

# SKYHAWKS ORGANIZER'S GUIDE



# FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in the Canadian Armed Forces Parachute Team, the SkyHawks.

The SkyHawks have represented Canada and the Canadian Forces for over 45 years showcasing the professionalism, dedication and teamwork it takes to be a part of Canada's military. Over the last four decades we have performed to over 73 million spectators worldwide under our signature Canadian flag parachutes.

Building formations in the sky by bringing our parachutes in close proximity to each other, the team puts on a spectacular show. Performing these aerobatic parachute formations requires a high level of skill and courage; and is known as Canopy Relative Work (CRW). The team is based out of Trenton, Ontario at the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre and is comprised of military members from both the Regular and Reserve Forces from a variety of occupations.

Our demonstration season typically runs from May until October each year. This guide will outline everything you need to know to host the SkyHawks at your event. Our performance is 20 mins in length and during good weather conditions our formations can be brought close enough to thrill spectators. As safety is paramount the team will always operate within safe guidelines to perform the best show possible for your audience. For this reason please note that parachuting relies on good weather and organizers should be mindful that our participation at your event may be cancelled due to inclement weather conditions.

If you are considering booking the team for your event please read through this guide to understand the team's needs and expectations. Though this document is labelled a "guide," some requirements outlined within are in fact mandatory, with this in mind it is very important that you read and understand its content.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a safe and successful event.



# SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

After you have read this guide and determined that your organization can meet the necessary requirements, go to the SkyHawks website <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/skyhawks/index.page> and submit your official request by filling out the form under “Book the team.” We will make an effort to notify you by e-mail to confirm receipt of your request. If you have not received notification please call or email us in order to verify that we have received your request.

Requests should be made before August of the calendar year prior to your event (example: if your event is July 2019 your request should be submitted before August 2018). Requests received after August will be considered however the risk of unavailability is higher as planning will have already begun. All requests made after December of the previous year will not be considered for the subsequent season.

Our performance schedule will be approved in January of each demonstration year. Upon approval, all event organizers will receive notification via e-mail confirming whether or not the team is able to perform at your event. Sometimes requests are not approved based on a lack of requirement (example: organizer has chosen an unsuitable drop zone). To avoid this, it is very important that you read and understand this guide before submitting your request.

After receiving confirmation of our attendance at your event you are required to complete and return a few very important documents. Timelines for completion of these forms will be e-mailed with confirmation of our participation.

For ease the following is a step by step process involved in having the SkyHawks at your event:

Step 1 – Read the Organizer’s Guide

Step 2 – Submit official request by going to “Book the team” on the SkyHawks website (<http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/skyhawks/index.page>) before August and wait for confirmation of participation (expect this confirmation in January).

Step 3 – Complete and return the “Demonstration Checklist” to the SkyHawks **no fewer than 60 days prior** to your event. This form will be e-mailed to you with confirmation of our participation.

Step 4 – Complete the NOTAM requirements and confirm to the SkyHawks that NOTAMs for your event have been submitted.

Step 5 – Await contact from the SkyHawks confirming details pertaining to your event. This will occur no later than 10 days prior to your event.



Step 6 – SkyHawks arrive and perform at your event.

## Organizer's Obligations

All logistical coordination will be made with the SkyHawks after the Demonstration Checklist is received. Final coordination briefings with respect to all aspects of our participation at your event will take place upon arrival.

Event organizers are responsible for the following:

- a. Air Craft (Jump Platform) – joint responsibility;
- b. Point of Contact (POC);
- c. Mailing address and storage facility capable of receiving and storing SkyHawk's smoke canisters and POC for disposal of pyrotechnics (ex: firefighters, police representative) **NO LATER THAN 60 DAYS PRIOR TO EVENT;**
- d. Accommodations (24 hrs before & after any parachute/public relations operations);
- e. Ground transportation;
- f. Fitness facilities;
- g. Drop Zone (DZ);
- h. Airspace clearance (NOTAM; up to 13,000 ft AGL);
- i. Airport requirements;
- j. Safe and secure access to the public with a suitable interaction area;
- k. Public Address system; and
- l. Readily available 911 Emergency Medical Services for all tandem and performance flights.

