



# Chapter Fly-In Guidelines



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## INTRODUCTION

Since the EAA's very beginnings, Fly-Ins have been one of the most popular and prolific activities of Chapters. They range from the simple pancake breakfast to multi-day events, with a wide variety of activities and attendance in the thousands. Fly-Ins are a primary fund-raising activity for most Chapters and, in many cases, may be the only formal activity that involves the entire membership of a Chapter. The number of Chapter sponsored Fly-Ins each year approaches 1000 in number and literally exposes the EAA and recreational aviation to hundreds of thousands of people. They are a source of tremendous value to the sponsoring Chapters and to the EAA organization as a whole.

Some Chapters have years of experience at staging Fly-Ins, but for newly formed Chapters, Chapters that have been inactive, or when the leadership of a Chapter has changed, the task of planning and executing a Fly-In can be a challenge. Every Chapter is unique and must ultimately form their own plans for their Fly-In based on their location, environment and resources available. However, the planning process itself is made up of common steps that apply to practically every Chapter sponsored Fly-In. The purpose of this handbook is to provide that process for planning a Fly-In along with guidelines and suggestions to assure Chapters enjoy successful and safe events.

**EVENTS** Not all Fly-Ins are created equal. Most Chapter sponsored events revolve around ground-based activities with some of the attendees arriving by aircraft. A few Chapters have the resources and experience to stage more complex events. This Handbook is limited to the simple, most common form of Fly-In Events:

*A Fly-In Event is limited to those scheduled, public events where all flying is in accordance with the normal FAA procedures applicable for the airport hosting the event. Flying activities included are:*

- *Transportation to and from the airport*
- *Young Eagle flights*
- *Poker runs*
- *Spot landing contests*
- *Radio controlled aircraft demonstrations*
- *Tethered hot air balloon rides*
- *Organized fly-bys that do not include any formation flying*
- *Orientation flights*
- *Airplane rides by commercial vendors*
- *Pilot proficiency events*
- *IAC critique/practice sessions*

*In addition to any combination of the above flying activities, a Fly-In may also include ground-based activities and food service.*

*Chapter Fly-In Events may not include any of the following:*

- *Aerobatic demonstrations – Paid or Unpaid*
- *WINGS pilot proficiency flights*
- *Racing of any kind*
- *Flour bombing*
- *Balloon breaking*
- *Ribbon cutting*
- *Simulated aerial combat*
- *Endurance flights involving fuel exhaustion*
- *Fireworks, explosives or pyrotechnics*
- *Night air shows*
- *Air show requiring Waivered Airspace*
- *Anything with respect to waivered airspace*
- *Parachute Jumpers*
- *Sale of Alcoholic Beverages*
- *Wing Walking*

This covers the majority of Fly-Ins sponsored by Chapters. If the event is more complex the Chapter should not begin planning for the event without first contacting the EAA Chapter Office at 920-426-4876.

## **PLANNING THE EVENT**

A Fly-In requires planning efforts by many people over an extended period of time. To be successful, an organized approach with designated responsibilities and a work plan is essential. Decisions and tasks need to be performed in logical order and at the appropriate times. A generic timetable is offered in the appendix of this document, to help demonstrate the timing and organization of activities necessary to plan a Fly-In. It is constructed to represent a six-month planning cycle and is probably the minimum duration most Chapters would want to assume for planning their event. Complexity of the event and the experience of the Chapter will be major factors that determine the total planning time required. This timetable may not include all of the activities needed for some events. Your Fly-In will be unique and this timetable is only a starting point -- your Planning Team should modify it to represent the actual timing and process they will follow.

PLEASE SEE THE GENERIC TIMETABLE IN THE APPENDIX OF THIS HANDBOOK  
We will use this generic timetable as a framework to organize the following discussion in the Handbook.

**I. ESTABLISH OBJECTIVES** The most fundamental step in planning a Fly-In is to determine **WHY** you want to do it. Fly-Ins are labor intensive, they require a major commitment by both the leadership and membership of a Chapter. Defining an objective for your Fly-In creates a purpose for the effort that will help motivate the membership and assure their support. Chapter members are all volunteers. They will work long and hard when they understand the objective of the event. EAA Chapter based Fly-Ins will be found to support a variety of different objectives:

- **FUND-RAISING**—the most common objective of Chapter Fly-In. The event will attract both pilots and the general public and provides the opportunity to sell a product or service – food service being the most common.
- **PROMOTING AVIATION** – a Fly-In generates public interest in the local airport and is an excellent opportunity to showcase aviation to the general public. Providing an activity for pilots and aviation enthusiasts is also a form of promotion for aviation.
- **EDUCATION** – many Chapters will include forums and workshops as a part of their Fly-In. These may be aimed at the aviation community (e.g., WINGS Seminars for pilots, workshops for homebuilders) or special programs for the public to expand their knowledge and appreciation of aviation.
- **ENTERTAINMENT** – many people just enjoy watching airplanes and a Fly-Ins can include organized fly-bys and other simple flying activities. Model flying, kite flying and other ground activities add to the enjoyment of a fly-in – especially for kids.

Reviewing these four broad objectives for Fly-Ins should create the realization that many Fly-Ins actually provide **ALL OF THE ABOVE** in varying degrees. It should also be clear that a Chapter Fly-In could be based on any one of the objectives listed – there is more to Fly-Ins than the classic pancake breakfast. However, a Chapter is usually best served if it focuses on a primary objective for its Fly-In and then determines how the other elements may fit into the total plan.

The four objectives illustrated above are examples. Your Chapter may have other objectives that are more in line with your Chapter's situation. However, there is one objective that should be considered mandatory for every EAA Fly-In: **MEMBERSHIP FUN**. Chapter Fly-Ins must always provide an enjoyable experience for the Chapter members and help grow a positive Chapter spirit. If an underlying base of fun and fellowship is not present in the planning and execution of your Fly-In – stop - you are doing something wrong.

