How to Run a MORS Special Meetings (Sp Mtg)

The Duties of the Special Meeting Chair: An Overview
You have **agreed to be a Special Meeting Chair for a MORS Meeting**.

- This tutorial was designed to provide you with what you need to run a successful Special Meeting.
- Special meetings are a key part of how MORS supports the community and its sponsors.
MORS has four types of special meetings:
- Workshops (objective is to solve a problem)
- Mini-Symposium (objective is to share information in a specified area)
- Tutorials (objective is to educate people on specific topics)
- Colloquia (objective is to introduce students to MOR)

This brief focuses on the workshop as it is the most difficult to execute successfully.
What is your starting point and what do you need to do?

• **Where you begin**
  - You probably have 4-8 months to plan the event
  - The Concept Paper used to gain approval for the special meeting
  - A list of a few others that have agreed to support the meeting including a Bulldog identified by the special meetings committee chair

• **Near term activities**
  - Form an organizing committee of 5-10 interested people and ensure everyone has a common vision for the goal of the workshop (hopefully with a member from the sponsor’s organization if the workshop is supported by a MORS sponsor)
  - Establish a timeline with Actions and Milestones - include dates for organizing committee meeting
  - Work with organizing committee to determine (1) working group names and topics and select working group chairs / co-chairs / assistant chairs (2) potential plenary speakers (3) other key people such as the syntheses chair
  - Write a Terms of Reference and submit to the MORS Council for approval (may change later and is posted on MORS website as part of the advertising)

• **Mid-term**
  - Publicize the meeting
  - Invite plenary speakers and help working group leads as needed – review agendas relative to the goal

• **Post meeting**
  - Generate products such as workshop report of annotated brief and executive brief
The MORS Bulldog

• Assigning a Bulldog to every Special Meeting has proven useful to MORS
  − The Bulldog is assigned by the Special Meetings Committee Chair
  − The Bulldog works for the Special Meetings Committee Chair, not the Special Meeting Chair

• What is a Bulldog?
  − To provide assistance and oversight, external to the special meeting’s organizational structure to assist the workshop chair
    ▪ Identify people and briefs that contribute to workshop goals that the chair is not aware of
    ▪ Helps ensure special meeting actions are being accomplished

• Who is a good Bulldog? Someone who:
  − Has chaired a MORS Special Meeting,
  − Is aware of current special meeting issues, trends, and concerns, and is willing to work and contribute.

The Bulldog can help you with your toughest problems
The classification of the workshop should be appropriate to the objectives – don’t compromise the objectives by having too low a classification

- Parts of a classified meeting may be conducted at the unclassified level (e.g., plenary)

Foreign participation should be encouraged if they can contribute to the workshop objectives

- Typically foreign participation is from Canada, United Kingdom and Australia, but other countries have attended as well
Special Meeting Agendas (1)

- Day one: morning: Plenary session:
  - The Special Meeting Chair calls the meeting to order
  - The Site host may want to provide a welcome and administrative announcements
  - The MORS President, or their representative, gives a welcome
  - Sponsor / Proponent Welcome:
    - A MORS Sponsor, or a MORS Sponsor’s Representative, gives the Sponsor’s Welcome, or
    - The Proponent gives the Proponent Welcome
  - The Keynote speaker gives the Keynote address to motivate, focus, and stimulate thought in the participants
  - Additional speakers or panels provide additional perspectives
Special Meeting Agendas (2)

- Day one: afternoon - working group meetings
- Day one: evening – social
- Day two: working group meetings
- Day Three: morning – working groups (review outbrief)
  - Day three: afternoon
    - Each working group briefs their results
    - Synthesis brief
    - Chair wrap-up, awards and hotwash
What is a MORS Synthesis Group?

- A group of senior personnel that will produce a product (briefing) at the workshop outbrief that syntheses the workshop products – this briefing often serves as the basis for the executive brief
- They do this by
  - Members attend all working group sessions
  - Group meets outside regular workshop events (early in the morning, during lunch, or late in the day) to share insights and establish cross-cutting perspectives
  - Identify ways events and products from one working group can help another working group and facilitate the interface
Conducting Your Planning Meetings

- **Frequency**: Initially monthly, then bi-monthly in the 2\(^{nd}\) and 3\(^{rd}\) month before the meeting and weekly in the last month
  - Agenda includes updates on additions and changes to the leadership
  - Plans for the plenary sessions (speakers, etc.)
  - Working group reports discussing their plans and problems (often someone in the meeting has an idea)
  - Administrative matters (program preparation, site, food, security, VIP coordination, etc.)
Special Meeting Advertising

• Phalanx article 1-3 months before the meeting
• Weekly MORS emails including every week during the last month
• Word of mouth – often the process of soliciting speakers and panel members by working group chairs with increase awareness and attendance
Special Meeting Products

- The specific products will be identified in the TOR
- The standard products include: PHALANX articles, Sponsor / Proponent Brief, Meeting Final Report, and an Outbrief at the next MORSS
- When organizing a special meeting, it is important to continually focus:
  - On who the customer is and
  - How MORS will get the products to them
- Expect the MORS Bulldog to help keep you on track
Final Thoughts

- You have, through the conduct of this special meeting, an opportunity to significantly support senior level decisions.
- The vast MORS community stands by to help you with problems – don’t hesitate to ask.
- For more information please review the “How to Lead a Successful Special Meeting” Tutorial on the MORS website.

http://www.mors.org/Events/Special-Meetings