

# **Wireless Institute of Australia Guidelines for Hosting a WIA Annual Event Weekend**

*July 2013*

## **Introduction**

These Guidelines are designed to help Affiliated Clubs and groups of clubs consider the requirements for hosting a WIA Annual Event weekend and the associated planning, organisation and running of the Event. The "Host Club" (which may be a group of clubs) will be required to work in close collaboration with the WIA Annual Event coordinator (appointed by the WIA Board) and the WIA National Office.

Please note that the points following are guidelines and suggestions only. These Guidelines, procedures and suggestions are for the assistance of the Event organisers to help to minimise difficulties and ensure a successful event.

Since our hobby has such a broad range of facets and aspects it is highly desirable that the location, activities and theme for each years event be unique to attract new and different members who may not have previously participated in a WIA Event Weekend.

## **The Goal of the WIA Annual Event Weekend**

The goal of the weekend is to:

- Socialise and promote the work of the WIA
- Feature weekend activities that are of particular interest to the radio amateur.
- Provide a venue for the WIA AGM and the open forum
- Provide a friendly environment where friendship between attendees can be developed and fostered.

## **Where to start ?**

The best place to start is by brainstorming with your fellow club members to come up with an idea or a couple of ideas for the main focal activity or event for the weekend. Think about something technical that would be of particular interest for others to attend and learn about, such as:

- A tour or visit to a technical facility,
- A hands on practical exercise that members can participate in,
- A technical presentation by an acclaimed subject matter expert.

Your idea is quite likely to be something unique that others have not thought about before, it doesn't have to be local, in fact some of the most interesting opportunities may be some distance away.

The weekend program is quite flexible so it does not matter if the activity you are considering is only available on a Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning.

## **Location**

The location of the event will be determined largely by the proposed main event or activity, but ideally it will be somewhere other than a capital city. Ideally the location should have a range of very affordable accommodation options (caravan park, hotel and motel) for weekend attendees. Whilst it's nice to think about having a weekend in a place with access to luxurious hotel rooms and modern conference facilities, there is typically a high price tag and heavy financial commitment for holding an event at these kind of places. Some of

our most successful weekend events have been kept low cost and this has ensured that those members on a limited budget have been able to attend.

## **Application to Host Event**

In making a formal application to the WIA about wishing to host an Annual Event Weekend, affiliated Clubs will need to address and present the following key points:

- Information about the Host Club
- Proposed feature activities of interest to the radio amateur that will become the theme for the weekend.
- Information about the town or location proposed for the Event Weekend.
- The facilities available in the town or location
- The suitability of the proposed venue,
- The accommodation options and costs
- The access, distance and means of transport (railway, bus/coach, taxi etc) from the airport to the Event
- Budgetary costs, and other information as described in the following sections

The application is to be sent to the WIA Office and WIA Annual Event coordinator and the WIA Board for the WIA Directors to consider. The WIA Board of Directors shall consider each written submission.

Having accepted and decided upon an application, the WIA Board of Directors shall then determine the date for the next Event in consultation with the chosen Host Club. Care shall be taken to ensure the date does not clash with any other event or activity in or nearby the proposed location that could restrict accommodation and other facilities.

***An application form is attached at the end of this Guide.***

## **Management Committee**

While the precise structure of the Host Club's group to manage the Event is really a matter for the club involved, it has been found that a small organising committee of two or three people working with the WIA Annual Event coordinator works best. The organising committee should not be too large with other individuals appointed for particular tasks. It is important that the committee works closely with the WIA Annual Event coordinator and the WIA Office staff and that everyone directly involved is copied on all communications and emails relating to the Event.

The Clubs Event Committee shall work with the WIA Annual Event coordinator and the WIA office to confirm the arrangements for the facilities, meals, catering, transport and support the Partners' Tour.

## **Communication**

Communication between the organizing committee and the WIA office is vital. A group email list shall be established and all correspondence should include all committee members and the WIA.

## **Timetable and Events**

As the WIA Annual Event Weekend hosts the WIA Annual General Meeting the weekend must be held within the 5 months following the end of the WIA financial year. Our financial year ends on 31 December, and then we have to have an audit completed, reports written and printed and circulated with *Amateur Radio* magazine.

The AGM and Open Forum needs to be allocated a contiguous 4 hour block at an appropriate time during the weekend, the Open Forum will require a tea and coffee break after two hours.

