

# **Airstream Club International National Event Rallies Handbook**

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March 2023

**The official handbook for Airstream Club International  
National Event Rallies, Sponsors and Hosts**

Created by the National Events Rally Committee with special thanks to everyone who contributed to the effort, especially the National Caravan Committee. Questions or suggestions may be sent to the NER Standing Committee Chair at [WeRallyTogether@gmail.com](mailto:WeRallyTogether@gmail.com)

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## **Section 1. Goals & Objectives of National Event Rallies**

Recent surveys of the Airstream community suggest increased interest in events for younger owners, families with children, remote workers, and an expectation of unique and ‘bucket list’ camping experiences. Many club members are looking for more opportunities to camp beyond their local club/region or experiences without having to manage all the arrangements.

The goal of the National Event Rallies program is to provide our members with unique opportunities and high-quality rally and event experiences at locations across the United States, Canada, and Europe.

This Handbook is intended to be a guide for sponsors and hosts of a National Event Rally (NER). However, it can be used for any club or region rally. Every rally and event is different and local circumstances will dictate the specific needs and conditions. Flexibility exists to plan, organize, and operate a NER in a manner that suits the style of the hosts and the capabilities of the participants.

A list of current NER events appears on the Airstream Club International (ACI) Events website, <https://airstreamclub.org/events>.

## **Section 2. Definitions**

### **National Event Rally**

National Event Rallies (NER) are designated as those with “national” status. They must meet certain criteria as defined in Section 3 and, as such, receive benefits such as prime placement in the Blue Beret and on the ACI website. They are held in conjunction with, or in the vicinity of, a well-known annual or periodic festival, event, celebration, places of historic significance or natural beauty. National Event Rallies may also be held in support of a community or non-profit organization, or focus on a celebration of the Airstream / WBCCI history or lifestyle.

### **Sponsor**

An NER must be sponsored by a recognized entity such as a local club, an intra-club, a region, or WBCCI itself. Think of the sponsoring organization as the NER’s backer. They may provide funds to start a rally/event; support through their treasurer or webmaster; or guidance and advice to the host. The sponsor is ultimately responsible for the integrity, reputation, and finances of the NER. The sponsor will receive a full final report and financial accounting from the event host.

### **Host and Co-host**

The host is the point-of-contact member(s) planning, organizing, and managing the NER. They are accountable for all operational aspects of the NER, including registration, communications, marketing, budget, finances, reports, post-rally surveys, etc.

The other type of recognized leadership position within the NER program is the co-host. They must be trained and able to step in at any time to manage the entire NER equal to that of the host. The host and co-host are equally accountable for the success of the rally. Depending upon the size of the NER, there may be multiple co-hosts. Other volunteers may be assigned tasks by the host(s) e.g. on-site registration, parking, etc. and would be responsible to assist participants within their area of responsibility

If there is a change in the named or on-site host, please inform the Standing Committee Chair.

## **Participants**

Participants are WBCCI-member registered attendees. In most cases, they will own and camp in an Airstream.

## **WBCCI Blue Book**

Listed below are the relevant WBCCI Bylaw and Policy citations found in the handbook. These can be found at [airstreamclub.org/bluebook](http://airstreamclub.org/bluebook).

### **BYLAWS**

- Article III, Section 1 Standing Committees
- Article IV, Membership and Membership Privileges
- Article V, Disciplinary Procedures
- Article XVI, Financial Management

### **POLICIES**

- 3.11 O. Standing Committees: National Event Rallies
- 16.6.1 Financial Management
- 16.6.2 Financial Data Guidelines
- 16.6.4 D. National Event Rallies
- 16.6.8 D. Badge Color Coding
- 16.6.9 Flags and Pennants
- 16.6.10 Airstream Numbers

## **Section 3. Requirements to be an NER**

1. The NER must be planned, sponsored, and conducted by one or more local club(s), Region(s), or Headquarters and held in conjunction with, or in the vicinity, of a well-known annual or periodic festival, event, celebration, or place of historic significance or natural beauty. It may be in support of a community or non-profit organization and may focus or celebrate the history or lifestyle of Airstream travel and/or WBCCI.
2. Host applicants should have prior experience in holding a rally or event as they seek endorsement from the sponsoring organization.

