



Mid-Atlantic Robotics, A NJ Non-Profit Corporation

Protocol for the Use of *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic owned and *FIRST*-loaned Competition Field Equipment

Section I - Introduction and Overview

Mid-Atlantic Robotics, d.b.a. *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic (FMA), owns and maintains one or more ensembles of field perimeter components built to *FIRST* specifications for use at *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC) events. As part of its affiliate agreement with *FIRST* (Robotics Competition Agreement), FMA receives the loan of game-specific equipment and field management system electronics in order to conduct FRC events in each calendar year. This protocol (a.k.a. Equipment Use Protocol) defines the conditions for use of this equipment or use of any other FMA-owned/rented equipment under all circumstances, including the FMA District Events and District/Region Championship Event that comprise the official FRC season as well as any use outside of the official FRC season.

Additional details, commentary, and clarification are highlighted as shown by this example. Commentary is only used to provide additional clarification and is not considered part of this Protocol.

1.1 Definitions

Field Perimeter (FP). FMA-owned standard FRC field perimeter which include the guardrails and driver station wall that surround the field.

Game-Specific Elements (GSE). *FIRST*-loaned game elements for each year's FRC game.

Field Management System (FMS). *FIRST*-loaned electronics used to connect driver stations and robots to the field, the scoring system, etc.

Event Shipment. The Event Shipment includes the FP, GSE, and FMS along with all other FMA-owned or rented equipment that is provided to events. This equipment may be transported within the approved transportation method, brought to venues by other means, or stored on site by the LEC. The contents of an event shipment for various event types may differ from the full event shipment provided to official FMA district events.

The Event Shipment includes all equipment required to run an event such as venue specific equipment that is custom to a venue and paid for by FMA. This equipment may also be stored year-round at a venue but remains property of FMA.

Official District/FMA FRC Event (FRC Event). An official *FIRST*-supported FRC Event between the FRC Kick-off and the *FIRST* Championships. FMA will appoint the appropriate personnel, recruit all volunteers, and cover all associated costs for all Official FRC Events.

FRC Off-Season Event (Off-Season). A non-official competition event that follows the rules and guidelines of the *FIRST* Robotics Competition or a scrimmage or demonstration that promotes or displays *FIRST* and/or the *FIRST* Mission in a public setting with 3 or more FMA teams. FMA support is generally limited to providing the event shipment.

1.2 Key Personnel

Local Event Coordinator (LEC). The lead person organizing, hosting, and running the event. The LEC may also be the Lead Person for the Local Event Committee. The LEC must be a qualified *Mid-Atlantic Robotics Equipment Representative (MER)* for any Off-Season, Scrimmage or Demo event. See the details for the MER position below.

FIRST Technical Advisor (FTA). *FIRST*-trained personnel responsible for the *FIRST*-loaned GSE and FMS as well as conducting the on-field competition. Additionally, the FTA is in charge of field set-up and take-down and may provide input to the LEC on event specifics.

FMA is allotted a limited number of FTAs to be trained each year by FIRST. If an FTA residing in FMA's region is not available for events, FTAs residing outside of FMA may be recruited. Consult the FMA FTA Coordinator for more information at fta@midatlanticrobotics.org.

Mid-Atlantic Robotics Equipment Representative (MER). Local personnel who share responsibility with the event FTA for supervision of equipment unloading, field set-up, take-down, and equipment loading into approved transportation methods. A list of MERs is in the current **FMA Event Support Guide**.

The success of FMA field operations is due to the continued support of volunteers within the region. Certain volunteers demonstrate a thorough knowledge of FMA's equipment and assets. The Program Committee created the role of the MER to have personnel represent and take responsibility for FMA-owned/rented and FIRST-loaned equipment at events. MERs are FMA's "eyes on the field".

