

# 2007 RFL Extensible Technical Regulations for: Western Allied Robotics

## 1. General

1.1. All participants build and operate robots at their own risk. Combat robotics is inherently dangerous. There is no amount of regulation that can encompass all the dangers involved. Please take care to not hurt yourself or others when building, testing and competing.

1.2. This rule set is designed to for adjustment by each event depending on its safety concerns. Any parts of these rules [bracketed in red] are parts that may be changed or omitted from event to event. Text that is stricken (stricken) represents rules that are not applicable to this event.

1.3. If you have a robot or weapon design that does not fit within the categories set forth in these rules or is in someway ambiguous or borderline, please contact this event. Safe innovation is always encouraged, but surprising the event staff with your brilliant exploitation of a loophole may cause your robot to be disqualified before it ever competes.

1.4. Compliance with all event rules is mandatory. It is expected that competitors stay within the rules and procedures of their own accord and do not require constant policing.

1.5. Each event has safety inspections. It is at their sole discretion that your robot is allowed to compete. As a builder you are obligated to disclose all operating principles and potential dangers to the inspection staff.

1.6. Cardinal Safety Rules: Failure to comply with any of the following rules could result in expulsion or worse, injury and death.

1.6.1. Radios may not be turned on at or near events for any purpose without obtaining the appropriate frequency clip or explicit permission from the event.

1.6.2. Proper activation and deactivation of robots is critical. Robots must only be activated in the arena, testing areas, or with expressed consent of the event and it's safety officials.

1.6.3. All robots must be able to be FULLY deactivated, which includes power to drive and weaponry, in under 60 seconds by a manual disconnect.

1.6.4. All robots not in an arena or official testing area must be raised or blocked up in a manner so that their wheels or legs cannot cause movement if the robot were turned on. Runaway bots are VERY dangerous.

1.6.5. Locking devices: Moving weapons that can cause damage or injury must have a clearly visible locking device in place at all times when not in the arena. Locking devices must be painted in neon orange or another high-visibility color. Locking devices must be clearly capable to stopping, arresting or otherwise preventing harmful motion of the weapon.

1.6.6. It is expected that all builders will follow basic safety practices during work on the robot at your pit station. Please be alert and aware of your pit neighbors and people passing by.

1.7. This event [does not require] your robot to have an active weapon other than the driving force of the robot. Some exceptions may be made for particularly technically advanced or fast robots. Contact your event organizer if you need an exception. [no extra notes].

2. Weight Classes. This event offers the listed weight classes in section

2.1. [There is a 100% weight bonus for true walkers.] (Walkers in the 340 and 390 lb classes may receive a 35% bonus. There is no weight bonus for shufflers or other forms of locomotion other than walking - see 3.1.2 for a definition of a walker.)

2.1.

Rolling	Walking
150 gram	300 gram
1 pound	2 pound
3 pound	6 pound
12 pound	24 pound

### 3. Mobility

3.1. All robots must have easily visible and controlled mobility in order to compete. Methods of mobility include:

3.1.1. Rolling (wheels, tracks or the whole robot)

3.1.2. Walking (linear actuated legs with no rolling or cam operated motion)

[Contact this event with questions on weight bonuses to see if your robot may qualify. Robots are classified as "walker" at the sole discretion of the Event Organizer, and are not subject to appeal.]

3.1.3. Shuffling (rotational cam operated legs)

3.1.4. Ground effect air cushions (hovercrafts)

3.1.5. Jumping and hopping [is allowed]

3.1.6. Flying (airfoil using, helium balloons, ornithopters, etc.) [is allowed]

3.1.7. [Additional notes on mobility.]

### 4. Robot control requirements:

4.1. Tele-operated robots must be radio controlled, or use an approved custom system as described in 4.4.3. Radio controlled robots must use approved ground frequencies [27/49/50/53/75/900/2400 for the United States ].

4.2. Tethered control is not allowed.

4.3. Pre 1991 non-narrow band radio systems are not allowed.

4.4. Radio system restrictions for this event with corresponding weight and or weapon restrictions:

4.4.1. Radio systems that stop all motion in the robot (drive and weapons), when the transmitter loses power or signal, are required for all robots with active weapons or any robot over 12lbs. (This may be inherent in the robots electrical system or be part of programmed fail-safes in the radio.)

4.4.2. All robot radio systems must have a way to change frequencies or coded channels to prevent radio conflicts. Having at least two frequencies or coded channels available is required. Lack of extra frequencies may result in a forfeit.

