

1. RA

1st AD UNDER THE LOCAL | GERMAN SYSTEM

The work of the 1. RA comprises artistic, technical, financial and logistical concerns and the 1. RA is the most important link between the Production Department and the Director. The collaboration and communication with ALL departments is the most important component of this position.

PREP

Areas of responsibility during pre-production:

- **Reviewing the script** to determine requirements regarding content and dramaturgy and the resulting organisational implementability. Any changes made to the script in the course of a production must be marked by the so called coloured script changes which have to be distributed and incorporated into the shooting schedule and the breakdown
- **Discussions** with the Director and the Production Department about the artistic vision within the framework of the budget.
- **Issuing** a chronological sequence of the dramaturgical days, the seasons and the historical dates within the timeline of the film.
- **Compiling the shooting schedule** taking into account various factors – number of shooting days, calculation of the parts, number of extras, requirements for SFX, VFX, stunts etc. using scheduling software such as Movie Magic Scheduling or Fuzzlecheck. The German software Sesam is rarely used these days. The 1. RA is in charge of the shooting schedule, in close consultation with the '1. Aufnahmeleitung' (a job only existing in the local system) and the Production Manager and according to the artistic, organisational and technical specifications of the Director, the DoP and the other departments. Various changes come about on a daily basis. These have to be incorporated into the shooting schedule to ensure that all information is always up to date.
In contrast to the AD System, the 1. RA will receive all blocked days of the cast from the 1. Aufnahmeleitung, as under the German system the Production Department is responsible for the contact with the actors and agencies.
- **Compilation of the Script Breakdown.** Each scene is broken down into all relevant information with regards to scene number, location, lighting, time of day, dramaturgical days, actors, extras, vehicles, stunts, SFX, costumes, make-up etc. and listed in the appropriate field on the breakdown sheet. The breakdown has to be continually updated with all relevant information.
- **Access to the budget.** Thus s/he can weigh up which costs are likely to be generated and react accordingly, whenever necessary.
- **Development of the Pre-Production plan** in collaboration with the Production Department. This plan lists tech recces, location inspections, appointments, meetings, rehearsals, training sessions, casting sessions, tests and approvals by all departments. The 1. RA coordinates meetings, takes part in all relevant meetings and disseminates the information to all departments.
- Organisation and implementation of **pre-productions**. Furthermore the 1. RA is required to **attend** tech recces, location scouts and sometimes also costume and make-up fittings and special rehearsals for the actors.
- **Casting.** The 1. RA is responsible for the extras budget and the real costs associated with it, in consultation with the 2. RA. Furthermore s/he manages the pre-selection of extras, the casting sessions and casts the so-called bit parts and the extras.
- The Script Supervisor times the script during Pre-Production. The 1. RA adds these timings to the shooting schedule, as they give an indication about the length of the film. This is always relevant, but crucial for TV productions. It is quite possible that the script has to be cut or extended according to the script timing. This in turn has an influence on the planning of the shooting days, the numbers of scenes scheduled to be shot on specific days and the total number of shooting days.

SHOOT

Areas of Responsibility on Set:

- **Coordination** of all scenic tasks and processes, including commands for actors and team.
- **Compilation of the daily call sheets** in consultation with the 1. Aufnahmeleitung and all other departments. The 1. RA is responsible for ensuring that the working hours on set are complied with and has to change the call sheet for the following shooting day, if necessary.
- **Overview over the shooting times, statutory night rest** and the associated agreement on tariffs requirements.
- **Directing** all background movement such as vehicles, extras, animals etc. Furthermore the 1. RA organises wild tracks and other voice recordings with help from the 2. RA.
- The most important contact person according to the German system is the Set Manager, who helps with the organisational and logistical processes on set. Both areas of responsibility are stand-alone, however, it is possible that they overlap or complement each other, depending on the agreements between the 1. RA and the Set Manager.
- The collaboration between the 1. RA and the 2. RA is an indispensable component of the logistical and organisational work of the Directing Department. Sometimes the 2. RA takes on some tasks partially or wholly. The responsibilities of the 2. RA are listed in the job description.

REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- Quick thinking, superior communication skills, organisational skills, the ability to master complex tasks, resilience to stress, attention to detail and the willingness to work weekends or nights.
- Extensive knowledge of the complete process of filmmaking: from the essentials of film financing and funding, via the visual execution to Post-Production.
- A good understanding of the creative means of film, their applications and the corresponding workloads. Which camera settings, positions or moves, shot size or focal lengths can be used to film a scene.
- Expertise with regards to the processes, complexity and expenditure of the individual departments such as camera, lighting, sound, sets, props, costumes and make-up. Thus s/he is able to relay the necessary information to each department and integrate the feedback of their notes into the development process.
- Experience of casting sessions and of casting actors, bit players and extras.
- Familiarity with the tasks of additional staff such as animals trainers, children's coaches, dialogue coaches, SFX crew, stunt crew, armourers, music consultants, VFX consultants etc.
- A good understanding of the agreement on tariffs, which is very important when it comes to overtime and the corresponding regulation of percentages, regulations concerning the statutory night rest and the consequences of noncompliance with the turnarounds etc.
- Knowledge of the common software applications, special production scheduling software and cinematic devices.
- In contrast to other positions, A levels or a high-school diploma and a university degree are not required.

LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

The length of employment is dependent on the scope of the project. However, it is essential to note that the sooner a 1. RA is involved in a project, the better it is to mould and influence creative and financial requirements.

• Guideline

TV movie (e.g. Tatort) | 21-23 shooting days | approx. 4 weeks of prep.

Features | 1:1 | Number of shooting days = Number of prep days.

However, for historical features or productions involving lots of travel, the prep period needs to be longer, as the expenditure is higher and the tasks are accordingly more time-consuming, complex and elaborate.