



United States Air Force



tops in blue

Celebrating
60 YEARS
of Tradition

2014
World Tour

AN AIR FORCE ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTION

2014 Project Officer's Support Operations Plan



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Chapter 1-Overview

Project Officers Are the Key to Success!

Whether this is your first time as Project Officer or your 20th time, please read the Support Operations Plan in detail to determine the exact requirements for this year's show. We have made changes to make it as trouble-free as possible for you to host TOPS IN BLUE. Reading this plan from cover to cover will reduce the chance of passing over new requirements or the possibility of accomplishing tasks no longer needed.

Your role as Project Officer will be to develop a Host Support Team and orchestrate the project tasks through your support unit members. Our office is also available and ready to help make your team's planning process go as smooth as possible.

In addition, we have made some changes to this Support Operations Plan to make it more useful as a reference as you prepare for your show:

- 1. We have included a "New for 2014" page (pg 5). This page will highlight any changes to procedures from the previous year's tour. It should be especially helpful for Project Officer's who have hosted TOPS IN BLUE in the past but need to be alerted to any changes we have made since their last show.**
- 2. We have moved the "Base Project Officer's Master Checklist" (pg 6) to the front of the Support Operations Plan. We've also included page numbers and links to detailed information for each of the items on the checklist. This should help you by providing a summary of all the tasks that need to be accomplished with a way to reference more information when you need it.**
- 3. We've added an Index (pg 72) at the end of the Support Operations Plan to help you quickly find answers to specific questions you may have.**

Please take the time now to notify all facilities and organizations on the base of the scheduled TOPS IN BLUE performance date, and mark the date on the Wing and Group calendars. Too often, other FSS activities, church groups, spouses clubs, etc., are disappointed because they have scheduled events on the same night as TOPS IN BLUE and people have to miss one of the events.

As Project Officer you will be assigned a specific Air Force Tour Coordinator (AFTC) the first time you contact the Air Force Entertainment office. Prior to the team arriving, all tour coordination and requests for information about the tour or team should be made through your AFTC. Please do not contact the team on the road in advance of arrival, as they are focused on the performance at another location during that time.

We know it is hard work and we appreciate your team's efforts in hosting TOPS IN BLUE. It is always rewarding to hear of the great job you do, not only in making the performances go smoothly, but also in taking care of the team while hosting them. Things which may seem small become very important when you are on the road for a year. Each member of the TOPS IN BLUE 2014 team and your audience who will enjoy this year's show are very appreciative of your hard work. Working together, we will make this another banner year for your TOPS IN BLUE.



New for 2014



NEW CORPORATE SPONSOR ADDED: We welcome Dell, Inc. as a new corporate sponsor for TOPS IN BLUE, joining our other long-time corporate sponsor, Coca Cola. (Pg 43)



INCREASED EMPHASIS ON SAFETY: The Wing or Base Safety Office needs to be involved in the show process. A local Safety Office representative needs to be available at the performance venue for load-in, setup, show, teardown and load-out. (Pg 21)



NEW TOUR FORMAT: Due to the new TOPS IN BLUE tour format, the setup, show and teardown will normally not all take place on the same day. (Pg 48)



TEARDOWN AND LOAD-OUT THE DAY AFTER THE SHOW: Depending on the tear-down time, arrangements may need to be made for delayed checkout from lodging for the team members, or access to a Fitness Center for the team to shower after load-out. (Pg 48)



MORE FLEXIBILITY ARRANGING FOR TEAM LODGING: When lodging the team on-base, the team may be lodged in single, double or TLF rooms. (Pg 28)



HOST BASES PAY FOR ROOMS ON SHOW DAYS ONLY: Lodging charges will be paid by host base funds on performance days only, whether on or off-base quarters are provided. TOPS IN BLUE will be responsible for lodging charges for transportation days, off days and tour preparation days. (Pg 29)



FLAGS AT THE PERFORMANCE: TOPS IN BLUE does not travel with U.S. or Air Force flags. If an Honor Guard is not available to post the Colors, the Host base must provide flags for the show. (Pg 22)



NEW VIDEO SPOTS AVAILABLE: A DVD of video spots produced in 2013 for use in commercials and other marketing is available from Air Force Entertainment. (Pg 39)



ADVANCE TOUR CHECKLIST AND PROJECT OFFICER EVALUATION ATTACHED: The Advance Tour Checklist and Project Officer Evaluation are included with this Support Plan. (Pg 14)

Project Officer's Master Checklist

Annotate checklist starting with receipt of Support Operations Plan and continue until totally complete. Target completion should be approximately 30 days prior to scheduled performance. This checklist briefly covers areas outlined in this Operations Plan and should be used as a guide to assist you in hosting TOPS IN BLUE. You should coordinate this with the individual section checklists to develop a comprehensive outline. This checklist is for the Project Officer's use and should not be forwarded to Air Force Entertainment.

_____ **ADVANCE TOUR CHECKLIST (pg 14): Complete basic questions and e-mail to Air Force Entertainment once performance venue is identified**

_____ **HOST SUPPORT TEAM (pg 19): Members selected**

_____ **SUPPORT PERSONNEL (pg 21):**

- Identified by name
- Assigned areas of responsibility

_____ **BASE COMMAND REPRESENTATIVES (pg 25): Named and briefed**

_____ **TRANSPORTATION (pg 31):**

- Standby 45-passenger bus ready
- U-Drive vehicles assigned
- Keys and U-Drive vehicles at meeting location
- Airlift arrival: special requirements (flatbed, forklift, bus, crew, etc.)

_____ **FOOD (pg 34):**

- Dining facility notified of team arrival
- Dining facility hours available to Team Meal Coordinator

_____ **LODGING (pg 28):**

- Rooms reserved
- Keys to be picked up and ready for Lodging Coordinator upon arrival

_____ **PUBLICITY (pg 36):**

- Coordinated publicity checklists
- Photographs, negatives, and newspaper articles submitted
- Banner to be returned to address listed

COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP (pg 43):

- Installation Commander informed about commercial sponsors
- Management at off-base, nonmilitary venue informed of sponsors
- Services Marketing staff contacted on the setup and display of sponsor banners and billboards
- Photographs and newspaper articles pertaining to the sponsor to be collected for mailing to Air Force Entertainment

PERFORMANCE FACILITY (pg 48):

- Location Determined
- Decision on TIB portable stage made
- Facility available for setup and tear down according to ATC schedule
- Base movies canceled on performance night if base theater is used
- Marquees properly displayed
- NO CHARGE for admission
- Conflicts of interest have been identified and resolved
- Facility clean

AUDIENCES (pg 60):

- Appropriate actions taken regarding concessionaire operation
- Tickets HAVE NOT been issued without approval
- Reserved Seating Plan Complete

DRESSING ROOMS (pg 58):

- Inspected and ready for team
- All supplies and towels on hand
- Overseas: Clothing racks on hand

FUNDING AND INSURANCE (If Applicable) (pg 62): All actions complete, awaiting final approval from Air Force Entertainment

ELECTRICAL (pg 52):

- Electrician/power pro technician identified by name
- Electrician/ power pro technician understands requirements and meeting time
- Facility electrical requirements complete

ARRIVAL OF TOPS IN BLUE (pg 68): All preparations complete

EVALUATIONS (pg 72): Evaluation Form completed and returned to AFTC

Contact Information

Air Force Entertainment Office Mailing Address

**AFPC/SVPCE
2261 Hughes Ave, Ste 156
Lackland AFB TX 78236-9852**

Air Force Entertainment Office Location (for shipping via FedEx, UPS, etc.)

**AFPC/SVPCE
3515 South General McMullen Drive
San Antonio TX 78226**

Air Force Entertainment Office Phone & Fax

**DSN Phone: 969-7237, Commercial: (210) 395-7237
DSN Fax: 969-7494, Commercial: (210) 395-7494**

TOPS IN BLUE Production Center Phone & Fax

**DSN Phone: 473-3702, Commercial: (210) 671-3702
DSN Fax: 473-1498, Commercial: (210) 671-1498**

TOPS IN BLUE Technical Center Phone & Fax

**DSN Phone: 473-3066, Commercial: (210) 671-3066
DSN Fax: 473-3927, Commercial: (210) 671-3927**

Online Support

Support Information and Promotional Materials (pg 35) at:

<https://www.usafservices.com>

<http://www.topsinblue.com>

TOPS IN BLUE Touring Staff

Tour Leadership

This year's **Team Officer-In-Charge (OIC) Is Capt Fenesha Frlar** and the **Superintendent Is CMSgt Andrea Falcher**. Capt Friar and Chief Falcher have the ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the team personnel and day-to-day operation of the touring unit. After arrival of the TOPS IN BLUE Team, all questions should be directed to these individuals.

Team Members

The 2014 team includes some of the best talent in the Air Force. They will spend seven months on the road as members of TOPS IN BLUE and are required to be the best of the best as Air Force Ambassadors 24 hours a day. Each team member has an individual performing arts specialty and is trained during the staging of the show to expand his or her performance abilities and technical crafts. **The performers themselves unload, setup, teardown, and reload over 60,000 pounds of equipment necessary for each performance.**

Technical Staff

The TOPS IN BLUE team includes professional technical members responsible for the supervision of the team in preparing for the performance and operating all equipment during the performance. This includes lighting, audio, staging, rigging, video, electrical, and transportation personnel. The Technical Director, SrA Blake Whilden, will ensure all members of your staff and the performance location staff meet these key personnel immediately upon arrival at the performance site. Your staff should work directly with these team members to ensure the easiest and quickest setup for the performance.

Orchestrate & Plan

Step 1 - Get Ready!

1. Read the entire plan to get an overview of the requirements needed to host a successful show.

Step 2 - Initial Decisions!

1. Read specifics on PERFORMANCE FACILITY (pg 48).
2. Identify options for performance site to maximize audience size.
3. Contact Air Force Entertainment to coordinate needed venue times for setup, performance and teardown.
4. Contact FSS Commander & Installation Commander for decisions on:
 - Location and start time of the show
 - Who will be authorized to attend
 - Determining if show will be in conjunction with any other program or event
 - Determining if there will be Distinguished Visitors (DV) and special invitations
5. Reserve performance site.
6. If rental of a facility is required for an off-base show, attempt to obtain commercial sponsorship to offset costs.
7. Begin the contracting process if rental of commercial facility is required.
8. Prepare letter for Installation Commander's signature to identify host team members needed from local support units.
9. Contact all activities including chapels, spouses clubs, FSS activities, and commanders to announce the performance date. **(THIS IS NOT FOR PUBLICITY PURPOSES! IT IS TO PREVENT OTHER ACTIVITIES FROM SCHEDULING EVENTS THAT WOULD CONFLICT WITH YOUR SHOW.)**
10. Begin the Advance Tour Checklist (Pg 14)

Step 3 - Make Contact!

