

Sears Ontario Drama Festival

TECHNICAL GUIDELINE MANUAL

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Preface

These guidelines are the first step in providing a consistent, workable environment, not only for actors, but also for technicians participating in the Sears Drama Festival. We have compiled these guidelines on a generic level so they might be applied to any facility hosting a festival.

This package, therefore, is not a "rule book" but a set of guidelines meant to improve the experience of the Sears Drama Festival. By working together through these guidelines, we should be able to create a specification package that is acceptable to all participants

1. Lighting

1.1. Control.

1.1.1. The dimmers should offer enough control and power to provide for all specified lighting, and have enough to provide for an equal number of specials (dedicated dimmers) per ensemble per day.

1.2. Acting Areas.

1.2.1. The stage must proportionally be divided into equally spaced acting areas.

1.2.2. The areas should not be heavily coloured, although using corrective gels is advised to create a "white" lighting look.

1.2.3. The instruments used to illuminate the areas must provide a general "bright" look to the area. It is recommended that two or more instruments be used to reduce shadows and lack of definition.

1.2.4. Each area must have a unique and separate control on the control console.

1.3. Set Lighting.

1.3.1. If the information on the technical questionnaires shows that a large portion of the Ensembles will be using taller set pieces such as risers and other elevations, the Festival should make attempts at lighting these areas.

1.3.1.(A) If the Festival is unable to light these areas, the F.S.M. should inform the ensemble of the next "best fit" solution.

1.3.1.(B) The method of lighting these areas is left to the discretion of the Festival Lighting Designer. It should not be specifically focused to meet the needs of a particular ensemble.

1.4. Cyclorama.

1.4.1. If possible the facility should be equipped with a cyclorama and a black backdrop to be used to cover the cyc when not required.

1.4.2. The cyc should be lit in a minimum of three colours.

1.4.3. The colours should be determined through examination of the requests of the participating Ensembles. Popular choices are usually the Red-Green-Blue or Cyan-Magenta-Yellow colour mixing processes.

1.4.4. The specific colours are to be determined by the Festival Lighting Designer and released to the participating Ensembles at least one week in advance of the festival week.

1.5. Colour Wash.

1.5.1. If a large number of Ensembles request a colour wash on the stage, the Facility should make an attempt to meet this request.

1.5.2. These lights will not replace any of the other lighting parameters. If the Facility does not have sufficient dimmers or circuits to provide a colour wash, the Festival may exclude this lighting parameter.

1.5.3. The specific colours are to be determined by the Festival Lighting Designer in the method described under "Cyclorama."

1.6. Follow Spot.

1.6.1. The facility must be equipped with a minimum of one follow spot, with sufficient power to provide for its use.

1.6.2. The follow spot must have sufficient candlepower to be effective from the installed location.

1.6.3. The follow spot must be located such that it can effectively illuminate the on-stage acting areas defined in section 1.2. (Acting Areas)

2. Sound

2.1. Front-Of-House Equipment.

2.1.1. The facility will also be equipped with a minimum of two cassette tape decks and two compact disc players for playback of sound effects.

2.1.2. There should be adequate circuiting to the stage available for the patching of microphones and/or backstage sound effect equipment. All on stage dialogue is to be carried out acoustically.

2.2. P.A. System.

2.2.1. The facility is to be equipped with a front-of-house mains system.

2.2.2. Monitors should be placed in suitable locations backstage for the playback of "onstage" sound effects and piano/accompaniment tracks.

2.2.3. The P.A. should be as noise-free as possible, and equalised to the room.

2.2.4. The front-of-house P.A. should be cosmetically set up so as not to interfere with the visual display of the performances.

3. Communications

3.1. System Parameters.

3.1.1. The facility is to be equipped with a headset communications system.

3.1.2. There should be one headset in each of the following locations: Backstage, each side; Sound console; Lighting console; Follow spot station; Stage Manager's station (if such exists.)

3.1.3. There should be at least one headset within the seating area for use by the director during the technical rehearsal.

3.2. System Usage.

3.2.1. The headset system is to remain dedicated to the Ensemble's use only. The festival crew should find alternate means of communication, such as a second headset system, or two-way radios.

3.2.1.(A) The two-way radio system is highly recommended, as it gives the Festival House Crew added mobility and flexibility.

3.2.2. The Festival Stage Manager should have a means of monitoring the headsets, so that he/she can be reached at any time during the performance or technical rehearsal.

4. Set Storage

4.1. Requirements.

4.1.1. The facility must make every available effort to provide adequate storage for all participating Ensembles.

4.1.2. Storage areas should be allocated in such a way that when an Ensemble is required to set-up, its set is completely accessible.

