

## What happens on the bridge...doesn't cause a splat

Team ESSO, please review this document that gives overly detailed instructions on what to expect for Bridge Day. Our goal is to use this information to be as safe and professional as possible.

### Gear:

Please make sure you have the following gear.

- **Harness, helmet, gloves, stainless steel rappel rack:** I'm not even going to comment on these. I will note that only locking carabiners should be used.
- **A safety:** This is a handled ascender attached via a lanyard (rope or webbing) to the main attachment point on your harness. Make certain the safety lanyard is long enough to allow you to function, but short enough to be able to reach it when you are attached to the rope. If you have doubts about the length of the sling see Brian, Don, or Tim before the rappel. You can also buy adjustable lanyards from On Rope 1 at the bridge day meeting. The safety should be attached to the main harness attachment point with its own carabiner. **DO NOT** share the carabiner used by your rappel rack. **Each piece of gear should have its own carabiner.** It is also acceptable to direct attach the safety to your harness if you have a hard attachment point such as a ½ moon.
- **Climbing system:** Consider wearing your climbing system on the drop or if not, practice putting it on while rappelling. Another option if you don't want to wear the full system on the drop is to wear just the foot ascender.
- **Radio:** Don't show up without a family band radio tuned to the team frequency. Just don't do it. Really, bring a radio. If you don't have one, you should buy one. If you don't want to buy one contact Brian about getting a loner for the day. This is required by both the bridge day organizers and our team. If procuring and wearing a radio is too much effort for you then please don't rappel. Place the radio so you can hear and talk on it while rappelling and/or climbing. Also, don't be cheap, put fresh batteries in your radio.
- **Railing sling:** This isn't needed, but if you don't like standing on the catwalk without being clipped in, you can bring something to loop over the handrail. Do not clip into the mainline when someone else is rappelling.
- **Costumes:** Most of you are ugly enough as it is. The bridge day powers that be have been clamping down on costumes. If you do feel the need to dress up make certain you aren't wearing anything that could possibly get into your gear.

Packs are a perennial problem on the bridge. If there is any way to avoid it do not bring a pack. The bottom team can carry in snacks and drinks and the rig team can fill the rope weight bag with drinks as well. If you do bring a pack please do the following:

- Don't bring extra stuff, keep it as light as possible. Perhaps just a small fanny pack.
- If the pack is less than about 10 lbs and you KNOW it won't pull you backwards consider wearing it on your back. If you have any doubt, tether it.
- Secure the pack from at least 2 points on the pack (e.g. the shoulder straps AND the top handle.)

- Secure the pack to either the eye in your rack or your main harness attachment with its OWN carabiner.
- If the pack isn't on your back I suggest hanging it from a tether. Run the lanyard over your non brake hand hip and make the tether short enough so the pack hangs by your foot allowing you can to kick it away from the rope if necessary.
- Decide where you want any accessory packs or other items to ride on the descent and get them in place. If you have something that is easier to attach after you are on the rope give it to the rigger (it must have a carabiner on it) with an explanation of where it goes.

### **Before coming out to dance:**

Be ready when it is your turn to come out on the bridge. We don't want to let the rope hang idle for a minute. Brian will determine the order of team ESSO for the first round, after that it is first come first served. When you are ready to come out on the bridge contact the ESSO person manning the rope to verify there is room for you at our rig point. The goal is to have the next person ready to cross the rail the instant the belayer calls the rope free. Remember YOU may be the one that gets an extra ride. However, once you cross the railing do not try to rush, that is YOUR time, relax and enjoy the experience.

Before coming out the catwalk, check that all loose clothing, personal items, and hair is secured. Especially tie up your hair. I know a girl that recently had the wispy hair around her face get caught in her rack. This isn't a fashion show, think Lillian on Cheers. Do not step on the bridge with anything that is not tied to you including cameras, radios, and etc. Camera companies make a killing on lens caps at bridge day. Just having the radio clipped on isn't good enough, secure it with a lanyard as well (you do have a radio don't you?). You could very easily kill someone below by dropping a small item.

### **At the rig point:**

Upon reaching our rig point, your harness and gear must be double checked by the safety person and/or ESSO member manning the top of the rope before crossing the railing, **no exceptions**.

Determine if you will climb over or through the railing and attach your safety to the mainline following the route you intend to take.

After crossing the railing take the majority of the slack out of your safety, this will minimize the fall should you slip and give you room to rig your rack.

Connect your rack to the main line as high as practical. Connect enough bars to be able to hold yourself at a stop.

After connecting your rack, the safety person or ESSO member will verify the rack is laced correctly and all carabiners are locked and not cross loaded.

Pull your safety down to just above the top of your rack so the rack is now your main connection point to the rope.

Sit down to place your weight on the rack.

After a last visual inspection (and assuming the rack holds!), remove the safety.

Spread or remove bars as necessary and enjoy the ride.

As you leave the W plate DO NOT push off. Simply sit and slide past the plate.

**Notes:**

There will always be an ESSO person manning the top of the rope. This person will be referred to as 'ESSO Bridge' or 'ESSO Top' on the radio. There also will always be an ESSO person at the bottom of the rope referred to as 'ESSO Bottom' or 'ESSO Belay' on the radio.