3. Evaluation criteria include the venue and theme selection, financial viability, group and optional activities available, communications and marketing capabilities, and the host's capability for managing and organizing a rally or event.
4. Must have space for at least 20 Airstreams, including sites for hosts and volunteers.
5. Registration must open to all club member participants at the same time.
6. Hosts should utilize bank accounts set up through their sponsor or WBCCI, provide online registration, and collect electronic payments. The host is responsible for the bookkeeping and accounting practices including keeping NER accounts separate from other club/region accounts, internal controls, keeping clear records, and completing a final report within 90 days following the completion of the NER.
7. Liability insurance coverage under the "blanket policy" of the WBCCI will apply to existing authorized events and to events as may be authorized by the Executive Committee or the International Board of Trustees. If a vendor requires a Certificate of Insurance (COI) it will be provided upon request. Please contact WBCCI Headquarters or submit on-line using this link.

#### **Section 4. Application Process**

The sponsor and host shall complete **an application form** at least SIX MONTHS before the proposed start date. A copy will automatically be sent to the NER Standing Chair at NationalEventRallies@gmail.com, where the application will be evaluated. The sponsor and host may be contacted to clarify any questions. The Standing Committee Chair will stay in contact with the sponsor as to the status of the application.

The following information is requested on the application:

- Type of NER: new, reactivated, recurring, one time, support of a community or non-profit organization, or other type.
- Sponsor and host contact information.
- Dates and location of the rally/event.
- Campground site and contact information.
- Proposed theme or venue (e.g. Christmas in the Smokies).
- Proposed budget and finances, including campsite cost, food, facilities and/or equipment, and administrative expenses.
- Group and optional activities available to participants with costs.
- Host's experience in managing and organizing club events.
- Capability for communications and marketing.
- Maximum and minimum number of campsites, including host(s) with site description (E/W/S, 20 amp only, dry camping, etc...) .
- Online registration and payment details including dates, cancellation policies, waitlist/lottery, etc.
- Any special considerations or limitations.

## **Section 5. NER Standing Chair Responsibilities**

The incoming International President of WBCCI appoints the National Event Rally Standing Chair, who is approved by the Executive Council. The Chair serves for one year and may be reappointed by the incoming president. The NER Standing Committee shall have a minimum of two additional members selected by the chair.

The duties of the NER Standing Chair and Committee are to:

- Promote, coordinate, and develop new and existing National Event Rallies.
- Administer and approve National, Region, and Intra-Club National Event Rally programs.
- Make presentations on approved programs as necessary.
- Assist sponsors with registration, itineraries, partnerships marketing & social media, budget, and event reports.
- Coordinate with National Caravans for joint caravan/event opportunities.
- Review and prepare summary reports from the financial reports received from the sponsors of each event/rally and present such reports to the International Board of Trustees at the annual meeting.
- Manage the NER fund and review and approve any expenditures.

## **Section 6. Sponsor Responsibilities**

The sponsoring organization is a recognized WBCCI entity such as a local club, an intra-club, a region, or WBCCI Headquarters. It could also be two or more of these who join together to sponsor a NER.

