

VEX VOLUNTEER
TRAINING DOCUMENTS
For
FIELD MANAGEMENT

Index



ROLE	PAGE
Volunteer Considerations	2
Division Resource Table & Illustration	3
Division Manager	4
Field Manager	5
Referees	6
Field Technical Advisor	7
Field Assistants	8
Field Control/Scorekeeper	9
Announcer/Emcee	10
Queuing Process Manager & Assistants	11

Volunteer Considerations

New event partners frequently ask how many volunteers they are going to need to run a successful event. While there is a wide range of possible answers, to get started let's assume a worst-case scenario (the highest number of volunteers), this would be one full time volunteer for each registered team, so a 24 team tournament with access to 24 volunteers would be in great shape to cover all the required positions and have relief for all.

If we focus on several key factors it is possible to fine-tune this estimate and reduce the number of volunteers needed for planning purposes. Key factors to consider are;

- Experience of teams attending (experience teams know what to do this puts less emphasis on queuing and proper preparation for matches)
- Experience of volunteers (experienced volunteers know what needs to be done, it is possible for several positions to be shared reducing head count)
- How much effort each volunteer is being asked to put forth

The rest of this document's pages provides one page training handouts to help get your volunteers ready for the tournament. Hand these out when assignments are made so people can prepare in advance. Try during setup to run a sample match(s) so that the different roles can understand the relationship that each position has to the other. Emphasize who takes direction from whom for all.

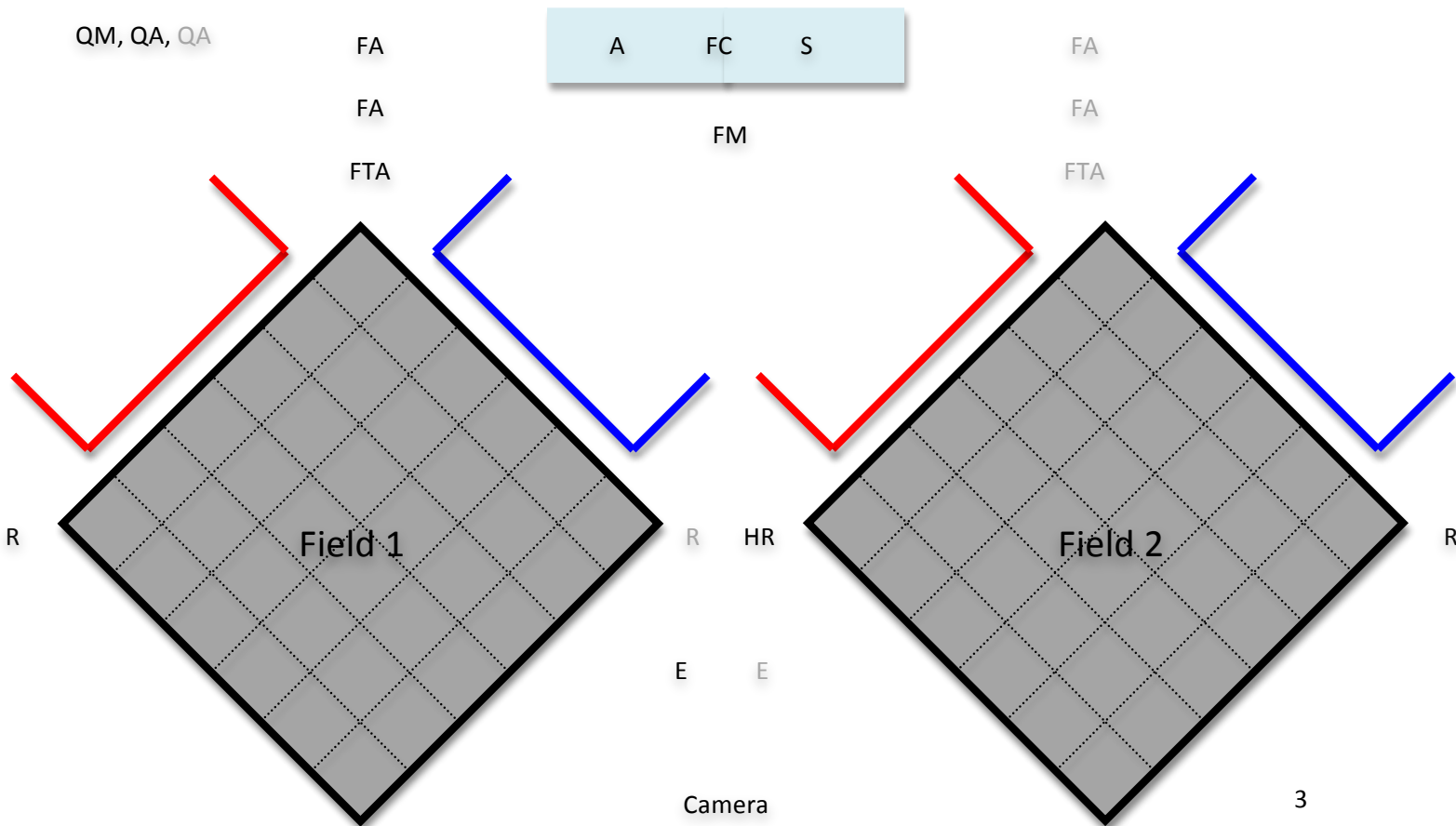
By doing this, a prepared volunteer staff will have the best chance to run an event on schedule. The greatest challenge for all events is getting started on time, getting through the first round of matches and restarting from breaks without falling behind. It is important that all volunteers understand what is supposed to be happening and then working together to help execute the schedule and not drift from it.

