



**2009-2010 Team Handbook**

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## **I. For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (*FIRST*)**

### Section 1: Vision

*To transform our culture by creating a world where science and technology are celebrated and where young people dream of becoming science and technology heroes.*

### Section 2: Mission

To inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skill, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.

### Section 3: Robotics Programs

For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (*FIRST*) is the organization that Aquidneck Island Robotics endorses to achieve its mission. *FIRST* coordinates the following three tiers of robotics competitions:

- *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC): FRC combines the excitement of sport with the rigors of science and technology. Under strict rules, limited resources, and time limits, teams of 25 students or more are challenged to raise funds, design a team “brand,” hone teamwork skills, and build and program robots to perform prescribed tasks against a field of competitors. It is as close to “real-world engineering” as a student can get. Volunteer professional mentors lend their time and talents to guide each team.
- *FIRST* Tech Challenge (FTC): FTC is designed for those who want to compete head-to-head, using a sports model. Teams of up to 10 students are responsible for designing, building, and programming their robots to compete in an alliance format against other teams. The robot kit is reusable from year-to-year and is programmed using a variety of languages. Teams, including coaches, mentors and volunteers, are required to develop strategy and build robots based on sound engineering principles. Awards are given for the competition as for well as for community outreach, design, and other real-world accomplishments.
- *FIRST* Lego League (FLL): FLL introduces younger students to real-world engineering challenges by building LEGO-based robots to complete tasks on a thematic playing surface. FLL teams, guided by their imaginations and adult coaches, discover exciting career possibilities and, through the process, learn to make positive contributions to society.

## II. Aquidneck Island Robotics

### Section 1: Vision

*To transform the culture of the local community by creating a society where local youth will dream to become science and technology heroes.*

### Section 2: Mission

Aquidneck Island Robotics (hereinafter referred to as AIR) is a 4-H club dedicated to mentoring local youth about science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects.

### Section 3: Recognition

AIR is organized under the National 4-H council and locally under Rhode Island 4-H. Rhode Island 4-H is the youth outreach education program of Cooperative Extension in the University of Rhode Island's College of the Environment and Life Sciences. The organization offers "hands-on" learning activities for young people so they will become production citizens. Self-directed study and "Learning by Doing" are key to the attraction and success of the 4-H program.

### Section 4: History

In May of 2008, Mr. Richard Blight and Mr. Michael DeSousa, former team mentors of FRC Team 121, created AIR. Formed as an organization that would support the development and sustainment of numerous *FIRST* robotics programs and teams AIR began by supporting the FTC Team 121 Rhode Rage, during the 2008-2009 competition season. Forms of support included, but were not limited to, mentorship, technical assistance, fundraising, and travel logistics.

After two years of successful team management with Rhode Rage, AIR developed and signed an Educational Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC) Division Newport, RI. This EPA allows AIR to share NUWC resources including, but not limited to, mentorship from NUWC employees, the use of NUWC workshops and outreach centers, and the use of NUWC tools and technical resources.

To date, AIR manages five *FIRST* Robotics teams, all of which are competing in the 2009-2010 *FIRST* competition season:

- FRC Team 78, Air Strike
- FTC Team 121, Rhode Rage
- FLL Team 6609, Rhode Block
- FLL Team 8860, Rhode Burn
- FLL Team 10152, Rhode Scholars

## Section 5: Goals

- Enrich the minds of every youth member who joins the team and prepare them for a successful post-secondary school education and career.
- Assist youth members in earning *FIRST*-related scholarships every year.
- Promote, encourage, and assist the creation of new FRC, FTC, and FLL teams in Newport County, Rhode Island.
- Enlighten the Newport County community about the rewards and benefits of science, technology, and engineering through outreach programs and service.
- Promote the mentorship and sponsorship of *FIRST* teams.
- Strive to win a programs award by being an exemplary team and a model for other teams.
- Earn technical awards and win competition events through exceptional robot performance.
- Collaborate with and help other FRC, FTC, and FLL teams.

### III. Community Impact

#### Section 1: Events

- AIR Open House:

At least once a year AIR opens its doors to the community at their open house. Youths of all ages are invited. During the event, youths learn about AIR through robot demonstrations, team presentations, hands-on trials, mentor Q & A's, and other interactive exhibits.