Setting an objective for your event answers **WHY** you want to do it – it also provides a starting point for determining **WHAT** the event will consist of. A Chapter Fly-In aimed at fund-raising will have different features than one designed for education. Clear objectives for your Fly-In will help frequently throughout the planning process to keep everyone on track, to weed out ideas and activities not consistent with the event, and to help generate enthusiasm among the membership.

Two other tasks that complement the Objectives for a Fly-In are:

- **DEFINE YOUR CUSTOMERS** -- what are the target populations you intend to draw from to attend your Fly-In? This relates directly to the objectives established. A Fly-In with a focus on fund-raising will have much greater potential if it is targeted at the general public than just the pilots flying in. Conversely, an event designed for education will be aimed at people in the aviation community and not the general public. Airport promotion needs the general public attendance, but may also include people from local government and planning committees. Only the largest and most diverse Fly-Ins can appeal to everyone. Define whom you want to attend your Fly-In – it will be crucial in the publicity plan to be developed later, but will also help define the scope and appropriate activities that make up your event.
- **DEVELOP A THEME** -- Fly-Ins are public events. Whether aimed just at pilots or intended to attract the general public, a name or theme for your event that can be marketed to catch public attention and interest has great value. It should be consistent with the overall objective and format of the Fly-In, with one exception: unless a recognized cause is clearly identified, fund-raising is strictly an internal objective and obviously not a basis for a Fly-In's theme. Two names we are all familiar with are AirVenture and Sun 'n Fun. They are both an event name and also suggest a theme for the events. Names like Planes 'n Pancakes, Wings 'n Wheels or Airport "Fun Day", each suggest something about the event and have more "marketing" value than EAA Chapter XYZ Fly-In. Choose your name or theme with care. If it is good and effective, you will want to use it year after year to take advantage of the name recognition.

Establishing the objectives, customers and theme for a Fly-In are critical tasks and the above discussion may suggest a time consuming effort. A focused Board meeting could accomplish all of the elements described above – the task is to determine **WHY** you want to do a Fly-In and for **WHO**, not how. This is logical task for the Chapter Board of Directors to handle. Because a Fly-In will require a major effort by the membership, the Board should take time to understand how the event fits into the overall flow of Chapter activities and helps accomplish the Chapter's goals.

**II. FORM THE PLANNING TEAM** The next step in planning a Fly-In is to appoint a team responsible for the planning and execution of the event. Once the Chapter's Board has determined the desire to hold a Fly-In, a Chairperson should be appointed. This is an important position and a person with good organizational abilities, leadership, experience and an interest in the event should be selected. This position should not be filled by an open volunteer from the ranks of the membership – recruit the best person available based on skills and abilities. The Fly-In Chairperson, and the Team members, do not have to be EAA Chapter Officers or Directors. This is an excellent opportunity to involve more of the membership and develop future leaders.

The chairperson will require help. A team could be appointed by the Board, but it is usually more desirable to charge the Chairperson with defining the positions needed and making the selections – building his or her own team is the foundation of effectiveness. As the various planning activities and elements of a Fly-In are discussed in the Handbook, many of the key positions on a Fly-In Team will be apparent. However, the Fly-In Team's final structure should be determined by the particular needs of the Chapter's specific event.

Once the Fly-In Chairperson is in place, he or she should be empowered by the Chapter Board of Director's to be fully responsible for the planning and execution of the Fly-In. The Board will have established the primary objectives for the event, which should be shared with the Team at the outset. The Board's ongoing role is to integrate the Fly-In and its requirements for Chapter resources with other Chapter programs and activities – not to plan the event. A regular reporting schedule with the Board should be established for follow-up and support, but the Fly-In Chairperson and the team should be the focal point for planning the event. The Fly-In Chairperson should be authorized to make decisions and spend money. Do not allow parallel actions by other EAA Chapter Officers or Directors confuse or undermine the Team's authority and responsibility. For example, if an outside group or person approaches the Chapter President with an inquiry about the Fly-In, they should be directed to the Chairperson for handling. The Chairperson should be the single point of contact for all Fly-In related decisions.

**III. ESTABLISH A DATE AND PLANNING TIMETABLE** Setting a date for your Fly-In is not a trivial task. Picking a date that does not conflict with other Fly-Ins in your region or other public events requires research and should be done as far in advance of the event as practical. Several points must be considered:

- Check the online EAA Calendar of Events (<http://www.eaa.org/calendar/>) for the previous year to determine what events were held by nearby Chapters and when. If another Chapter in the region traditionally holds a Fly-In on a given date that would be a poor choice – competing with other Chapter Fly-Ins is non-productive.
- Are there other public events in the community that might conflict with your event? This is somewhat dependent on the objectives and target population for your event. A local Art Fair would not affect a Fly-In that is directed toward education and the aviation community. Community events may also be an opportunity – many Chapters coordinate their Fly-In with a local festival or other activity. This is dependent on many local conditions – nature of the event, location of the airport, cooperativeness of sponsors and the date itself.
- In some regions, weather is a minor factor for Fly-In planning. However, most Chapters must consider time frames for their event in which favorable weather is most probable. With access to good facilities, a Fly-In can be designed to be an all-weather event – except for the people that would actually fly in. Chapters have a successful Fly-Ins on rainy days with no aircraft flying in, but selecting a date with probable good weather should be the goal.
- Lead-time will also affect the selection of the Fly-In date. The duration of the planning process for a Fly-In will vary with the scope and complexity of the event. For a small, simple Chapter-based Fly-In only a few months would be required, driven primarily by the lead-times for publicity in aviation periodicals – typically three to five months. Larger Fly-Ins that involve the participation of other organizations could take as long as a year due to the negotiations and coordination involved. When the planning process was initiated can have a major bearing on the scope and final timing of the event.