*To become an MER, an individual must be approved by the Program Committee and listed in the current **FMA Event Support Guide**. An individual can typically become an MER by volunteering at many events over multiple years and displaying comprehensive knowledge of FMA's equipment including but not limited to setting up the field, volunteering at events, taking down the field, packing equipment in approved transportation methods, and preparing equipment in between FMA-sponsored events. In general, there is no formal training or test to become an MER. When accepting a new MER, the Program Committee asks the question "Do we trust that FMA equipment will not be damaged or lost and that it will be returned and ready for use at its event under the guidance of this potential MER?". If yes, the person is typically approved to be an MER. For additional information on the MER role or to contact an MER for your event, consult the Program Committee.*

1.3 Supplemental Documents

FMA Event Support Guide (ESG). The Program Committee develops a yearly ESG that details the Event Shipment for the year, with focus on Off-Seasons Events. The guideline lists variable equipment requirements and practices for that year's FRC game including field transportation methods, provided equipment, required personnel, field consumables, field power requirements, etc. The ESG also includes a form to request use of the FMA Event Shipment. This document will be made available by April 15 each year and posted to the FMA website.

Section II – Event Support

All parameters of event support are governed by the Program Committee at its sole discretion. Any deviations from this Protocol for individual events or appeals of the Program Committee's support may be brought to the Board of Directors for majority vote. FMA will make every effort to accommodate event needs but reserves the right to limit its support of events for any reason.

2.1 General Event Requirements

Events employing the Event Shipment must be conducted in accordance with current *FIRST* guidelines under the supervision of an FTA and MER. It is the responsibility of the LEC/MER for Off-Season Events to recruit all volunteers, including FTAs and MERs.

The event MER for Off-Season Events is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of FIRST guidelines are followed. This includes but is not limited to the quality of the event / team experience, safety, and Gracious Professionalism. Repeat and/or significant violations of FIRST guidelines may result in the subsequent disqualification of the subject MER or in the absence of a replacement MER, suspension of the event until such time that a new event MER can be approved by the Program Committee.

FMA will aid in the recruitment of FTAs and MERs for Off-Season Events if requested but cannot guarantee recruitment of any volunteer. The LEC/MER may consult the FMA Senior Volunteer Coordinator for volunteer recruitment advice.

2.2 Event Shipment Transportation

The Event Shipment shall be transported to events and stored between uses by methods determined by and under direct supervision of the Program Committee. The FP, GSE, and FMS may only be deployed in their entirety; incomplete portions of the Event Shipment will not be made available without approval by the Program Committee. Equipment may only be transported outside of the Event Shipment when approved by the Program Committee. The standard transportation method shall be arranged by and communicated through the Program Committee for FRC Events and is listed in the ESG for Off-Season Events. Alternate transportation methods may be used if under the supervision of an MER and approved by the Program Committee. Portions of the Event Shipment shall not be transported separately (i.e. computers, tablets, etc. shall not be transported between events in personal vehicles) without Program Committee consent.

Event Shipment Transportation Costs. The LEC for Off-Season Events is responsible for field transportation costs by the standard transportation methods approved by the Program Committee only if there is a registration cost of attending teams that exceeds \$100. The event shipment transportation costs for Off-Season Events shall not exceed \$1500. Any Off-Season Event that charges attendings teams less than \$100 will not be charged transportation costs.

Off-Season Events are subject to a transportation fee that will be listed in the ESG. The fee is variable and based on average costs for the year. On average, the Program Committee expects the fee to be \$750.

2.3 Equipment

FMA owns and maintains miscellaneous equipment to support events including, but not limited to floor covering, pipe and drape, tools, and electrical distribution equipment. FMA reserves the right to withhold the loan of certain high-value items (e.g. electrical distribution equipment, video capture and distribution equipment, projectors, radios, etc.) to Off-Seasons, Scrimmages, and Demos.

Game Pieces and Field Consumables. FMA shall provide all game pieces and field consumables. The LEC for Off-Season Events shall be responsible for the costs of game pieces and field consumables. An advanced deposit for the Game Pieces and Field Consumables is due to be paid to FMA 15 days prior to the event shipment delivery date for Off-Season Event. The LEC shall be invoiced by FMA with 90-day payment terms for any costs not covered by the advanced deposit which were a result of hosting any particular event. The amount of the advance deposit for any particular game/year will be determined as a result of actual experience from the Official FRC Events. All game pieces and field consumables shall be returned to FMA at the conclusion of the event or the LEC shall be invoiced for the remaining material cost as determined by the event FTA and MER in conjunction with the Program Committee. The Program Committee will publish this deposit amount in the FMA Event Support Guide (ESG).

