

A Day in the Life of a General Steward

I had a slow start today because my team did the late shift yesterday evening. I made sure I was up for breakfast though and then had a long shower before joining the other stewards for 11.30 team worship with our pastors. From there, it was straight into lunch and team briefing because our team took over from the morning shift at 1pm.

Today, I was on Purple Gate for the beginning of my shift, checking that everyone had their New Wine ID and welcoming them onto site. Then, after my tea break, I swapped over and spent two hours driving the buggies. We needed to move some equipment across site so I had a two-seater buggy with the storage space on the back. I took a pack of water out as well because it's been a scorching day and I thought some of our stewards might need a top up. The rest of our team were doing patrols and seminars. We usually do two different things each shift.

Now, it's 7pm and I'm off duty so I'm going into the evening meeting. After that, I might have a look around the Resource Hub or head into the Team Lounge in search of coffee and cake. I won't be too late into bed though because our team begin at 8am tomorrow. My first job will be parking cars for the day delegates and then I'm stewarding a seminar.

A Day in the Life of a Control Team Steward

It's quite difficult to describe a typical day in Control because we do so many different things. At some point during each shift I'll be tucked away in the quietest corner, staffing the two-way radios. There are always two of us doing this together because we listen to four radio channels. It's not as hard as it sounds though because we only have to respond when they actually call us for help. A lot of the time, they chatter away among themselves.

The emergency phone is with the radios. It doesn't ring very often but whenever it does, we make sure to answer within three rings. The most common emergency is a lost child but sometimes we deal with medical emergencies and we always have to be prepared for a major incident – just in case. For all emergencies, there are forms which tell us what questions to ask on the phone and who to inform to get a response started.

The other main duty we have is staffing the front desk. This will include charging the two-way radios and logging them out to team members when needed; logging out keys for venues and vehicles; issuing parking permits; receiving reports of problems around site and writing job tickets for the appropriate people; looking after some lost or found property, and answering general questions about what and when and where.

We work around 8 hours each day but that includes two 30-minute breaks to eat in team catering and have a cuppa. It's challenging work but it's great fun!

A Night in the Life of a Night Team Steward.

I love being on Night Team. It feels quite special to be awake when other people are in bed and to have responsibility for the whole site, and being out at night is often really peaceful.

We start each shift at midnight, though we usually gather together from about 11.30pm for a pre-shift hot drink, snack and catch-up from the day team. The early part of the night is always spent making sure that venues are securely locked. After that, we start encouraging people to go back to their villages and go to bed. We're always nice but it's important that everyone on site sticks to the 'Silent Hours' because it's almost impossible to sleep in a tent if other people are being noisy. Sometimes there are small groups of people who want to hang around into the early hours so we'll probably just stop for a brief chat and encourage them to return quietly to their villages. Occasionally we have to find missing people; you can imagine how problematic that is in the dark and it is one of the reasons it is helpful to have people back on their villages so we are not getting distracted by others.

Patrolling takes up a lot of the rest of the night. We go out in pairs, make sure everything is peaceful, respond to any emergencies, and prayer-walk the site. Sometimes we have to escort people who have got lost back to their villages – the site looks very different at night, and it's easy to lose your bearings. We all have a two-way radio and stay in touch with each other and Control all through the shift. Sometimes we have to deal with inclement weather (this is New Wine after all!!) but the most common nighttime emergency is a medical problem and there's always a medic

on call if they are needed. Other key people are on call for other situations and our team leader will always get those people out of bed if they are really needed.

Between patrols, we return to Control and our Steward Crew Room, where there are plenty of snacks and soft drinks. We also stop to eat a meal together in the early hours.

By 5am, the sun is up and the early morning joggers are on the move. Soon after that, young children are waking up their parents, people start heading for the showers, venue leaders appear in Control to collect their radios and keys, the early morning Bible study begins, and the stewarding day team begin wandering through for breakfast. The site gradually comes back to life. We'll still be out, keeping an eye on the site, and occasionally get offered a breakfast!

By 8am we will head for breakfast (which for us is really a late tea!), socialise together, maybe catch a worship or teaching session then head to our bunkabins for a good sleep. We'll often be up in time for the evening meeting and some of the events that are put on before it all starts again.