Military Operations Research Society
Special Meetings (Sp Mtg) Tutorial

How to Lead a Successful Special Meeting: Special Meeting Background
After completing this module, the prospective Special Meeting Chair & Planning Committee will learn about:

− What a special meeting is
− The history of special meetings
− The planning process overview:
  ➔ From an idea to a meeting
Sp Mtg Background: Agenda

• This module will cover
  – Why special meetings
    ▪ What is a special meeting
    ▪ The history of special meetings
  – Planning process overview
    ▪ Concept
    ▪ Terms of Reference
    ▪ Team
    ▪ Timeline
    ▪ Location
Sp Mtg Background: What is a Special Meeting

**What is a special meeting?**

- In addition to the annual Symposium, MORS conducts special meetings to address significant and complex problems.
- For these *issue-specific* workshops, tutorials, colloquia and mini-symposia, MORS defines the problem in advance in a document entitled a Terms of Reference (TOR).
  - The topic of a special meeting should address a national security operations research (OR) issue and have a reasonable expectation of usefulness to the national security OR community.
  - Participants with specific interest and expertise collaboratively share information about the problem, discuss issues in depth and work together to produce useful results.
  - Arrangements and products for each meeting are tailored to best accomplish its specific purpose.
Special Meeting overview comments

- The number of attendees may range from a dozen to over 300.
- Some meetings are classified and some meetings invite foreign nationals.
- A topic should not be the subject of a current or soon to be released government solicitation.
- Attendance at a special meeting should not give an unfair advantage to individual competitors.
Sp Mtg Background: History

• When the Military Operations Research Symposia were established by the Office of Naval Research – Pasadena in 1957, the members met twice a year for nationally oriented, joint-service Symposia.

• The Office of Naval Research – Washington assumed supervision at the 11th Symposium. In April 1966, the Military Operations Research Society was incorporated.

• When attendance at both Symposia during the year started to decline, the Society shifted to one annual Symposium and a few special meetings a year to address significant and complex problems.

• Since the first MORS Workshop in January 1985, MORS has held two to five special meetings each year.
Special Meetings have historically had planning horizons ranging from just a few months to a year.

Every chair of a Special Meeting will have a different experience since each meeting can have unique characteristics.

The following slides will present a brief overview of the process – from an idea to a meeting; more details will be provided in the following modules:

- Types of Special Meetings: Module 3
- Team Responsibilities: Module 4
- Paperwork: Module 5
- Final Thoughts: Module 6
• Write and submit a concept paper – the idea
  – The Concept Paper is the first formal document in the process of initiating a special meeting
    ▪ The Concept Paper outlines the idea
    ▪ The template is in Section 9.15 in the MORS Organization Manual
    ▪ The paper provides MORS Leadership with the fundamental information needed to decide whether to pursue the meeting and, if so, to direct the continued development of the idea
    ▪ The paper should include short paragraphs on the purpose, justification, relationship to previous MORS events, and sponsor/proponent interest (if any so far)
Sp Mtg Background: Process Overview III

• Special Meeting Committee Chair (SMCC)
  − In conjunction with the President-Elect, the SMCC will review the proposed Concept Papers with the Special Meeting Committee and prioritize those to be presented to the Sponsors, normally for the Sponsor’s Luncheon in the Winter
  − Once the Sponsors select the Concept Papers to be pursued as Special Meetings for the next MORS year, based on SMCC recommendations, the Executive Council will select a Special Meeting Chair who will then expand the Concept Paper into a Terms of Reference document and begin the process of organizing the meeting
Sp Mtg Background: Process Overview IV

- Write and submit a Terms of Reference (TOR)
  - The TOR is written based on the Concept Paper upon approval of the topic by the Sponsors.
  - The template is in section 9.16 of the MORS Organization Manual
  - The document provides the necessary formal written framework for establishment of a special meeting.
  - In the Milestone section 9.14, the timeline or Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M) is included

  - Short Term: 60 days
  - Medium Term: 120 days
  - Long Term: 150 days
  - If dates for the meeting are not finalized, then tentative dates for planning are used
The VP (MO) will present the TOR for consideration to the Executive Council.

Final approval for a special meeting will be given only after review and acceptance of the TOR by the Executive Council (EC).

While a TOR presented for approval should be as complete as possible, in practice a TOR is a “living document” which can be continued to be developed and refined after formal approval -- as long as changes are supportive of the goals and objectives of the meeting.

However, major revisions to the meeting concept, structure, or content require EC approval.

Executive Council approval of the TOR provides the authority for the meeting to be conducted.

- A copy of the approved TOR will be provided to all MORS Sponsors.
- Classified Special Meetings must also be approved by Navy Security.
Sp Mtg Background: Topics and Personnel

- Consider and solicit key special meeting personnel
  - Special Meeting Chair, Co-Chairs, and Assistant Chairs
  - Technical Chair or Co-Chairs
  - MORS Bulldog (selected by the Special Meeting Committee Chair)
  - Synthesis Group Chair and Members
  - See Module 4, Team Responsibilities, for more details on the above key personnel
- Determine the appropriate working group topics and select working group chairs
  - Determine the extent to which you will have working group co-chairs and / or advisors
- Invite them to participate in planning meetings to assist in the planning process
- Consider other important sessions
  - Keynote, other plenary sessions, mini-symposium, and tutorial speakers
  - Getting the right people is important to the success of the meeting
Wide attendance is normally encouraged for mini-symposia, and they are often a good opportunity for introducing non-members to MORS.

Attendees at classified special meetings are normally required to meet the same attendance prerequisites as for an annual MORS Symposium.

Foreign national participation depends on classification level of the meeting and requires significant coordination with the MORS Office.

Working groups within workshops should be kept small to be effective.

The planning committee should consider inviting recognized experts in the specific field of the meeting and from related fields with representatives of as many interested organizations as possible.
Once the general information has been decided, it can be consolidated for advertising with:
- Special Meeting title and background
- Goals and objectives
- Format (i.e., mini-symposium, workshop, tutorials)
- Working group specifics (if a workshop),
- Location and date
- Key planning committee members

The advertising information can be placed on the web and other media for all MORS events (e.g., other special meetings, annual symposia, etc.)

See Module 5, Paperwork, for more information.
Sp Mtg Background: Products

- Two (2) PHALANX articles – one before and one after
- Sponsor’s Brief
- Special Meeting Final Report
- Outbrief for the next annual MORSS
- Other factors that may be unique to the meeting
- See Module 5 Paperwork for more information
Sp Mtg Background: Location

• The MORS Office will normally have the locations and dates scheduled for special meetings a year in advance

• If not, you can work with the MORS Office for a facility considering:
  − The number of expected attendees
  − The facility location
  − The classification of the meeting
  − The comparative costs for using the facility
In this module, you were introduced to what a special meeting is, how special meetings came about, and an overview of turning an idea into a special meeting.

In the next module, you will be provided an overview of the types of special meetings and suggestions specific to the type of special meeting.
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