Experience shows that the sooner a date is selected for a Fly-In the better. It makes the Fly-In a reality, establishes a commitment and triggers enthusiasm within the membership.

At this point the Planning Team should also establish their overall Planning Timetable. Creating the Timetable is a powerful exercise. It forces the Planning Team to thoughtfully consider all the decisions and tasks necessary to accomplish the Fly-In and when they should occur. The generic timetable provided in the appendix of this Handbook is a good start, but the Planning Team must determine the specific activities and timing necessary to plan your event.

Regular reviews with the Board of Director's to report progress should be built into the timetable. The timetable is a good tool to use for these reviews, and with the membership. It focuses attention on "what we are currently working on" and "where we are going".

**IV. CONFIRMATION WITH THE AIRPORT MANAGER** Good relations with the Airport Manager are an essential ingredient for a successful Fly-In. This is a mandatory partnership that should be established at the beginning of the planning process. A walking tour of the airport grounds with the Airport Manager to survey the grounds and facilities involved in the Fly-In – parking areas, operating areas, airport security, safety concerns – is recommended. Once approval is secured a letter of intent documenting the Chapter's overall Fly-In plans should be written and sent to the Airport Manager. Invite the Airport Manager, or his representative, to attend planning meetings and include him in the distribution of meeting minutes.

This step of the process should include a review of applicable rules, regulations and ordinances relative to the airport and any impact they may have on the Fly-In and any potential activities. Special attention should be given to any regulations regarding commercial activities on the airport property. Usually such regulations will not apply to a Fly-In or the Airport Manager will waive them for the event. Chapter Fly-Ins cannot be conducted if they require waived airspace from the FAA. However, if the Fly-In will be held at a controlled airport a meeting should be held with the Tower Manager to determine Air Traffic Control requirements.

**V. CONFIRM CO-SPONSORS** Chapters hold very few Fly-Ins without the assistance and cooperation of other parties. Clearly the Airport Manager must be involved and may participate as a co-sponsor. Other airport groups may also be involved or local civic groups. These relationships are important and must be clearly defined. Co-sponsors should be established as soon as practical in the planning for a Fly-In. They will have a role in defining the overall character of the event and will contribute experience and resources that help facilitate both the planning and execution.

If a group or individual is contributing resources and is invited to be an active member of the planning process, their role is a co-sponsor and they potentially share the legal and financial responsibility for the event. Documenting the relationship and roles of all co-sponsors for the Fly-In is strongly recommended. This can be accomplished if good minutes are taken at every planning meeting and are distributed to all the co-sponsors. The minutes should clearly reflect all decisions and commitments made and the parties present at each meeting. Insurance carried by each co-sponsor must be discussed and understood.

Vendors and other groups or individuals invited to have a role in the Fly-In, but not involved in the planning and definition of the event are classified as participants. They do not share in the legal or

financial responsibility for the Fly-In. Each participant must have their own liability coverage and the Chapter Planning Team should ask for copies of their policy for confirmation.

Participants should be solicited early in the planning timeline. Vendors will book events well in advance and must be approached early to assure their availability. Other groups, such as the CAP, will need substantial lead-time to plan for participation in your event. Identifying and committing participants can consume considerable time and effort and should be reflected as a long lead-time element on the planning timetable. A good practice is to send a confirmation letter to each participant, which acknowledges their intent to participation in your event, the times and dates, and the role or services they will be providing.

Charging vendors a set-up fee or percentage is discretionary. Vendors help attract people to your event which has value to the Chapter and many will make a donation to the Chapter voluntarily if they have a good day. Conversely, the Fly-In and its publicity provide a market for the vendors to do business and that has value to the vendors. The Planning Team must establish a policy that is appropriate for your event and Sponsors.

Local charitable and service organizations should be considered as co-sponsors or participants where appropriate. This is an excellent means to bring in resources to help support your event and broaden the exposure of the airport and aviation. For example, if a local Church group is included to provide a lunch, your event will automatically gain attendees from that Church's congregation. This is a "win-win" strategy – especially for small Chapters than may have limited manpower.

**VI. DEFINE SCOPE AND ACTIVITIES** This STEP in the planning process is where the conceptual ideas and framing for the Fly-In are finalized. The Planning Team should be able to describe all of the following elements of the planned Fly-In:

- Date and location
- Primary objective – reason for holding the event
- Secondary objectives – additional results expected
- Target population – what kind of people and groups are we trying to attract
- Name all co-sponsors – including their roles and contributions
- Describe all activities to be offered – meals, fly-bys, aircraft judging, etc
- Name all vendors and other groups that will be participating

This step ends the developmental phase of planning. It is an important milestone to observe because it signifies the start of implementation planning – it is time for the Team to stop inventing. This is an excellent point to have a major briefing with the Chapter membership. The Team can describe clearly what the Fly-In is going to be, help the membership understand its role and contribution to the Chapter and generate enthusiasm. They will soon be called on to volunteer in force to help make it happen – this is a good point to be building their motivation.

**VII. ESTABLISH FINAL BUDGET** Fly-Ins cost money: publicity, supplies, rentals, permits, etc. The Planning Team should be identifying the costs associated with the Fly-In and by the time the scope and activities are defined have developed an estimated budget. This is a crucial point in planning. Clearly only estimates are available, but the Planning Team and the Chapter Leadership need to assess the financial outlook for the event. If expenses cannot be recovered, either the plan (costs) must be scaled back or revenues (fees, prices, attendance) must be increased. There are many uncertainties that will affect the final outcome, but a projection of the expected financial results of the Fly-In is necessary to responsibly go forward.

Build the budget around two basic categories: fixed and variable expenses. Items like publicity and rentals are fixed and cannot be varied once the basic Fly-In Plan is committed. Other items such as food can be variable – some last minute judgment can be used for purchases based on weather reports and frequently, unopened food items may be returned if not required. Unless a grant or donation has been pledged, all revenues are variable. However, this is where the business judgment of the Planning Team comes into play – how confident are they the Fly-In activities and publicity will attract the public.

