they take care of paying the veteran pensions, the widow's and orphan's pension, the public relations work of the Rangers and many further details.

Interior Affairs

The *Ministry of Interior Affairs* (usually called Interior Ministry), takes care of various things. It's field of responsibility encompasses the infrastructure of the Republic, as well as most things citizens need from their government – but also taking care of property right, which often are exceedingly difficult to parse – who owns a skyscraper that's been abandoned for 170 years, somewhere in the south of what had once been Los Angeles? The company that had it built 200 years before? The scavengers and treasure hunters, that recently discovered it and built their camp in it – or the local, big company that wants to dismantle that ruin bit by bit to get at the good quality steel used in it's construction?

Besides such contemptuous questions, that the Interior Ministry usually defers to judges with great pleasure, they take very special care to improve and maintain the road network of the Republic. The Interior Ministry works closely with the New California Train and Travel Company in that regard.

In addition to the street network, the Interior Ministry takes care of the telegraph poles and lines next to the streets, and of the *Republican Postal Service* that is a separate agency of the *Ministry of Interior Affairs*.

The Interior Ministry also has limited funds at its disposal, to bankroll schools and teachers – even to give the poorest settlements in the NCR some help in hiring a barely qualified teacher that at least is able to teach the basics. The Republic has some really good schools, even the beginnings of true universities, but is unfortunately still far away from being able to make schools mandatory. And good schooling is expensive – and so far at least, only available in large cities.

The largest and most work intensive job of the Interior Ministry however is the registration of the Republican citizens. Issuing everything from birth certificates, documents and passports, the registration of residences and voting rights and all the other bureaucratic fol-de-rol of a proper government,

Exterior Affairs and Diplomacy

The *Ministry for Exterior Affairs* (usually abbreviated to Exterior Ministry) is the smallest of the NCR's ministries and has only three tasks.

The first and most obvious is of course diplomacy. The NCR has trade relations with numerous settlements outside of it's borders, from San Francisco to Redding to Vault-City. No matter what is

traded, no matter who trades, sooner or later there are issues about tariffs, unjust treatment of traders, traders that have been stuck in jail for their involvement in a bar brawl – that alone can make the diplomats busy, even without talks that can spell survival.

The second duty of the Exterior Ministry is one that is looked askew by many potentates in the settlements and cities outside the NCR: the *Department of Publicity* that plasters walls in New Reno with propaganda posters and hands out the *NCR Magazine of political education* all across the Wasteland. It's not necessary to mention, that citizens of Vault-City for example, are less than thrilled about their 'servants' reading of freedom of speech and similar things (which in turn, gives the diplomats of the other departments more work).

The third duty of the Exterior Ministry is gathering foreign intelligence. In other words: they run the Republican Intelligence Service. While a lot is talked and whispered and speculated about the alleged machinations of this department, their work is rarely as spectacular as many people think. Most of their information comes from patriotic merchants, that travel the Wasteland anyway and gladly report on conditions, when they return. Only a few members of that department travel the area themselves to spy and do all those exciting things that are known from books and Holo Disks from before the Great War.

The Ministry of Development, Improvement and Science

The *Ministry of Development, Improvement and Science* is, with it's 140 officials the second smallest of the NCR's ministries, after the *Exterior Ministry*. It has a somewhat ambiguous area of work and employs some of the smartest heads of the republic.

It is not responsible for inner peace or streets or the defense of the republic but for the development and utilization of any and all imaginable technologies, from special chemical manures and medicines and medical technologies up to high tech weapons.

The Ministry of Development, Improvement and Science works closely with the infant universities, the Followers of the Apocalypse and even some private companies that utilize or produce high tech equipment (the New California Train and Travel Company comes rather forcibly to mind).

The Ministry of Development, Improvement and Science is material to the motorization of the Republic, takes care of the electricity and water supply and is already planning the wind and water power plants that will one day be built off the coast of the Boneyard.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The *Ministry of Health and Social Affairs* tests the doctors of the republic, tries to prevent unnecessary or negligent dangers in the use of various, dangerous chemicals in the industry and generally tries to make sure that the citizens of the republic have access to medical professionals.

There are a few hospitals and large, privately run clinics in the republic and many (more or less well trained) doctors. But those people have running costs, too, that need to be paid – and some command really exorbitant prices for their services. While some people in the republic are able to afford such expenses quite handily, and many more have enough saved to cover the costs, many lack those possibilities. The Ministry for Health and Social Affairs offers two solutions for that. One is a kind of voluntary health insurance in which one can pay and which covers at least a part of the treatment costs, the other one is an advance loan, that covers the expenses – but that loan is charged with interest and many that take it spend the next ten or twenty years repaying it.

As for the second part of the ministry's name, there is the voluntary option of paying into a pension fund from which one would later in life receive benefits as well as orphanages, especially in the large cities.

The Ministry of Agriculture

The *ministry of agriculture* takes care of the production of food. The NCR maintains gigantic brahmin and horse ranches and enormous fields full of corn, soy beans and mutated cabbages. This ministry makes sure, that the food stuffs don't present a health hazard, coordinates the efforts of pest control, tries to prevent the grounds from getting overly taxed in their use and makes sure the ground water is not poisoned.

Randomly sampled examinations of fields and pastures, both of the flora and fauna on them as well as the business practices of the people using and living on them, have created problems for many a farmer or rancher. The controllers of the *ministry of agriculture* know, that they make themselves rather unpopular with these people – a price they are quite willing to pay to make sure the 250,000 people in The Hub don't suffer hunger, because some idiot wanted to buy the neighboring farm, but instead of paying the full price preferred to poison the fields, so that the farm would lose value for a time.