1. Set up time, date, and place for initial host team meeting and notify each member of the Host Support Team (pg 19).
2. Contact the Services Marketing Director and Commercial Sponsorship representative to assist in developing the overall operations plan, your promotional plan, and to identify any sponsorship opportunities available during your hosting of TOPS IN BLUE. (pg 43).
3. Visit the Performance Facility (pg 48) to initially identify potential problem areas and resources.

Step 4 - Meet!

1. Schedule the initial Host Support Team meeting as soon as possible. The following should be included in the agenda:
 - Identify commander's support for the hosting of TOPS IN BLUE
 - Overview of TOPS IN BLUE program
 - Time, date, location of show
 - General overview of show operations plan
 - Print and pass out specific logistical requirements and checklists
 - Base Command Representatives pages 25-27
 - Lodging pages 28-30
 - Transportation pages 31-33
 - Food Support pages 34-35
 - Services Marketing/Public Affairs pages 36-47
 - Services Commercial Sponsorship pages 43-44
 - Performance Facility Representative pages 48-67
 - Civil Engineer Representative pages 48-67
 - Security Forces Representative (pg 21; will need to develop locally designed requirements based on performance location)
 - Discuss any specific local problems that may need to be addressed early on in the planning stage
 - Advise Host Support Team of follow-on meeting to discuss status of each requirement

Step 5 - Prepare

1. Visit the performance facility with each host team member to look over specific needs (pg 48).
2. Identify volunteers and staff needed to host the performance and assign a Volunteer Coordinator (pg 22).
3. Develop a comprehensive marketing and publicity plan (pg 36).
4. Help the Installation Commander prepare for the opening of the show (pg 25).
 - Provide the TOPS IN BLUE Fact Sheet (pg 45).
 - Provide a brief outline of recommended comments.
 - Provide the names and organizations of any TOPS IN BLUE 2014 team members from your base
 - Advise that Coca Cola and Dell, Inc. are corporate sponsors
 - Advise on any corporate sponsor personnel that will be attending
5. **ADVANCE TOUR CHECKLIST:** The Advance Tour Checklist is included in this Support Plan for your reference (pg 14). Your **AFTC** has also sent you an editable electronic copy of the Advance Tour Checklist attached to the Support Plan. You should email the attached Advance Tour Checklist to your **AFTC** as soon as a venue and a performance site are selected and include any other basic information that is available regarding your performance. Your **AFTC** can then help to identify any concerns and provide assistance. The checklist then becomes a working document and the means of communication between you and your **AFTC**. It can be updated as final plans are developed.

Your AFTC needs your final complete Advance Tour Checklist NLT 30 days before your show. Non-receipt of the Advance Tour Checklist in sufficient time for pre-planning may necessitate CANCELLATION of your performance.
6. Have periodic meetings as required to update Host Support Team and confirm progress in each area of responsibility.
7. Coordinate and send out DV invitations, if required (to order invitations, see pg 39).
8. Reconfirm with each Host Support Team member on each checklist item.
9. Ensure promotional material is out and posted in visible locations and your promotional plan is running on target.

Step 6 - Finalize!

1. Have final meeting with Host Support Team members and staff to walk through the tasks and events leading up to the show.
2. Go through the Project Officer's Master Checklist to ensure completion of items (pages 6-7).

Step 7 - Showtime!

1. Re-confirm Leadership greeting the team upon arrival (pg 25).
2. Ensure facility set up is complete (pg 48).
3. Meet TOPS IN BLUE team; escort as required (pg 68).
4. Coordinate with TOPS IN BLUE OIC and Superintendent (pg 9).
5. Coordinate any final requirements; brief ushers (pg 21).
6. Reconfirm the commander opening the show and coordinate the introduction (pg 25).
7. Coordinate the opening of house doors with the TOPS IN BLUE Superintendent (pg 60).
8. Meet and greet invited guests and commanders.

Step 8 - Kudos!

1. Prepare letters for the Commander's signature, thanking each member of the host team for making the show a success.
2. Complete and forward the attached the Project Officer Evaluation within 72 hours of performance. (pg 71).
3. Collect photos & publicity and forward to the Air Force Entertainment Office.

Take a bow!



2014 Advance Tour Checklist

BASE/ LOCATION		SHOW DATE		SHOW TIME	
VENUE		OUTSIDE/INSIDE?		TIB STAGE?	
LOAD-IN/SETUP DATE		LOAD-IN/SETUP TIME		NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS FOR LOAD-IN/SETUP	ARRIVAL TIME FOR LOAD- IN/SETUP VOLUNTEERS
TEARDOWN/ LOAD-OUT DATE		TEARDOWN/ LOAD-OUT TIME		NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS FOR TEARDOWN/LOAD- OUT	ARRIVAL TIME FOR TEARDOWN/ LOAD-OUT VOLUNTEERS
TOPS IN BLUE TEAM ARRIVAL					
ARRIVAL DATE OF TIB TEAM		ARRIVAL TIME (ETA)			
TEAM IS DEPARTING FROM: (PREVIOUS VENUE)		DEPARTING AT (TIME)			
DISTANCE FROM DEPARTING LOCATION TO YOUR LOCATION:				TRAVELHOURS:	
VIA (CHECK ONE)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>AIR</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> <i>GROUND TRANSPORTATION</i>		
WHAT IS THE NEAREST CITY TO ARRIVAL LOCATION?					
MEETING POINT LOCATION			PHONE AT MEETING LOCATION		
MET BY					
STREET ADDRESS					
REFRESHMENT/LUNCH UPON ARRIVAL? (CHECK ONE)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>YES</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>NO</i>		IF "YES," WHAT FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED?		
NUMBER OF U-DRIVE-IT (UDI) VEHICLES PROVIDED:		TYPE OF VEHICLES PROVIDED (15-PAX VANS, 7 PAX VANS, ETC.):			
DATE TEAM IS DEPARTING YOUR LOCATION					

BASE/SITE		SHOW DATE/TIME	
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PROJECT OFFICER INFORMATION

PROJECT OFFICER NAME		DSN DUTY PHONE		DSN FAX	
RANK		COMM PHONE		COMM FAX	
POSITION		HOME PHONE		MOBILE PHONE	
OFFICE MAILING ADDRESS					
ALTERNATE PROJECT OFFICER		DSN DUTY PHONE		DSN FAX	
POSITION		HOME PHONE		MOBILE PHONE	

LODGING INFORMATION

TEAM LODGED AT:		<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ON BASE</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>OFF BASE</i>
LODGING COMPLETE STREET ADDRESS (NOT P.O. BOX OR APO)	DSN PHONE	DSN FAX
	COMM PHONE	COMM FAX
CHECK IN DATE	CHECK OUT DATE	TOTAL NIGHTS
NUMBER OF ROOMS-MALE	SINGLES-MALE	DOUBLES - MALE
NUMBER OF ROOMS-FEMALES	SINGLES-FEMALE	DOUBLES-FEMALE
KEYS AVAILABLE UPON ARRIVAL?	LODGING NOTES:	

BASE/SITE		SHOW DATE/TIME	
SHOW INFORMATION			
SET UP DATE		SET UP TIME	
VENUE		ON OR OFF BASE?	SEATING CAPACITY
VENUE STREET MAILING ADDRESS		VENUE TECH DIRECTOR	
		PHONE	FAX
LODGING TO VENUE DIRECTIONS			
LOAD IN/OUT:	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>LOADING DOCK</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>RAMP</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ELEVATOR</i>
ENOUGH ROOM FOR 53 FT TRACTOR/TRAILER TO BACK UP TO LOADING AREA?		<input type="checkbox"/> <i>YES</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>NO</i>
LOAD IN/OUT NOTES:			
STAGE WIDTH:		STAGE DEPTH:	
DISTANCE TO CEILING FROM STAGE FLOOR:		NUMBER OF STAIRS:	
STAGE CONSTRUCTION	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>INDOOR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>OUTDOOR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>PORTABLE</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>BUILT-IN</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>TIB STAGE</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>FLATBED</i>		
DRESSING ROOMS	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>INDOOR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>OUTDOOR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>PORTABLE</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>PERMANENT</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>OFFICES</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>OTHER (EXPLAIN):</i>		
PRIMARY SOURCE OF POWER	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>HOUSE POWER</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>TIB GENERATOR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>CE GENERATOR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>OTHER (EXPLAIN):</i>		
POWER (CHECK)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>110 VOLTS</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>220 VOLTS</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>SINGLE PHASE</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>THREE PHASE</i>	NUMBER OF AMPS:
			DISTANCE TO POWER:
STAGE, DRESSING ROOM OR POWER NOTES:			

BASE/SITE		SHOW DATE/TIME	
ADDITIONAL SHOW INFORMATION			
NAME AND RANK OF DV OPENING THE SHOW:		POSITION ON BASE:	
ADDITIONAL DVs ATTENDING:	NAME & RANK		TITLE
SPONSORS ATTENDING:	NAME & COMPANY		NUMBER OF GUESTS
MEAL AFTER THE SHOW? (NOT A REQUIREMENT)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	IF YES, GIVE DETAILS:	
IF NO MEAL PROVIDED, PLEASE LIST AVAILABLE MEAL LOCATIONS:			
HONOR GUARD ARRIVAL TIME		PHOTOGRAPHER ARRIVAL TIME	
OFF-BASE PRESS PLANNED?		MARKETING/SPONSORSHIP ARRIVAL TIME	
ARRIVAL TIME OF 2 BACKSTAGE VOLUNTEERS		ADVERTISED TIME DOORS OPEN (SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN 45 MIN BEFORE SHOW TIME)	
ESTIMATED SEATS NEEDED FOR TIB GUESTS (PROVIDED BY AIR FORCE ENTERTAINMENT)			
LOCAL LEADERSHIP INFORMATION			
WING NAME:		WING COMMANDER:	
WING HQ PHONE:		COMMAND CMSGT:	
MISSION SUPPORT GROUP NAME:		MISSION SUPPORT GROUP COMMANDER:	
FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON (FSS) NAME:		FSS COMMANDER/DIRECTOR:	
FSS STREET ADDRESS:		FSS DEPUTY COMMANDER/DIRECTOR:	
FSS DSN PHONE:		FSS COMM PHONE:	

BASE/SITE		SHOW DATE/TIME	
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OTHER INFORMATION			
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Enter any notes you think might help this year's tour run smoothly (receptions, potential load-in concerns, current 2014 TOPS IN BLUE member from your base, etc.)			
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Chapter 2-Personnel

Host Support Team

We recommend that the Mission Support Group Commander designate a Host Support Team that includes personnel from all key support areas.