***Note: If any of the aforementioned are not in place, cancellation of SkyHawks participation in your event will result.***

Should the SkyHawks performance be cancelled due to inclement weather conditions, aircraft serviceability, or unforeseen last minute circumstances, the organizer remains fiscally responsible for all the above-mentioned items.

### Aircraft (Jump Platform)

The SkyHawks will make every attempt to utilize RCAF aircraft in support of the demonstration jumps; however, in the event that an RCAF aircraft is unavailable the team will employ contracted air (Either an SC-7 Short SkyVan or Twin Otter). Organizers may indicate on their submission whether or not their venue can support the team with its own aircraft. Suitable jump platforms should be able to support 16 jumpers; additional coordination regarding this requirement can occur



in advance with the SkyHawks. Aircraft fuel costs for RCAF and contracted aircraft are covered by the team.

### Point of Contact (POC)

For logistical arrangements it is best for us to liaise with **only one person** from your organization. This POC should be reasonably accessible before and during the event therefore a cellular contact number is preferred as well as an e-mail address. It is expected this person will remain with the team once we are in location and be aware of all of the organizers responsibilities regarding the hosting of the team. This POC will be expected to be in contact by telephone with the SkyHawks Team Captain a minimum of 10 days prior to the event. POC's will be expected to meet with the team upon arrival, provide the most updated schedule for the event, and any items not already provided in prior coordination.

### Accommodations

The SkyHawks travel an average of 300 days a year for training and parachute demonstrations. We therefore require that at a minimum each team member receives a single room that is clean, quiet and of a high standard. Each room must have as a minimum:

- a. One double bed;
- b. Private bathroom; and
- c. Telephone, internet and TV.

Prior to arrival we will forward a team roster by email to assist with accommodation bookings.

### Ground Transportation

Transportation requirements for the SkyHawks are 5 passenger mini-vans or larger SUVs (e.g. Tahoe, Explorer, etc.) each with a full gas tank. The organizer is responsible for providing the necessary insurance for any and all crew members to drive the vehicles, and that the vehicles are made available and accessible upon arrival. Understand that the team consists of 20 members, with extensive equipment to conduct the performances and crowd interactions.

Additionally, the team will require a golf cart (or similar) vehicle for equipment transfer in location of the event. This will be utilized to successfully conduct our performance, as well as engage with spectators and fulfill public relations.

### Fitness Facilities

The members of the SkyHawks strive to keep a high standard of physical fitness in order to



maintain our excellent parachuting safety record; therefore we require that you provide complementary access to a fully equipped local fitness facility to all team members for the duration of their stay. Hotel gyms will not suffice as they are typically limited in their equipment.

## Drop Zone

The **minimum** DZ requirements (landing area) are 50m radius for a circular DZ and 100m x 50m for a rectangular DZ (preferred). Drop zones must be clear of trees, fences, buildings, telephone wires. **No high-tension wires are to be located within 400 meters (1/4 mile) of the DZ.**

*Important note: all obstacles on the outside periphery of the DZ are considered obstacles within the zone from peek to a 45° surrounding. What this means is that obstacles outside the perimeter of the DZ may still be considered impediments if they are of such height and placement that they may interfere with the jumpers landing approach.*

Drop zones within 500 meters (1/3 mile) of open water require safety boats, capable of recovering 2 jumpers, with a minimum crew of 2 (a minimum of 2 boats is mandatory).

Please note that pavement, asphalt, gravel etc. are surfaces that can easily damage our canopies and increase risk of injury to jumpers. Open and unobstructed grass fields are ideal.

An electronic copy of an aerial photograph and a detailed sketch of the DZ and airshow set up is required along with a photograph of the landing surface taken from ground level. All must be sent to the SkyHawks office along with the Demonstration Checklist. Please also photograph any significant potential obstacles on or near the DZ.

Due to safety restrictions placed on parachuting, an on-site evaluation will be conducted by the team to authorise the DZ upon arrival. Note the final decision rests with the Team Commander.

Upon commencement of the performance we require sterility of the DZ. Only designated personnel are allowed in the landing area so event organizers should take precautions to prevent spectators from entering the DZ. Our on site DZ controller will maintain command and control of the area until the last jumper is safely on the ground.