Once the Fly-In budget is determined, the Fly-In Chairperson and others on the Planning Team should be authorized to make commitments and spend money. Requiring each expenditure to be processed through the Chapter Treasurer and/or approved by the Board is inconvenient and inefficient. As long as the expenditures they make are consistent with the approved budget, they should have the freedom to do their job.

**VIII. DEVELOP PUBLICITY PLAN** No one will come to your Fly-In if they don't know about it. A good publicity plan will make the difference between a successful Fly-In and a failure. As discussed earlier, each Fly-In should be designed to attract a specific target population based on the objectives of the Fly-In and the type of activities provided. Since Fly-Ins are an aviation event, pilots in the region are always part of that population and the Publicity Plan should include specific steps to notify and attract them.

Most aviation-oriented periodicals include a Calendar of Events and will publish a complimentary notice of your Fly-In. This is only one of several methods to notify pilots and the public of your event, but it must be used early in the process. Publishing schedules require several months of lead-time from the receipt of your notice until it will appear in print. Submitting these notices as early as possible will result in its appearance in several editions of the magazine and gain more exposure for your event.

These notices will be brief due to space limitations in most magazines, so only the most basic facts about your Fly-In will be needed – name, date, sponsor (your Chapter) and contact information. While much planning may remain to define and finalize your plans, once the above information is established, the notices should be submitted.

In addition to printed publications be sure to take advantage of online Calendar of Events. EAA's calendar is a must and can be found on the web at: <http://www.eaa.org/calendar/>. Take advantage of your local convention and visitor's websites, community calendars, and local newspaper listings as well.

At least three additional methods of publicizing a Fly-In to pilots can also be used:

- Aviation web pages – many web pages will carry a Calendar of Events. Use a search engine to locate those that would be relevant to your region.
- Regional EAA Chapters and Members – the EAA Chapter Office will supply names and addresses of EAA Members and EAA Chapters in your area on request. A direct mailing will let this highly interested group of people know about your event. Many EAA Chapters carry a calendar in their newsletters and websites of Fly-Ins scheduled for their region – let them know. By the same token, your Chapter should consider including a similar calendar in your newsletter and website as a reciprocal courtesy.
- Airport Flyers – obtain an airport directory for your State. It will list the FBOs and Flight Schools based at each airport. Mailing a flyer to each location for posting on their bulletin boards will expose your event to many pilots. Time this mailing for 4-6 weeks prior to the event. Too soon and the flyer may be taken down before your event occurs. Too late and its exposure time will be limited.

Other publicity initiatives will be needed to reach the non-aviation public if they are part of the population you want to attract:

- Paid advertisements – placing an advertisement in local newspapers, shopping guides and other publications will reach many people. However, this can be expensive and should be planned as a budget item to assure the event can afford this type of publicity.
- Public Service Announcements – most radio stations and many TV stations offer free public service announcements for non-profit and charitable groups.
- Direct Media Contacts – seek out reporters that may be interested in aviation or your event and encourage them to write an article.
- Bulletin Board Blitzes – encourage Chapter members to post flyers for your event on bulletin boards wherever they go: stores, clubs, Churches, schools, work lunchrooms, etc.

Publicity will require considerable effort to generate flyers, news releases, mailings, etc., and is one of the larger fixed expenses for a Fly-In. It is also an activity that has critical timing with much of the effort concentrated in the last two or three weeks before the event. The EAA Chapter Office will furnish a resource paper titled: Publicity – Key to your Chapter's Success. It goes into greater detail on the details and steps to publicize a Chapter event. Members of the Planning Team responsible for publicity should read it.

**IX. FACILITIES COMMITTED** Chapters that own a hanger or meeting hall may be positioned to host a Fly-In totally from their own facility. However, many Chapters depend on the use of borrowed or rented hangers and buildings to house activities. Whether private individuals, businesses or the FBO own these facilities, the Planning Team must approach the owners in a timely fashion, confirm the facilities can be used for the event, and agree to any terms. Two to three months of lead-time is recommended for this activity. This gives the owners sufficient time to make their own plans for vacating the facilities during the Fly-In. It also allows ample time to develop specific plans for moving aircraft from occupied hangers, the logistics and set-up of equipment, and security.

Clearance to use airport property for aircraft parking and other related Fly-In activities should be confirmed at this time. The same is true if off-airport space is to be used for car parking, etc. This is another area where letters to the property owners that confirm the time and date of the Fly-In, the purposes their building or space will be used for and thanking them for their support is advised.

The Team should also assess support facilities that will be required. Portable toilets and trash collection equipment needs should be defined and reservations placed. Do not forget to make accommodations for handicapped guests.

**X. OBTAIN CHAPTER EVENT INSURANCE** Fly-Ins create a potential risk for accidents and legal action. This risk applies not only to the sponsoring Chapter, but also includes the national EAA organization and any other groups that are co-sponsors of your event. The EAA has established a liability insurance program to provide protection for Chapter activities including Fly-Ins. Payment of the annual fee in December activates this mandatory coverage each year for a Chapter.

To ensure that Fly-Ins sponsored by Chapters are compatible with the terms of the overall EAA Policy, it is necessary to submit an *EAA Chapter Event Notice Form* to the EAA Risk Management Office for review. This should be submitted at least 30 days before the event. If the planned Fly-In is within the guidelines of the EAA Chapter Insurance Program, a *Certificate of Insurance* can be issued to the Chapter, upon request. If there are issues, the Planning Team can work with the EAA Risk Management Office for resolution. This is the timeframe to assure your event will be covered – not in the last few days before it is scheduled to happen. An EAA Chapter Event Notice Form is found on the web at <http://www.eaa.org/apps/insurance/> .