This team will assist the Project Officer in completing tasks and making all support organizations aware of their part in the overall success of the TOPS IN BLUE visit. One or two people CANNOT complete hosting responsibilities. Hosting TOPS IN BLUE is a base-wide responsibility and Project Officers ensuring the involvement of base professionals in all areas of required support are the most successful.

As a minimum, this team should consist of the following:

- FSS Staff Members (Include Lodging, Food Service, Community Activities Center, Honor Guard, and Marketing Representatives as a minimum)
- Protocol Representative
- Civil Engineer Representative
- Logistics Readiness Squadron Representative
- Public Affairs Representative
- Security Forces Representative
- Safety Representative
- Performance Site Representative
- Command Staff Representative
- Medical Representative
- Volunteer Coordinator and those who have an interest in helping

Host Support Team Contact Sheet

KEY SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS	NAME	PHONE
Community Activities Center		
Lodging		
Marketing		
Food Services		
Honor Guard		
Protocol		
Civil Engineer		
Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS)		
Public Affairs		
Security Forces		
Performance Facility		
Safety		
Command Staff Rep		
Medical Rep		
Volunteer Coordinator		

Support Personnel

Safety

TOPS IN BLUE continues to place an increased emphasis on safety. It is very important that the Wing or Base Safety Office be included in the show planning process from the very beginning. We also request a local Safety Office representative to be available at the performance venue for both load-in and load-out to identify and assist with any safety and Operational Risk Management concerns.

Ushers

Ushers must be familiar with the performance facility and handle all crowd control. The Project Officer determines actual procedures and briefs all ushers. Most facilities recommend **one usher per 100 people**. This number, particularly in downtown facilities, helps establish the Air Force presence and our concern in making our civilian guests welcome. Ushers should guide all special guests and DVs to the reserved seating area. Their appearance reflects directly on the image of the Air Force during the event.

Security

Security personnel should be tasked to provide security for vehicles, equipment, and backstage at the performance facility, as well as crowd and traffic control. Certain limitations apply to downtown performances based on local agreements and authorizations. However, this is often the time when security is needed the most and arrangements must be made to meet this requirement and remain within the limitations imposed.

Portable Stage Setup (Outdoor & Hangar shows-Stateside)

A portable stage is available in lieu of flatbed trailers for STATESIDE SHOWS ONLY . If requested, the host base needs to provide volunteers to help set up and tear down the stage.

Coordinate as early as possible! The TOPS IN BLUE stage may be used for almost all stateside outside or hangar performances by simply coordinating with your AFTC in advance. When this stage is used, eight to ten “motivated” volunteers are needed to off-load and assemble the stage. These volunteers need to be able-bodied adults. They should wear suitable work attire, including closed-toe footwear (no sandals) and work gloves. Significant lifting will be required. The setup and teardown time for the stage will be coordinated directly with your AFTC.

Volunteers for Setup and Tear Down

If the TOPS IN BLUE portable stage is not required, then volunteers for setup and tear down are optional. However, if you have motivated volunteers who are willing to help out, their assistance will be welcome and much appreciated. Again, they should be able-bodied adults and should wear suitable work attire. Coordinate with your AFTC before the team's arrival regarding report times for the volunteers. The TOPS IN BLUE Technical Staff will direct the volunteers on the day of the show.

Backstage Volunteers

Two able-bodied adult volunteers will be required backstage to assist with this year's show. Upon arrival of the team and a review of the performance venue, the Tour Director will advise you on any changes for this requirement.

The backstage volunteers should report to the TOPS IN BLUE Stage Director 30 minutes prior to show time. Volunteers will be assisting the team throughout the performance. Lifting may be required. For safety, volunteers should also wear appropriate clothing, including long pants and closed-toe shoes...no shorts or flip-flops are allowed.

Honor Guard

When scheduling the Honor Guard, please advise them that if time is needed to "preview" the site or practice the entrance on stage, they should arrive no later than 30 minutes before the doors open to complete their rehearsal before the public is allowed to enter. No practicing will be permitted once the audience is allowed into the venue.

If an Honor Guard is not available to post the Colors, the Host Base must provide flags and stands to be positioned on the stage at the end of setup. TOPS IN BLUE does not travel with U.S. or Air Force flags.

NOTE FOR OVERSEAS LOCATIONS: If you plan to include the host country national anthem in the opening ceremony, the Honor Guard must also include that country's flag.

Support Personnel Worksheet

Volunteer Coordinator:

Name _____ Phone _____

Arrival time of ushers at the performance facility _____

Ushers to be briefed by _____ Time _____

Safety Assistant:

Name _____ Phone _____

Times required at performance facility _____

Security Coordinator:

Name _____ Org _____ Phone _____

Arrival time of security at the performance facility _____

Security briefed by _____ Date _____

If using TOPS IN BLUE stage:

Arrival time of stage setup personnel _____

Arrival time of stage tear down personnel _____

Setup-Teardown Volunteers:

Times for Setup _____

Times for Teardown _____

Backstage Assistants:

Arrival time of back stage assistants (30 min before the show):

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Honor Guard:

POC Name _____ Phone _____

Arrival Time (30 Min before the doors open) _____

OVERSEAS: Host country flag included with Honor Guard? _____

Base Command Representatives

Many commanders enjoy meeting and greeting the TOPS IN BLUE team upon their arrival at the base and after the show.

ARRIVAL: Coordinate with your AFTC if a commander or other DVs wish to welcome TOPS IN BLUE upon arrival. The Advance Tour Checklist includes space for listing personnel meeting the team.

SHOW OPENING: The Wing Commander normally introduces each performance for the base. Brief opening remarks are used to prepare the audience for the performance and ensure military awareness in the community. Comments should include information about TOPS IN BLUE, acknowledgement of special guests, and thanks to any appropriate people or organizations. Some commanders are now also including special activities in the opening such as announcing a promotion, re-enlisting personnel or even enlisting new Airmen when the show is held off base. These types of actions are more than welcome as long as coordinated in advance.

TYPICAL SHOW OPENING SEQUENCE: This is the typical sequence of events to open a TOPS IN BLUE show. It can be adjusted as needed to accommodate special activities or unique situations at your particular location. Coordinate with your AFTC before the team arrives regarding any special requirements for the Opening Sequence.

- The Tour OIC will meet the host Wing Commander or other DV opening the show upon his or her arrival at the venue for the performance. He or she will be briefed and provided a wireless microphone for their presentation
- At the show start time, TOPS IN BLUE will welcome the audience and acknowledge all national sponsors
- The Honor Guard will present the colors and TOPS IN BLUE will perform the National Anthem.
- Air Force-level “U Got Talent” winners perform, if applicable
- After the Anthem, TOPS IN BLUE will introduce the Host Commander. His or her remarks will lead directly into the start of the performance; therefore, the Commander should conclude his or her comments by introducing TOPS IN BLUE.

Air Force Entertainment will not provide speech scripts. However, a specific fact sheet is included in the PROMOTION section on pg 39 of this Operations Plan.

AFTER THE SHOW: It is extremely important for the TOPS IN BLUE team to continue their tradition of thanking the audience following their performance. They spend approximately 15 minutes in the lobby or exit area of the performance location as the audience departs the facility.

We would like to extend an opportunity to the Commander to meet with the TOPS IN BLUE team immediately following their time with the audience. The Team OIC will coordinate with you during the show setup regarding your commander's desires.

Chapter 3-Logistics

Lodging

Appropriated Funds

The Secretary of the Air Force Financial Management Office has approved Appropriated Funds for rental of off-base venues to host Tops in Blue performances. However, these funds may not be used to pay for meals or lodging for the team.

Lodging

Comfortable lodging is very important for allowing the team to rest during their limited free time. Every effort should be made to ensure lodging rooms are the best available to the team and that certain steps are taken to expedite lodging check-in.

The team may be lodged in single, double or TLF rooms on-base. If lodged off-base, every effort must be made to minimize costs. Doubled rooms off-base are often less expensive than single rooms on-base. Discounts for multiple rooms plus any amount of commercial sponsorship can also further reduce costs off-base

TOTAL ROOM REQUIREMENTS: 39 PERSONNEL

- **12 Females - 5 Doubles and 2 Singles or 12 Singles**
- **25 Males - 12 Doubles and 1 Single or 25 Singles**
- **1 Married Couple - 1 Double**

TOTAL: 18 Doubles and 3 Singles, 1 Double and 37 Singles, or other combination for 39 personnel (must coordinate w/AFTC for other combinations)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Team members are on a unique schedule resulting in late hours and very little time for rest. Team members **MUST NOT** share rooms with non-team members and must be housed as much as possible as a group.

ROOMING LISTS

You will receive an initial rooming list to be used while reserving rooms. It will include designated roommate assignments if double rooms are used. A FINAL list will be sent approximately 7 days prior to the team's arrival. **BE SURE TO UPDATE LODGING UPON RECEIPT OF NEW LIST.** You must ensure lodging uses the final list to update names prior to arrival of the team.

IN-PROCESSING - LODGING

In order to make the in-processing procedures as smooth as possible, please do the following:

- Use the initial rooming list to reserve the rooms in advance.
- Pre-register the team and acquire keys in advance on day of arrival.
- Upon arrival of the team, give keys to the Lodging Coordinator. **NOTE:** If signatures are required for lodging forms, the Lodging Coordinator will sign for all rooms prior to departure from the base.

BILLING (NEW FOR 2014)

Lodging charges will be paid by host base funds on performance days only, whether on or off-base quarters are provided. This is a major change from previous tours, when bases were also required to pay for transportation days. Air Force Entertainment will be responsible for lodging charges for transportation days, off days and tour preparation days. Air Force Entertainment will coordinate in advance for any lodging payments required for TOPS IN BLUE. Payments will be made by direct bank transfers from HQ AFPC/FMN. Lodging Managers can contact the Air Force Entertainment Financial Coordinator, Mr. Matt Chambers, at (210) 395-7243, DSN 969-7243, or by email at matthew.chambers.3@us.af.mil to arrange for payment by direct bank transfers.