The sponsor's responsibilities include:

- Approve the proposed rally/event as meeting the necessary qualifications to be a NER.
- Provide support, guidance, and assistance needed to operate the NER effectively.
- Ensure that the NER has a named host and sufficient members and support to effectively organize and manage the NER.
- Oversight of the NERs budget and finances and filing of IRS tax forms.
- The sponsoring organization and host should agree on the use of any net income whether it's to operate next year's NER, support the host's club or region, be returned to participants or donated to a community or non-profit organization. The sponsor is also responsible for any losses which may occur.
- Review and approval of any cost reimbursements to a host or co-host.
- Ensure that the NER and its host adhere to the Blue Book Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies and with fund-management practices as outlined in WBCCI Policies 16.6.1 (Parts L. Bank Accounts & M. Compliance)

## **Section 7. Host Responsibilities and Privileges**

Hosts are the point-of-contact member(s) planning, organizing, and managing the NER, including the selection of their co-hosts and volunteers and providing assignments to each. A co-host is equally accountable for the work and will be the point of contact if the hosts cannot fulfill their obligations.

The host's responsibilities include:

- All aspects of the NER, including communications, marketing, registration, budget/finances, reports, and post-rally survey (detailed later in the handbook).
- Informing the sponsor and the standing committee chair on program changes, successes, concerns, etc.
- Day-to-day bookkeeping and accounting of income and expenses.
- Completion of the final report within 90 days or as soon as all financial information is available. The on-line report template [is available here](#). The online version will automatically send a copy to the Standing Committee Chair and to the sponsoring organization.

The host and co-host may choose to have certain rally costs reimbursed. Estimates for these costs are included in the budget and reimbursements with receipts must be approved by the sponsoring organization's treasurer.

- IRS mileage between home and the rally point and return costs determined by using a mapping service.
- Campsite fee, if not complimentary.
- Group and Optional Activity costs such as tour bus tickets, museum admission, or historic tours.

The host and co-host are eligible for a NER color-coded badge. Please contact WBCCI Headquarters on how to order.

The host and co-host are eligible for a 900 series Big Red Number following the successful completion of five NERs. These do not need to be the same NER or for consecutive years. Please contact the Standing Committee Chair for instructions.

The NER host may obtain a NER pennant flag by contacting the Standing Committee Chair. This may be flown during the rally/event to indicate the host's campsite.

## **Section 8. Policies & Other Guidance**

### **Generator Use**

Quiet generators are allowed in a designated boondocking area. A generator may be used as long as it doesn't create unreasonable noise or disturb other campers. Generators may be run anytime between 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM.

Commercial campgrounds may have their own generator policies, so please check with the management and let your participants know in advance.

### **Invocations, Blessings, and Prayers**

The club embraces diversity and tolerance among members. Our constitution and bylaws address this topic in two ways:

- First: The bylaws of the club, in its order of business, require any invocation to be non-sectarian (not faith-based).



- Second: The club code of ethics states “To be ever mindful of what we say or print with respect to its effect on other of our diverse membership so as to avoid disharmony and ill feelings among club members of differing ethnicities, religious beliefs or orientation and to dedicate ourselves to the work of cementing together the members of WBCCI in bonds of good fellowship and mutual understanding.”

NER’s may choose a non-religious form of invocation or blessing or none. The club offers some [guidance regarding invocations, blessings, and prayers at this link.](#)

## **Pets**

All pets must be on a 6-foot, non-retractable leash when outside the Airstream. Always check collars and leashes to ensure they fit correctly and are working properly. A size-appropriate pet containment system can be used at the campsite. Pets are not permitted in the buildings or outside dining areas during a meal except for working service animals. Well-mannered dogs are welcome to play and exercise in designated dog parks. Always clean up after your pet. And make sure your pet has an ID tag.

Hosts may have a policy that animals are not permitted during other activities as well due to safety or health issues. In addition, some RV parks have policies that if pets have been in buildings, a professional cleaning fee will be charged.