- Community Events

Each summer and fall, AIR participates in local family oriented events such as the Harvest fair in Middletown, RI, the Escobar Corn Maze in Portsmouth, RI, and the RI 4-H Fair in Portsmouth, RI. At these events, AIR mentors and youth members describe our program, demonstrate past years' robots, and give spectators a hands-on experience with robotics.

#### Section 2: Partnerships

- Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC)

AIR has an Educational Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the NUWC Division Newport, RI. This EPA allows AIR to share NUWC resources including, but not limited to, mentorship from NUWC employees, the use of NUWC workshops and outreach centers, and the use of NUWC tools and technical resources.

- University of Rhode Island (URI)

In 2004, members of AIR formed the URI Robotics Club. The club recruits college students to learn and practice mentorship skills through AIR's programs. The URI Student Senate formally recognizes this club.

- Newport County Schools

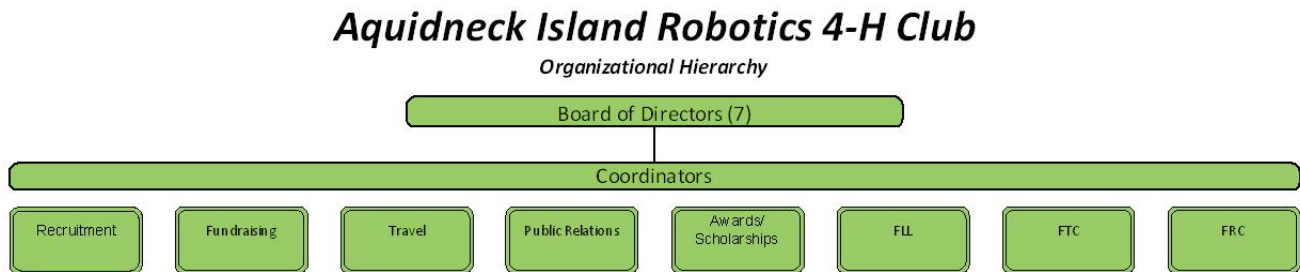
AIR has an understanding with the Newport County schools that have students involved in the FRC and FTC programs. This understanding allows students to inform teachers ahead of time of absences due to competition related travel and develop a plan to make up any missed work and/or exams.

## IV. Organizational Structure

### Section 1: Bylaws

AIR operates according to the most recent version of bylaws adopted by the club on XX-XX-2009.

### Section 2: Organizational Hierarchy



*Figure 1 – AIR Organizational Hierarchy*

### Section 3: Committees

AIR has the following permanent committees, each managed by a different coordinator:

- Recruitment & Retention
- Fundraising
- Travel
- Public Relations

AIR may create a special committee, managed by a coordinator, if the need arises. Some examples of a special committee include, but are not limited to:

- Grants
- Offseason Activities
- Team Building/Morale

## V. Funding

### Section 1: Example FRC Budget

FRC is the most expensive program in FIRST. Figure 2 shows a breakdown of a standard FRC season budget.

Item (Per Team)	Cost (\$)
Team Registration/ BAE Regional	5,500
Championship Registration*	5,000
Robot Parts	1,000
Field Elements	500
Spirit Items	250
Miscellaneous	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,750.00</b>

\*Qualification required.

*Figure 2 – FRC Budget Breakdown*

Based on previous years of travel experiences, AIR can estimate the competition travel costs for youth members and mentors. These numbers vary year to year.

Item (Per Person)	Cost (\$)
NH BAE Regional Lodging (2 Nights)	75
NH BAE Regional Food	85
Championship Flight*	350
Championship Lodging (4 Nights)*	200
Championship Food*	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>910.00</b>

\*Qualification required.

*Figure 3 – FRC Travel Cost Breakdown*

### Section 2: Example FTC Budget

FTC is the second most expensive program in FIRST. The reduced cost gives the team the opportunity to attend more competitions. Figure 4 shows a breakdown of a standard FTC season budget.

Item (Per Team)	Cost (\$)
Team Registration	1,000
Massachusetts Event Registration	300
Rhode Island Event Registration	150
Delaware Event Registration	250
Championship Event Registration*	1,000
Robot Parts	1,500
Miscellaneous	250
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,450.00</b>

\*Qualification required.