AIR FORCE ENTERTAINMENT STAFF BILLING

Air Force Entertainment staff will travel with the team during portions for the tour. Any staff members traveling with the TOPS IN BLUE team will pay for their own lodging expenses, whether on or off-base. Please ensure staff members are billed separate from the team.

Lodging Checklist

_____ Reservations made Date: _____ Confirmation No. _____

_____ Confirmation of reservations Who: _____

_____ Arrangements made for local funding of rooms

_____ Final room assignments received from Air Force Entertainment, taken to Lodging Office, ensured any name/personnel changes completed by Lodging staff. (minimum 7 days prior to arrival)

_____ Pre-registration paperwork complete

_____ Keys picked up in advance of arrival of the team

_____ Keys and Seven copies of completed rooming list provided Lodging Coordinator upon arrival

LODGING PHONE NUMBERS

Point of Contact: _____

DSN: _____

Commercial: _____

Lodging FAX: _____

Lodging Street Address: _____

Lodging FED EX Address: _____

Transportation

ARRIVAL BY GROUND: (STATESIDE OR OVERSEAS)

When traveling stateside by ground, TOPS IN BLUE will arrive in a motor-coach, two 53' tractor/trailers, and two SUV's towing a performance generator and a smaller luggage trailer. Overseas, the team will arrive in a bus, two equipment trucks and an additional truck towing a generator. Adequate parking will be needed for these vehicles upon arrival. Additional vehicle support will be needed from the host base once the team arrives.

Request the following vehicle support:

- **TWO U-Drive vans (minimum 9-passenger) with off-base authorization to be turned over upon arrival of the team at meeting location.**
- **ONE 45-passenger bus on STAND-BY ONLY. This is a stand-by bus and may not be used by TOPS IN BLUE during the team's stay. The bus should remain with the Logistics Readiness Squadron, but be prepared. If it is known that the bus will be needed, the TOPS IN BLUE Transportation NCOIC will develop a bus schedule with the Base Project Officer after arrival. All requirements for the stand-by bus will be due to TOPS IN BLUE vehicle problems and will therefore be of an emergency nature.**

ARRIVAL BY AIR: (STATESIDE OR OVERSEAS)

Request the following support:

- 1. Trucks to transport pallets of equipment to the performance site. The number of pallets will vary by aircraft as follows:**
 - **KC-10 – 13 pallets**
 - **C-5 – 10-12 pallets**
 - **C-17 – 10-12 pallets**
 - **C-130 – 4 pallets per aircraft**
- 2. ONE 1 1/2 ton truck for baggage.**
- 3. ONE 45-passenger bus for a minimum of 40 personnel and carry-on baggage.**
- 4. 10K forklifts; one on the flight line to load pallets on trucks and one at performance site.**
- 5. TWO U-Drive vans (minimum 9-passenger) with off-base authorization to be turned over upon arrival of the team at meeting location.**
- 6. FOUR-MAN CREW to assist team in handling pallets and equipment.**

DEPARTURE BY AIR: (STATESIDE OR OVERSEAS)

TOPS IN BLUE personnel will palletize for departure the performance site.

Request the following support:

- 1. Trucks to transport pallets of equipment from the performance site to the flight line. The number of pallets will vary by aircraft as described in the Arrival by Air Procedures.**
- 2. ONE 1.5-ton truck for baggage.**
- 3. ONE 45-passenger bus for a minimum of 40 personnel and carry-on baggage.**
- 4. 10K forklifts; one at performance site to load pallets on trucks and one on the flight line.**
- 5. FOUR-MAN CREW to assist team in handling pallets and equipment.**

Your AFTC will discuss at length the support that will be needed if **TOPS IN BLUE** arrived by ground but will depart by air. You will need to coordinate with the Airfield Manager to ensure the number of pallets required and sufficient cargo straps, nets and bags for each pallet are available for the type of aircraft **TOPS IN BLUE** will be traveling on. Air Force Entertainment staff will coordinate with the commander of the aircraft arriving to pick up **TOPS IN BLUE** to ensure that the aircrew will bring pallets to replace the ones **TOPS IN BLUE** will be taking.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Plan the return of U-Drive vehicles with the **TOPS IN BLUE U-Drive Transportation Coordinator** in advance of departure of the team.

Transportation Checklist

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE BY GROUND

- _____ Ensure there is adequate secure parking for a motor coach, two 53' tractor/trailers and two SUVs pulling a generator and a luggage trailer.
- _____ Parking Location for TIB Vehicles:
 - At Venue: _____
 - Overnight : _____
- _____ U-Drive van request to Vehicle Operations (Phone: _____)
- _____ Stand-by 45-passenger bus request to Vehicle Operations
- _____ U-Drive pickup time confirmed. Time: _____
- _____ Departure U-drive drop-off location coordinated with TOPS IN BLUE U-Drive Transportation Coordinator

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE BY AIRCRAFT

- _____ U-Drive van request to Vehicle Operations (Phone: _____)
- _____ Request appropriate flatbed trucks for equipment from Vehicle Operations
- _____ Request one 1.5 Ton truck for baggage from Vehicle Operations
- _____ Request 45-Passenger Bus from Vehicle Operations
- _____ Request two 10K Forklifts (one on flight line and one at performance location)
- _____ Request Loading/Unloading assistance
- _____ If arriving by ground and departing by air only, request required number of pallets, straps, nets and bags from Airfield Manager
- _____ U-Drive pick up time confirmed. Time: _____
- _____ U-Drive drop-off location coordinated with TOPS IN BLUE U-Drive Transportation Coordinator

Food

Appropriated Funds cannot be used to purchase food for the team and bases are not required to provide food for the members of TOPS IN BLUE. However, many bases work with Spouses Clubs, TOP 3 organizations, etc., or obtain commercial sponsorship to provide food, and it is much appreciated. Your AFTC will ask if you are providing food; this is for logistics planning purposes only and is not intended as a request to feed the team.

AFTER THE SHOW

As a general rule, entertainers cannot eat a large meal prior to the show and perform to the best of their abilities. Bases are not required to provide the team with a meal following the show, however, food after the show becomes very critical to the health of the team members. Project Officers must discuss this issue with your AFTC in the initial planning phase for hosting TOPS IN BLUE.

Upon arrival, please provide the following information to the Team Meal Coordinator:

1. Times and meals served at the Dining Facility
2. Local on- and off-base restaurants/fast food/pizza delivery service phone numbers and hours of operation.
3. Specific restaurants providing service until 0100 hrs

OTHER MEALS

Although not a requirement, many bases provide refreshments upon arrival of the group. Please notify your AFTC if your base plans include or do not include a meal or snacks upon arrival.

Please notify the dining facility of the following:

1. Team members are on NAF Travel Orders and do not receive per diem.
2. When lodged on base, the team may eat breakfast as a group prior to performance setup if arriving the night before the performance. They may also eat breakfast if teardown is scheduled on the morning following the performance.

WATER

TOPS IN BLUE will bring packets of powdered drink mix, four 5-gallon Igloos and sufficient water bottles for their backstage, setup and teardown liquids. Request arraignments be made to fill the Igloos with ice and water (Bottled water not required) to mix the drink powder at the start of setup, at the start of the show, and at the start of teardown.

Food Checklist

_____ Dining Facility advised of upcoming TOPS IN BLUE visit

_____ Food on arrival or set up?

_____ If yes, what will be provided?

_____ Food provided following the performance?

_____ If yes, what will be provided?

_____ Operational hours for base dining facilities:

_____ Operational hours and phone numbers for late-night local restaurants:

_____ Water and ice source established

Chapter 4-Promotions

Marketing & Publicity

One of the keys to a successful TOPS IN BLUE performance is a well-rounded promotional effort. We will provide the promotional materials needed to promote the show.

PROMOTIONAL PLAN

Before you can establish a promotional plan, you need to determine who your target market is and where you can best reach them in the community. A lot will depend on the location of your show, the seating capacity, if your show is open to the public, and whether or not your show is co-hosted with the local community. Another consideration when determining how you can best advertise and promote the show will depend on whether there are any community or base events/programs in conjunction with the show.

On-Base Shows: In most cases the primary target market will be military members, retirees, and DoD personnel and their families. In addition, TDY personnel would probably love to know about your TOPS IN BLUE show. A potential secondary market would be military members of other branches of service, such as Army, Navy, Marines, Guard/Reserve units or Recruiters in the local community.

- The primary objective for this market is to inform the customers of the date, time, and location of the show since many of them are already aware of the Air Force TOPS IN BLUE program and their reputation for exceptional quality.
- The secondary objective is to inform and educate new customers of what TOPS IN BLUE is and the exciting show they can expect to see.

Off-base Shows: These shows are described as those either hosted or co-hosted by the Air Force but open to the local community. Off-base shows require more effort in promotions since the off-base audience may not be familiar with the TOPS IN BLUE program. Do not assume this market knows what TOPS IN BLUE is. Extra attention is needed in educating and communicating with outside media.

*Remember to coordinate with your public affairs office
when working with outside media sources*

FLYERS

Camera-ready flyer and ad mats provide top quality masters for your ad campaign. Coordinate with your local commercial sponsorship program manager before printing any additional products concerning sponsor logos. **NOTE:** Local sponsors may not be added to any Air Force Entertainment marketing materials.

INVITATIONS

Depending on your base policy, distinguished visitor invitations may be an important part of your process. To make the process easier, TOPS IN BLUE will provide 150 blank invitation shells (These can be used as self mailers or inserted in # 10 size envelopes). An optional template in Microsoft Word for show information is available for download (pg 39).

PRESS RELEASE & INTERVIEWS WITH THE PRESS

Great publicity includes coordination and planning. In most cases, you will want several inputs to inform your market of the show. Contact your Public Affairs Office to coordinate releases to newspaper/media. If time permits, an interview can be set up with a TOPS IN BLUE team member. Contact your AFTC to organize and get approval for an interview. Please note that the Team OIC is not authorized to approve interviews; all interviews must be arranged through your AFTC. If your base has a member on the current TOPS IN BLUE team, you may request a media bio for that person from your AFTC.

VIDEO SPOTS

Video products are available from Air Force Entertainment at no cost-See page 39

Two products are available. One DVD (COMMERCIALS) has :30 and :60- second commercials and B-roll suitable for broadcast. The second video is a promotional video of 1:20 minutes long for video display or web downloads. Both videos can be customized with your show date, time and location. These promotional videos feature the 2011 TOPS IN BLUE team.