Comfort animals are specifically denied as support animals by the ADA policy and any support animal must be trained (not in training) and support a defined disability which can include PTSD, autism, hearing loss, etc. Please review the Americans with Disabilities Act on Service Animals, <https://www.ada.gov/topics/service-animals/>

## **Incidents & Accidents**

In cases when someone is injured or an accident occurs during your rally or event, please gather the following information and email it to the Standing Committee Chair. There is also a form located on the [ACI website, Assorted Guides and Manuals.](#)

- Date, time, & location
- Authorities contacted
- Description of incident or accident
- Names, addresses, phones of persons involved
- List any injuries or property damage
- Date & time and contact information of person completing report

## **Grievances**

Any member may file a grievance alleging that another member has violated any WBCCI Constitution, Bylaws, Policies, or Code of Ethics, or any comparable governing rules of any Region or Local Club of WBCCI, or that the member is guilty of any misconduct. The complaint must be filed to the Standing Committee Chair no later than thirty (30) days after the alleged violation or misconduct occurred or was discovered. Please see [Blue Book Bylaws, Article V, Disciplinary Procedures](#) for more detailed information.

## **Section 9. Budget and Finances**

## **General Information**

The aim of a National Event Rally is to provide a high-quality, bucket list experience for our members. In doing so, a balance should be reached between providing appropriate and comfortable accommodations and experiences while recovering all costs and minimizing expenses to participants. This will be different for each NER depending upon the event, location, and amenities.

The host or any member of the NER shall not profit personally through the operation of the rally/event. Reimbursement of reasonable campground costs and IRS mileage to and from the rally site is allowable.

The host is not expected to pay “out of pocket” for deposits, contracts, etc., that must be made in advance. If not available from the prior NER or the sponsor, a request for an advance loan can be made from the NER Fund, once it has funds, through the Standing Committee Chair. The advance loan must be paid back within 90 days of the rally’s conclusion.

## **Bank Accounts and online payment systems**

It is recommended each NER has a bank account separate from the sponsoring entity to prevent the commingling of funds. The sponsor can set up a separate bank account of their choice for the NER or a US Bank Account through WBCCI. US Bank Accounts have no monthly fees with the bank account, and you can have checks, debit cards, and electronic deposits and do all your banking online.

For US Bank the entire signup process is done virtually. WBCCI is only involved during set-up and if there’s a change in the authorized signers. WBCCI will be listed on the account as a non-user to represent the corporation documentation. Once the account is set up, HQ has no involvement or online access to the account.

Please contact the Corporate Manager for details or to set up your account.

## **Developing a Budget**

Establishing a budget is one of the most important responsibilities, which will eventually determine the rally or event fee and whether you operate at a profit, break-even, or a loss. A budget is a detailed forecast of what will be happening financially at your rally/event. You will need to list all the possible expenses that will likely occur and where costs might fluctuate. In some cases there may be revenue such as sponsorships or in-kind donations.

All NER’s are self-supporting, with each participant paying their share of the total expenses. The standard is two people in an Airstream, but make adjustments where there is only one person or more than two.

Most hosts use Excel or Google Sheets for budget planning but there are also helpful technology solutions available. Each line item should represent a specific type of expense or revenue and should be grouped in a way that makes the most sense. It’s a good idea to make two columns for estimated and actual numbers.

## **The Rally Fee**

The total of all the items in the budget will be used to determine the base rally fee. Fixed costs such as campground fees, or entertainment should remain constant. Variable costs will increase or decrease depending on the number of attendees such as administrative costs or food.

Some costs may be per Airstream; others will be per person. If there are children, some costs may be reduced. Adding all budgeted fixed costs and variable costs and then dividing by the minimum or exact number of Airstreams will be the rally fee.

Optional activity costs will be added to a participant's total cost.

### 1. Campsite Fee

In most cases, the total camping fee is usually the largest item in the rally fee but also the easiest to budget. The campsite fee is the agreed-upon fee charged by the campground or facility where the Airstreams will be parked. An advance deposit may be required and group rates may be available. When camping in fields, fairgrounds, or other large parking areas, if no fee structure is set, it is a good practice to offer a contribution.

In some instances, the campsite is reserved and the fee is paid directly by the participant to the campground or facility. The cost and how to make reservations should be clear in your marketing communications.