Our aircraft will monitor any frequency specified by the event organizer. The SkyHawks ground to air frequency for drop zone control will be **122.925 MHz** unless otherwise directed. Frequencies are **not** to change from Community Outreach/Media days to performance days.

## Airspace Clearance

Event organizers are responsible for obtaining airspace clearance by submitting a “Notices to Airmen” (NOTAM) up to 13,000 **Above Ground Level (AGL)**. If you require assistance with



this, notify the SkyHawks well in advance. The NOTAM must be submitted to the designated Air Traffic Control tower and a copy sent to our office no fewer than 7 days prior to our first jump opportunity at your event. It is always best to request liberal timings on the NOTAM as parachute timings are not always exact. We suggest 90 mins per flight to allow for unforeseen delays.

*Note: Failure to submit the NOTAM will likely result in cancellation of the SkyHawks participation at your event.*

## Airport Requirements

Wherever possible, airport staff should be brought into the planning process. SkyHawks will require aircraft parking, ideally with team access to the plane at all times.

It is likely we will require refuelling for our aircraft. Airplane type will vary throughout the season and specific fuel needs can be coordinated with the pilots on the ground.

Standard security protocol for military aircrafts applies to all SkyHawks jump platforms and transport aircraft as applicable.

## Public Address (PA) System

The SkyHawks provide our own narration for our performance. The Team Narrator requires a simple introduction before being given control of the PA system. He/She also must have an unobstructed view of the drop zone during the narration of the performance. Music for our performance is sourced from an Ipad so we will require a connector cable that is compatible from an Ipad to your PA system.

## Medical

Due to the high risk nature of our parachute activities the SkyHawks require trauma response service (ambulance) to be able to quickly respond to any potential incidents.

## Show Scheduling

Upon arrival the Team Captain and Team Second in Command will confirm details with the POC with respect to:

- a. Schedule;
- b. Activities and dress;
- b. Performer briefing (safety brief);
- c. Media and public appearances;
- d. Event timings; and
- e. Team's contingency emergency plan.



*Note: Event organizer must ensure airspace clearance (NOTAM) is in accordance with show schedule.*

The SkyHawks have unique scheduling requirements due to the format of their show. The minimum low show drop altitude for the team is 3,000 feet (AGL). Wind drift indicators or “streamers” are dropped from 2,500 feet (AGL) to determine the wind drift **prior** to climbing to drop altitude of between 6000 – 12,500 feet (AGL).

To help illustrate a breakdown of timings the following are examples of tandem flight timings and performance timings:

a. Tandem flight timings:

- (1) Taxi time – **1100 hrs;**
- (2) Take-off – **1105 hrs;**
- (3) First pass - streamer drop begins – **1110 hrs** A/C circles once streamers are thrown so the Jump Master can see where they land the A/C climbs to tandem altitude of 12,500 feet (AGL);
- (4) Streamers finished – **1120 hrs**
- (5) Second pass (SkyHawks not involved in the tandem jumps will exit A/C and freefall before coming under canopy) – **1135 hrs;**
- (6) Third pass (tandem pax exit A/C) – **1140 hrs;** and
- (7) SkyHawks A/C lands – **1150 hrs.**

**Note: Total time required for this tandem flight on NOTAM is approx 1 hr. An additional 30 minutes are required between lifts should multiple jumps be desired.**

b. Performance flight timings for a flag jump:

- (1) Taxi time – **1100 hrs;**
- (2) Take-off – **1105 hrs;**
- (3) First pass - streamer drop begins – **1110 hrs** A/C circles once streamers are thrown so the Jump Master can see where they land the A/C climbs to an altitude of 6,000 feet (AGL);
- (4) Streamers finished – **1115 hrs;**
- (5) Second pass – Flag jumpers exit A/C assuming there is a 5-10 min narration to officially open the show. During the jump the national anthem(s) is/are played. SkyHawks will hold in air until official show opening timing – **1130 hrs;**
- (6) SkyHawks A/C lands – **1145 hrs.**





**Note: Total time required for this performance flight on NOTAM is approx 1 hr.**

c. Performance flight timings for a full show:

- (1) Taxi time – **1400 hrs;**
- (2) Take-off – **1405 hrs;**
- (3) First pass - streamer drop begins – **1410 hrs** A/C circles once streamers are thrown so the Jump Master can see where they land the A/C climbs to an altitude of 6,000 feet (AGL). SkyHawks can hold outside the show box until performance time or jump once jump altitude is reached;

**Note: SkyHawks narration will begin 5 mins before first jumper exits the A/C. The “performance” starts with music etc. In this example the show would begin at 1415hrs.**

- (4) Second pass – first formation exits the A/C (usually a “Canadian-T” - 3 Jumpers) – **1420 hrs;**
- (5) Third pass – second formation exits the A/C (usually a “3-Stack Drag” and a “Parabolic team” - 5 Jumpers) – **1425 hrs;**
- (6) Fourth pass – third formation exits the A/C (usually either 2 x “Candy-canes” or another “Parabolic team” and a “Tri-by-side” formation – 5 Jumpers) – **1433 hrs;**
- (7) SkyHawks A/C flies past while the team is on the DZ performing a “SkyHawks Salute” to the crowd – **1438 hrs.**
- (8) A/C lands – Whenever possible. Full performance time is dependant on winds and is estimated 18 – 25 mins in length.

**Note: Total time required for this performance flight on NOTAM is 1 hr.**

### Demonstration Routine Format

The team is best employed to either open or close your show. Our 25 minute show begins with flags being jumped in and transitions directly into our performance routine. We can jump two 450 square foot national flags at the beginning of the routine (Canadian, American and/or Provincial), and up to one other small provincial or sponsor flag throughout the remainder of the show. This is our preferred format as it keeps our entire show contained within one period of time.

Alternatively, the team can open your event with flags flown by single jumpers and do a full performance routine later on at your event. In order to do this, the team will require a minimum of sixty minutes between aircraft landing and takeoff in order to prepare for the subsequent show. Up to 3 flag jumpers may be available for show openings.



Flags of other organizations (towns, major sponsors, etc.) may also be jumped upon request (min 3' x 5' to be seen in the air). Organizers must provide suitable flags to the team well in advance (30 days) for these special arrangements. There is no guarantee that any flags will be returned in a condition suitable for ceremonial use.

The team also has the ability to conduct multiple full performances or different acts. While the aforementioned routine is our primary performance, a secondary full routine can be conducted should you desire. This offers variety and showcases the extensive parachuting skills team members possess. Please inquire beforehand if a second full routine is something you desire.

## **Communications**

The SkyHawks Public Affairs Representative will work with your Communications team to maximize our participation at your event. Working together to increase exposure will ensure all parties make the most of this opportunity.

It is standard for the SkyHawks to conduct Community Outreach/Media Day activities on the day prior to the event itself. Time for media activities (interviews, ride along opportunities, b-roll footage collection etc.), community outreach activities (visits to youth groups, veterans, hospitals etc.), and tandem opportunities can all be arranged with the SkyHawks Public Affairs Representative. All these activities bring a great value to your event and should be advertised to a maximum extent.

We request that copies of all SkyHawks coverage from your event (i.e. articles, videos, brochures, posters, etc.) be collected and forwarded to the SkyHawks office to assist us in preparing our annual report and maintaining accurate historical records.

### **Public Affairs (PA)**

Advertising the SkyHawks at your event is naturally encouraged via any outlet. To leverage our participation we are willing to conduct media interviews weeks in advance of your event and once in location, at your show site or in studio. These opportunities can be arranged by your communications team or the SkyHawks Public Affairs Representative. Interviews by phone to local radio stations can be done well in advance as well as TV interviews (double-enders etc.). Contests can be arranged with newspapers or radio stations months in advance to create a “buzz” about your event.

Social Media is encouraged and information can be shared from our Facebook account ([www.facebook.com/theskyhawks](http://www.facebook.com/theskyhawks)) and Twitter (@CAFSSkyhawks). Advertising ideas are welcome and can be executed with the SkyHawks PA Rep.



PA products should be coordinated to prevent a duplication of effort. If a News Release (NR) or Media Advisory (MA) is planned we ask that a copy be sent to the SkyHawks PA Rep for approval before release. Information can be verified and confirmed to avoid false information being sent out.