T-SHIRTS AND CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

The TOPS IN BLUE team member in charge of Marketing will issue 2014 T-shirts to the Portable Stage volunteers. Backstage volunteers will be given their T-shirts by the Stage Director when they report to him 30 min before show time. Blank Certificates of Appreciation, signed by the Chief, Air Force Entertainment, can be ordered from New Century Graphics at no cost (see pg 39). These certificates can be personalized through MS Word.

BASE PHOTOGRAPHER TO DOCUMENT THE PERFORMANCE

Show photographs are critical for our publicity and to meet commitments to our commercial sponsors. Marketing offices should be the point of contact for photography support. The following items are needed:

- Photos of the show (hi-res) as well as photos of the stage and truss reflecting sponsor banners
- Photos of TOPS IN BLUE members interacting with members of the audience during the show

These photos will be helpful to other Marketing offices and TIB Project Officers for their publicity campaigns and will provide a valuable history for TOPS IN BLUE.

Marketing offices should collect photos (hi-res), press releases and copies of promotional materials and forward to them to Air Force Entertainment within three days of the event.

Promotional Item Ordering Information

Air Force Entertainment does not send out promotional materials to the host bases. You will need to order your materials (at no charge) directly from the printer.

PRINTER:

NEW CENTURY GRAPHICS

11971 STARCREST, SAN ANTONIO TX , 78216

210-829-7515

Email: gary@ncgraphics.com

Because the items will be printed as you order them, you can order only the items you need, and you can order your materials with your show information pre-printed on the items.

CUSTOM-PRINTED MATERIALS AVAILABLE FROM NEW CENTURY GRAPHICS AT NO CHARGE:

Posters 22"x 28" *(Up to 10 per base)*

Posters 12"x 18" *(Up to 50 per base)*

4" x 6" Acrylic Table Top Inserts *(Up to 150 per base)*

Table Tents *(Up to 150 per base)*

8.5" x 11" Full Color Flyer *(Up to 50 per base)*

8.5" x 11" Full Color Static Cling *(Up to 5 per base)*

Blank Invitations *(Up to 150. One side has pre-printed design. Other side is left blank for show information. Downloadable template available)*

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM NEW CENTURY GRAPHICS :

4'x6' Banner – available to purchase from New Century Graphics at base expense

AVAILABLE FROM AIR FORCE ENTERTAINMENT :

Commercials DVD: :30 & :60 seconds TV or Radio commercials, and B-Roll (Produced 2013-no charge)

36' Banner – available for checkout from your AFTC at no charge-see pg 36

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORDERING CUSTOMIZED MATERIALS FROM NEW CENTURY GRAPHICS:

**(MARKETING OFFICES SHOULD PROVIDE THIS SUPPORT TO THE
TOPS IN BLUE PROJECT OFFICER)**

- 1. CONFIRM DATE, DAY, SHOW TIME, AND VENUE WITH THE PROJECT OFFICER**
- 2. ENSURE PROJECT OFFICER HAS RECEIVED APPROVAL OF SHOW DATE AND TIME FROM AIR FORCE ENTERTAINMENT. DON'T ASSUME THAT THE DATE AND TIME ARE FIRM WITHOUT ASKING THE PROJECT OFFICER IF THE DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION HAVE BEEN APPROVED**
- 3. ONCE YOUR SHOW INFORMATION HAS BEEN CONFIRMED, GO TO <https://warehouse.newcenturygraphics.com/> TO REQUEST YOUR CUSTOMIZED MATERIALS**
- 4. HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION READY**
 - a. DATE**
 - b. DAY**
 - c. SHOW TIME**
 - d. LOCATION**
 - e. QUANTITIES FOR EACH ITEM (SEE PREVIOUS PAGE)**
 - f. MAILING ADDRESS: FED EX GROUND FOR CONUS, U.S. POSTAL FOR OVERSEAS**
 - g. COMMERCIAL PHONE NUMBER**

CAUTION: Make sure your show information is firm when you order your promotional materials. Once you approve your art from New Century Graphics, your files will be printed at Air Force Entertainment expense. Air Force Entertainment will only fund one run of the materials. If errors need to be corrected or changes are made, the base assumes the reprint costs

Downloadable Promotional Materials

Downloadable files of promotional materials are also available from <https://www.usafservices.com>. These items are available for download:

Poster, 22" x 28 "

Web-Banners

1/2 Page Print Media Ads

Digital Art to include 16:9 and 4:3 Aspect Ratio (NEW)

Black & White & Color Ad Slick

Promotional Photos

Graphic files for all printed materials

Press Release

Templates for Labels & Invitations

Downloadable digital ad video for plasma/LCD TV displays

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DOWNLOADING PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

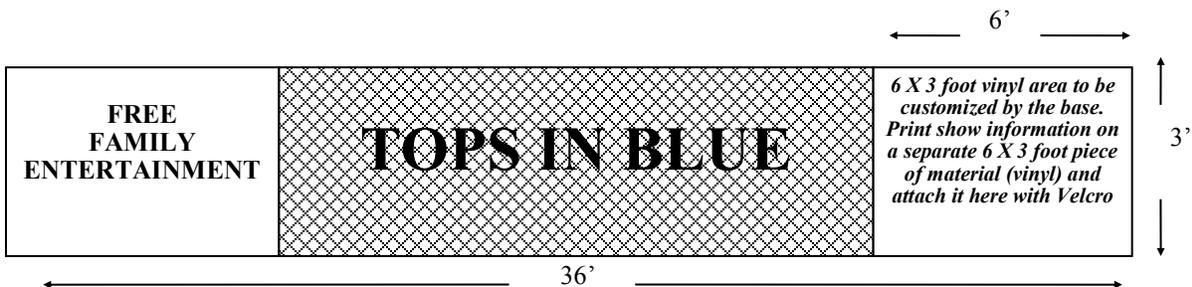
1. Go to <https://www.usafservices.com>
2. Click on "Login" on the upper right hand side of the home page. You may have to create an account. If that is the case, follow the instructions to create your account, and then login.
3. Click on the "Managers" tab.
4. Click on "Marketing" from the list on the left side of the page.
5. Click on "Download Central"
6. Scroll down to the TOPS IN BLUE logo for links to the items you can download.

TOPS IN BLUE Street Banner

A 36-ft banner is available for checkout. To reserve this banner or for more information, contact your AFTC at least 4 weeks before the performance.

Banner Description

The TOPS IN BLUE banner is 36 ft long and is designed to be suspended across a roadway. It is constructed of a mesh material with the letters “TOPS IN BLUE” in the center section. There are 2 vinyl sections, one on each side of the banner. The left vinyl section is pre-printed with sponsor information. The right vinyl section is left blank for local show information. Print your show information on a separate piece of vinyl or other material, 6ft long by 3ft high, and attach it to the right vinyl section of the banner with Velcro. The banner is meant to be used at many different locations on the tour, so please **do not print directly on the banner**.



Please ensure the banner is clean and dry before you pack it for return, and please return the banner the day after the show in the plastic container in which it arrived to:

HQ AFPC/SVPCE
3515 S. General McMullen Drive
San Antonio TX, 78226

NOTE: *Instead of returning the banner to Air Force Entertainment, your AFTC may ask you to forward it to the next location that needs it. If that is the case, you will be provided the necessary information in time for you to ship the banner the day after your show. Again, please ensure the banner is clean, dry, and shipped in its original plastic container.*

Commercial Sponsorship

A TOPS IN BLUE performance is a great opportunity for interacting with existing and potential sponsors. It also comes with obligations to TIB's corporate sponsors.

FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON (FSS) SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship to off-set NAF expenses or to enhance your event is authorized in AFI 34-108, *Commercial Sponsorship & Sale of Advertising*. Financial &/or in-kind support for your TIB performance may be secured for things such as, hosting costs, an off-base venue, advertising, a team meet & greet, etc. Work with your local sponsorship coordinator to discuss needs, opportunities and local obligations commensurate to the level of support.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Each year, the AFPC Services Directorate Marketing (AFPC/SVKB) sponsorship team secures support to off-set expenses and to enhance the overall TOPS IN BLUE tour. Insuring obligations to these sponsors is critical to renewing their support and even attracting new sponsors. The 2014 TOPS IN BLUE tour corporate sponsors are Dell, Inc. and Coca-Cola. As such, no other computer company or beverage company may provide sponsorship of a local TIB performance.

FSS SPONSORSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Inform leadership about corporate sponsors and local sponsors.
2. Provide talking points to recognize all sponsors at local performances.
3. If your performance is at an off-base venue, inform the facility manager that TIB sponsors will be recognized at the event.
4. Insure all locally produced publicity/advertising includes corporate sponsor logos (available at <https://www.usafservices.com/Managers/Marketing/DownloadCentral.aspx>)
5. Provide VIP seating for local sponsors.
6. Insure local sponsor recognition does not "up stage" corporate sponsor recognition.
7. Insure photos are taken of your event and forwarded to Air Force Entertainment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FSS

1. Invite sponsors you are courting.
2. Invite the local Coca-Cola distributor.
3. Encourage local TOPS IN BLUE sponsors to help you promote the show at high traffic locations in the days leading up to the show.

THANKING SPONSORS AT THE SHOW

It is appropriate to thank any local sponsors during the opening sequence before the show. However, TOPS IN BLUE will only thank our corporate sponsors, Coca-Cola and Dell, Inc. If local sponsors need to be thanked from the stage, the Host Commander can thank the local sponsors during his or her comments. Please let your AFTC know if you wish to thank local sponsors.

SPONSORSHIP QUESTIONS

For ANY sponsorship questions, contact AFPC/SVI, at DSN 665-7000, Commercial 210-565-7000. You can also submit a question through 'myPers', Resource and Requirements:

<https://mypers.af.mil/app/categories/p/8%2C11/c/1515>

TOPS IN BLUE Fact Sheet

Known as the Air Force's Expeditionary Entertainers

TOPS IN BLUE is one of the oldest and most widely traveled entertainment groups of its kind. Composed of 35 to 40 of the most talented vocalists, musicians, dancers, and technicians anywhere, their primary purpose is to perform for military personnel and their families throughout the world. However, the enormous popularity of the group has also made them America's goodwill ambassadors around the globe.