### 2. Meal and food costs

These can be another major expense and perhaps one of the more difficult areas to plan for. Food and drink are great socializing opportunities so consider a range of offerings: Get Acquainted Meetings (GAM)/social hours with snacks either brought by participants or sponsored; organized meals or cookouts prepared by the host team or catered; potlucks where participants bring a dish; or a trip to a local restaurant.

If organizing a casual trip to a local restaurant, brewery, winery, etc., contact the business well ahead of time to confirm your group is welcome and when would be a good time. If the visit is an optional paid activity, firm prices, and reservations should be solidified in writing. Make sure taxes and tips are included in the vendor's contract and in your budget.

At an Airstream rally, you never want to run out of food but some participants may have food sensitivities, allergies or prefer to eat in their own Airstreams. Because of this, you might want to make big-ticket meals an optional add-on fee (see below). Some rallies are now making all food activities optional.

### 3. Group or Optional Activity Fees

Consider activities such as musical entertainment, walking tours, bus/jeep/boat/train tours, high-adventure activities, bike rides, kayaking, museums, local docents tours, or unique dining experiences. Is the activity best suited for a bus rental or car-pooling?

Costs for activities where everyone participates are included in the base rally fee. Some activities are unique and should be optional. These will have a separate optional activity fee.

If there is an agreement with a vendor, make sure it is in writing and includes tax, gratuities, and any other related expenses in your budget. Frequently local guides, historians, or park rangers will give a presentation and either do not wish to or are not permitted to charge a fee. When this happens, offer to contribute to a local/appropriate charity, friend's group, or association of their choice and include it in your budget. Also, a well-placed thank you letter is always appreciated and will help at next year's event.

#### 4. Facility, Equipment, or Utility Expenses

These direct costs could be for a building rental, electricity, pump outs, trash pickup, or one-time equipment rentals. They can also be prorated over the course of several rallies/events. Expenses should be for those items that the club does not already own or use for other club purposes.

Seasoned hosts have a basic set of equipment on hand to aid them in running an efficient rally. The conditions at your rally/event site will dictate what equipment you should consider. Some examples include:

- First aid kit
- portable speaker system
- cooking equipment such as large pots or grills with utensils
- extra water hoses and hose connectors
- pressure-reducing valves
- extra sewer hose
- directional signs
- rain shelter with sides

#### 5. Administrative Expenses

Administrative expenses would include any direct costs to support a NER and could include things like credit/debit card processing fees, host/co-host reimbursements, copying/reproduction, postage, or mailing costs.

They can also be prorated over the course of several NERs and not charged to one specific rally. Expenses should be for those items that the club does not already own or use for other club purposes. These items may include subscription services like jotform, text-to-group apps, tableware, trash bags, office supplies, bank and check supplies, or bank fees.

#### 6. Contingency

Depending upon the sponsor and host's confidence in the budget estimates, and the complexity of the rally/event, a contingency amount should be included. A good method to calculate this number is to use 3 to 10% of the total of the above amounts.

#### 7. NER Fund

Effective August 1, 2022, a \$5 per rig fee will apply to all new NERs until a \$10,000 fund balance is reached. The fees will go to a discretionary account administered by the NER Committee for items such as:

- loans to participating NERs for advance payments necessary for campsites, facilities, entertainment, or other contracts

- subscription services – e.g. Jot form for online registrations accessible by the host, payment systems, apps, etc.
- nationally-sponsored NER promotional products - logo stickers, plaques, flags, etc.
- emergency funds (e.g. hazard outside of the control of sponsor/host requiring immediate expense)
- financing additional support from outside vendors or HQ when necessary
- ACI NER Flag for each NER

Advance loans to NERs will be paid back to the NER Fund within 90 days of the end of the event/rally.

### **Finances During the Rally**

Once the NER begins, the budget becomes a thing of the past and the actual costs are what is important. Use the budget as a tool to see how the NER is doing financially, to see if finances are on track, and if there will be a surplus or a loss at the end of the NER. Keep up daily with your bookkeeping to ensure that all income and expenditures records are maintained.