4.1.2.(A) If the set is not accessible when set-up is to commence, allowances should be made to make it accessible before the set-up commences.

4.1.3. Once a set has been packed into the storage area, moving or tampering with the set by other Ensembles and/or the Festival Crew is prohibited without consultation with the Ensemble's stage manager.

4.1.4. If not in a rehearsal, set-up, strike, or performance time, Ensembles are required to obtain the approval of the Festival Stage Manager to move, adjust, repair, or otherwise modify their own sets. Under no circumstances shall an Ensemble be permitted access to any portion of its set stored backstage during another Ensemble's technical rehearsal, set-up, strike, or performance time.

4.2. Large Set Storage.

4.2.1. Participating Ensembles should be discouraged from bringing large sets into the festival; however, this is a permissible action and the Facility should make all attempts to provide for the needs of the ensemble.

4.2.1.(A) Ensembles must give a reasonable estimate of the set storage space required within their technical questionnaire. If an Ensemble requires more space than is listed on this questionnaire, the Festival Stage Manager is not required to provide additional space, although the Festival should make every available effort to do so.

4.2.2. If there is not enough space within the venue to store the set, alternate arrangements should be made through the Festival Stage Manager prior to the week of the Festival. However, the Ensemble should be permitted to move its set from the alternate storage facility to the venue before its set-up will commence. (See 4.1.2.)

5. Staging.

5.1. Stage Deck.

5.1.1. The stage deck must be fairly smooth, and covered with a wooden surface.

5.1.2. The downstage edges of the deck must be marked with a single stripe of glow tape or glow paint across the entire edge.

5.2. Spike Tape

5.2.1. Each Ensemble must be provided with spike tape during their technical rehearsal to mark where their set is to be placed.

5.2.2. Different colours of tape should be available so that each Ensemble receives its own colour.

5.2.3. It is recommended that sets be spiked in the upstage corners only to avoid covering the entire stage deck with spike tape. This tape should be secured as well as possible so it is not accidentally removed.

5.2.4. When cleaning the stage deck during the course of the day, the Festival House Crew should use great care so as to avoid removing the spike tape. The tape should only be removed at the end of the day.

5.3. Draperies.

5.3.1. All draperies must be controlled in such a way as to make them accessible to the Ensemble's crews. During the Ensemble's time on stage, the Festivalhouse crew will not operate any draperies unless specifically instructed to do so by the Ensemble's stage manager or director.

5.3.1.(A) If, for safety reasons, the Ensemble crews may not operate the drapery controls (ie. large fly galleries,) the Festival must provide a Festival house crew member specifically to operate these draperies under the instruction of the Ensemble Stage Manager only.

5.3.2. Each venue should be equipped with sufficient masking so as to hide the backstage area from the audience's view.

5.3.3. All draperies should be black, with the exception of the main curtain.

5.4. Sight Lines.

5.4.1. The Festival will make all attempts to provide an unobstructed view of the entire stage deck from the majority of the seating area.

5.4.2. Backstage sight lines will be marked in either tape or paint in a highly visible colour.

5.5. Seating Area.

5.5.1. The seating area must be in a safe and presentable condition.

5.5.2. Seats should be reserved for the adjudicator, festival administration, participating directors and ensembles, and sponsors.

5.5.3. There must be adequate seating available to the physically challenged.

6. Technical Information Communication.

6.1. Stage Manager's Report.

6.1.1. Each Ensemble will be provided with a Stage Manager's Report providing recent, up-to-date information about the facility and the configuration of the technical equipment as early as possible.

6.1.2. This report will contain: a stage plot in ground plan and elevation views; a lighting plot; a listing of sound equipment being used; stage draperies and staging information; a map or directions to the festival site; specific procedures while inside the venue.

6.1.3. The report will be up-to-date to the week prior of the festival, if not, the Festival must provide additional information, as it becomes available, to all participating Ensembles.

6.1.4. All reports and revisions will be dated and signed by either the Production Co-ordinator or the Festival Stage Manager.

6.2. Technical Information Sheets.

6.2.1. All Ensembles are to receive Technical Information (T.I.) Sheets with their Stage Manager's Report.

6.2.2. Ensembles should make every effort to complete and return their T.I. Sheets as soon as possible.

6.3.3. The Festival is ultimately responsible to the Ontario Sears Festival governing body regarding its communications.

6.2.3. The Festival should attempt to fulfil every request made by the Ensembles if it is within the parameters of the current guidelines

6.2.4. Ensembles who do not provide information via the T.I. Sheets should not expect that their requirements be granted; nor is it the responsibility of the Festival to do so.