Game elements for FRC Events are provided by FIRST HQ and field consumables (field tapes & cable ties) are supplied by FMA. FMA will secure excess game pieces and field consumables from FRC Events and make available excess elements to Off-Season Events. Any additional costs of game elements and field consumables are the responsibility of the LEC. The costs associated with any additional purchases or rentals of game pieces, game elements, or field consumables will be distributed to all LECs of all Off-Season Events or any specific costs that the Program Committee, in conjunction with the event FTA & LEC, deem are a direct result of any specific Off-Season Event. The cost will vary from year to year, and the final invoice will be sent to any affected LEC following the last scheduled event of the year.

FMA will provide the field consumables required for that year's game. It will not provide any consumables for non-field related set-up material such as floor covering, electrical systems, etc. for Off-Season Events. The list of field consumables that are provided are listed in the ESG.

Equipment Maintenance. FMA must take advantage of all possible opportunities to maintain its equipment. The LEC shall provide volunteer manpower to accommodate, within reason, FMA-supervised equipment maintenance during the time that FMA's equipment is at the local event venue.

FMS Substitute. Use of non-FMS systems at Off-Season Events shall be permitted when approved by the Program Committee.

FIRST HQ may require the return of the FMS prior to the off-season event schedule completion. The Program Committee may support an alternate system use at Off-Season Events to support traditional event timeframes.

2.4 Insurance

FMA equipment shall be insured at all times against loss and liability under policies contracted by FMA or the LEC for no less than \$100,000 and specifically naming FMA as an "additional insured" entity. The LEC for Off-Season Events shall be responsible for damage, theft, or loss to any equipment provided within the Event Shipment including but not limited to FMA-owned tools, Pipe and Drape, and non-field equipment as deemed by the Program Committee.

Equipment that is transported outside of the Event Shipment is required to have insurance. If the LEC desires to transport equipment outside of standard methods, the LEC shall obtain insurance for alternate transportation methods specifically naming FMA as an "additional insured" entity.

The FMA insurance policy does not cover event venues for Off-Season Events. The LEC shall obtain insurance policies as required by the local venue. The policy is not required to be provided to FMA.

Section III – Events

FMA will support all Official FRC Events and associated costs. Reference the **Protocol for MAR – LEC Responsibilities** for additional information for Official FRC Events.

3.1 Non-official FRC Events

FMA will deploy the Event Shipment to any Off-Season Event hosted by an LEC directly affiliated with an FRC team within the FMA geographic region that is conducted according to this Protocol and the published *FIRST* guidelines for such events. FMA teams shall solicit an MER to request event support by completing and submitting the form included in the ESG. FMA may withhold support at its sole discretion for any event that does not comply with the requirements of this Protocol. All events are subject to approval by the Program Committee after review of their intended use.

Key Personnel / Volunteers. The LEC/MER must identify the following adult (non-student) personnel to perform tasks related to the event. Attendance of an MER is required at all times during transportation of Event Shipment, from set-up through take-down and load-out.

1. **MER**, who will assume responsibility for compliance with this Protocol and the additional conditions described in the current ESG.
2. **FTA**, who will supervise field set-up and take-down as well as conduct the on-field competition. The LEC shall pay reasonable travel and lodging expenses for the FTA as requested by and to the FTA.

In planning non-official events, the Program Committee will communicate directly with the event MER. Logistically, it is simpler for the Program Committee to communicate directly with an MER as the MER understands FMA's perspective in more detail. The MER also has a better understanding of the requirements to host an event and has the ability and contacts to ensure a successful event with a positive volunteer and team experience.

The basis behind this requirement is that FMA has qualified representatives that are trusted with understanding of its assets and FMA desires to empower MERs with use of its assets.

