MORS Special Meetings (Sp Mtg)

Considerations to be a Special Meeting Chair: Should You Do It?
You have been asked to be a Special Meeting Chair for a MORS Meeting.

Should you accept the offer?

• This tutorial was designed to provide a high-level overview of the responsibilities of the Special Chair and their planning committee to help answer that question.
• Special meetings are a key part of how MORS supports the community and its sponsors.
What is the Goal of Special Meetings?

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 overview focuses on the workshop as it is the most difficult to execute successfully
Common Initial Questions

- Do you have to have experience with MORS Special Meetings?
  - **NO**
  - The MORS Special Meeting Committee will provide:
    - A MORSian experienced with special meetings for your leadership team,
    - Some volunteers to help with the meeting planning (your initial planning committee),
    - Templates for the meeting Terms of Reference, Plan of Actions and Milestones, and meeting page on the MORS website, and
    - A MORS Special Meetings Committee member called the MORS Bulldog (to be discussed in a later slide).

- What are some initial “knowns”?
  - You have 4-8 months to plan the event with your planning committee
  - The special meeting was already approved by the MORS Leadership
What are some things your planning committee will need to do?

• Near term
  – Continue to grow the planning committee ensuring everyone has a common vision for the workshop goal determining
    ▪ Working group names and topics,
    ▪ Finding working group chairs / co-chairs / assistant chairs,
    ▪ Soliciting potential plenary speakers, and
    ▪ Find other key people, such as the syntheses chair (to be discussed on a later slide)
  – Tailor the Terms of Reference and Plan of Actions and Milestones templates for your special meeting.

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

• After the meeting
  – Generate products such as workshop report of annotated brief and executive brief
Help from the MORS Bulldog

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

• Background of 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
Classification and Attendee Considerations

• The classification of the workshop should be appropriate to the objectives – don’t compromise the objectives by having too low a classification
  – MORS can conduct up to SECRET meetings
  – Parts of a classified meeting may be conducted at the unclassified level (e.g., plenary, selected working groups, etc.)
• 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
The **Synthesis Group** is comprised of senior personnel (MORSians and SMEs) that will produce the foundation for the Leadership Brief and Final Report products.

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
- Members identify ways events and products from one working group can help another working group and facilitate the interface
Example Workshop Agenda (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
Example Workshop Agenda (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 (their outbrief)
  - Synthesis brief
  - Chair wrap-up, awards, and hotwash
Regular Planning Meeting Considerations

- **Frequency:**
  - Initially monthly,
  - Then bi-monthly in the 2\(^{nd}\) and 3\(^{rd}\) month before the meeting, and
  - Weekly in the last month
- **Discussions:**
  - 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.)
How do you get the word out? Advertise!

- MORS Phalanx article 1-3 months before the meeting
- Include in the MORS Newsletter emails
- Page on the MORS website
- Word of mouth – often the process of soliciting speakers and panel members by working group chairs to increase awareness and attendance
What are the Workshop Products?

• The specific products will be identified in the TOR
• The standard products include: PHALANX articles, Sponsor / Proponent (Leadership) 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

The Synthesis Group will help build the foundation for the meeting products.
Final Thoughts

• You will have, through the conduct of a MORS special meeting, an opportunity to significantly support senior level decisions.
• The vast MORS community stands by to help you supporting the meeting and with any encountered problems – don’t hesitate to ask.
• The Special Meeting Planning Committee will review the considerations in this overview to help you determine what’s “right” for your meeting.

• So should you accept the offer to be a MORS Special Meeting Chair?
• Hopefully, with the information in this overview and the support MORS provides, your answer will be YES!
More Detailed Information

- For more detailed information, please review the “How to Lead a Successful Special Meeting” Tutorial on the MORS website.

- [http://www.mors.org/Events/Special-Meetings](http://www.mors.org/Events/Special-Meetings)