**XI. OBTAIN PERMITS** In most states; a temporary food license or permit must be obtained from the local Health Department to serve food to the public. Training in food preparation safety may also be required. These are not difficult requirements to meet, but are mandatory if the Chapter is to provide food service. Depending on the activities involved, other permits may also be required and the Planning Team must make a conscious effort to determine what they are and obtain them before the event. The embarrassment and bad-will generated if your Fly-In was closed down because it did not have a proper permit would be tremendous.

**XII. DEFINE OPERATING PLAN** There are many very specific tasks and responsibilities that must be defined for the actual execution of a Fly-In. The Operating Plan is a document prepared to specifically identify all key tasks, assure they are integrated and furnish all the key volunteers with a common plan for getting the job done. For example, it does not have to be a work-breakdown on how to empty garbage containers, but it does need identify how garbage will be handled and who is responsible. Every Fly-In is unique so the following work plan elements are only generic, but they should illustrate what needs to be compiled:

- Overall Event Schedule
- Communication plan
  - Phone numbers [cell phones] of all key personnel
  - Radio frequencies for ground communication
  - Emergency phone numbers
- Safety
  - List and location of safety equipment [fire extinguishers, first aid kit, etc.]
  - Emergency services on-site and their locations [map]
  - Name of Safety Officer and contact number/frequency
- Administrative
  - List of all permits required and where they will be located
  - Name of person(s) responsible to obtain permits
  - Submission of the Event Notice form for the chapter insurance
- Set-Up Plan
  - Starting time and date
  - List/description of set-ups to be done
  - Location of special equipment or supplies needed
  - Name of person in charge of each area
- Airplane Parking
  - Description of ground support to be provided for arriving and departing aircraft
  - How aircraft will be routed depending on active runways [map]
  - Where aircraft will be parked – will they be “tailed” [map]
  - Size of crews needed and how many
  - Signs and equipment required
  - Name of the person in charge
- Car Parking
  - Where cars will be parked [map]
  - Routes in and out of the parking areas [map]
  - Level of control to be provided – will local Police or Sheriff assistance be provided
  - Size of crews needed and how many
  - Signs and equipment required
  - Name of the person in charge
- Crowd Management
  - Safety zones and prohibited areas [map]
  - Signs and equipment required
  - Number and location of toilets
  - Name of person in charge
- Activities List – including vendors
  - Description of each activity
  - Schedule

- Location and facilities required [map]
- Size of crews needed and how many [for Chapter supported activities]
- Name of the person in charge for each activity – including vendors
- Name of overall coordinator
- Teardown and clean-up plan
  - List/description of each teardown to be done
  - Time for each tear-down
  - Disposition of non-Chapter owned equipment
  - Name of person in charge of each area

The above template for an Operating Plan undoubtedly appears detailed and tedious. Frankly, many Chapters probably hold Fly-Ins regularly without writing down any formal plan – experience and inefficiency will get the job done. However, “winging it” is the hard way. If the Planning Team builds the Operating Plan over a period of time, as the details of the Fly-In are determined, the task will be easy and yield many benefits:

- Completeness – the Operating Plan helps assure all the bases are covered and no tasks left undefined
- Integration – everything is coordinated and fits together
- Communication – everyone knows who is in charge and what needs to be done
- Staffing – the number of volunteers required from the Chapter is well-defined and easily coordinated
- Effectiveness – volunteers always perform better when the job is well defined and they can see what needs to be done

Another value of a well-developed Operating Plan is it streamlines the planning and preparation for future Fly-Ins. With a few years of experience and refinement, the document becomes standardized and makes it much easier for the Chapter to hold successful Fly-Ins as the membership and leadership changes.

**XIII. SETUP** Even the simplest of Fly-Ins require some advance set-up before the event. Checking equipment, positioning signs, stocking supplies and making one final review of the plan assures that all elements are covered. This is the time to answer questions like: “where does the xxxxxx go?” or “who is handling yyyyyy?” When planes are landing and people are lining up for pancakes is not the time to be dealing with unplanned details and still be setting up equipment. Set-up day gives the Team Leaders a chance to prepare their areas without time pressure and allows the volunteer workers to familiarize themselves with their upcoming jobs. The Operating Plan is the guide for this day. Be sure to include the set-up dates when applying for the Event Insurance.

**XIV. EXECUTION** On a given day, whether the planning is finished or not, your Fly-In will occur. Hopefully, all jobs have been identified, they are staffed with people that know what to do, the weather is good and the airplanes and people come. Many members of the Planning Team will probably be in charge of specific activities, but the Chairperson should avoid being committed to any specific task. Being able to circulate among the volunteers to trouble-shoot, get them help or relief if needed and just being visible is an important function and contributes greatly to a well-run, happy Fly-In. Progress reports to the volunteers is a means to keep enthusiasm up, e.g., how many airplanes have arrived, how many breakfasts served, etc. have much value.

**XV. CLEAN-UP** An airport is a very lonely place once your Fly-In is over, everyone has gone home . . . and there are still clean-up chores to do. Informally leaving this part of the Fly-In workload to the hardy few that stay till the end is inefficient and unfair. Some parts of clean-up can be made integral to the responsibilities of the crews manning various activities – the car parking crew can collect signs and barriers when they are done, the last kitchen crew can clean the grills, etc. Other tasks must wait until the activities and guests are gone. These should be clearly defined and a specific crew assigned for the job. This is an area that should be included very clearly in the overall operating plan. Be sure to include the teardown dates when applying for the Event Insurance.