4.4.3. If you are using a home built control system, or a control system not covered here, you must first clear it with this event.

4.4.4. Toy radio systems [are] allowed at this event for robots up to 12 lbs with no active weapons.

4.4.5. RC systems on the AM band [are] allowed at this event for robots up to 12 lbs with no active weapons.

4.4.6. All robots that are either: a.) Larger than 12lbs or b.) Have an active weapon MUST use a radio systems on the FM band with [PPM, IPD] coding, a digitally coded 900 MHz (IFI) system, or an approved custom control system.

4.5. This event does not require a separate power switch for the radio, but it is encouraged.

4.6. This event [has not] reserved frequencies/channels for testing and safety.  
[Frequency/Channel List:]

5. Autonomous/Semi-Autonomous Robots: Any robot that moves, seeks a target, or activates weapons without human control is considered autonomous. If your robot is autonomous [you are required to] contact this event before registration. [no extra notes]

5.1. Autonomous robots must have a clearly visible light for each autonomous subsystem that indicates whether or not it is in autonomous mode, e.g. if your robot has two autonomous weapons it should have two "autonomous mode" lights (this is separate from any power or radio indicator lights used).

5.2. Robots in the 12 pound or under classes are exempt from the remaining rules below, but safe operation, arming, and disarming must be demonstrated in safety inspections.

5.3. The autonomous functionality of a robot must have the capability of being remotely armed and disarmed. (This does not include internal sensors, drive gyros, or closed loop motor controls.)

5.3.1. While disarmed, all autonomous functions must be disabled.

5.3.2. When activated the robot must have no autonomous functions enabled, and all autonomous functions must failsafe to off if there is loss of power or radio signal.

5.3.3. In case of damage to components that remotely disarm the robot, the robots autonomous functions are required to automatically disarm within one minute of the match length time after being armed.

## 6. Batteries and Power

6.1. The only permitted batteries are ones that cannot spill or spray any of their contents when damaged or inverted. This means that standard automotive and motorcycle wet cell batteries are prohibited. Examples of batteries that are permitted: gel cells, Hawkers, NiCads, NiMh, dry cells, AGM, Llon, LiPoly, etc. [If your design uses a new type of battery, or one you are not sure about please contact this event]

6.2. All onboard voltages above 48 Volts require prior approval from this event. (It is understood that a charged battery's initial voltage state is above their nominal rated value)

6.3. All electrical power to weapons and drive systems (systems that could cause potential human bodily injury) must have a manual disconnect that can be activated within 15 seconds without endangering the person turning it off. (E.g. No body parts in the way of weapons or pinch points.) Shut down must include a manually operated mechanical method of disconnecting the main battery power, such as a switch (Hella, Wyachi, etc) or removable link. Relays may be used to

control power, but there must also be a mechanical disconnect. Please note that complete shut down time is specified in section 1.6.

6.4. All efforts must be made to protect battery terminals from a direct short and causing a battery fire.

6.5. If your robot uses a grounded chassis you must have a switch capable of disconnecting this ground. ICE robots are excepted from this rule if there is no practical way to isolate their grounding components. It is [required] to contact this event for this exception.

6.6. All Robots must have a light easily visible from the outside of the robot that shows its main power is activated.

## 7. Pneumatics

7.1. Example diagrams of typical pneumatic systems in robots over 30lbs:

7.1.1. CO2 based systems

<http://www.botleague.com/pdf/GeneralPneumaticsCO2.pdf>

7.1.2. High Pressure Air (HPA) based systems

<http://www.botleague.com/pdf/GeneralPneumaticsHPA.pdf>

7.2. Robots in the 12 lb class or lighter are exempt from the remaining rules in this section but must comply with the following:

7.2.1. You must have a safe way of refilling the system and determining the on board pressure.

7.2.2. Pressures in the 12 pound or less robots are limited to 250psi.

7.2.3. [12-16g cartridges may be excepted, contact your event if you need this exception.]

7.2.4. All components must be used within the specifications provided by the manufacturer or supplier. If the specifications aren't available or reliable, then it will be up to the EO to decide if the component is being used in a sufficiently safe manner.

7.3. You must have a safe and secure method of refilling your pneumatic system.

[All pressure vessels must have the standard male quick disconnect for refilling

or have an adapter to this fitting. (Standard paintball fill fitting available at many retail outlets and online. For specs see Part#12MPS from Foster, <http://www.couplers.com>.)