The other events are quite flexible but usually:

- Is held over three days, commencing on a Friday evening and finishing on Sunday afternoon or evening.
- Registration is on Friday afternoon/evening
- Includes a Friday meal, Saturday lunch and dinner, Sunday lunch.
- Features a main attraction or feature event
- Includes a tour for Partners during Saturday
- Most people arrive Friday afternoon and will be looking to complete their Registration and pick up name tags and information etc.

## **Financial Arrangements**

From a financial perspective the host club should be sensitive to the cost for members attending the weekend. Accommodation meals/functions should be conducted on a cost recovery basis. Sponsorship may be used to defray costs.

- Weekend participants should be given the choice to opt in or out of attending any activity, event or meal at time of registration.
- The proposed fee to participate in any event, activity or meal should be sufficient to cover the cost of that particular activity.
- The proposed fee to participate in any event, activity or meal should not be inflated in an effort to create a profit or cross subsidise another activity.
- All fees should be kept affordable, maximising the opportunity for participation by those on a limited budget.
- The weekend must be fully self funded by the fees collected to participate in the various activities, events and meals. The WIA is unable to subsidise the cost of running the weekend, other than meeting the cost of hall hire to conduct the WIA AGM and Open Forum.

## **WIA and Participants**

The choice of reasonably priced facilities and accommodation is important. Less expensive hotels or motels should be sought to ensure we don't exclude those on limited budgets. Many participants may want to travel to the destination with their campervan or caravan, so appropriate nearby Parks should also be identified.

The WIA will pay approved costs and expenses related to the running of the AGM and Open Forum.

The Host Club is not expected to meet any financial commitments specifically for running the Event, except for any functions or events it may choose to schedule.

All participants and their partners are responsible for all their own costs – travel, accommodation, meals etc.

Make sure that any accommodation prices obtained are room prices, and not a price per person. That makes it economic for a couple to share a room, particularly if breakfast for two is included in the price.

## **Contracts and Financial Commitments**

Should there be any contracts that require financial commitment or commitment of another kind, the contract must firstly be presented to and approved by the WIA board. Any contract must be between the WIA and the Vendor/Service Provider and not the host club and the Vendor/Service Provider.

## **The Conference Venue and Facilities**

It is important to ensure that the arrangements for any venues or facilities associated with the Event are adequate.

It is ideal to book any required venues or facilities well in advance

The weekend location should be a friendly environment and the program should include free time and places for people to congregate allowing friendship between weekend attendees to be developed and fostered.

Space or a venue close to the entrance is needed for registration

It is important to confirm in writing all "understandings" relating to arrangements at the venues and any special provisions and arrangements with any other suppliers. Do not rely on verbal agreements.

The size of any venue being considered depends on the number of people attending. Participation at past events has varied from 80 – 200 members plus the WIA Directors, Secretary, Treasurer and staff.

Signs at the venue to guide people around may be needed.

## **AGM and Open Forum Requirements**

The AGM and Open Forum will require a suitable location to hold the WIA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Open Forum the requirements are :

- Comfortable seating for 100-150 people
- Tea and Coffee facilities
- A PA system with at least two fixed microphones and one wireless microphone.
- Good room acoustics.

## **Meals and Catering**

The catering and meals often represent significant costs, so care and consideration should be given to:

Menu planning for all meals is a very important requirement.

The WIA recommends using commercial caterers unless your Host Club is familiar with food handling requirements/permits and has the required number of people with commercial catering experience to do the necessary work.

Remember, if the food is not of sufficient quality and quantity it will be hard to make the rest of the Event a success.

## **Accommodation**

As noted earlier, the choice of reasonably priced accommodation is important. Some smaller and less expensive hotels or motels should also be sought for those with limited budgets.

Information shall be provided as part of the advertising in relation to the venues for the events, as well as Hotel and other recommended accommodation, with indicative pricing and their contact details.

Weekend participants shall be responsible for booking their own accommodation.

Additional accommodation will be required for the WIA Directors, Secretary, Treasurer and staff the WIA office shall make these bookings.

## **Guests**

The Host Club in consultation with the WIA may invite official guests, (eg. to officially open the Event on Friday evening or more appropriately, to the Annual Dinner) and local city dignitaries. Be careful to ensure that only appropriate guests are invited.

Keep the WIA informed of any guests and their spouses, so that they can be greeted and acknowledged, and included in the opening ceremony etc.

## Transport

It is essential to have a Transport Coordinator. The Transport Coordinator will:

- identify site specific issues, such as the likely ratio of fly-in to local participants and those staying in caravan parks
- arrange to meet participants on arrival at the airport and provide transportation to the Event hotel. Many will have travelled for a significant distance and time, and it may be their first visit to your location.
- provide information, budgetary costs and travel times, about independent transport from the airport to the city and venue, (Hotel shuttle bus/coach service etc).
- check if transport is also needed for departures.
- organise coaches or buses if required for the day tour of the Partner Tour.