## **CONTINGENCY PLANNING**

What if it rains on the day of your event? What if your marketing is not as effective as anticipated and attendance is much less than planned? There are many uncertainties that affect the final success or failure of a Fly-In and your event could turn out different than planned. Fortunately, most failures relative to a Fly-In result in disappointment or inconveniences – they are undesirable, but not the end of the world. As a Chapter's plans for a Fly-In are developed, it is prudent to regularly consider elements where something might go wrong and build contingencies into the total plan to minimize the risk or consequences. Some cases to consider:

- WEATHER – Poor weather does not mean a Fly-In will not occur. Most Fly-Ins are attended by more people that drive in rather than fly. If sufficient shelter is available, a pancake breakfast or other meal service and activities can still be very successful. Assess how weatherproof your event will be. If it starts to rain during the event, everyone will want to get under shelter – if there is reasonable space available, they will stay. Evaluate your car parking areas. While the parking area itself may be stable following a rainfall, the entrance and exit areas may become impassible after a couple hundred cars have passed. Requiring the services of a tow truck to get cars out of the parking area is embarrassing – and expensive. In general, think your way through what you will do if it rains to minimize the impact.
- FINANCIAL LOSS – If attendance at your Fly-In is less than expected, the Chapter may lose money on the event. This risk can be minimized with good planning. When the Fly-In budget was established, some costs were identified as fixed and others variable. The secret is to make as many costs variable as possible and not commit money for fixed costs until necessary. The amount of food supplies purchased can be adjusted in the last day before the event based on the weather forecast. If the manpower is available and sources nearby, a purchasing crew can even make last minute buys during the event based on actual attendance. Some suppliers will accept unopened food, if returned in a specific timeframe, which can reduce the cost of leftover inventory. Every event will have different conditions, but time spent on making the plan flexible to avoid a potential loss is very worthwhile.
- TOO MUCH SUCCESS – What if more people show up than anticipated? Include a plan for overflow airplane and car parking. Have a plan to purchase more food or other supplies, if needed, with enough lead-time to have them on-hand before the original purchase runs out. Even a Fly-In Team with years of experience can sometimes be surprised with more success than expected – evaluate the Operating Plan to determine what will be done if this good problem occurs.

## **FLY-IN SAFETY**

An accident is the worst possible thing that could happen at a Fly-In. Unfortunately, even the best of planning and preparation cannot assure one will not occur. However, many specific actions can be taken to help prevent an accident at your event, starting with the appointment of a Safety Officer as an integral part of the Planning Team. When someone has the responsibility of continually reviewing the plans for the Fly-In as they are developed, activities and situations that may create unsafe conditions can frequently be avoided. In addition, the Safety Officer can identify areas where safety may be an issue during the development of the Fly-In plan and include steps to control the exposure. The Safety Officer should have the freedom to move about the entire site of the event and to work independently. The Safety officer should be a knowledgeable individual with the authority to make decisions “on the spot” if a safety problem is found.

**PREVENTION** There are at least three ways that accidents can be prevented: eliminate the hazard, make people aware of it, and/or implement some form of positive control. The following are some of the key areas where the Fly-In Planning Team and the Safety Officer should pay special attention:

- **AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS** – All personnel assisting the ground flow of aircraft should wear orange safety vests and use orange batons or paddles. Each person should be briefed on the overall flow plan for arriving and departing aircraft and be trained in appropriate signaling procedures. A standardized set of signals and procedures for directing aircraft ground operations is included in the appendix. If every member of the team directing aircraft is trained in these procedures, they will be safer and the pilots will have a better understanding of what to do. Wing-walkers for taxiing aircraft are essential on a crowded flight line. Keeping people separated from moving aircraft and propellers is the most important job on the airport. Very few of the general public, especially children, know what “clear!” means.
- **SIGNS** -- Post conspicuous signs that outline basic safety cautions for the public (an example is included in the appendix). If a public address system is in use during the event, periodic announcements regarding the safety rules should be made. Most importantly, every Chapter member regardless of their job, should be aware of the safety rules and alert to problems when visiting or working on the flight line.
- **CAR PARKING** – More people drive to a Fly-In than fly. The flow of vehicles into the airport property and parking areas must be planned to minimize traffic conflicts. Avoid pedestrian traffic across streets or roads whenever possible. Well-placed signs directing cars and people help significantly to reduce accidents. Usually, the traffic flow to and from a Fly-In is distributed over several hours and does not cause congestion, but, if a major street or road is involved in the traffic flow, consider requesting the assistance of the local police or sheriff to direct traffic. A courtesy call to the police or sheriff to advise them of your plans should be made.

- WALKING SURFACES – Thoroughly survey all of the airport property for holes, tripping and slipping hazards – everywhere people will be walking. Inspect any stairs or platforms people may climb on. Eliminate them if possible, otherwise make sure they are sound and have secure handrails. Do not route hoses or extension cords across any area where people will be walking. This especially includes the work areas for your volunteers.
- EQUIPMENT CONDITION AND OPERATION – Inspect all of the equipment the volunteers and guests will be using. This includes tables, chairs, benches, etc. Look for frayed or ungrounded power cords. Make sure all heat shields are in place on cooking equipment. All volunteers should be trained on the equipment they are using – from coffee pots to grills to golf carts. Check fire extinguishers and first aid kits and have them placed in a designated place known to all crews.

**PREPAREDNESS** If an accident occurs, Fly-In personnel must be prepared to summon emergency services at once. Large events may choose to have emergency equipment (Fire and Ambulance) already on the field. The Safety Officer and Team Leaders should have cell phones or radios to enable immediate communication if there is an accident.

In addition to notifying emergency personnel, please notify the EAA Risk Management Dept. promptly.