Figure 4 – FTC Budget Breakdown

Based on previous years of travel experience, AIR can estimate the competition travel costs for youth members and mentors. These numbers vary year to year. (The Championship event for FRC and FTC are at the same venue, so members on both teams incur Championship travel fees only once.)

Item (Per Person)	Cost (\$)
Delaware Event Lodging (2 Nights)	120
Delaware Event Food	85
Championship Flight*	350
Championship Lodging (4 Nights)*	200
Championship Food*	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>955.00</b>

\*Qualification required.

Figure 5 – FTC Travel Cost Breakdown

### Section 3: Example FLL Budget

FLL is the least expensive program in *FIRST*. Figure 6 shows a breakdown of a standard FLL season budget (travel and personal costs are not included):

Item (Per Team)	Cost (\$)
Team Registration	200
Robot Parts	500
Field Elements	75
Rhode Island Event Registration	75
Spirit Items	150
Miscellaneous	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1100</b>

Figure 6 – FLL Budget Breakdown

#### Section 4: Grants

Organizational and corporate grants are AIR’s primary source of funding. Throughout the year, youth members and mentors are encouraged to search for possible grants to submit to the AIR Board of Directors (BOD). The BOD reserves the authority to either write and submit grants or assign the work to the fundraising committee.

Grants vary in size and come from different private and public companies and organizations. This money is often earmarked in the grant requirements for registration and/or a specific *FIRST* program. Money awarded from grants cannot be expected to subsidize travel expenses.

#### Section 5: Club Fundraising

General club fundraising is AIR’s secondary source of funding, which includes, but is not limited to, the follow methods:

- Fundraisers (i.e. bake sales, car washes, golf tournaments, raffles and more).
- Personal donation collections.
- Local and corporate business donations.

The AIR fundraising committee operates year round and is run by an appointed coordinator, as described in the AIR Bylaws.

All club fundraisers are conducted with the understanding that the specific fundraiser will benefit the AIR general fund, a specific program level (i.e. FRC, FTC, FLL), and/or individual youth member travel funds (based on member participation).

The fundraising committee, in conjunction with the BOD, will do their best to organize and execute team fundraisers to fill shortfalls in the AIR general fund, a specific program level, and/or to subsidize travel expenses. All youth members and mentors are highly encouraged to participate in team fundraisers.

## Section 6: Youth Member Travel Funds

During the planning of a fundraiser, the fundraising committee may decide to allow participating youth members to benefit directly from their hard work. Depending on the type of fundraiser, a percentage of the fundraised money will go towards a participating youth members travel fund. The percentages and participation requirements will be publicized prior to the fundraiser.

For example, if AIR hosts a car wash that raises \$500 in profit with 10 youth members participating for the entire event, AIR can split the profit with them. AIR will take \$250 for the general fund, and \$25 will go into each of the 10 youth members travel funds. The club treasurer maintains the youth members travel funds.

When a balance is announced for a youth members next travel experience, their travel fund balance will be automatically applied and the youth member will only owe the difference.

This is done to help alleviate the costs to youth members and parents and reward the youth members who participate in AIR fundraisers. The money in a youth members travel fund can only go towards hotel and transportation expenses. If the youth member has a balance in their fund at the conclusion of a season, the money can be rolled over to the next season if they are still a youth member. The money is forfeited to the AIR general fund if the youth member is dismissed, quits, has no travel to use it on, and/or graduates, or is no longer a youth member.

## VI. Club Membership

### Section 1: Equal Opportunity

AIR shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual preference, age, handicap, national origin, religious affiliations, or religious beliefs.

### Section 2: Club Composition

AIR is comprised of adult mentors, youth members between the ages of 9-18, and parents/guardians. The majority of the club members reside in the Newport County, RI area. Mentors carry out the administration of the club and youth member technical support. Additionally, the club welcomes support from individual volunteers who work professionally in the surrounding community, especially professional engineers. The family members of AIR's youth members form a dedicated support group for the club through their volunteer efforts.

### Section 3: Application

Before becoming a member of AIR, youth members, adult mentors, and parent/guardian members are required to complete an AIR and RI 4-H application. Additionally, adult mentors and parent/guardian members must authorize RI 4-H to conduct a background check.