7.4. Pneumatic systems on board the robot must only employ non-flammable, non-reactive gases (CO<sub>2</sub>, Nitrogen and air are most common). It is not permissible to use fiber wound pressure vessels with liquefied gasses like CO<sub>2</sub> due to extreme temperature cycling.

7.5. All pneumatic components on board a robot must be securely mounted. Particular attention must be made to pressure vessel mounting and armor to ensure that if ruptured it will not escape the robot. (The terms 'pressure vessel, bottle, and source tank' are used interchangeably)

7.6. All pneumatic components within the robot must be rated or certified for AT LEAST the maximum pressure in that part of the system. You may be required to show rating or certification documentation on ANY component in your system.

7.7. All pressure vessels must be rated for at least 120% of the pressure they are used at and have a current hydro test date. (This is to give them a margin of safety if damaged during a fight.) If large actuators, lines, or other components are used at pressures above 250psi these will also need to be over-rated and are [required] to be pre-approved for this event.

7.8. All primary pressure vessels must have an over pressure device (burst/rupture disk or over pressure 'pop off') set to no more than 130% of that pressure vessels rating. (Most commercially available bottles come with the correct burst assemblies, use of these is encouraged)

7.9. If regulators or compressors are used anywhere in the pneumatic system there must be an (additional) over pressure device downstream of the regulator or compressor set for no more than 130% of the lowest rated component in that part of the pneumatic system.

7.10. All pneumatic systems must have a manual main shut off valve to isolate the rest of the system from the source tank. This valve must be easily accessed for robot de activation and refilling.

7.11. All pneumatic systems must have a manual bleed valve downstream of the main shut off valve to depressurize the system. This bleed valve must be easily accessed for deactivation. This valve must be left OPEN whenever the robot is not in the arena to ensure the system cannot operate accidentally.

7.11.1. It is required to be able to easily bleed all pressure in the robot before exiting the arena. (You may be required to bleed the entire system if it is believed that you have any damaged components.)

7.12. All pneumatic systems must have appropriate gauges scaled for maximum resolution of the pressures in that part of the system. (There must be gauges on both the high AND low-pressure sides of regulators.)

7.13. If back check valves are used anywhere in the system you must ensure that any part of the system they isolate can be bled and has an over pressure device.

7.14. Any pneumatic system that does not use a regulator, or employs heaters or pressure boosters, or pressures above 2500psi [must be pre qualified by this event.]

7.15. Please note that some pneumatic systems with very low pressures (below 100 total PSI on board), small volumes (12-16g CO2 cartridges), single firing applications, or pneumatics used for internal actuation (as opposed to external weaponry) may not need to comply with all the rules above. You are [required] to contact this event if you would like an exception.

## 8. Hydraulics

8.1. Robots in the 12 lb class or lighter are exempt from the remaining rules in this section, but good engineering and best practices must be used in all hydraulic systems. However the pressure for 12 pound or less robots is limited to 250psi and there must be an easy way to determine this pressure. [Contact this event with questions.]

- 8.2. All hydraulic components onboard a robot must be securely mounted. Particular attention must be made to pump and accumulator mounting and armor to ensure that if ruptured direct fluid streams will not escape the robot.
- 8.3. All hydraulic components within the robot must be rated or certified for AT LEAST the maximum pressure in that part of the system. You may be required to show rating or certification documentation on ANY component in your system.
- 8.4. Any accumulators or large reservoir must be rated for at least 120% of the pressure they are used at. (This is to give them a margin of safety if damaged during a fight)
- 8.5. All hydraulic systems must have an over pressure by pass device set to no more than 130% of the lowest component rating. It must be rated to bypass the full volume of the hydraulic pump.
- 8.6. All hydraulic systems must have a(n) accessible manual by pass valve(s) to easily render the system harmless.
- 8.7. All hydraulic systems must have appropriate gauges scaled for maximum resolution of the pressures in that part of the system.
- 8.8. All hydraulic systems must use non-flammable, non-corrosive fluid and must be designed not to leak when inverted.
- 8.9. Any hydraulic system using pressure boosters, or pressures above 5000psi (without accumulator) or pressures above 2000psi (with accumulator) [must be pre qualified by this event.]
- 8.10. Please note that some simple low pressure and volume hydraulic systems, like simple braking, may not need to adhere to all the rules above. You are [required] to contact this event if you would like an exception.

## 9. Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) and liquid fuels. [are not allowed, ignore 9.1-9.7]

### 9.1. Fuel and Fuel Lines

9.1.1. All commercially available grades of automobile or RC hobby fuel are allowed. Alcohol, Nitro-methane, jet fuel and other specialty grades of fuel [require prior approval.]

9.1.2. Fuel lines and tanks must be made of high quality materials and all ends must be clamped securely.

9.1.3. All fuel tanks and lines must be well protected and armored from all sides including moving parts and heat sources inside the robot.

9.2. Fuel tank volume, on any robot, shall not be greater than the amount required to operate the engine for more than 1 minute longer than the match time at combat power plus a reasonable pre-match warm-up period. This volume may not exceed 20 oz unless prior approval is granted from this event.

9.3. The output of any engines connected to weapons or drive systems must be coupled through a clutch which will decouple the motor when it is at idle. (This does not include motors used for generators and hydraulic pumps.)

9.4. All engines must turn off or return to idle at loss of radio signal and turn off at loss of radio receiver power.

9.5. All engines must have a method of remotely shutting off.

9.6. Any robot with liquid fuel and oil must be designed not to leak when inverted. (Minor oil leakage may be tolerated, however if it affects the other robot or becomes a large cleanup issue you may be called and the leaking robot will forfeit.)

9.7. Use of engines other than standard piston engines (i.e. turbines etc.) [require prior approval] at this event.

## 10. Rotational weapons or full body spinning robots [are allowed]:

10.1. Spinning weapons that can contact the outer arena walls during normal operation must be pre-approved by the event. (Contact with an inner arena curb, or containment wall is allowed and does not require prior permission.)

10.2. Spinning weapons must come to a full stop within 60 seconds of the power being removed using a self-contained braking system.

## 11. Springs and flywheels

11.1. Springs used in robots in the 12 lbs class or smaller are excepted from the rules in this section. However safe operation and good engineering are always required.

11.2. Any large springs used for drive or weapon power must have a way of loading and actuating the spring remotely under the robots power.

11.2.1. Under no circumstances must a large spring be loaded when the robot is out of the arena or testing area.

11.2.2. Small springs like those used within switches or other small internal operations are excepted from this rule.

11.3. Any flywheel or similar kinetic energy storing device must not be spinning or storing energy in any way unless inside the arena or testing area.

11.3.1. There must be a way of generating and dissipating the energy from the device remotely under the robots power.

11.4. All springs, flywheels, and similar kinetic energy storing devices must fail to a safe position on loss of radio contact or power.}

## 12. Forbidden Weapons and Materials. The following weapons and materials are absolutely forbidden from use:

12.1. Weapons designed to cause invisible damage to the other robot. This includes but is not limited to:

12.1.1. Electrical weapons not specifically allowed in the Special Weapons section 13.1

12.1.2. RF jamming equipment, etc.

12.1.3. RF noise generated by an IC engine. (Please use shielding around sparking components)

12.1.4. EMF fields from permanent or electro-magnets that affect another robots electronics.

12.1.5. Weapons or defenses that stop combat completely of both (or more) robots. This includes nets, tapes, strings, and entanglement devices not specifically allowed in the Special Weapons section 13.2.

12.2. Weapons that require significant cleanup, or in some way damages the arena to require repair for further matches. This includes but is not limited to:

12.2.1. Liquid weapons not specifically allowed in the Special Weapons section 13.3. (Additionally a bot may not have liquid that can spill out when the robot is superficially damaged.)

12.2.2. Foams and liquefied gasses

12.2.3. Powders, sand, ball bearings and other dry chaff weapons not specifically allowed in the Special Weapons section 13.4

12.3. Un-tethered Projectiles (see tethered projectile description in Special Weapons section 13.5)

12.4. Heat and fire are forbidden as weapons. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

12.4.1. Heat or fire weapons not specifically allowed in the Special Weapons section 13.6

12.4.2. Flammable liquids or gases

12.4.3. Explosives or flammable solids such as:

12.4.3.1. DOT Class C devices

12.4.3.2. Gunpowder / Cartridge Primers

12.4.3.3. Military Explosives, etc.

12.5. Light and smoke based weapons that impair the viewing of robots by an Entrant, Judge, Official or Viewer. (You are allowed to physically engulf your opponent with your robot however.) This includes, but is not limited to the following:

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