EAA Risk Management Department	920/426-4822 - Office
	920/379-4822 - Cell
EAA Chapter Manager	920/426-5914

Reminder – In case of an Incident or Accident:

If you should have an incident at your EAA Chapter sponsored event, please contact EAA Risk Management as soon as possible with the following information:

- Date, time & location of the incident
- Names, addresses & telephone contact numbers for all injured persons
- Names, addresses & telephone contact numbers for all witnesses to the incident
- Make sure immediate first aid and qualified medical personnel are notified of any injury. Protect damaged property from any further damage.
- Have someone take immediate photographs of the incident if possible.
- Do not discuss the facts leading up to the incident with the news media at any time
- Report incident to local FAA office or other government authority if applicable

EAA Risk Management Emergency Contacts:

(920) 426-4822 (M-F 8:15 AM to 5:00 PM) or (920) 379-4822 (cell): Karen Kryzaniak  
 (920) 426-6106: Insurance Administrator

Discuss this protocol ahead of time with your key Fly-In personnel. Being prepared to respond quickly and effectively if an accident occurs is a critical responsibility of the entire team.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

Once the Fly-In is over, the airport is cleaned up and the last volunteer has gone home, there are still a few chores left to do:

- **THANK THE VOLUNTEERS** The Chapter Leadership should make special effort to acknowledge the efforts of all the members that worked to make the Fly-In a success. The Planning Team should be complimented by name for their effort and broader thanks extended to the total membership. This should appear in the Chapter Newsletter and be a point of discussion at the Chapter meeting following the event. Also make a point of reviewing the original objectives of the event and summarize how well they were met. The sense of accomplishment from meeting the Fly-In Objectives will give the volunteers an additional reward.
- **THANK YOUR CO-SPONSORS AND PARTICIPANTS** Letters to each co-sponsor summarizing the success of the Fly-In and stating an appreciation of their support and involvement should be mailed promptly after the event. A letter thanking participants for their support should also be sent. These letters are not only gestures of courtesy; they also start the process to bring the people back to your event next year.
- **DEBRIEF THE TEAM** While the event is still fresh in people's minds, hold a debriefing session to evaluate how the event turned out. Three simple questions are good framing for this meeting:
  - What worked?
  - What didn't work?
  - What should we do different next year?

This is valuable information and is an objective way to capture and forward experience to the next Planning Team. Copies of the Operating plan and other documents that help define how the event was planned and the details of execution should be organized for the future.

## **SUMMARY**

Often, the only live exposure the media and general public have to Recreational and General Aviation is at a local Fly-In. Your event will help define the image of the entire aviation community. The record for EAA Chapter Fly-Ins is outstanding. We have a reputation for providing safe, clean, well-organized and FUN events. A Chapter sponsored Fly-In can be one of the most visible, profitable and rewarding of EAA activities. It can support Chapter financial needs, serve the aviation community and also strengthen Chapter spirit and camaraderie.

A Chapter Fly-In requires much work and cooperation both within the Chapter and with other organizations. The key elements that are the foundation of a successful Fly-In are:

- Good Planning
- Teamwork
- Safety

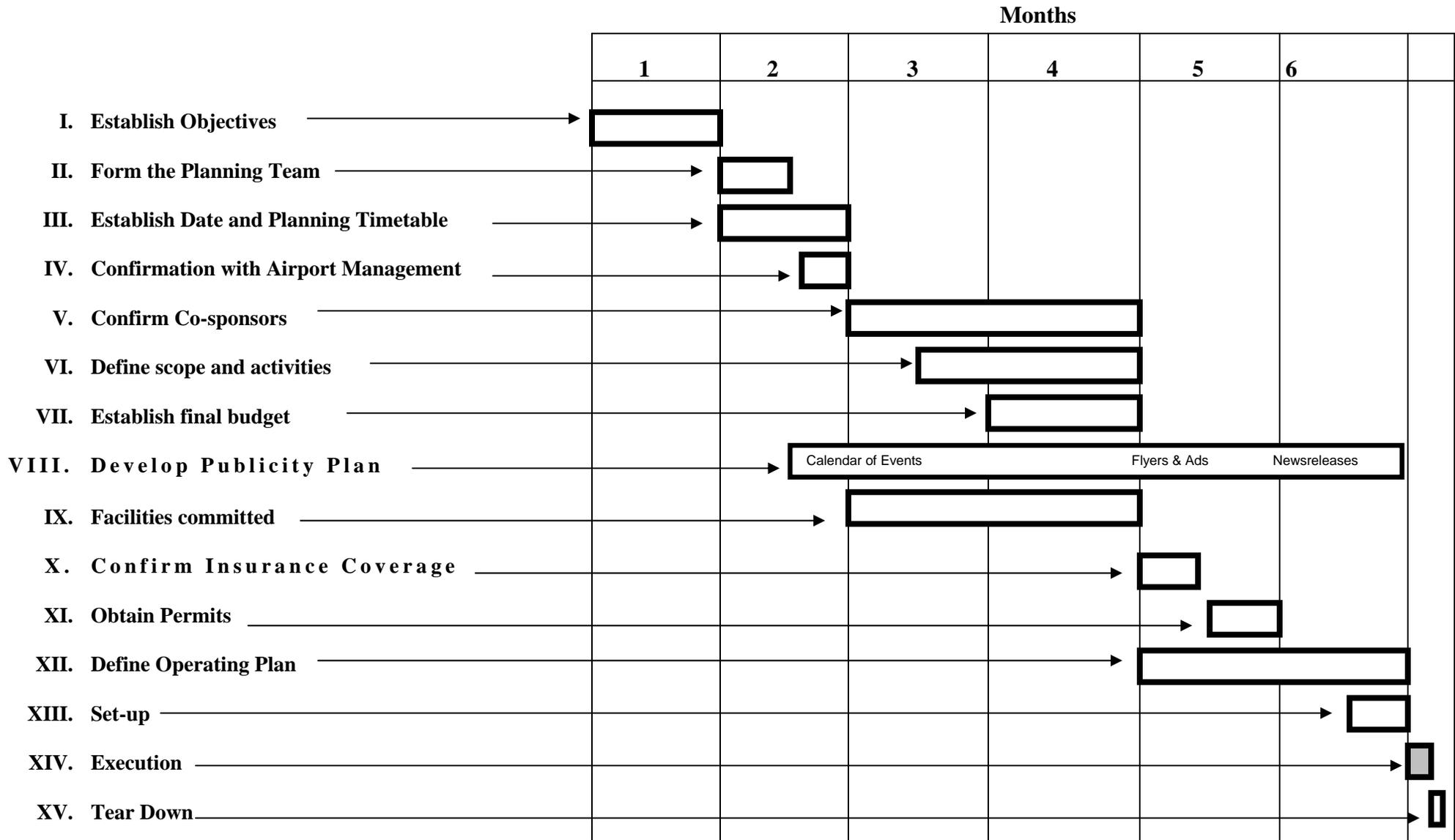
This Handbook provides a planning template and guidelines to help a Chapter sponsor a Fly-In that should be successful and fun. Since every Chapter is unique, this Handbook can only provide a guide to your successful Fly-In – the specific ideas that will work for your Chapter and co-sponsor are in the minds of your leadership and Planning Team.