### Section 4: Academic Standing

Academic success will remain a priority for all youth members in the club. It is expected that students be able to fulfill commitments to both their academics first, and then their robotics team. Any students with a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of below 1.7 (C-, based on a 4.0 scale) will not be permitted to travel with the team until their GPA has been raised above that threshold. Youth members who do not meet the GPA requirement will still be allowed to attend team meetings but must use 50% of their time there to do to schoolwork. Present club members will be willing and able to help with the studying and homework.

### Section 5: Member Classifications

Classification	Personnel
Club Member	Any AIR member who is up to date on dues and forms
Club Mentor	AIR adult mentor
Youth Member	AIR member between the ages of 9-18
Parent/Guardian Member	Adult volunteer and also Parent/Guardian of a youth member

*Figure 7 – AIR Member Classifications*

## Section 6: Membership Dues

AIR requires youth members and mentors to pay yearly membership dues. These dues include the following items:

- Official membership in Rhode Island 4-H
- Medical insurance
- AIR specific team T-shirt

The membership fees for the 2009-2010 *FIRST* season are listed below:

Member Type	Cost (\$)
FLL Youth Member	20.00
FLL Parent/Guardian Member	20.00
FLL Mentor	20.00
FTC Youth Member	25.00
FTC Parent/Guardian Member	15.00
FTC Mentor	25.00
FRC Youth Member	25.00
FRC Parent/Guardian Member	15.00
FRC Mentor	25.00

*Figure 8 – AIR Member Dues*

## VII. Meetings

### Section 1: Club Business Meetings

AIR club business meetings are every Tuesday at 6:30PM in the Undersea Collaboration and Technical Outreach Center of Building 80, NUWC, Newport, RI. During the FRC build season, business meetings are held on Saturday at 1:00PM in Building 2, Naval Station Newport, RI.

### Section 2: Team Meetings

FRC, FTC, and FLL meeting dates and times vary based on the program's season, mentor availability, and workload. Each team leader will produce a monthly or season schedule for their respective team. In general, the meetings and locations are as follows:

Team Type	"Build Season"	Meeting Frequency	Duration	Location
FRC	Early January – Mid February	Daily	3 hours +	Building 2, Naval Station Newport
FTC	Early September – Late March	Twice a week	3 hours	Building 2, Naval Station Newport
FLL	Mid August – Early January	Once a week	2 hours	Building 80, NUWC

*Figure 9 – AIR Team Meetings*

### Section 3: Attendance

Although each program level varies in the amount and frequency of meetings, youth members are expected to make their best effort to attend as many meetings as possible. FLL and FTC youth members are expected to attend at least 75% of meetings during their build season. FRC youth members are expected to attend at least 50% of build season meetings.

Team and club meetings are scheduled far in advance and highly advertised on the AIR website. Youth members should have enough time to adjust work and social schedules to try to meet the above expectations. If there is a conflict, youth members are encouraged to inform and potentially work with their team leader to resolve it.

Attendance is taken at all AIR functions and poor attendance may result in a loss of privileges, including the ability to travel with the team. It is the responsibility of the youth member to sign in and out at the beginning of each build season meeting.

### Section 4: Participation

Participation is one of the most important aspects of the AIR program. In addition to good attendance, youth members are required to put forth their best effort to accomplish daily tasks and goals. Other youth members, club mentors, and the team leader notice poor participation.

Poor participation may result in a loss of privileges, including the ability to travel with the team, the contacting of parents/guardians, and/or the recommendation of dismissal from the team by the BOD.

## **VIII. Code of Conduct**

### Section 1: Gracious Professionalism

AIR encourages all members to follow the *FIRST* definition of gracious professionalism:

*Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of FIRST. It is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community.*

*With Gracious Professionalism, fierce competition and mutual gain are not separate notions. Gracious professionals learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. They avoid treating anyone like losers. No chest thumping tough talk, but no sticky-sweet platitudes either. Knowledge, competition, and empathy are comfortably blended.*

*In the long run, Gracious Professionalism is part of pursuing a meaningful life. One can add to society and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing one has acted with integrity and sensitivity.*

### Section 2: Club rules

AIR believes in the strict adherence of all RI and National 4-H policies, and state and federal laws. The following policies and standards apply at all AIR functions, which include (but are not limited to) team meetings, club meetings, fundraisers, team parties, and while on team travel:

- Youth members will respect all mentors, parents/guardians, and other youth members.
- Youth members will respect the rights of others and their property.
- Youth members will participate in a positive and enthusiastic manner.
- Youth members will behave in ways that protect the health and safety of themselves and others.
- Youth members will be respectful of the facilities, tools, equipment, and things being used by the club.
- Youth members will not use profane, obscene, or vulgar language in written, gestured, and/or verbal form.
- Youth members will exhibit dignified and restrained actions in expressing affection towards members of the opposite sex.
- Youth members will not be in possession or under the influence of illegal substances.
- Youth members will not be in possession of weapons.