6.2.5. Exact format of the T.I. Sheets is to be determined by the Festival Co-ordinator. It should request information on the following: length of play; number of members attached to the Ensemble; house entrances; set parameters including storage area required; lighting

colours/effects requested; specials requested; playback machines and microphones required; piano required; pyrotechnic and special effect information; floor plan of set.

6.3. Communication.

6.3.1. All official communications concerning an ensemble must be viewed by the ensemble staff advisor and signed before they are forwarded to any other persons.

6.3.1.(A) Information for public release will be cleared by the ensemble staff advisor before it is released to the public or media source.

6.3.2. Clear communication at all times will be the responsibility of the Festival, under the perception that the participating Ensembles will uphold the same understanding.

7. Timing.

7.1. General.

7.1.1. Under no circumstances, except for emergencies or when specifically asked to by the Ensemble Stage Manager or Director, will the Festival House Crew assist or interfere with a timed action of any Ensemble.

7.1.2. The Ensemble will not be permitted to ask the Festival House Crew to assist in any timed action unless required in the cases of safety concerns or facility-specific duties.

7.2. Timers.

7.2.1. There will be at least two stopwatches running during the technical rehearsal, set-up, strike, and performance times.

7.2.2. These stopwatches will be held by the Festival Stage Manager and an assistant.

7.3. Recording Times.

7.3.1. All participating Ensembles will be issued a time recording sheet by the festival.

7.3.2. The times recorded by the two timers will be transcribed onto this sheet during the Ensemble's stay at the festival.

7.3.3. The time recording sheet will be signed by the Festival Stage Manager and the Ensemble Stage Manager before being distributed or filed. (See Appendix C)

7.4. Timeouts.

7.4.1. In the event of a house-related concern affecting the ensemble, during the technical rehearsal, set-up, or strike, the Festival Stage Manager must call a timeout (stop clock). Safety concerns, at the discretion of the Festival Stage Manager, may also qualify for an official timeout.

7.4.2. All timers will halt at this point, and the Ensemble crew will cease its operations and clear the stage deck, if instructed by the Festival Stage Manager.

7.4.3. The concern must be solved before the Ensemble is permitted to recommence its actions.

7.4.3. In the case of performance times, where the clock may not be halted but a house-related concern has affected the performance or technical action of an Ensemble, the Festival Stage Manager must complete a Technical Fault Report and forward it to both the Ensemble Stage Manager and the Adjudicator. (See Appendix B)

7.5. Starting the clock.

7.5.1. In all cases of timing with the exception of the performance, the Festival Stage Manager will notify the Ensemble Stage Manager as to when timing will commence.

7.5.2. The Festival Stage Manager will start the clock on a pre-arranged verbal or visual cue given to the Ensemble. "Go" or a flagged arm would be good examples.

7.5.3. If the Ensemble Crew begins before being given this cue a Technical Fault Report will result.

7.5.4. The Festival Stage Manager must establish with the Ensemble Stage Manager the beginning and ending point of the Ensemble's performance for timing purposes. (See Appendix A)

7.6. Exceeding Time Limits.

7.6.1. The Festival Stage Manager must notify the ensemble Stage Manager two minutes before the ensemble's performance time has expired.

7.6.1.(A) The Festival Stage Manager will always notify the Ensemble Stage Manager of the progress of Set-up and Strike timings, if he/she can do so without interfering with the Ensemble's current action.

7.6.2. In all cases of over times, particularly including performance times, the Festival House Crew will not tamper with or assist in the Ensemble's work until called to do so by either the Ensemble Stage Manager or the Director.

7.7. Time Limits.

7.7.1. Each Ensemble is permitted two hours of onstage technical time and thirty minutes of load-in time. Each Ensemble is allowed 10 minutes of set up time, and 5 minutes of strike time.

Each Ensemble's performance must be no less than 15 minutes and no more than 50 minutes.

7.7.2. All times must be communicated in writing to the Ensemble via the time recording sheet.

7.7.3. Time may not be saved and transferred between the allotted types of timings.

7.8. Stopping the clock.

7.8.1. The Timers will halt their timing clocks for each of the following conditions:

Technical Rehearsal: set, cast and crew are off the stage deck, and the set is in a moderately packed form.

Set-up: Set is onstage, ready to use, all properties are in place, all safety concerns have been met, and the cast and crew are off the stage deck.

Strike: Stage deck is clear of sets, properties, and anything else belonging to the ensemble. Cast and crew are off the stage deck.

Performance: At the pre-established completion of the performance.

8. Production Staff.

8.1. Job Descriptions.

8.1.1. Note: Some positions may be doubled up to reduce large staff numbers.

8.1.2. Festival Co-ordinator: Performs administration tasks as stated in Festival Guidelines. Does not participate in technical production aspects of the Festival. Remains as an impartial party to be consulted as needed by the Participants or the Production Co-ordinator /Festival Stage Manager.