Good Luck

# *APPENDIX*

Generic Timetable  
Standard Hand Signals for Directing Aircraft

# GENERIC FLY-IN PLANNING CALENDAR



# Hand Signals

Taken from section 4-3-25 of the Aeronautical Information Manual

FIG 4-3-7

Signalman Directs Towing

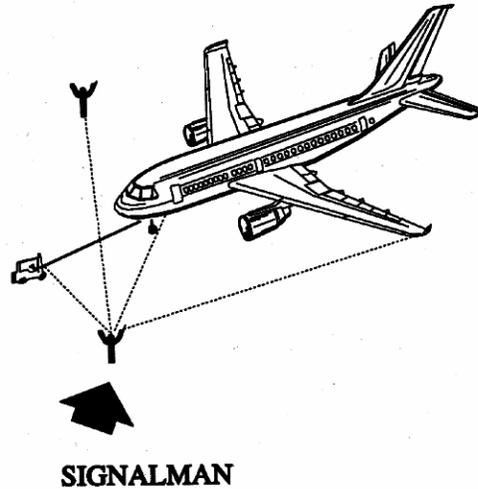
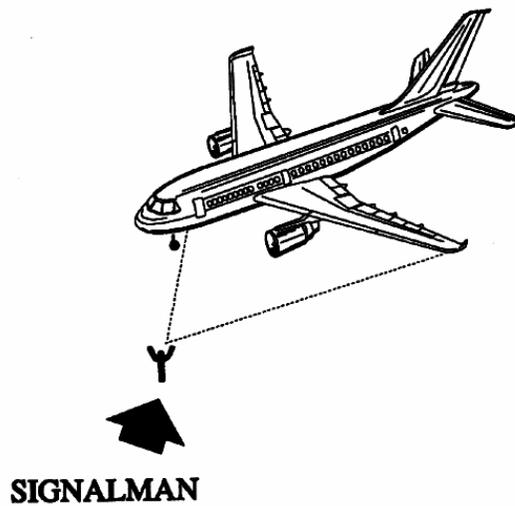


FIG 4-3-8

Signalman's Position



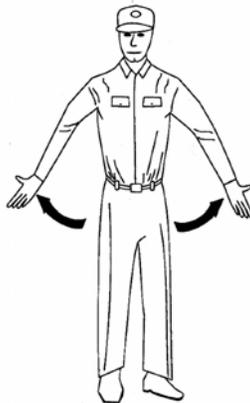
*FIG 4-3-9*  
**All Clear**  
**(O.K.)**



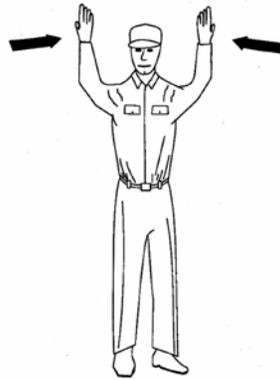
*FIG 4-3-10*  
**Start Engine**



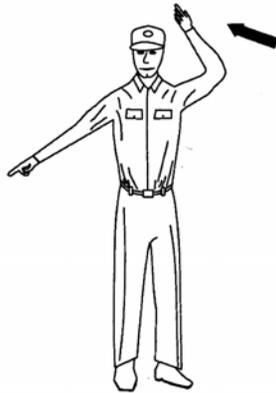
*FIG 4-3-11*  
**Pull Chocks**



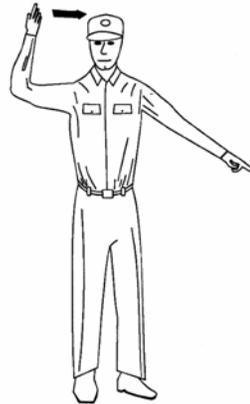
*FIG 4-3-12*  
**Proceed Straight Ahead**



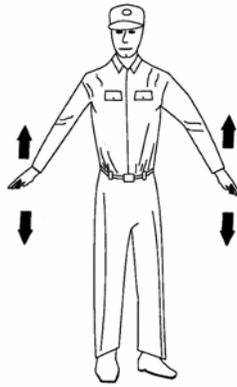
*FIG 4-3-13*  
**Left Turn**



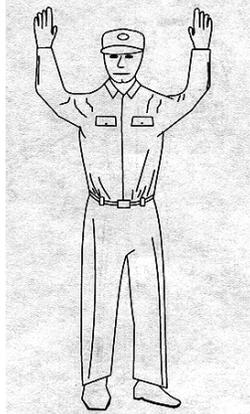
*FIG 4-3-14*  
**Right Turn**



*FIG 4-3-15*  
**Slow Down**



*FIG 4-3-16*  
**Flagman Directs Pilot**



*FIG 4-3-17*  
**Insert Chocks**



*FIG 4-3-18*  
**Cut Engines**



*FIG 4-3-19*  
**Night Operation**



Use same hand movements  
as day operation

*FIG 4-3-20*  
**Stop**



NOTES: