

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION OF UNITED STATES AIR FORCE MARATHON DEPLOYED LOCATION RACES

The intent of this paper is to provide the basic guidelines to conduct a United States Air Force Marathon sanctioned race in deployed locations, allowing troops assigned to these theaters to participate in this prestigious annual Air Force event.

To be recognized as a United States Air Force Marathon event, the deployed location course must be either a 10K, half marathon (13.1 miles) or a full marathon (26.2 miles). The race courses may offer multiple types of races, along with a 4-person relay if running a full marathon. Remember, the more variations added to your race, the more volunteers and materials you will need to support it. Deployed location races will be conducted on courses that are not USA Track and Field certified. Completion of a United States Air Force Marathon sanctioned deployed location race will not qualify the participants for any other races, including the Boston Marathon. To be considered a finisher at the deployed location, the participant must complete the race. The deployed airman's originating MAJCOMs will receive credit toward the USAF Marathon MAJCOM Challenge Traveling Trophy for their participation in a deployed location race.

To maintain the world class status of the United States Air Force Marathon, it is imperative that participating deployed locations adhere strictly to these basic guidelines. Deployed locations may provide race enhancements beyond the minimum listed below.

STAFFING AND COORDINATION

- Each approved deployed location race will have a POC who will coordinate their requirements through HQ AFMC/A1SK. The deployed location POC will be responsible for the overall operation within their country and following these guidelines.
- Each deployed location race should have a marathon committee comprised of representatives from the following functional areas: security forces, medical, transportation, civil engineering, communications, services, and public affairs. Having these individuals working with you in advance will ensure the success of your event.

RACE TITLE

- The title for deployed locations will be "United States Air Force Marathon". The deployed location country name ONLY will be added at the end in parenthesis, i.e. "United States Air Force Marathon (Iraq)".

RACE DATES/TIMES/DURATION

- To be sanctioned as a United States Air Force Marathon deployed location race, your race must be conducted within the time period of 15 through 30 September 2008.
- During hot weather, races should be scheduled in the early morning or evening hours.
- Full marathons (26.2 miles) will keep the course open until the last runner crosses the finish line, but not longer than 7 hours. Half marathons (13.1 miles) will keep the course open until the last runner crosses the finish line, but no longer than 3.5 hours. Any runners remaining on the course after the maximum time limit will be picked up and

returned to the finish area. These individuals will be considered as not completing the course and are not entitled to the finisher's medal.

T-SHIRTS/FINISHER MEDALS/BIBS/AWARDS

- Official medals and shirts for this year's race will be provided. Quantities will be based upon projected participation numbers provided by your location.
- Bibs and safety pins will also be provided. If the deployed location is including a relay race, blank bibs will be included in the shipment. Each relay bibs will be marked with the same number for each team member will need to be utilized and for the back of the runner's shirt a bib will need the wording "RELAY" added. Four "RELAY" bibs per team will need to be produced.
- Awards will be provided for the top male and female finishers.

MARKETING/SPONSORSHIP

Deployed locations are authorized to use the official United States Air Force Marathon logos and graphic materials. The official logos will not be altered in any manner. Materials may be downloaded from the USAF Marathon website, www.usafmarathon.com under the Air Force Active Duty link including:

- Printable race registration form
- A flyer with a customizable area for date/time/location of your race will be available for download on the marathon web site as well and maybe used to promote your race within theater.
- All promotional materials associated with the United States Air Force Marathon and all associated deployed location races will provide recognition of the event's presenting sponsors Northrop Grumman and USAA-, along with required disclaimer – "No Federal Endorsement of Sponsor Intended".

REGISTRATION

- The United States Air Force Marathon office will provide a distinct deployed location runner registration form. Paper copies may be downloaded from the USAF Marathon website. In order for respective commands to receive credit for runner participation, forms will need to be mailed to HQ AFMC/A1SK, 4225 Logistics Ave, Rm S205, Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433-5006 immediately following your race.
- All marathon participants must sign the release statement indicated on the marathon registration form.
- Each runner will be supplied with a bib-number. The bib-numbers must be affixed to the front of the runner during the race. On the back of the bib, any pertinent medical information should be provided by each runner.
- You will need to create a registration roster which lets you know which runner has which number. If you computerize your registration, you should prepare two rosters, one in bib-number order and the other in alphabetical order. If you do not use a computer, one

convenient method is to write the bib-number on the completed entry blank at the time of registration and then keep the entry blanks in bib-number order.

- The registration system should provide rapid identification of award winners at the conclusion of the race and provide some form of race results. Bib-numbers and entry rosters provide quick identification in case of medical emergencies.

PACKET AND T-SHIRT PICKUP

- Packet and T-shirt pick up can be done either on the day of the race, prior to the race or both. If you are having packet pick-up only on the day of the race the t-shirt should be given when the runner crosses the finish line as they might not have a location to place the shirt while running.
- Packet should include, but is not limited to, runner's bib, 4 safety pins and map of race. If your deployed area is including a relay race, each person (4) will receive the same bib number, "RELAY" (4) bib for back of shirt and a baton for first runner to pass to the next relay team member.
- The number of packet pickup stations depends on how many packets need to be picked up and how many hours runners may pick up their packets. Use LARGE signs to identify "packet pickup" and the location for each group, e.g., A-F, G-L, etc., or #1-999, #1000-1999, etc.
- Most runners will wait until the last minute. Close the doors at the last minute but figure on taking another half hour to complete packet pickup. If 10% of your entrants wait to the last minute to pick up their packets, figure roughly 30 seconds per pickup and 30 minutes to finish the last minute rush which means each station can handle 60 last minute people. If your packet pickup period is more than five hours total, each station can handle 600 packets. If your pickup period is less than five hours, the number of packets per station should be reduced accordingly.
- Packets may already contain the size T-shirt indicated by the entrant on the entry blank. This certainly speeds handing out packets but does make bulky packets. Another alternative is to ask each entrant as they pick up their packet, what size T-shirt they want. It usually takes 3 or more seconds to elicit a response and 5 or more seconds to find the right size T-shirt.

TIMING

- Digital watches are fine for timing small races and taking times on selected individuals. Stop watch with a split time printout are recommended if available.
- All official timers must be at the start, within ten meters of the starter or starting device. Since it is not practical to recall a false start for a road race, the timers must be prepared to start their watches (or timing devices) when the first runner breaks. Timers need to be briefed on this procedure so they won't be caught off-guard.
- Manual select timing is MANDATORY for all races of any size in order for non-winning times to be considered for record purposes. All races should employ at a minimum the manual select timing!
- Manual Select Timing
 - Personnel: two required, three recommended
 - Equipment: stop watch, clip board, pens, paper
 - Reliability: very good to excellent

- Robustness: excellent
- Process Rate: 6 to 12 runners per minute
- The preferred manual select timing team consists of three persons, one to select and time the incoming runner; the other two record bib-numbers, placement stick number and time as called by the spotter.
- The select timing team must be placed at the finish line with a clear view of on-coming runners. The select timing team is vital to the reliability of the final race results. Do not pull them from their position, regardless of whatever other disasters may be occurring.
- Select timers can usually time most if not all of the early finishers. As the finishing rate increases, it is important to concentrate on getting a limited amount of good data rather than trying to select time most of the finishers and ending up with a lot of poor data. This will depend on what awards you are handing out. If you are not recording all runners' time, please inform runners before race begins.
- As the selected runner crosses the finish, the spotter reads the runner's time to be recorded. Placement sticks (tongue depressors with numbers 1 to how many are participating) can be used as a back up or second source. As each runner crosses the finish line they will receive a placement stick that will correspond with their time. The runner checks in with his placement stick number to confirm runner name.
- Times may be reported from a "running" watch. These should be reported to full seconds. Note that a "running" watch LCD display that reads 32:47 is really 32:47.xx where the fractions of seconds usually are going by too fast to read. When submitting a mark for record purposes, report the running time as read and identify it as a "running" time but realize that for determining the official winning time, you should add one second, i.e., the 32:47 running time is really a 32:48. When you report such a time in your final race results for general distribution, please report the 32:48, i.e., add that second.
- Small races usually can record the desired time/runner sequence directly. If the race is really small, as each runner finishes, his/her time can be recorded and if the recorder does not recognize the runner, there is sufficient time to ask the finisher what his/her name is and record it before the next finisher arrives. This method is useful up to peak finishing rates of 5 runners per minute. If placement sticks are used at the end of a "processing" chute, runners can be processed at roughly 30 runners per minute.
- As the race size increases, use of bib-numbers speeds up the process and allows all small races to be handled in this manner. In such cases, finish chutes are not required although they are advised and the electronic timing device is used to provide split times for each finisher in addition to the "running" time recorded manually. For such races, you may wish to employ a very short finish chute to help sort out clumps of runners. The use of bib-numbers extends this method of directly recording times and runners to peak finishing rates of up to 15 runners per minute.

START LINE

- The start line will be clearly drawn across the surface with tape (athletic or masking) or painted (spray chalk or lime) on the surface.
- Starting method must be explained to all runners prior to the start of the race to prevent false starts.

THE COURSE

- Accuracy of the course length is of utmost concern to maintain the integrity of finisher's times.
- If possible, the hydration station, start & finish lines, and course barricades/cones should be set up and stocked the day prior to the race.
- The course will be free of vehicular traffic. Vehicle crossing points on the course will be staffed to provide for the safety of runners. Runners have priority unless it is an emergency situation.
- The course will be adequately marked at strategic points to keep runners on the course. Each turn and intersection will be clearly marked so there is no doubt as to the direction runners must go. At key intersections it is recommended to have a Race Marshall at the location.
- Distance markers will be placed on the course at minimum intervals of 2 or 3 miles.

HYDRATION STATIONS

- Water, electrolytes and other suitable refreshments should be available at the start and finish of all races.
- Water, electrolytes, sponges, gels, and fruit stations should be provided at suitable intervals of approximately 2 to 3 kilometers based upon the weather conditions. Water will be provided at every Hydration Station. (Note: the United States Air Force Marathon has hydration stations approximately every mile.)

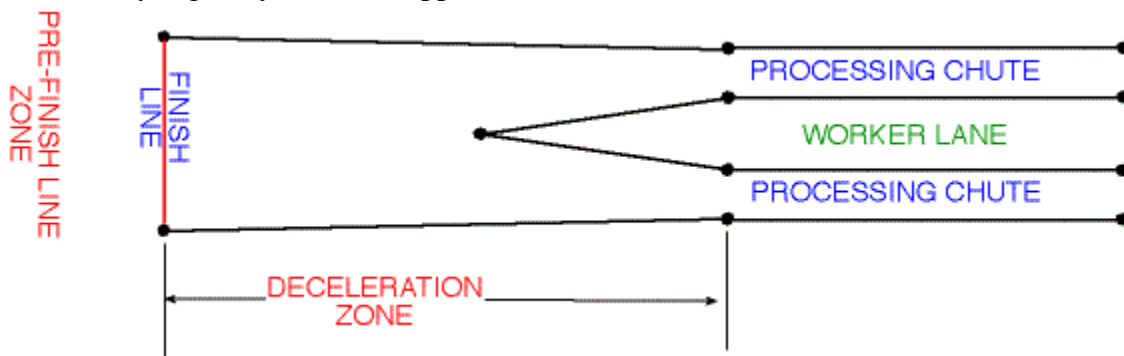
FIRST AID STATIONS

- Adequate first aid facilities will be provided at the finish line and on the course. On course first aid is preferably by use of mobile unit(s).
- The finish line aid station should have medical personnel who are trained in sports related injuries (dehydration, sprains, cuts, abrasions, etc.)
- EMS bike patrols are beneficial in areas where there are long stretches without hydration stations or First Aid Stations.

FINISH LINE

- The finish line must be clearly marked. The finish line is to be a line drawn across the surface from finish post to finish post. The "true" finish line is the leading edge of the marked line on the ground, i.e., that part of the marked finish line first encountered by the finishing runners.
- The best finish line is one that is painted on the road surface. You may wish to "tape" the finish line with athletic tape or masking tape, but unless the surface is fairly clean, these may not stick too well. You may also "chalk" the finish line using the lime or "Spray Chalk" which is a chalk which sprays on like paint but can be hosed off after a race.
- It is important that the finish line be well-defined. This is the line to be used for all timing and is the line to be used for judging close finishes. If the line wiggles or is poorly defined (or non-existent), judging close finishes is difficult.
- The finish line must be at least 2 meters long and may be up to 10 meters long. If the finish line is too wide, your timers will have difficulty focusing on the finishers and it will be difficult to judge close finishes and maintain the correct finish sequence. If it is too narrow, sprinting finishers may collide with each other or with your finish line personnel.

- The deceleration zone should be at least 10 meters long and may be as long as 30 meters. The length of the deceleration zone depends on the length of your race. Processing chutes should be one meter wide.
- The order each runner crosses the finish line will be the official finish position.
- Single Chute Operation
 - When a single finish chute handles all the runners, you need to erect "buffer" zones between the chute and the spectators. This buffer zone or worker lane is to allow the various chute workers space to perform their varied functions without interference. It also discourages runners from "jumping" out of the finish chutes and leaving gaps in your finish order.
 - Finish chutes are defined by stanchions and ropes. Stanchions consisting of a heavy base (bike rack stanchions are often used) and rigidly attached one meter vertical pole may be used for paved and unpaved finish areas. Stanchions should be sturdy enough to remain upright when bumped. End stanchions should be solidly fixed. Stanchion height should be "waist-level" or roughly one meter. The "ropes" used to define the chutes often have brightly colored pennants attached which improve the visibility of the rope. The space between stanchions is dictated by their sturdiness. Stakes in dirt can support up to 10 meters of chute ropes while the small 30cm x 30cm metal plate base stanchions used on pavement may only support 2 to 3 meters of rope. Ropes should be looped through rings or hooks on the tops of the stanchions and wrapped again around the top of the stanchion. If they sag, they can be wrapped around another time.



VOLUNTEERS

- Conducting a marathon requires a large number of volunteers. This number varies based on the number of registered runners. Below are the areas where you will need volunteers with a minimum suggest number of people:
 - Course set up – 4Packet Pickup/t-shirt issue – 6
 - Timing team (3 people each team) – 3
 - Hydration Stations – 26 minimum for full marathon (if the race doubles back, a station can be hit by the runner more than once)
 - First Aid – Finish line 4; on course 2 teams of 2 (EMS bike patrols are beneficial in areas where there are long stretches without hydration stations or medical)
 - Medal presenters – 4 (recommend senior leadership participation)
 - Finish line – 4

- Clean up crew – 4
- Transportation – 4 (relay runners need to be transported to and from exchange zones)
- It is critical that all volunteers be briefed on their responsibilities and where they need to be prior to race day. This will prevent a lot of confusion the morning of the race. It is recommended that packet pickup and t-shirt issue should be conducted the evening prior to the race.

LOGISTICS

- The amount of material needed to conduct your race will vary depending on the number of registered runners. As a baseline, you should plan on have the following items:
 - Tables and chairs (you will need one or two tables at each hydration station, along with a few chairs. You will need additional tables and chairs at the finish area for refreshments, storage of medals, and work space)
 - Water coolers for Hydration Stations and Finish Line
 - Water and other electrolytes
 - Ice
 - Cups for electrolytes and water at hydration stations and finish line. Only fill the cups half way due to spillage that occurs when handing runner's water as they are running.
 - Safety pins for bibs (supplied)
 - Race packet bags
 - Cones (you will need lots of cones to mark the course and block off any roads)
 - Directional signs (these will need to be large enough for runners to read)
 - Mile markers
 - Bull horn for announcement and for start if you do not use starter pistol
 - Timing devices (stop watches, timing clocks, etc)
 - Clip boards and pens
 - Trash cans and liners
 - Portable toilets or restrooms in the immediate vicinity of the start and finish lines
 - Finish line ribbon
 - Food and refreshments for after the race
 - Sponges

AFTER ACTION REPORT

Provide to HQ AFMC/A1SK, 4225 Logistics Ave, Rm. S205, WPAFB OH 45433-5006

- After actions report will be required from each deployed location race no later than one week after the race. This report will contain as a minimum:
 1. Number of registered runners
 2. Number of finishers
 3. Runner's originating MAJCOM
 4. Name/gender/age/finishing time/category and placement for all winners in each category used.

1. As a minimum, each race will have an overall winner, 2nd and 3rd place finishers in both male and female categories with finishing times.
2. Optionally the race may have placement categories for:
3. Male finishers
4. Female finishers
5. Age groups
5. Pictures of winners and other interesting shots
6. Lessons learned (when went well and what could be improved) in the following areas:
 1. Volunteer recruitment
 2. Packet/t-shirt pick up
 3. Start and finish line operations
 4. Hydration and first aid stations
 5. Course setup
 6. Logistics support
7. Budget
 1. Overall budget
 2. Supplies orders
 3. Resource list

Other

You might consider asking the base's DFAC (dining facility) to offer a pasta dinner the evening before your race to serve as a carb loading opportunity for your runners.