Since the hosts have opened a business bank account and have checks and/or received a debit or credit card, finances are in place to operate your NER. Banks and credit unions issue monthly statements and have online banking to assist with the required bookkeeping function.

Unforeseen circumstances do arise. The host/co-host should keep original receipts and a record of all expenditures to be able to account for and be reimbursed for these funds.

### **Finances at the End of the Rally**

Whew! The NER is over and you're home or on your way to another stop. Now is the time to focus on balancing the books. Print out the online bank statement, gather all of your receipts, contracts, and other expenses, and see if the amount of money spent is not more than the rally fees. It's also a great time to look at your estimated budget and see where the differences are with what was actually spent.

It is a good practice to be transparent with your participants and club members about the NER's finances. Reassure them that their money has been well spent. While excess funds can be retained for next year's rally, support the local club or region, or donated to a nonprofit, it's also a good practice if there are excessive funds to refund them to the participants. In any case, a clear and auditable record of finances should be available to them if requested.

## **Section 10. Registration, Deposits, & Cancellations**

### **Online Registration and Payments**

There are so many reasons to have online registration and payment systems for your participants. First, they expect it because it provides immediate confirmation, eliminates human error, and saves time and money. Second, the advent of fill-in forms from companies like jotform makes the process simple. As a NER you have access to our jotform account for registration and the use of banking systems through ACI.

Companies such as PayPal or Square charge a processing fee for credit/debit cards, in-person, and other online payments. There are numerous websites and apps to help calculate what the fee is and, thus, how much the fee will increase your rally fee. As these rates differ and change over time, please check for the most recent information from the method you're using. These fees should be included in your administrative fee budget estimates.

The registration form should collect all of a participant's information necessary for a successful rally/event: name(s), address, email(s), any youth & ages, BRN, trailer/coach requirements, and early/late parking. It should also explain deposits, cancellations, and other policies of your NER. For participants who cannot or will not register or pay online provide a downloadable .pdf and your contact information.

Hosts may consider adding a question regarding pets and working service animals. If the answer is yes, a dropdown box with the ACI pet policy and then an affirmation that the registrant has read and agrees to adhere to the policy before being able to proceed with registration.

### **Standby/Waitlists, or Lotteries**

This is the situation you want to find your NER in. It is so popular that it's on every Airstreamer's bucket list. Existing hosts have taken a number of different strategies. Let's take a look at them.

A standby or waitlist can be used to fill cancellations for a single NER or to fill future years. If using a single NER, set a number based on the overall number of Airstreams and what potential cancellations might be. Over time, the cancellation rate will be clear. For very popular NERs, a waitlist for future years is a good choice because Airstreamers will know which year they can plan on attending. The challenge is that standby/waitlists take a lot of management and clear communication.

A lottery system could be used when competition for sites is stiff. Set a time frame to register and when the deadline expires export all registrants into an Excel spreadsheet. A random number calculator will select the participants based on the number of campsites available plus any going on the waitlist. Notify 'the winners' and those going on a waitlist. Again, list management and clear communication are the challenges.

Selected participants should pay the full rally fee or a deposit upon registering or 'winning' the lottery but there shouldn't be a charge to be on a waitlist.

### **Deposits and Cancellations**

When a deposit is paid, a participant is less likely to cancel because they are indicating they are serious about attending. Base your deposit and cancellation policies on deadlines and financial commitments with campgrounds, vendors, or the event venue. Some costs cannot be recovered and should be charged to the person canceling, such as online banking fees. Additionally, consider whether you will offer full or partial refunds on given dates, particularly if a waitlist can fill the slot. Non-refundable deposits may be applied to the next Airstream on a waitlist.

The NER's deposit and cancellation policies need to be clearly stated in all of your communications.