8.1.3. Production Co-ordinator: reports to the Festival Co-ordinator and is responsible for coordinating the technical production of the Festival in accordance with the Technical Specifications Manual

8.1.3. Festival Stage Manager: (FSM) reports to the Production Co-ordinator, supervises the venue at all times it is in operation, and ensures that all equipment is functioning correctly. The FSM is responsible for timing and noting all production details for which the Production Team may be responsible. The FSM must be recognisable by all Participants through introductions and/or information sheets.

8.1.4. Assistant Stage Manager: reports to the FSM. He/she is responsible for supervising one side of the backstage area at all times, timing, and acting as general crew when required.

8.1.5. Festival Lighting Designer: (FLD) reports to the Production Co-ordinator and is responsible for creating the lighting plot to be used for the festival in accordance with the Technical Specifications Manual, as well as overseeing the installation and focus of the lighting system. He/she may also be required to arrange lighting equipment rentals and transport.

8.1.6. Lighting Crew: reports to the FLD during pre-production and load-in, and to the FSM during the Festival week. The crew is responsible for installing the Festival lighting design to the specifications set by the FLD. It is also responsible for maintaining this system throughout the week without noticeable change. The lighting crew will hang and focus specials for the ensembles, explain the equipment to the ensemble's crews, and operate the lighting console if necessary.

8.1.7. Sound Engineer: reports to the FSM and is responsible for installing and maintaining the P.A. and communications equipment. He/she explains all equipment when required by the Ensemble's crews, and will operate the console on the Ensemble's direction, if required. He/she may also be required to arrange sound equipment rental and transport.

8.1.8. Video Technician: (If systems are installed) reports to the FSM. He/she maintains closed circuit camera system so that all stations are operational.

8.1.9. Deck (Stage) Crew: reports to the FSM. These individuals perform tasks on stage as assigned.

8.1.10. Front of House (FOH) Co-ordinator: reports to the Production Co-ordinator and acts as liaison between the Festival Production Crew, Festival Stage Manager and FOH crew.

8.1.11. Performer Services: reports to the FOH Co-ordinator, carries out duties as assigned and acts as a "Host" to the participating Ensembles.

8.1.12. Dispatcher: (If system is in use) reports to the FSM. He/she is responsible for outgoing telephone calls and requests on behalf of the FSM. May be required to provide transportation for equipment or people.

APPENDIX A - Notes on Radio Usage

- Efficient use of the radio system is essential for good operations. A "high level" of radio discipline and protocol must be used at all times.
- Transmissions should be brief and to the point. Long conversations should be conducted in person. The 10-code system should be used in order to shorten transmission time. The radio frequency is not private and all users must govern themselves accordingly. Sensitive information, such as production timing, should never be communicated through the radio system.
- Polite, courteous language must be used at all times. The Federal Radio Act states, "Profane and offensive language is strictly prohibited."

BEFORE BEGINNING A RADIO TRANSMISSION, ALL RADIO USERS MUST LISTEN FOR A PERIOD LONG ENOUGH TO BE SATISFIED THAT THEY WILL NOT BE INTERFERING WITH A TRANSMISSION ALREADY IN PROGRESS.

- The term "CLEAR" will be employed by the user who initiated the call when the call is completed. When the term "CLEAR" is heard, this is a signal that the channel is free and ready for use by another radio user.

ALWAYS IDENTIFY THE PERSON YOU ARE CALLING FIRST, THEN IDENTIFY YOURSELF!

Example: "Shawn, this is Dan."
"Go ahead, Dan."

ON COMPLETION OF A CONVERSATION, THE PERSON INITIATING THE CALL SHOULD ALWAYS CLEAR!

Example: "Dan, clear."

- Carry the radio in a carrying case at all times and refrain from putting the radio in your pockets. Never leave the radio unattended.
- The battery life of the radio units is approximately six to eight hours. Limit transmission time to extend your battery life. Change batteries after eight hours or when power begins to fade - don't forget to start the old battery recharging when you do this!
- During performances, if you are in or near the stage area, you are required to wear headphones to limit the level of noise in the area.

Radio 10-Codes

10-4 O.K., Yes.

10-8 In Service

10-10 Negative, No.

10-7 Out of Service

10-25 Meet in person

10-9 Repeat last transmission

10-20 What is your location?

APPENDIX B - Sample Technical Fault Report

**Sears Halton Drama Festival
Technical Fault Report**

Date:	Time:
Reported By:	Position:

Details of Fault	Technical: Human:
	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>

How was Fault Corrected	

School:	
Show:	