

Proposals for Reform of the SCAR Delegates and Business Meetings

Goal: By 2010 streamline the Delegates' Meeting, engage the delegates in the meeting in a more substantive way, engender excitement about SCAR's mission and work, and establish high-quality Antarctic science as a central theme in the meetings.

The Issue: The Delegates gather for only 3 days once every two years. It is imperative that this time be spent on substantive discussions; that time is available for consultation; that Delegates feel informed and understand what it is they are approving, and that "buy-in" to SCAR decisions is ensured. Delegates need to leave the meeting feeling they have had ample opportunity to make their views and concerns known and that they understand what they have agreed to and authorized SCAR to implement in the intersessional period.

The adoption of an interactive model for how we function, while embracing a forward-looking and more efficient approach to conducting SCAR business, is an essential next step in the evolution of SCAR and should engage the Delegates more actively and stimulate more substantive discussion at Delegates meetings. This is imperative since the SCAR member nations are our first-order customers as they finance the organization. The future of SCAR is critically dependent on its member nations feeling that they are getting value for their investments, which go far beyond payment of the membership fee, including, but not limited to: funding of travel for national representatives to attend meetings, hosting SCAR meetings, support of national committees, provision of travel grants for non-national representatives (e.g. students, early career scientists, and researchers) to attend SCAR meetings, occasional *ad hoc* funding of specific SCAR activities (i.e., IPY double fee contributions, fellowships, etc.), funding of research that supports SCAR science and, most of all, the often unrecognized salary support for the time spent by the many volunteers that SCAR is critically dependent on to conduct its business. In these times of rising costs for all national programs the benefits of this investment are under greater scrutiny than ever before in SCAR's history. It is this investment that enables the relatively modest amounts of capital SCAR manages to be leveraged many times over.

The Objective: Working Paper WP10 proposes improvements to the way in which the SSGs conduct their business and report to the Delegates. This paper (WP21) addresses how the Delegates meeting itself might be improved to increase the engagement of individual representatives in the decision-making process.

Actions to streamline the Delegates Meeting and engage the delegates more closely

1. **Limit Working Papers to no more than 10 pages and Information Papers to no more than 6 pages** using a common, standardized template that includes a standard one-page summary that communicates the essence of the paper with special attention to justification, what the delegates need to know and what we wish them to act on.
2. **Eliminate projecting and reading of papers and replacing this with PPT summaries as guidance for discussion** – PPTs should summarise the content of the summaries that introduce the papers.

3. **Engage volunteer reporters to produce the meeting reports.** This will help to capture the attention of a larger segment of meeting attendees. It will also relieve some of the burden on the Secretariat responsible for producing reports and ensure that the essence of the meeting is retained by providing multiple views of what transpired. This should be arranged prior to the meeting.
4. **In most instances the EXCOM members (or their representatives) should be presenting agenda items not assigned to specific other individuals** (e.g. SSG, SRP, and SC COs) and the Secretariat staff should be freed-up to manage the meeting and record the proceedings. VPs have agreed to portfolios that cover the major portions of SCAR's missions and remit – science, administration, finances, IPY legacy and outreach - and they are responsible for leading the associated efforts, presenting outcomes, facilitating discussions, developing work plans, and identifying actions to be taken. The main exception is Finance, where the V-P for Finance would be expected to introduce the papers and to call on the Secretariat for detailed explanations.
5. **Delegates Committees' reports to plenary should be in a common format and presented in a summary PPT presentation.** The associated reports should adhere to the format, page limitations, and templates described in (1) above.
6. **The Secretariat should provide final Recommendations and Action Items to Delegates in hard copy and present them in a PPT format.**
7. **The meeting schedule must provide adequate time for discussion and review.** If reports are delayed, the meeting should be paused to allow Delegates to review the hard copy reports.
8. **Seating arrangements should be such that most attendees face each other to create the basis for interactive dialogue.**
9. **Audio systems must be clear and crisp,** and all presenters should be asked to speak slowly and clearly avoiding “language-based jargon”.
10. **PPT presentations should be projected in large font sizes to allow them to be read from anywhere in the meeting room.**
11. **For last minute papers and other supporting material during the meeting, ensure that hard copies are available in a timely manner.** We should avoid discussing material the Delegates have not seen and/or do not have in front of them. Local hosts should provide (e.g. rent) adequate copying facilities (machine, paper, staples).
12. **Encourage all attendees to put their cell phones on silent (vibrate).**
13. **If WiFi is available, request that people do not use it while the meetings are in session, or have it switched off during sessions.** (Some session presentations may require the use of Internet)
14. **Encourage Delegates to attend the entire meeting** and not leave on the afternoon of the third day.
15. **Produce a hard copy of a “A Guide to the ### SCAR Delegates Meetings” to be provided at registration.** It would contain the meeting agenda (to include the title, speaker and location of the lunch and banquet science lectures, see below); the meeting timetable; all report summaries (noting summaries to be provided at the meeting); and a cross-reference table of agenda items, report numbers and page number of the associated report summaries contained in the guide. If double-sided the guide would be 25 or less pages. Other materials might include: a glossary of acronyms; SCAR mission statement; very brief highlights (factoids) from SCAR science; roster of SCAR EXCOM Officers and portfolios; a compilation of SSG, SRP, and SC officers (points of contact);

and advertisements for SCAR services. However, the objective is a concise and easily referenced document that Delegates can carry with them at all times and it should not become overly long or cluttered with too much information or material. The Guide will also be made available electronically and serve as a resource for post-meeting briefings.

16. Secretariat to collect a copy of all meeting PPTs to develop a library of these presentations as a resource for member nations.

Actions to engender excitement about our work and make high quality Antarctic science a central theme

- 1. Encourage all Delegates to attend the OSC.**
- 2. Create a “SCAR Polar Frontiers and Emerging Issues Luncheon”.** On one day of the Delegates Meeting, SCAR hosts a luncheon with a featured speaker. A polar frontiers presentations will highlight the best and most exciting elements of SCAR science, such as ANDRILL, subglacial aquatic environments, astrophysics research (e.g. ICECUBE), life in the cold and dark, ice sheet mass balance, etc. Emphasize interdisciplinary and multi-national activities. For emerging issues draw from the CEP and SSG agendas – alien introductions, bioprospecting, climate change, tourism, etc. In most cases it would be at no additional expense, as an appropriate attendee might present the lecture; otherwise bring in a speaker (this might also be an opportunity for the host nation to highlight one of its scientists or programs). Extend the lunch to 1_ hours and recoup the time by convening _ hour earlier in the morning.
- 3. During coffee breaks draw on the extensive and high quality audio-visual products available on the web and project these in the meeting rooms (requires WiFi or other Internet connection).**
- 4. SSG, SRP, SC and other reports and presentations should begin with a summary of the most exciting and new science of SCAR.** While business matters must be discussed they should not be the sole content of the presentations.
- 5. At the Delegates Banquet include a 30-minute after dinner-type science lecture.** The luncheon and the banquet talks could alternate between science and emerging issues talks. As above this might be an opportunity for the host to highlight their achievements.
- 6. Have SRPs, SSGs, and SCs produce posters to be displayed outside the meeting rooms and serve as a focus for discussions during breaks.** SCAR services and products posters to be included. Make these posters available to Delegates and National Committees on-line. Offer during the meetings to mail sets of posters to Delegates and interested parties. Draw attention of the Delegates to these posters during the plenary.
- 7. Secretariat and SSGs to produce monthly highlights on the web site home page. (i) a science issue ; (ii) a national programme; (iii) a SCAR service or product.** Highlights to be archived in library of SCAR activities as a resource for Members.