The 2014 tour is a celebration of **TOPS IN BLUE** and 60 Years of Tradition, and we commemorate the past six decades by looking forward to a bright future of "Family Entertaining Family." This year's tour features the exciting sounds of Bruno Mars, Pharrell Williams, Daft Punk and others. It also showcases great country music of artists like Jerry Reed, Nelly and Florida Georgia Line, Dierks Bentley and the Pistol Annies. Of course, no **TOPS IN BLUE** show would be complete without the great patriotic music that honors our nation and its heroes. Add the high energy precision choreography and dazzling visual impact **TOPS IN BLUE** is known for and every member of the audience will be singing along and dancing in their seats.

This year's tour will take **TOPS IN BLUE** throughout the United States and to more than 20 countries, with close to 90 performances over a seven-month period.

Each year, Air Force personnel stationed worldwide compete in a multilevel competition for the right to be selected as a member of this elite organization. The **TOPS IN BLUE** team is an all-active duty U.S. Air Force special unit made up of talented performers selected for their entertainment abilities.

Each team begins their tour with an intense 60-day training period at the "Home of **TOPS IN BLUE**," Joint Base San Antonio – Lackland AFB, TX. This training consists of a highly accelerated educational process to prepare them to succeed as world-class entertainers and distinguished Air Force Ambassadors during the seven-month tour. The performers must master the instrumental, vocal, choreography, and staging requirements of the show. In addition, they also must become highly accomplished in the intricate technical skills needed to support the tour. They are, in essence, their own "road crew."

Under the guidance of five technical personnel, the performing team is responsible for setting up over 60,000 pounds of staging, lighting, audio, video and special effects equipment required for each performance.

TOPS IN BLUE has a distinctive history, spanning over 60 years. Since its first world tour in 1953, the group has also performed on film, produced albums, and appeared on national television with such legends as Ed Sullivan, Bob Hope, Alabama, Barbara Mandrel, **BOYZ II MEN**, Lee Greenwood, and many others. They performed the entire half-time shows for the 1981 Garden State Bowl and Super Bowl XIX. **TOPS IN BLUE** has appeared in front of hundreds of thousands of fans at NASCAR events. In 2005, they performed the National Anthem for Game 6 of the NBA Finals,

and in 2011, they performed with Lea Michele of “Glee” at Super Bowl XLV. TOPS IN BLUE has performed for heads of state and dignitaries throughout the world. They have toured throughout Western, Central, and Eastern Europe, the Far East, Middle East, Central America, Southwest Asia, Canada, and all 50 of the United States. Countries such as Taiwan, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Iceland, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Albania, Vietnam, Cuba, Africa and Iraq have all experienced the extraordinary entertainment of TOPS IN BLUE.

Promotions Checklist

PRE-EVENT PUBLICITY

- _____ Determine target market & develop a promotional plan for local area
- _____ Inform all Services facilities of TOPS IN BLUE show date
- _____ Order customized printed promotional materials
- _____ Request DVD of Commercials from Air Force Entertainment
- _____ Provide news releases and photos to base newspaper for release
- _____ Local publicity input submitted (i.e. emails/bulletins, Commander's Channel, web/digital media)
- _____ Printed collateral materials distributed (Localize if not already customized)
- _____ Reserve all key base marquees (target for 1-week exposure)
- _____ Request 36-ft banner from Air Force Entertainment if desired
- _____ Appoint base photographer
- _____ Attend the show, coordinate photos, sponsors and support Project Officer

OFF-BASE SHOWS & PACAF/USAFE (AS APPLICABLE)

- _____ Radio & TV
- _____ Commercial newspapers
- _____ Local talk shows (news, variety, etc.). You must coordinate in advance with your AFTC if local media desires to conduct interviews of team members

POST-EVENT ACTIONS

- _____ Collect photos, press releases, and ad materials (all digital) for marketing after-action
- _____ Provide Marketing's portion of the after-action report to the POC no more than 3 days following the event.
- _____ Return banner, if used. Send to:

**HQ AFPC/SVPCE
3515 S. General McMullen Drive
San Antonio TX 78226**

Or forward the banner to the next location as directed by your AFTC.

Chapter 5-Performance Facility

Performance Facility Requirements

The performance should be scheduled in the best facility available, preferably with a raised stage. If more than one adequate facility exists, preferential consideration should be given to the largest seating capacity. In order to accommodate larger military audiences, performances in hangars, physical fitness centers, outdoors, and at off-base sites are encouraged.

STAGE REQUIREMENTS

This year's set has been designed for use on a stage that is 24 ft deep (7.5 meters) x 40 ft wide (12.25 meters) with a 20 ft high ceiling clearance over the entire stage area. Smaller (or shorter) stages may be used, but will require significant set modifications that will definitely affect the quality of the performance and limit the special effects used in the performance. If a portable stage is used or one is being built, extending the width to 48 ft will significantly impact the ease of setup and performance. Additionally, the stage should have a weight-bearing capacity of 150lbs per square foot. Provide 20' of clearance behind the stage for team movement and equipment storage.

NOTE: Your AFTC must be notified immediately if the stage size is smaller than indicated. Preparations must be made by the touring technical staff prior to arrival at the venue.

FACILITY AVAILABILITY

The performance facility must be made available for TOPS IN BLUE to set up staging, lighting, and sound equipment at the time established for setup on the Advance Tour Checklist. The facility will need to be for the sole use of TOPS IN BLUE from setup until after load-out. Load-out times will also be listed on the Advance Tour Checklist. Due to the new TOPS IN BLUE touring format, equipment setup, show, and teardown will normally not happen all on the same day. This change has been incorporated to ensure safety of the team and the volunteers. This will normally require additional time in the performance facility. Coordinate extra time requirement with the AFTC before finalizing the facility location.

FACILITY REPRESENTATIVE

A representative for the performance facility must be available on-site for the entire time that TOPS IN BLUE occupies the facility, including during setup, the performance, tear-down and load-out. This person must be available to address any facility-related issues that may arise while TOPS IN BLUE is on-site.

Stages

PORTABLE STAGES

Often the venue selection is contingent on the available stage. In some cases, smaller venues have been used simply because a portable stage or flatbed trucks were not available. Stateside bases have the opportunity to opt for the larger venue by requesting the use of the traveling TOPS IN BLUE stage. This is a professional quality stage, 32'x 48', which can be used free of charge for the show. Project Officers should request use of the TOPS IN BLUE stage as early as possible. The host base is required to provide eight to ten "motivated" volunteers to assist with off-loading and setting up the stage at the scheduled setup time indicated on the Advance Tour Checklist. The volunteers will also be needed to disassemble and reload the stage approximately two hours after the start of teardown. Call your AFTC if you are considering a show location where the TOPS IN BLUE stage could be effectively used.

Base Theaters

Base theaters should be used for performances only if a larger facility is not available. You must obtain approval from your AFTC if a base theater is to be used. If a base theater is approved, **concessions may not be opened before, during, or after the performance.**

MOVIE CANCELLATION

Base Project Officers must coordinate with the regional AAFES office to cancel the motion picture performances scheduled on the TOPS IN BLUE performance date if the base theater is the performance location.

MARQUEES

When the TOPS IN BLUE performance is scheduled in the base theater, the theater marquees will be used to publicize the program on the day of the performance. Authority has been granted by AAFES for TOPS IN BLUE host bases to utilize the changeable letter signs for this purpose.

Off-Base Facilities

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES MUST BE FOLLOWED:

- Ensure that there is **NO CHARGE** for attendance at a TOPS IN BLUE performance.
- Off-base sites must have advance telephone or email approval from your **AFTC**.
- Anticipated audience must be larger than the base facilities can accommodate.
- Local community facility must have unrestricted admission.
- Site must be in close proximity to the host base military community.
- Adequate seating for anticipated military audience must be ensured.

Other Performance Facility Considerations

MULTIPLE EVENT OR RESTRICTED ATTENDANCE PERFORMANCES

Prior approval from Air Force Entertainment is required for scheduling of performances in conjunction with any income producing function or any activity having a restricted attendance. Contact your AFTC to coordinate approval.

COMMUNITY CENTER/CLUBS

The TOPS IN BLUE production is not staged for presentation in Community Activity Centers and Clubs and therefore, these locations will not be approved as the performance location.

CLEANLINESS OF FACILITY

The facility should be well cleaned before the team arrives. The TOPS IN BLUE team will clean their areas before departing the facility.

SHOW TIMES

The show time should be established to allow sufficient setup time for the team members and to maximize audience attendance. Once the show start time has been coordinated with the Base Leadership, the Project Officer must immediately contact the AFTC to ensure TOPS IN BLUE is capable of meeting the requested time.

OUTDOOR SITES

A backup indoor facility should be considered whenever an outdoor performance is planned. The TOPS IN BLUE production staff will work with you on a final location decision if inclement weather seems likely. Because of the special effects associated with the TOPS IN BLUE show, outdoor performances during the summer or early fall will normally be affected by natural lighting. As a general guideline, outdoor shows should not start before dusk. **We encourage and will support moving the start time to 2000 or 2030 hrs so the audience can enjoy the full effects of the show.**

Composite Indoor Performance Location Checklist

Performance Location: _____

Phone #: _____ Seating capacity: _____

Stage size: Width: _____ Depth: _____ Height: (Above Stage to Ceiling) _____

Date notified AFTC of performance location: _____

Performance Time: _____ Date: _____

Set-up Time: _____ Date: _____

Teardown Time: _____ Date: _____

_____ Reserved Seats Approved by Installation Commander

_____ Electrician arrangements made

_____ Electrical power available at performance location

Date & Time electrician/power pro technician needed to hookup TIB Equipment: _____

Off-base facility: House audio system availability

Off-base facility: House lighting system availability

_____ Facility Cleaned

_____ Facility Security Arrangements Made

_____ Base theater movie canceled (if applicable)

_____ "TOPS IN BLUE" on marquee

_____ Sufficient lighting or "lite-alls" for load-out

_____ Stairs for Stage

Electrical Requirements

The first choice for a power source for TOPS IN BLUE is that which can be provided by the performance venue, as long as that power is sufficient to support your show. An electrician must be available at the performance location as determined by the Advance Tour Checklist setup time if a performance venue power source is to be used. The electrician must identify, in advance, the power capabilities in the performance venue. The source must be available within 50 feet of the stage.

The TOPS IN BLUE team travels in the United States and Europe with a 75 KW whisper-quiet generator, large enough to handle show requirements. If an adequate power source is available, the TOPS IN BLUE generator will be used for backup. If sufficient power is unavailable in the performance venue, the TOPS IN BLUE generator will be used for the performance and an additional generator must be made available as backup. The performance location must include the ability to position the generator within 150 feet of the stage. Generators must be used at overseas locations whenever possible.