Events should not be endurance challenges for your volunteers, plan for relief of your volunteers. Having said that, breaks can be costly! Starting and stopping of play can be a challenge and could be disruptive to a schedule. Use breaks cautiously and emphasize to volunteers how important it is to resume the event *on schedule*. This means that volunteers need to **act ahead of schedule** to be in place to resume matches on time. As an alternative consider relief workers to provide breaks for individuals while allowing qualifications to continue uninterrupted. This can avoid the pitfalls of starting and stopping and can be used to get teams more matches as well. This is also an effective way to avoid lunchtime rushes where food distribution can be a bottleneck. If 200 people plan to eat in 30 minutes, make sure food service can do it.

Make sure people have the tools needed to execute their role. Communications is frequently the key to success especially if a venue requires that the teams pits are separate from the competition area. Don't skimp on the use of radios, they also can save lots of unnecessary walking.

Volunteer Positions per Division

TITLE	CODE	IDEAL #	MINIMUM #
Field Manager	FM	1	1
Field Technical Advisor	FTA	2	1
Head Referee	HR	1	1
Referee	R	3	2
Field Assistants	FA	4	2
Field Control	FC	1	.5
Scorekeeper	S	1	.5
Emcee	E	2	1
Announcer	A	1	1
Queuing Manager	QM	1	1
Queuing Assistants	QA	2	1
TOTALS		19	12



VEX Training Document

for

DIVISION MANAGER

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Insure the smooth and effective operation of the division.**
- **With a focus on the volunteers, help your field managers do their jobs of maintaining the schedule.**
- **Use all resources assigned to get the job done. Ask for more if needed, however think creatively if shortages exist. Understand what positions can be shared if necessary.**
- **Be proactive, look for things that need attention and make adjustments before they become real issues.**
- **Be sensitive to volunteer needs, do what you can to keep them happy.**

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate relief of volunteers that might not have schedule breaks.
- Personally relieve volunteers if necessary for needed breaks.

EQUIPMENT – Clipboard, match schedule, volunteer assignments, pen, radio, appropriate colored shirt.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – Master event schedule, match schedule.

TAKES DIRECTION from the EVENT DIRECTOR and Interfaces with the Volunteer coordinator, provides direction to the field managers.

NOTES

- Managers are asked to do everything in there power to start on time and keep to the schedule.
- Prior to the start of the day, managers are asked to work with the volunteer team to make sure all volunteers understand their roles and how it impacts the people they interface with.
- Take time to talk to the various functional groups of volunteers and answer any questions they may have. Encourage consistency and kindness.
- Be sensitive to the fact that many volunteers may be supporters of a team and have a strong desire to see their teams perform in matches. If resources allow you to relieve people for this, that would be great.

TIPS

- Volunteers will be asked to be “on station” 15 minutes before the schedule requires it. This should permit a dry run of the match cycle time required to maintain schedule. This helps all involved to understand just how quickly they must perform their duties to stay on track. During the early matches focus on this to prevent time being lost needlessly. Once the team working the field finds its rhythm, things should progress smoothly.

VEX Training Document

for

FIELD MANAGER

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Insure the smooth and effective operation of the field(s).**
- **With a focus on maintaining the schedule provide teams with a quality match experience.**
- **Use all resources assigned to get the job done. Ask for more if needed, however think creatively if shortages exist. Understand what positions can be shared if necessary.**
- **Be proactive, look for things that need attention and make adjustments before they become real issues. (Ex: move or separate people who are not working well together.)**

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Inform your Division Manager of volunteers that need breaks.
- Treat all volunteers respectfully and remember to be pleasant to them.
- As a last resort, personally relieve volunteers if necessary for breaks.

EQUIPMENT – Clipboard, match schedule, volunteer assignments, pen, volunteer shirt.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – Match schedule, copies of all volunteer training documents for positions related to running matches.