### Section 3: Disciplinary Actions

The team leader and/or the BOD may impose disciplinary actions when they feel a club rule has been violated. Disciplinary actions may include one or more of the following:

- Early dismissal from an AIR function, which may include competitions while on travel. Any non-refundable costs associated with an early dismissal will be a loss for the youth mentor.
- Contacting of the parents, legal guardians, or authorities.
- Search and seizure of suspected or found forbidden items.\*
- Dismissal from AIR.

\*Youth members are not entitled to any sort of "Miranda"-type warning before being questioned AIR club mentors, nor are club mentors required to contact a youth member's parent or guardian before questioning the youth member. However, club mentors will tell all youth members why they are being questioned. In addition, club mentors may conduct searches of youth members and their belongings if the club mentor has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the youth member violated RI and National 4-H policies, AIR club rules, or state and federal laws.

## **IX. Safety**

### Section 1: Club Safety

The responsibility of safety lies with each member of AIR. Each team member is required to abide by the safety practices of all club and event facilities. Almost all aspects of the project involve the use of tools and equipment that are potentially dangerous if not used properly.

Youth members of AIR are viewed by the club mentors as young adults, acting much like employees of an organization. It is important to maintain a positive image to our community, sponsors, and *FIRST*, and this begins with safety. All AIR members must know and demonstrate safe and professional behavior wherever the team conducts business.

### Section 2: Safe Practices

The following safety practices apply at all AIR functions which include, but are not limited to, team meetings, club meetings, fundraisers, team parties, and while on team travel:

- Club members will respect the safety captain(s) and adhere to any requests made by them.
- Club members will not use tools and equipment without proper training
- Youth members may use power tools or equipment only under the supervision of an adult club mentor.
- Club members must have completed and been signed off on any required NUWC safety training.
- Club members will be required to wear safety glasses in work areas of NUWC facilities and in the pit area of all *FIRST* competitions. In addition, club members may be asked to wear gloves, facemasks, and/or ear protection during certain tasks.
- Club members will be required to maintain a clean and organized work area. In addition, club members will be required to clean up work areas at the conclusion of a workday. This process includes sweeping the floors, sweeping the work surfaces, putting away tools, putting away materials, and disposing of trash.
- Club members will be required to wear proper clothing at competitions and in work areas such as closed toed shoes and correctly fitting clothing.
- Club members will be required to tie back long hair while working with power tools and on the robot.
- Horseplay will not be tolerated at any time on NUWC/Navy property or at any club event.

## **X. Family Involvement**

### Section 1: Importance of Family Involvement

AIR strongly believes in families supporting their children in any AIR robotics team. Family involvement can be beneficial to both their children's experience and to the AIR organizations. Parents/guardians who are active in their children's youth programs often develop a better understanding of their children's skills and goals.

### Section 2: Types of Family Involvement

AIR has many opportunities for families. Some parents/guardians may want to become an actual club mentor: no technical experience is required, just a desire to learn and help others. In addition, some parents/guardians may just want to take on specific tasks and roles as a parent/guardian member. Some of these tasks and roles are as follows:

- Assist in the supervision of youth members at AIR functions which include, but are not limited to, team meetings, club meetings, fundraisers, team parties, and while on team travel.
- Provide food for long club meetings.
- Join a committee.
- Support fundraisers and team parties.
- Become a club mentor.
- Drive youth members to club meetings, team meetings, and competitions.

## XI. Communication

### Section 1: Importance of Communication

All AIR programs are time intensive and often require dynamic meeting schedules and plans. It is imperative that all club members, especially youth members and parents/guardians, be kept well informed of all plans. By staying informed, club members will be able to hone their levels of involvement so they may better fit their busy schedules. Also, important deadlines often come up and it is vital that club members respond so they do not miss new and planned opportunities.

