

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISING LOCATION MANAGER

From Script to Screen

1. Read the Script, do a location breakdown of the script references / scene headings and take part in discussions with the Director and Designer to understand their vision for the project.
2. In response to their creative briefing, research, scout and photograph potential locations appropriate for the interpretation of the project and that help to tell the story. Be ready to employ different research & scouting techniques, relative to the particular requirements of the given creative brief.
3. Prepare photographic presentations for the Production Designer and Director, paying attention to the need for different mediums (printed photos on boards vs. on-screen slide shows vs. video footage). Be sure to photograph the locations very well – clear and comprehensive with good composition. Shoot the reverse.
4. Draft proposal documents to determine viability of the proposed shoot requirements and glean principle approval from Location owners.
5. Arrange and attend all recces (visits) to chosen locations with all other HoDs (Heads of Departments).
6. Work alongside the 1st AD and other key HoDs to help schedule all the location requirements, whilst at the same time fielding the complexities of location and cast availability. Don't let the tails wag the Dog.
7. Prepare a Location Budget and negotiate fees to comply with approved budget.
8. Negotiate legally binding Location Agreements to include Art Department and Lighting Department alterations and oversee all preparation and reinstatement.
9. Negotiate with Local Authority representatives to negotiate and secure permissions for parking, filming on the street, street furniture removal, lighting positions, permission for SFX rain and/or wet-downs, etc.
10. Negotiate with Police for filming on the street regarding traffic control for vision, sound and cast & crew safety.
11. Negotiate with members of the community where major scenes are to be shot, ensuring the Crew is aware of particular sensitivities and that all members of the community are aware of the production plans. Ensure that the project always leaves an appropriate lasting positive legacy within the given Community.
12. Set up and manage a Unit Base for each filming day, providing logistics support for all production departments.
13. Provide directions for all the crew to get to the unit base and the location each day: Movement Orders, acknowledging the changing nature of how they have evolved over time.
14. Find sources of fresh water for catering, wardrobe, and make-up departments. Find sources and negotiate permission for use of fresh water for Visual Effects (VFX) (rain / wet down / snow and clear-up).
15. Find and provide space for Extras Changing areas to include Wardrobe and Make-up positions, allowing adequate time for set up and strike. Provide all equipment for Extras Changing areas (make-up mirrors, tables, chairs, heating, cooling, etc).
16. Provide heating or cooling and where possible ensure adequate weather protection for Crew.
17. Ensure Safe Access to locations – eg. lay temporary “track-way”, or in some cases even build roads; consider deploying military access facilities and/or employing 3rd parties to move gear and equipment for you.
18. Provide Security for the Locations, the negotiated parking positions, and all the technical and facility vehicles.
19. Provide alternative parking for members of the public whose spaces might be taken by film vehicles.
20. Clean the location – prior to commencement of activity if a Location is contaminated in any way, and afterwards to ensure the Location Owner is happy with the condition of the Location after use.
21. Come the shoot, remain calm in the face of adversity. React and manage the unforeseen and keep the Film Crew happy and working without delay. Maintain good relationships with Location Owners and members of the General Public. The secret is being able to ask someone not to do something they want to, or not to do something they do, all without upsetting them.
22. Rubbish clearance – including collection and disposal of catering rubbish on a daily basis, and major Art Department strikes at the end.
23. Thank the Location Owners, Council Representatives and Police for their help and hospitality. Walk away with your heads held high, knowing that you would be welcomed back.