## **Section 11. Communications and Marketing**

**Communication vs. Communications 101.** Communication (no 's') is how information is received and interpreted, while communications are the technology, systems, and tactics used for delivering that information. We need both to be effective communicators.

Following approval as a National Event Rally, the host will be contacted to provide information for supporting website, marketing, and social media efforts. For resources and guidelines on technology, please visit the web pages.

### **Airstream Club International**

A benefit of being a NER is free advertising with Airstream Club International. This includes articles, advertisements/coupons, and listings published in the printed and digital Blue Beret magazine and Blue Beret Directory. Several times a year, a NER may be featured on the cover and have a feature article. Routine information must be received by the Blue Beret editor at least two months in advance by sending it to [blueberet@airstreamclub.org](mailto:blueberet@airstreamclub.org). The NER Committee is available to assist with writing articles and feature stories.

Also available are postings on ACI's social networking sites. At present those are YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Please contact [comments@airstreamclub.org](mailto:comments@airstreamclub.org) or the NER Committee for more information.

### **NER website**

Your rally and event will receive prime placement on the ACI's website NER page. This is the first stop for many of our members to decide where they are going so it's important to have as much information as possible here. Check out the existing NER web pages and decide the kind of information you want to see on your website.

The NER committee will contact the host to get the details and help with setting these pages up. Your sponsor's webmaster (or host's appointee) may also choose to create and manage the NER's event page and "microsite page" with additional rally information. Website assistance can be requested by contacting the NER Committee or emailing [werallytogether@gmail.com](mailto:werallytogether@gmail.com).

Pro Tip: Once your NER event ends, the webpage will need to be updated with next year's dates otherwise the event/pinpoint will disappear from the NER map. Put known information in or reference when the member should check back.

### **Region/Club website**

All region, club, and NER websites must be located on the WBCCI platform, especially if "Airstream" appears in the title. WBCCI holds a licensing agreement with Airstream, Inc. to use the title 'Airstream'. This is particularly important because if an external website is hacked information might not be able to be taken down.

Your NER should also be listed on the host's club and region websites. Contact your region webmaster to find out how.

### **Apps**

Technology has made it much easier to communicate with your guests before, during, and after a rally/ event. Social media, group text, and event management apps are the modern way to communicate - it's immediate, reliable, and can happen anywhere and anytime.

Social media apps Facebook and Instagram are good for pre-event communications but not optimal for participants during the NER. For this period, three group text applications are currently evaluated and endorsed by the ITC. Look for ones with the ability to import your participant's contact information or send a link with your registration information.

1. Slack - free. It may be harder for non-tech people and involves a shared link or a bunch of private invites. No way to bulk-add emails. On the free plan, there's also a limit on how many messages are retained per channel.
2. GroupMe - Very easy to use but the rally host has to add the members of the rally one by one for each rally. The take-up rate is very high since people get messages whether they have the app installed or not
3. WhatsApp is similar in ease of use and a lot of people already know this app, but the same in terms of setup as GroupMe. The take-up rate is very high since people get messages whether they have the app installed or not

The big takeaways are to find communications that work for your participants and depending upon the size of the NER operate two 'streams' - one for chit-chat/photos and one for direct communication from the host TO the participants.

## Hashtags

A hashtag is a keyword or phrase preceded by the hash symbol (#), written within a social post or comment to highlight it and facilitate a search for it. Essentially, by including hashtags in your post it will be organized by the social network so that it can be discoverable to everyone. Some popular ones with ACI members are:

#wbcci  
#werallytogether  
#liveriveted  
#airstream  
#putyourrallynamehere (as an example)

When you're on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or another social platform, just enter a hashtag or two as part of your post. Then when you or someone is looking for some particular information, use the search feature and enter the hashtag of what you'd like to find. Try it with one of the ones listed above, but anything goes.

## QR code

What is a QR code and why would you want one? QR stands for Quick Response and it's a type of digital barcode. It is scanned with a phone's camera and takes the user to your event or schedule webpage. QR codes are free and there are many web applications available to create one.