**Tip** - a small hired bus has been found very helpful. It is essential that the WIA is consulted before such a vehicle is hired and the amount of excess is determined. Generally speaking, the cost of additional insurance to reduce the excess to a nominal amount is required. Careful inspection of any vehicle on pick-up is essential.

## Registrations

The WIA is responsible for collection all Event registrations. It will collect registrations via a page on the WIA website and via a printed registration forms that can be filled out and mailed to the WIA office.

The WIA Website shall keep a data base/register to track registrations. Every registered person will be allocated a number.

Each registration will be acknowledged to confirm receipt.

All registered participants will be issued with a name tag to show: NAME, CALLSIGN (if applicable) and the functions for which they are registered. These tags will be easy to read, assisting with security at the venue.

Name tags will be provided by the WIA.

## Publicity

Publicising the WIA Annual Event Weekend can create a good impression for amateur radio in general and the Host Club locally. A Publicity Coordinator should be appointed by the local Club, and in association with the Events Committee:

- ensure a consistent message is issued and that all opportunities for promotion are taken.
- consider targeting all local media using the WIA media kit. The Host Club can gain valuable publicity from this event. Arrangements for the local press, radio and TV services to cover the Event may be possible. The Chairman of the Event Committee needs to be responsible and lead this.
- produce material about the event and the venue for *Amateur Radio* Magazine, the WIA Website and the Weekly WIA News Broadcast in the months leading up to the Event. (Copy for AR must be with the Editor well before each monthly close-off date).

A page on the WIA website shall be used to promote the event and will be updated regularly. The Host club shall assist with the supply of information and photographs to help make the page informative and accurate.

A destination-specific satchel may be given to all participants. The contents will be decided upon by the WIA in consultation with the Event Committee. Local tourist bureaus, manufacturers or service companies may be sources of input. Use the bags to hold any handouts, including the "Open Forum Reports" and the "Program and Information Guide" and any local tourism and publicity brochures, maps of the venue and local area.

## Program & Information Guide

The WIA will produce a “**Program and Information Guide**” for Event participants.

The content of the Guide will be a collaborative effort between the Host Club and the WIA office, and include the following information:

- information about host destination, including local historical information, local features, shopping, food and events (Festivals, carnivals etc)
- visitors centre location
- timezone
- weather information
- event venue details – location, phone numbers, directions etc
- a local area map
- event setup (eg location of information/registration table)
- contact numbers – event venues, organizers and WIA directors
- local Amateur repeater Information
- function venue details
- host Club information
- the Weekend Program – a timetable of each event, marshalling points etc.

## Some Other Items

Talk-in Radio using a Club Call and a specified local VHF or UHF repeater is encouraged. Organise a roster of people to operate this station.

The WIA will obtain a Special Event Callsign for each Annual Event, VK10XWIA, where X is the number of years since 2010, the Centenary of the WIA.

Have someone appointed before the Event as "scribe", to write an article for *Amateur Radio Magazine* from the Host Club point of view. You will probably need an article for your own Club magazine or journal too, make sure you have a designated photographer to take some good quality photographs.

If space allows, and you can find people willing to assist, make provision for displays of local society activities and history, branch activity photographs, historic radios and QSL cards etc.

If you are providing a Partners Program consider having a dry-run a week prior by the people who will be leading the trip. This ensures timing is right and that venues are clear on bookings and our requirements. Paying up front will also save unnecessary delays on the day.

The WIA National Office will need to confirm requirement for the Event to “break even” in terms of cost. As such, all financial information relating to the running of the weekend must be sent through to the Office as soon as possible.

# Venue Proposal WIA Annual Event Weekend

## Checklist

Before submitting your proposal you should ensure it identifies the following;

- 1) Name and contact details of the Club (or group of clubs) and the appropriate contact person.
- 2) Name and contact details of the proposed feature activity, location etc.
- 3) A summary of the locations facilities, including accommodation options, proposed location for the AGM/Open Forum, fees and charges etc.
- 4) Suggested catering meal arrangements.
- 5) Regional attractions that may feature in the Event weekend as venues for activities and tours. Include approximate distance from host venue, any known costs or minimum numbers required.

A summary of the merits of the location you propose for the WIA Annual Event Weekend – your marketing opportunity!