TAKES DIRECTION from the DIVISION MANAGER, provides direction to the team of volunteers under their control.

NOTES

- Prior to the start of the day, managers are asked to work with the volunteer team to make sure all volunteers understand their roles and how it impacts the people they interface with. Work to develop synergy as a team.
- Managers are asked to do everything in there power to start on time and keep to the schedule.
- Take time to talk to the various functional groups of volunteers and answer any questions they may have. Encourage consistency and kindness.

TIPS

- Volunteers will be asked to be “on station” 15 minutes before the schedule requires it. This should permit a dry run of a match to measure cycle time and adjust as necessary to maintain schedule. This helps all involved to understand just how quickly they must perform their duties to stay on track. During the early matches focus on this to prevent time being lost needlessly. Once the team working the field finds its rhythm, things should progress smoothly.

VEX Training Document

for

REFEREES

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Enforces all the rules of the game to ensure fairness for all.**
- **Apply the rules consistently during the event.**
- **Makes any violation calls that are required.**
- **Fills out the score sheet after each match in a timely manner.**

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Is cognizant of time cycle of matches and works closely with the rest of the field team to stay on schedule. This takes everyone's effort and attention especially at the beginning of an event to avoid falling behind right away.
- Checks that fields are properly reset before each match and that robots are placed correctly on the field and do not violate the size restrictions.

EQUIPMENT – Clipboard, match schedule, score-sheets, pen, referee shirt, safety glasses.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – game rules, referee manual, most recent forum Q&A on rules interpretations.

TAKES DIRECTION from the FIELD MANAGER and interfaces with the field team and scorekeeper to control the start of the match.

NOTES

- In the situation where an event does not have a person for technical field support (Field Technical Advisor), it can be helpful (time permitting) for the referee to help teams check their robots before each match.
- Head Referees - For larger events it is beneficial to have a head referee who can organize and oversee all referees. Other duties of a head referee include referee training and being a final authority for any rulings.
- There is usually a "Drivers Meeting" in the morning run by the head referee. It gives teams a chance to ask questions about rules. Use this time to communicate expectations for the teams as well.

TIPS

- Once teams are set and ready to begin a match, elevate and hold an arm and give a thumbs up signal that the emcee and score keeper can see. This helps get matches started sooner.
- Be cognizant of the match cycle time being run at this event. During the early matches focus on this to prevent time being lost needlessly. Once the team working the field finds its rhythm, things should progress smoothly.

VEX Training Document

for

FIELD TECHNICAL ADVISOR

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Sets up and tests the Field Control System for each field and ensures it is operating properly before the matches begin.**
- **Supervise matches to monitor that the field control system is performing correctly.**
- **Fixes the Field Control System (FCS) if required.**
- **Has the authority to advise the head referee for a replay if the FCS was at fault.**
- **Is cognizant of time cycle of matches and if needed helps the rest of the field team to stay on schedule.**
- **Assigns which crystals are used. (for events that use crystals)**

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Is a resource to the teams to help trouble shoot or problem solve why a robot did not function properly in a match (to the extent that this does not interfere with their ability to perform primary responsibilities).
- Can bring teams back to the Competition Field for troubleshooting after the matches have been completed for the day.
- May advise teams on proper procedure for preparing robots for a match.

EQUIPMENT – Safety glasses (optional), any tools as determined by the Field Technical Advisor such as a device to measure presence of frequencies or Wi-Fi in the building

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – Field control setup schematic, crystal distribution.

TAKES DIRECTION from the FIELD MANAGER and interfaces with the referees to let them know, you know the system is ready to begin match play.

NOTES

- If crystals are in use at the event, establish a procedure with the field assistants and referees to quickly remove the crystals from the robots without interfering with the ability to get an accurate score of the match.

TIPS

- Be cognizant of the match cycle time being run at this event. During the early matches focus on this to prevent time being lost needlessly. Once the team working the field finds its rhythm, things should progress smoothly.

VEX Training Document

for

FIELD ASSISTANTS

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **If crystals are in use and you have been requested to assist in their removal, extract the crystals from the robots with care at the end of the match.**
- **With permission of the referees, and if requested by the team(s) help them remove robot(s) from the field. (It is best to carefully move them to the perimeter of the field so teams can pick them up and remove them.)**
- **With permission of the referees, correctly and accurately reset the field elements for the next match.**

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Be cognizant of time cycle of matches and work closely with the rest of the field team to stay on schedule. This takes everyone's effort and attention especially at the beginning of an event to avoid falling behind right away.

EQUIPMENT – Safety glasses, volunteer shirt.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – picture of a properly set up field.

TAKES DIRECTION from the FIELD MANAGER or REFEREE if designated by the Field Manager. Also interfaces with the Field Technical Advisor if requested to assist with crystals if in use.