Imagery: For images, videos and information on the team please see the SkyHawks Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/theskyhawks](http://www.facebook.com/theskyhawks). High resolution photos can be downloaded from our photo gallery as well as our official SkyHawks logo for use in websites, programs, social media, promo items etc. Also available are a 1 min and 3 min promotional videos that can be utilized at airports, in commercials etc.

While at your event we ask that show photographers connect with the PA Rep to arrange photo opportunities (in the air and on the ground) and to exchange contact information. We would appreciate any still and video images you collect on the team for future use in our communications products. Credit will of course be given to the organization the footage/images originated from.

## **Public Relations**

As stated above it is standard for the team to carry out Community Outreach/Media Day activities the day before your event. On this day we are prepared to do a number of activities, which can be arranged with the SkyHawks PA Rep, to reach out to the community and help promote your event. These include the following:

- a. Presentations at youth clubs, schools, local events etc.;
- b. Visits to hospitals and at local events (telethons, family days, school events etc.);
- c. Packing of parachutes and autographs; and
- d. Provide tandem opportunities to stakeholders and accredited media.

Presentations: Arrangements can be made with the SkyHawks PA Rep to have the team make presentations at schools, clubs etc. to speak on a variety of topics (life as a SkyHawk, personal experiences, military experiences, women in the military etc). The team can bring parachutes, photos and videos to augment the presentation. As such we would require audio visual equipment to be arranged at the venue.

Visits: Sometimes unique opportunities can offer exceptional value when seeking exposure. Telethons, charity and local events are great examples where participation can be synergetic for all parties involved. The SkyHawks look forward to participating at events such as these if time permits while in location.

Packing and autograph sessions: After each performance the SkyHawks split up into the crowd and pack their parachutes in the audience encouraging as much participation as allowable given the venue. This unique opportunity gives spectators a chance to engage with the jumpers to ask



questions or to satisfy curiosity by watching how the chutes are packed. This process usually takes 60 minutes and the jumpers will usually hand out SkyHawks promotional items (pins, stickers and arm bands etc.)

Following the packing of the parachutes the team will gather at a location to be determined by the organizer for the team to sign autographs. The SkyHawks will provide all promotional items to be signed and will require the following:

- a. shaded area in a high traffic location;
- b. a tent or facility to block from inclement weather (when required);
- c. 6 x six-foot tables;
- d. 20 x chairs; and
- e. Water.

Autograph sessions can last for **up to an hour** if time permits and should be announced by the event's MC so no one misses out on the opportunity.

Tandem opportunities: The SkyHawks can conduct multiple tandem flights per event on the day prior to their first performance or on performance days if time permits (not encouraged). Additional tandem flights may be executed upon approval by the Team Captain if the request is justified by the event media plan and if other factors such as fuel, airspace and time allow. These flights can be arranged with the SkyHawks in advance to identify how many tandem opportunities your event has been allocated. The purpose of these flights is to showcase the Canadian Armed Forces to media on the ground and to provide stakeholders/accredited media personnel the opportunity to experience the thrill of skydiving. This opportunity is a great way to advertise your event to accredited media personnel in your local area. Tandem flights can accommodate the following:

- a. 3x Tandem passengers;
- b. 3x ride-along passengers; and
- c. Drop Zone media.

***Important note:** At no time can an event organizer guarantee a tandem jump unless they have received approval from the SkyHawks. The SkyHawks reserve the right to cancel tandem flights due to safety concerns, operational priorities or logistical limitations. **Further, any flight above 10,000ft MSL on an RCAF aircraft will not be able to support ride-along PAX.***

Tandem PAX: For safety reasons there are specific restrictions that tandem PAX must meet to be considered for a tandem jump. Tandem PAX **MUST NOT EXCEED** the following:

- a. Maximum weight of 91 kilos (200 lbs);
- b. Maximum height of 183 cm (6 feet); and



- c. Maximum age of 50.

***Important note:** It is at the discretion of the Tandem Master and Team Captain to accept or refuse a tandem PAX if he/she exceeds these restrictions or is physically or mentally incapable.*

Tandem PAX must arrive at the RV location at the time specified by the SkyHawks. This timing will normally be 60 minutes prior to the tandem flight. Failure to arrive at the specified time will most likely result in a lost opportunity.

The SkyHawks Team Captain is the approving authority for all tandem PAX. This approval must be obtained at least 24 hours before the scheduled tandem flight so names of suggested PAX must be identified 5 days prior to the jump and submitted to the SkyHawks Team Captain for approval. When submitting suggestions for tandem PAX the Team Captain will require the following information:

- a. Name of tandem PAX;
- b. Title;
- c. Name of media outlet;
- d. Height;
- e. Weight;
- f. Age;
- g. Passenger contact information (preferably a cell phone number);
- h. Coverage expected; and
- i. Remarks (unique cases where the tandem PAX is not accredited media).

It is the responsibility of the organizer (or media liaison) to ensure their identified tandem PAX are contacted and relayed timings. Failure to meet specified timings could result in loss of tandem opportunity.

**Ride-Along PAX:** For certain tandem and/or practice flights there may be an opportunity for ride-along PAX. These availabilities are dependent on type of aircraft used and RCAF policy. Any flight over 10,000ft. MSL on an RCAF aircraft will not be able to support ride-alongs. Furthermore, due to CAF policy, no ride-alongs during our demonstration jumps will be entertained, as there will be no military member available to escort the PAX. These seats should be allocated to accredited media, event and CAF stakeholders. This opportunity provides media personnel with a unique experience of being in the aircraft to witness the teams' routine and to witness jumpers exiting the aircraft. Due to space in the aircraft no large TV cameras will be allowed on board. Handheld cameras or smaller are permitted.

***Important note:** Individuals with medical restrictions, those prone to motion sickness, or who have a serious fear of heights should not be considered.*



A list of potential ride-along PAX should be submitted to the SkyHawks Team Captain to maximize the value of this opportunity.

Ride-along PAX must arrive 60 minutes prior to the tandem flight at the predetermined RV time and location discussed with the SkyHawks to sign waivers, receive a harness and be briefed on what to expect in the air. Please advise PAX that due to cooler air at altitude a jacket or sweater is highly recommended.

Drop Zone media: Media who are unable to participate in the SkyHawks tandem flight may be invited to the SkyHawks Drop Zone (DZ or landing area) to collect footage of the jumpers in the air and tandem PAX landing. This exciting and relevant footage can be best captured from the DZ vantage point. Accredited media and family members of the tandem PAX can be invited to the DZ during Community Outreach/Media Days. These invitations are dependent on multiple factors and at the discretion of the Team Captain. If on the DZ, all personnel will be expected to obey the instructions of the DZ Controller or face removal or cancellation of the jump.

## Appreciation

The SkyHawks will be honoured to attend any reception or related event(s) that organizers wish to extend an invitation to. Please note for planning purposes the team will require three hours after landing to conduct post-show duties, change clothing and arrive at your function.

In order to acknowledge the efforts to have the team perform at your event, the SkyHawks may make lithograph presentation(s) to selected individuals in your organization. If there are individuals or organizations you wish us to thank specifically, by presenting a lithograph, please make this suggestion by filling out that portion of the Demonstration Checklist. We can accommodate a maximum of two suggestions per event, and if approved by the Team Captain will be presented at a time coordinated with the organizer.

The SkyHawks are always grateful to receive letters of appreciation. Should your organization wish to do so, such letters may be written and sent to any of the following recipients:

The Chief of the Defence Staff  
National Defence Headquarters  
Major-General George R. Pearkes Building  
101 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K2

Commander Canadian Army  
National Defence Headquarters



Major-General George R. Pearkes Building  
101 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K2

Commanding Officer  
Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre  
Canadian Forces Base Trenton  
PO Box 1000, Stn Forces  
Astra, ON K0K 3W0

## Contact Us

### Mailing Address:

Canadian Armed Forces Parachute Team, the SkyHawks  
Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre  
PO Box 1000, Station Forces  
Astra ON K0K 3W0

Phone : (613) 392-2811 ext 2049

Email: [skyhawks@forces.gc.ca](mailto:skyhawks@forces.gc.ca)