### Sections 2: Types of Communication

- Website

The AIR website is a great resource for information. Here you will find the specific team meeting schedules, event schedules, club meeting agendas, club meeting minutes, and all the forms required for involvement in AIR. In addition, the website will have links to official *FIRST* information, team photos, and other informative news and websites.

The AIR website is also where you can look for last minute updates such as meeting cancelations due to inclement weather.

<http://www.air4h.org>

- Email

The AIR BOD often sends emails to the entire organization, team leaders often send emails to an entire team, and club members often send emails to each other. Email is AIR's most common and important form of communication. Club members are required to check and respond to their email regularly.

Club leader (Rick Blight):	<a href="mailto:rick@air4h.org">rick@air4h.org</a>
Club Treasurer (Sue Violet):	<a href="mailto:sviolet@cox.net">sviolet@cox.net</a>
Club Secretary (Tom Dolan):	<a href="mailto:thomas.j.dolan@navy.mil">thomas.j.dolan@navy.mil</a>

Board of Directors email:	<a href="mailto:bod@lists.air4h.org">bod@lists.air4h.org</a>
FRC program leader (Robert Zeuge):	<a href="mailto:robert.zeuge@pentair.com">robert.zeuge@pentair.com</a>
FTC program leader (Mike DeSousa):	<a href="mailto:michael.desousa@navy.mil">michael.desousa@navy.mil</a>
FLL program leader (Gary Gabriel):	<a href="mailto:gary.m.gabriel@gmail.com">gary.m.gabriel@gmail.com</a>
Director (Joe Menassa)	<a href="mailto:jmenassa@gpworldwide.com">jmenassa@gpworldwide.com</a>

- Phone

The AIR BOD and specific team leaders are the only club members with access to the club roster with telephone numbers. They may call youth members and parents with important information of last minute changes if email is not quick enough.

- Facebook & Twitter

AIR will try to stay current with the social networking sites and may post relevant information on Facebook and/or Twitter. Youth members and parents may choose to follow AIR on these sites. These however, are not a substitute for following emails or the websites.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Aquidneck-Island-Robotics-4-H-Club/206705012528?ref=sgm>

<http://twitter.com/AIR4H>

## XII. Resources

### Section 1: Importance of Available Resources.

The *FIRST* robotics programs can be very in-depth and overwhelming, especially for new participants. AIR wants youth members and their parents to have the ability to learn as much as possible about these programs. Veteran AIR members are always willing to introduce and educate youth members and their parents on the *FIRST* robotics programs. The veteran AIR members are great sources of knowledge.

### Section 2: Types of Resources

- *FIRST* website

The *FIRST* website is the best place to learn more about the robotics programs, their goals, and history. It is also program specific information, such as the competition manuals, updates, competition venues and dates, and other team information can be found.

<http://www.usfirst.org>

- Chief Delphi Forums

The forums on this website have become the communication point for all *FIRST* students and adults. Specifically, the FRC forums have the most members and thread, but information on FLL and FTC is also available. Here, members of the *FIRST* community from around the world share ideas, show photos, and chit chat about robots, teams, and competitions. AIR members are encouraged to join and share their thoughts, however, please remember to act and speak graciously as you will be representing your specific team and AIR.

<http://www.chiefdelphi.com>

- The Blue Alliance (TBA)

TBA is a scouting database for FRC teams. Here, with only a simple search of a team number, data, and video of the past five years can be found for nearly any team and robot. This is a great website to learn and watch the results of other competitions happening around the world.

<http://www.thebluealliance.net>

2009-2010 Handbook Signoff Sheet

Please complete and return to Thomas Dolan

I, \_\_\_\_\_, as a youth member of Aquidneck Island Robotics (AIR) 4-H Club, have read this handbook and hereby agree to the policies, procedures, rules, and guidelines conveyed. If I violate these rules, I understand and agree to the disciplinary actions listed in this handbook.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, as my child's parent/guardian have read this handbook and hereby agree to the policies, procedures, rules, and guidelines conveyed and will assist my child in following them. If my child violates the rules outlined, I understand and agree to the disciplinary actions listed in this handbook.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_