NOTES

- Always check with the referees first if at any time there is doubt on handling a robot.
- Do not touch a game element that could be interpreted by a referee as being in the “neutral zone” until permission is given by the referee.

TIPS

- Be cognizant of the match cycle time being run at this event. During the early matches focus on this to prevent time being lost needlessly. Once the team working the field finds its rhythm, things should progress smoothly.
- Encourage the teams once they have their robots to leave the field immediately to clear the area as soon as possible so that the next teams may approach and begin setting up for the next match.

VEX Training Document

for

FIELD CONTROL/SCOREKEEPER

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Understand if field control is separate from scorekeeping or combined. (Could be resource constrained.)
- Makes sure the event has been properly setup in the Tournament Manager software.
- Make sure the system is operating properly. Coordinate a system test with the Field Technical Advisors before the matches begin.
- Makes sure the proper information is on the proper display.
- Starts the autonomous portion of the match on queue from the emcee. Resumes the driver portion of the match on queue from the emcee
- Enters the score from the score sheet after each match and posts results when queued by the emcee. (If match cycle times are aggressive, these will be delayed by one match to keep the matches flowing smoothly).

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Is cognizant of time cycle of matches and works closely with the rest of the field team to stay on schedule. This takes everyone's effort and attention especially at the beginning of an event to avoid falling behind right away.

EQUIPMENT – Computer (fully prepped), printer, pen, volunteer shirt.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – Tournament Manager support documents

TAKES DIRECTION from the DIVISION MANAGER. Takes match start/stop queues from the FIELD MANAGER or REFEREE if designated by the Field Manager.

NOTES

- Pay close attention at the start of a match in case a match has to be aborted.
- Remember the sequence of posting appropriate information on the different screens that the system is controlling (on-deck, current match, match results, rankings, etc).

TIPS

- Be cognizant of the match cycle time being run at this event. During the early matches focus on this to prevent time being lost needlessly. Once the team working the field finds its rhythm, things should progress smoothly.

VEX Training Document

for

ANNOUNCER/EMCEE

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES (determine if shared or solo)

- **Sets the tempo to keep matches on schedule.**
- **Informs the audience of what is going on.**
- **Introduces the teams. (Announcer role)**
- **Calls the matches. (Emcee role)**
- **Informs the audience of the results.**

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Is cognizant of time cycle of matches and works closely with the rest of the field team to stay on schedule. This takes everyone's effort and attention especially at the beginning of an event to avoid falling behind right away.
- Fills dead time with appropriate information or content.

EQUIPMENT – Hands free head-set, Clipboard, announcer sheets, pen, wild shirt or attire that attracts attention.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – should already know the game rules and can speak to the challenges of playing the game to add color to the commentary.

TAKES DIRECTION from the FIELD MANAGER. Wisely uses the position to help keep matches on schedule. Takes match start/stop queues from the REFEREE but is in control of getting new matches started.

NOTES

- Using information found in the “Announcers Report” (from the tournament manager software) the announcer can mix up the introductions some.

TIPS

- Consider educating the public about the VEX Robotics Competition program. Most adults in attendance might not know much about the details of the program.
- Be cognizant of the match cycle time being run at this event. During the early matches focus on this to prevent time being lost needlessly. Once the team working the field finds its rhythm, things should progress smoothly.

VEX Training Document

for

QUEUING PROCESS MANAGER & ASSISTANTS

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Keep all fields and queues supplied with teams to maintain the schedule.**

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES - No additional tasks

EQUIPMENT – Radio (1 for the mgr and at least 1 for an assistant), Clipboard, Pit Maps, Match schedules, Pen, Volunteer shirt.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS – None

TAKES DIRECTION from the DIVISION MANAGER. Coordinate with the FIELD MANAGER to make sure queues are adequate.

NOTES

- Teams are held accountable for monitoring the match schedule and arriving at the queuing station on their own.
- Early in the day talk to teams and encourage them to seek out their partner teams themselves to make sure they don't have to perform solo in a match.
- Remind teams that if their robot is not functional for a scheduled match, they still have the responsibility to send a team representative to the queue and inform the queue manager of the situation.
- With that said the primary job of the queuing assistants is to attempt to locate teams that have not shown up in queue so that all matches can run with four robots.
- The queue will hold both "on-deck" teams and "double deck" teams to make sure the queue does not empty. Anticipate checking in four teams in every 3 – 4 minutes

TIPS

- Wear your most comfortable walking shoes as you will cover a lot of ground in this role.
- In the morning or after breaks the Queues must be "filled" before the first match starts. So make sure teams in the first four matches know who they are and are aware that they need to attend the ceremony fully prepared to play the match.