—————→  
Try it      out!



## **Communications before the NER**

The host should reach out to each registrant welcoming them to the rally/event, confirming their registration details and payments, providing links to apps or social platforms, and making themselves available to respond to any questions. As the date nears, an additional communication should be made to the registrant confirming the arrival date and location and the first evening's get-together.

An activity flyer that spells out when, where, and what is happening should be made available to the guests and posted to the NER event page. Extra copies should be posted and/or available during the rally/event.

If the NER has a standby/waitlist, keep them informed as to their status on the list and include any information pertinent to their ultimate participation.

## **Communications during the NER**

A Get Acquainted Meeting (GAM)/ social hour should be held the first evening so your guests have a chance to socialize and ask any questions. Make sure that participants are able to access their apps in case of last-minute information.

Communicate each morning and/or evening about the time, location, and activities. Keep the communication with your guests short and precise.

Taking photos during the NER is important - they can be posted to social platforms and used for the Blue Beret articles and the NER website. Although it's perfectly legal to take and post most photos online, you might want to ensure you have your guests' permission, particularly if children are involved.

## **Communications Post-NER**

Maybe one of the most important communication and marketing tools you possess is the post-NER participant survey. Experiences vary with each participant which is why it's important to collect as many responses as you can. You can do this by distributing a written survey at the event, providing a link to an online survey, and/or following up a few days after the event/rally. [Survey Monkey](#) is a popular and free online tool. The questions should be tailored to your event, but could include things like:

1. Would you recommend this National Event Rally to a fellow Airstreamer?
2. How would you rate this rally/event compared to other Airstream events you've attended? (when using a rating scale - use 5 or 7 levels)
3. How would you rate the value of the event/rally for the cost?
4. Do you think the rally/event was too long, too short, or about right?
5. How organized was the event?
6. Prior to the rally/event, how much of the information that you needed did you get?
7. How would you rate the venue and camping arrangements?
8. How would you rate the food and meals if provided?
9. What did you like best about the event? What did you like least? (Open-ended comment)
10. Is there anything else you'd like to share? (Open-ended comment)

It's also a good idea to follow up with an email to your guests thanking them for attending, sharing photos, asking for more feedback, and how their friends can register for next year's rally/event.

Consider conducting an After Rally Review with your co-hosts, volunteers, or the campsite managers. Also keep good notes before, during, and after the NER on what's going well and what's not. This will help with the 'internal workings' of the rally/event and provide the insight you glean from the post-NER Survey. Discussion questions typically center around three themes:

1. What was supposed to happen? What did happen? Why was there a difference?
2. What worked? What didn't work? Why?
3. What would you do differently next time?

A last word on privacy - in today's environment our fellow Airstreamers may be wary of sharing their private information such as phone numbers, addresses, email addresses, even their trailer/coach location during a rally/event. Please be sensitive to this and protect and keep their information confidential at every turn.

## **Section 12. Final Report**

As soon as possible or within 90 days of completion of the National Event Rally, the hosts shall forward a final report using this link. A copy of the form is also located on the WBCCI Guides and Manuals. If the latter please forward to the NER Standing Chair at [NationalEventRallies@gmail.com](mailto:NationalEventRallies@gmail.com) for record keeping and providing a financial report to the International Board of Trustees and your sponsoring region/club for IRS tax reporting requirements.

The report requests the following information:

1. Details of the NER such as host & co-host name(s), dates, # of Airstreams, and participants.
2. Successes or problems encountered.
3. Description of any changes to next year's rally/event.
4. Final financial report including beginning cash, receipts, expenses, and ending cash, disposition of excess funds or description of financial losses and remedies.
5. Upload documents or any attachments.

Note: Copies of financial records, including all source documents (electronic or paper), shall be retained by the NER host or sponsor for 7 years.

If this is the host's' final time to lead this NER, all property purchased with NER funds should be passed on to the next rally host or to the NER committee chair.

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