NOTE: THE ELECTRICIAN MUST BE ON SITE WHEN TOPS IN BLUE ARRIVES TO SET UP! It is essential that the power hook-up is completed by your electrician or power pro technicians within 45 minutes after start of setup!! TOPS IN BLUE requires power to begin setup of the lighting and stage truss; failure to hook up power in a timely manner will cause delays to the entire show day schedule. **This has been the #1 technical problem on past tours!**

ELECTRICAL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

TOPS IN BLUE will provide 4/0 bare-ended pigtails for connecting to a main source. If required, the electrician must ensure availability of sufficient and adequate size 4/0 double-buss lugs for hook-up prior to arrival of the team.

The connector end of the TOPS IN BLUE provided pigtails are fitted with camlok twist-lock connectors, which will connect to a complete circuit-protected distribution system, also provided by TOPS IN BLUE. No connectors other than the 4/0 buss lugs are required by the base electrician. The TOPS IN BLUE electrician will assist the host electrician in connecting the pigtails to the distribution system.

COLOR CODE

WHITE	GREEN	RED	BLUE	BLACK
COMMON	GROUND	HOT	HOT	HOT

NOTE: Common and Ground must be separate

Electrical Requirements: CONUS

BACKSTAGE POWER REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM POWER

**110/208 VAC, 3 phase, 600
amps**

**200 amps per phase (3 hot
legs)**

**TOPS IN BLUE uses splitters to
hook up audio, lighting and video
in this configuration.**

OPTIMUM POWER

**110/208 VAC, 3 phase, 600
amps**

**200 amps per phase (3 hot
legs)**

PLUS

***A SEPARATE 110/208 VAC, 3
phase, 100 amps per phase
(3 hot legs)***

***(A separate set of 4/0 pigtails is
provided for this setup)***

Electrical Requirements: Overseas

BACKSTAGE POWER REQUIREMENTS - OVERSEAS

In many USAFE locations overseas the team will travel with their generator. Host generator requirements are based on the following instructions. Contact your AFTC to determine whether or not the TOPS IN BLUE generator is available. 60 cycles are needed from host generators.

Use of Generators

Generator power should be used any time the quality or quantity of power in the selected venue is questionable to support the TOPS IN BLUE requirements. (See requirements on previous page)
Lack of preparation in this area has resulted in canceled performances.

GENERATOR REQUIREMENTS

Stateside: 100KW Generator, MEP7 operating on 3 phases with each phase at 110 Volts, 60Hz

Overseas: 60KW Generator, as a minimum, operating at 110 Volts on 3 phases with each phase at 60Hz ...the above listed MEP7 is the optimum if possible.

Generator power must be checked at the stage. Reduced power due to runs of cable over 100 feet will shut down the TOPS IN BLUE audio system. Noise baffling may be necessary for your generator at outdoor performances. The TOPS IN BLUE generator is self-baffled.

A generator refueling schedule must be coordinated during setup between the host base and TOPS IN BLUE Power Pro technicians.

Electrical Requirements Checklist

- Electrician requested**
- Electrician's name:** _____
- Telephone number:** _____
- Electrician briefed on requirements...45 minute hookup**
- Coordinate electrician arrival time at performance venue**
- Available electricity:**
 - Minimum Power**
 - Optimum Power**
- Is 1 or 2 Generator(s) required? If yes:**
 - Certify availability**
 - Meets performance requirements**
 - Coordinate arrival time at performance venue**
 - Power Production Technician name**_____
 - Telephone number**_____
 - Briefed on requirements...45 min hookup**
 - Refueling schedule developed between Host & TOPS IN BLUE Power Pro technicians**
- Main power located a minimum of 50' from stage**
- Common and ground are separate**
- Fixed ground available**

Facility Equipment

TOPS IN BLUE is a self-contained unit requiring minimal additional support.

All lighting, audio, set equipment, wardrobe, and musical instruments are normally provided by TOPS IN BLUE. However, at large off-base facilities, use of existing house audio and/or lighting systems may be desirable as a stand-alone system or in conjunction with the TOPS IN BLUE systems. This often cannot be determined until arrival at the venue. Any available information pertaining to facility equipment should be provided to your AFTC well in advance of the performance.

TOPS IN BLUE will provide spotlights and spotlight operators. However, some off-base venues have restrictions regarding the use of spotlights, requiring that TOPS IN BLUE use the venue's spotlight and/or spotlight operator. All of these conditions are typically associated with a fee. It is imperative that you determine if the facility you are using has a requirement of this type, and if so, that you provide this information to your AFTC as soon as possible so we can coordinate with the venue staff.

Haze

TOPS IN BLUE puts a haze into the air on stage to enhance lighting effects during the show. This is a light, barely-visible haze that consists of fully refined white mineral oil diffusion fluid. This haze is harmless to both the performers and audience members. However, sometimes the haze can set off existing fire-protection systems, such as sprinklers or smoke alarms. Please coordinate with local fire officials to turn off any systems that may be affected by the haze during the show. Your AFTC must be notified ahead of time if these systems cannot be turned off and haze cannot be used. (A Material Safety Data Sheet for this diffusion fluid is available upon request.)

NOTE: Haze is not the same as stage "fog machine" effects. Fog is heavier than haze. TOPS IN BLUE does not utilize fog machines.

Lighting for Loading and Unloading

Adequate lighting is essential for safe packing and loading of the truck following the performance. Please ensure there are sufficient permanent lights in the loading area. If this is not the case, please arrange for two to four “Lite-All” portable light carts to provide enough light for safe loading operations. **This has been a problem during recent tours, particularly at outdoor performances.**

Stairs

A minimum of one set of steps without hand rails is required in front of the stage into the audience area for the setup and performance in indoor performance venues. One set of steps without hand rails in front of the stage and two behind the stage are required if an outdoor or special stage is built for the event. Four foot wide or wider are best for safety & performance purposes.

Dressing Rooms

- 1. Separate dressing rooms are requested for males and females but are not mandatory. The team will initially use the dressing rooms, and then will move to dressing areas established behind or adjacent to the stage in order to accommodate the fast changes required.**
- 2. Dressing rooms must be clean and ready for use at set-up time.**
- 3. Dressing rooms must be heated in cold weather and an attempt should be made to ensure availability of air conditioning in hot climates.**
- 4. All dressing rooms should be equipped with the following:**
 - **Appropriate lighting, chairs and mirrors based on the size of the dressing room(s).**
 - **Waste baskets**
 - **Table or equivalent surface area**
 - **40 large clean towels (will be returned)**
 - **20 amp (110V) or 10 amp (220V) service with multiple receptacles**
 - **Security for dressing rooms during the show must be provided in downtown locations.**
 - **OVERSEAS ONLY: Four clothing hang-up racks**

Dressing Room Checklist

- Dressing rooms available**
- Dressing rooms must be clean, equipped and ready for use at set up time**
- Dressing rooms are heated in cold weather**
- Dressing rooms are cooled in hot weather if possible**
- Each dressing room must have 20 amp (110V) or 10 amp (220V) electrical service with multiple receptacles**
- Security coordinated for dressing room areas during the show at downtown locations**
- Overseas: Four clothing hang-up racks in backstage area**

Audiences

ADMISSION TICKETS AND SEATING

Admission is on a first-come, first-served basis.

TICKETS WILL NOT BE USED WITHOUT AIR FORCE ENTERTAINMENT APPROVAL

NON-MILITARY ATTENDEES: The Installation Commander determines guidelines for attendance of non-military members and their families.

RESERVED SEATING: The Installation Commander or representative should approve all reserved seating.

OPENING OF DOORS

Doors may be scheduled for opening a maximum of 45 minutes prior to the performance. Any deviation must be approved by your AFTC. In some instances, due to technical difficulties, the tour unit may not be ready for the doors to open as scheduled. In order to ensure audience safety and control, the House Manager must obtain approval from the team Superintendent (pg 9) prior to letting the audience into the performance area.

CONCESSIONS

Concessions are not authorized if the show is at the Base Theater. Off-base locations with large seating capacities have the option of making concessions available in the same manner as they would with similar events conducted in the facility. Concessions may be sold prior to and following the performance when held on base in a hangar or outdoors.

LATE ARRIVALS

The house manager and ushers will control late arrivals to ensure minimum disruption to previously seated audience members.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Your AFTC will notify you of any special seating requirements, including requesting support for team member's families when seating is available.

PROGRAMS

Programs will be provided by the TOPS IN BLUE Promotions Coordinator at setup. Ushers are critical for handing out programs. Don't hesitate to request more programs if needed.

Audience Checklist

- _____ Installation Commander or representative has established guidelines for non-military attendees
- _____ Installation Commander or representative has approved reserved seating plan
- _____ No tickets have been disseminated for the TOPS IN BLUE show without approval
- _____ Concessions approved as appropriate for performance facility
- _____ Coordination with your AFTC on opening of doors
- _____ House manager and ushers briefed on handling late arrivals
- _____ Coordination with your AFTC on any special seating requirements
- _____ Receive programs from Marketing Coordinator during show setup

Remember to coordinate with the team Superintendent prior to the actual opening of the doors to the public

Funding and Insurance

AFI 65-601 V1, *Financial Management*, authorizes the use of appropriated funds to support TOPS IN BLUE. Specifically, paragraph 4.30.1.8 reads in part: “Rental of a local facility using O&M funds is authorized for Air Force entertainment such as Tops in Blue or a military service band if the majority of the anticipated audience will be military and their dependents (including retirees) and no suitable facility is available on the installation.”

The use of appropriated funds is authorized for fees and rentals of off-base facilities for TOPS IN BLUE performances. Authorization can be supported when the primary purpose of the performance is to entertain Air Force personnel and their family members. Every effort should be made to use appropriated funds to pay rental or other fees associated with securing the use of off-base facilities. Since the Air Force is self-insured, commercial insurance is not required when appropriated funds are used for rental of the facility. A letter from the AFPC Services Directorate Legal Office is available to support this if documentation is required by the facility.

If appropriated funds are unavailable, the use of NAFs must be approved in advance by the Air Force Chief of Staff. In cases where there is no alternative to using a NAF contract, the proposed contracts must be forwarded to AFPC/SVPCE, 2261 Hughes Ave, Ste 156, JBSA-Lackland TX 78236-9852 at least 45 days prior to the intended performance date. This requirement for prior review and approval is limited to contracts for off-base facilities, and does not apply to contracts for other goods and services needed for the performances involved.