Scheduling of Non-official Events. FMA shall support Off-Season Events after June 1, unless otherwise approved by the Program Committee. The LEC/MER shall schedule its event by consensus of the prior year's Off-Season Event LECs and inform the Program Committee by April 1 of each calendar year. The event MER shall submit the form included in the ESG by May 1. The Program Committee shall acknowledge receipt of request and shall accept or decline all requests by May 10. After May 1, any event date not secured with a completed ESG Form, will be available for any event in the order of requests at the sole discretion of the Program Committee.

It is the responsibility of existing Event LEC/MERs to coordinate the Off-Season Event Schedule. Any new event is subject to available dates in between existing events. In general, returning events have priority over new events. The April 1 deadline essentially "pencils" in the date of the event. If the ESG form is not received by May 1, the Program Committee will open the event date to alternate events based on submission order and may not support any events who do not submit a completed ESG by May 1 at its sole discretion.

The gap between the end of Official FRC Events and June 1 is to allow the Program Committee appropriate time to prepare the Off-Season Event Shipment.

Event Sponsorship. The LEC shall designate FMA and FIRST as an event sponsor and provide all means of recognition that are available to any sponsor at the event, such as identification in written and electronic communication, team registration material and advertising, reasonable access to meeting rooms for FMA information sessions and workshops, and a speaking opportunity for FMA leadership. The level of recognition shall be commensurate with the value of FMA's in-kind donation relative to that of other event sponsors.

The FIRST Mid-Atlantic logo/brand shall be displayed on all marketing and promotional material related to the Off-Season Event and be displayed on the LEC's website. FMA will list the Off-Season Event details on its website if requested and/or promote the event on its social media devices. Coordinate any details with the Information Technology Committee by contacting it@midatlanticrobotics.org. The FIRST Mid-Atlantic logo/brand is available on www.midatlanticrobotics.org/brand.

New Non-official Events. New events are subject to approval by the Program Committee at its sole discretion. The event MER shall provide an Event Outline that includes a description and details the event for the Program Committee to review at least 90 days prior to the event.

The event MER for new non-official events shall prepare an Event Outline for the Program Committee's review. The outline shall include all event logistics, including field set-up & take-down, recruited FTAs & MERs, and additional personnel available to support the event. This information is imperative for the reviewing process and to determine FMA's support. Incomplete or outlines lacking detail are grounds for automatic rejection. Consult the Program Committee for aid in the Event Outline. The intent of this requirement is not to be overly restrictive, but to make sure both the Program Committee and the LEC have the same understanding leading to a successful event for all in attendance.

Considerations for New Events:

Event Set-Up Plan. Event set up can take 6 (or more) hours depending on the experience level of the volunteers present. When do you plan to complete set up for the event? Do you have appropriate access to the venue (typically the evening before)? How many experienced volunteers do you plan on having present? How many inexperienced volunteers (great training opportunity)?

Event Take-Down Plan. Typical event take-down, packing, and load-out is completed in 3 hours. How many volunteers (experienced or inexperienced) will be present? Will you have continued access to the venue to complete take-down?

Volunteer Plan. Identification of event FTA, MERs, and approximate number of volunteers needed and secured. When planning your event, please be cognizant of the fact that an FTA and MER are required for all days the equipment is on site, during load-in and load-out, & for transportation of equipment that deviate from standard methods. It may be difficult to recruit personnel to cover multiple days, especially weekdays.

General Event Schedule. *What time will teams arrive? What time is the general public admitted? What time will the event be starting and stopping each day(s)? Is there an appropriate break for meals for teams and volunteers?*

Floor Protection. *Some venues have delicate and expensive flooring under the playing field and pit space such as basketball courts. It is imperative that protection is in place in all areas of the event to prevent damage to these floors. What is your event's plan for protecting the venue floor?*

Optional Considerations. *Speakers for music and announcements, Microphone system for emcees, game announcers and speakers, Projection/display for scores and audience display, & Event webcast, camera system and internet access*

Revision History:

8/23/13 – Adopted by Board

5/21/15 – Revised & adopted by Board

3/12/19 – Revised & adopted by Board