Dear NAMES

Thank you for accepting the role of Sergeant-At-Arms for the [NAME OF CONTEST] Contest.

The purpose of this email is to acquaint you with the procedure for the contest.

The following is pertinent to you as a contest official. Please read carefully.

**Place and Date of Contest**

Date:

Time: Contestant and Officials Briefing

Contest commences at

Venue:

Transport

Parking:

**Procedure for Contest**

Please familiarise yourself with the [Toastmasters Speech Contest Rulebook (1171)](https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/2021-2022-speech-contest-rulebook-english). A copy is embedded within the Hyperlink.

Here is a [video overview of contest roles, “When You are the Judge” and “Judges Guide and Ballot”](https://www.toastmasters.org/Leadership-Central/Speech-Contests/Speech-Contest-Tutorials).

The contest officials briefing will be held at the contest venue on the day at [TIME]. Please ensure that you arrive early to be on time for the briefing.

If you have any questions, please contact me on [MOBILE #] or email [EMAIL].

Yours Sincerely,

Name

Role

**Role of the Sergeant-At-Arms**

The Sergeant-At-Arms (SAA) role is to help manage the venue, audience and contestants to make sure everything runs smoothly and the venue looks professional with little distraction to the contest participants.

There will be two or three SAAs who will work together during the contest, in particular the Table Topics and Evaluation Contests.

The Chief Judge will provide you guidance on what is required on the day. You will need a Contest Agenda and/or run-sheet, a list of contestants and note the speaking order of the contestants. Make sure you know where the speaking area is, where the Contestant should stand/sit once in the room and waiting to be called by the Toastmaster, and also where the break-out room is where contestants wait outside the main room.

Evaluation contestants will be given an Evaluation Notes Form when the Test Speaker is ready to speak. That is the only form allowed by Evaluation Contestants to scribble their notes on. It is taken into the breakout room with them to spent about five minutes to work on their Evaluation speech. Once the five minutes is up, the SAA will collect all notes to hand back to each Evaluation Contestant when they are called to speak.

One SAA will remain in the contest room at all times. Either SAA1, or SAA2 if there are three available, will remain close to the door to help call the next Contestant forward as soon as the previous Contestant finishes his/her speech.

In the case of the Evaluation Contest, one SAA will remain with the Evaluation Contestants in the breakout room and another close to the door. One is handed the Evaluation Notes at the end of five minutes to give to the speaker just prior to speaking.

The SAA2, or SAA3 if there are three SAAs, will accompany the Contestants to and from the main venue to the ‘break-out’ room where contestants wait for their turn to speak.

Table Topics and Evaluation contestants will be asked to leave the room and follow the SAA to the breakout room so they are out of hearing range when the contestants before them do their table topics or Evaluation speech. The Table Topics and Evaluation contestants wait in the breakout room area until they are called in one by one following the SAA to the stage area where directed to wait until called upon by the Toastmaster.

For Table Topics - Please let the contestant know that the Toastmaster will read out loud what the Table Topics question is, then will place the printed question on the lectern. This will enable the contestant to refer to it from time to time during his/her speech to help stay on track with the question.

There will be a one-minute silence between speeches to enable judges to mark the contestants in their ballots. During this time, the SAA is directed to guide the Contestant to the stage area.

Please work out a signal between the SAAs on who is going to stay with the contestants in the break out room, who is going to guide the contestants to the stage, who will remain in the breakout room with Evaluation Contestants, and the cues each will receive to let each other know the next contestant is able to enter the room. Some SAAs may choose to alternate between each other.

Once the Table Topics and Evaluation Contestants speak, he/she may sit down and observe the speakers after him/her.