When indicated by the degree of risk of potential liability, or required by the building facility/owner, the purchase of commercial insurance may be necessary when off-base locations are secured with NAF. The possible added expense of the commercial insurance should be considered during planning. Normally, the facility manager can provide information on any contractual requirements for commercial insurance and vendors that routinely make acceptable coverage available for short-term use of the facility.

Funding and Insurance Checklist

- Off-base facility approved by AFPC/SVPCE
- Contract required
- Contract signed by base procurement officer using appropriated funds.
(If so, no additional requirements for insurance. If not, Air Force Chief of Staff approval required for non-appropriated funds)
- NAF Contract sent to AFPC/SVPCE (Date: _____)
- NAF contract returned from AFPC/SVPCE
- Commercial insurance obtained if NAF
- Contract complete

Outdoor/Hangar Show Procedures

The procedures outlined in the sections for indoor show also apply for outdoor or hangar shows. However, there are some additional requirements:

Stage (Stateside)

The portable TOPS IN BLUE 32' X 48' stage is available for use for outdoor and hangar shows when stages are not built in. See page 49 for the requirements for using the portable stage. Coordinate the stage set up with your AFTC as soon as the requirement is known.

STAGE SETUP ON GRASS OR SOFT GROUND

If the stage location is on grass or soft ground, the host base needs to provide plywood to place under the legs of the lighting supports to prevent them from sinking into the ground. Ten sheets of 4' X 8 sheets of 3/4" plywood will be needed to place under the lighting supports. See the diagram on page 59 for placement of the plywood sheets.

Stage (Overseas)

The TOPS IN BLUE portable stage is not available for overseas locations. The host installation must provide a 24 ft. (7m) deep by 40 ft. (12m) wide stage. It must have a minimum of 20 ft. (6m) clearance above all areas of the stage, and the stage floor should be a minimum of 3 ft. (1m) above ground level. An alternative to a portable stage is the flatbed configurations described below (see diagram on page 65):

- Three each 40' flatbed trailers may be used
- Set trailers side by side, as close as possible
- Ensure trailers are level and squarely aligned
- Cover with 3/4" plywood as depicted in diagram
- Construct three sets of stairs as depicted in diagram
- Provide appropriate curtain or bunting for skirting the front of the stage
- Ten 4'x8' pieces of plywood to be used for light truss support (returned after the show)

THREE FLATBED TRAILERS, 8' WIDE, 40' LONG AND 4'HIGH

TRAILER LENGTH = 40'

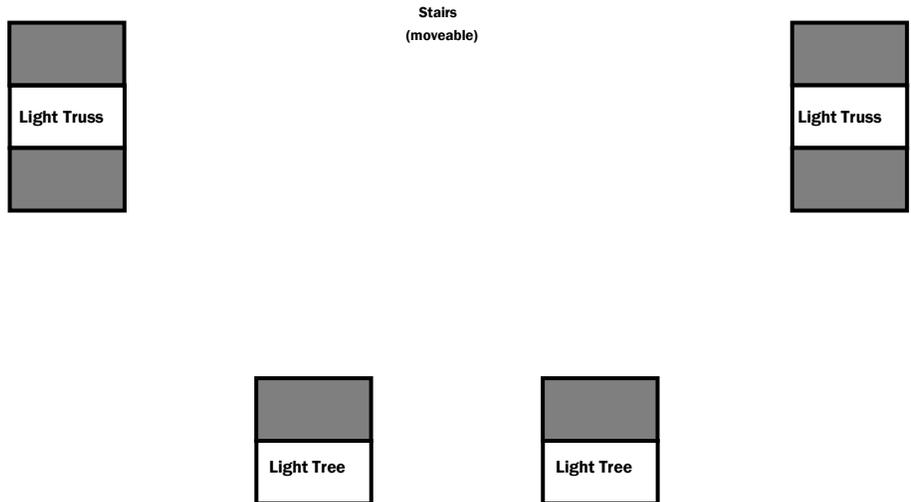
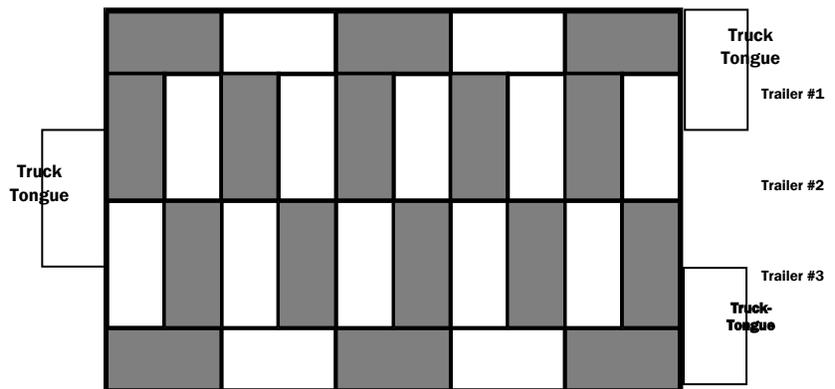
SET TRAILERS SIDE BY SIDE AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE

ENSURE TRAILERS ARE LEVEL AND SQUARELY ALIGNED

COVER WITH 3/4" PLYWOOD AS DEPICTED IN DIAGRAM

CONSTRUCT 3 SETS OF STAIRS AS DEPICTED IN DIAGRAM

HANG CURTAINS/SKIRT/BUNTING (IF APPLICABLE) IN FRONT OF STAGE



Both Stateside and Overseas:

Rigging

For the safety of both the performers and the audience, the TOPS IN BLUE lighting trusses must be secured by cables attached to stationary rigging points. In locations where these rigging points are not available, such as open outdoor areas or hangars, **the host location must provide six concrete or six water-filled plastic Jersey barriers to be used as rigging points.** If jersey barriers are not available, vehicles may be used as rigging points

Dressing Rooms

Offices or tents may be used as dressing rooms in outdoor or hangar locations. If tents are used for dressing rooms, set tents 15' to 20' behind the back of the stage.

Electrical Requirements

The electrical requirements are the same for outdoor/hangar shows as they are for indoor shows. However, it is much more likely that generators will be used as the primary power source in these locations. If that is the case, the TOPS IN BLUE generator will be the primary power source and the host base will need to provide a generator for backup power. See page 54 for generator specifications and requirements.

Lighting

Four "Lite-All" portable light carts or equivalent fixed lighting are required for unloading and setups or teardowns and load-outs when scheduled during normally dark hours. Units can also be used to assist in safe exit of audience following performance.

Outdoor/Hangar Performance Location Checklist

Performance Location: _____

Closest Phone: _____

Estimated seating capacity: _____ Type of seating: _____

____ TIB PORTABLE STAGE ____ OTHER PORTABLE STAGE ____ FLATBEDS

Stage size: Width: _____ Depth: _____

____ If flatbed trailers are used, are they closely aligned and according to plan provided?

Date notified AFTC of performance location: _____

Performance time: _____ Date: _____ Set-up time: _____ Date: _____

Number of reserved seats approved by Installation Commander: _____

____ Dressing rooms equipped and 15-20 ft from back of stage

____ Electrician survey complete

____ Electrical power available at performance location

Date & Time electrician/power pro technician needed to hookup TIB equipment: _____

____ Security arranged for Stage and Dressing Rooms

____ TIB Vehicle Parking identified

____ TIB Vehicle parking blocked for setup, performance, & teardown

____ Ten 4'x8' pieces of plywood for lighting setup

____ Storage space for equipment between stage and dressing rooms

____ Appropriate curtain or bunting provided for front of stage

____ Three sets of stairs without rails set up as diagram indicates

____ Adequate permanent lighting or two to four Lite-All Portable Lighting Systems in place

____ Six jersey barriers to be used for rigging points (if needed)

Chapter 6-Arrival of TOPS IN BLUE

Prepare for Team Arrival

ARRIVAL ON A SETUP DAY

TOPS IN BLUE will proceed directly to the performance site upon arrival and will not go to Lodging first. Initial briefing/welcome should be at the performance site, if possible. This will expedite set-up time.

ARRIVAL ON A NON-SETUP DAY

- Initial briefing/welcome location is at the discretion of the Project Officer.
- If arriving by aircraft, prior arrangements must be made to move equipment on pallets to a **SECURE** storage facility until the established set-up time.

ARRIVAL TIMES

Arrival times for **TOPS IN BLUE** will be included in your Advance Tour Checklist. In **CONUS**, the Team OIC will call a telephone number designated by you, one hour in advance of arrival. For overseas locations, approximate arrival and departure times will be provided closer to the performance date. In the event of transportation time changes as a result of maintenance problems, inclement weather, etc., you will be notified as quickly as possible.

WELCOMING

Normally, key base personnel will greet the team upon arrival. They welcome the team and brief them on local plans, policies, schedules of events, etc.

Mail

The majority of the team's mail is sent to our Air Force Entertainment Office and then Express Mailed or Fed-Ex'd as a group package directly to you as the Project Officer. There are sections on the Advance Tour Checklist to provide street addresses for your office, Force Support Squadron, Lodging, and performance site. **Please provide complete street addresses for these locations.** Fed Ex will not deliver to a Post Office box or APO.

Deliver all mail to the team Superintendent upon arrival.

Request that any mail arriving after the team's visit is immediately forwarded. Contact your AFTC to coordinate the forwarding address.

Arrival of Team Checklist

Arrival date of the TOPS IN BLUE team: _____

Arrival time: _____

Meeting Location: _____ Phone _____

Met by: _____

Local info handout ready: _____

Refreshments (Optional): _____

Secure and dry storage area for pallets if arriving by aircraft and not setting up on arrival day.

Location: _____

Contact: _____

Secure and dry storage area for pallets if departing by aircraft from after teardown until time for loading pallets on aircraft.

Location: _____

Contact: _____

_____ **Mail delivered to team Superintendent**

_____ **AFTC contacted regarding any mail arriving after team departure**

Evaluation

An objective evaluation is essential in maintaining quality TOPS IN BLUE tours. Your comments and those of the audience play a large part in determining the success of the tour. Evaluations are kept on file indefinitely and help in determining future tours and show content.

You should provide an accurate and timely evaluation within 72 hours following your TOPS IN BLUE performance.

Wing/Installation Commander evaluations will be sent directly from the AFTC to the appropriate commander. That evaluation form includes a section where the commander can request a future TOPS IN BLUE performance.

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