



**XXXII SCAR Delegates' Meeting**

**Portland, USA, 23-25 July 2012**

Agenda Item: 10.3

Person Responsible: R Ravindra/  
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**Other Communications Activities (social  
networking, publications, SCAR  
Newsletter, etc.)**



## Executive Summary

**Title:** Other Communications Activities (social networking, publications, SCAR Newsletter, etc.)

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**Relevant URLs or references to other reports:**

<http://www.scar.org/communications/>

<http://www.scar.org/publications/reports/25/Report25.pdf> (Communications Plan)

<https://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2514526253>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/270797622936290/>

**Introduction/ Background:** SCAR increases the visibility of the organization and its activities through Communication. SCAR develops cooperation with partners; mobilize resources; effectively link the Secretariat staff with SCAR's Executive Committee, scientific activities, and other Antarctic organizations; ensure that all SCAR members are aware of opportunities to participate in SCAR; and establishes SCAR as the preferred source of scientific information for policy makers, scientists and journalists looking for information with respect to scientific issues in the Antarctic region.

**Important Issues or Factors:** Delegates to note that Draft social media policy is presented here for discussion

**Expected Benefits/Outcomes:** Increased visibility for SCAR, and dissemination of information in a range of matters, in order to create maximum impact.

**Partners:** National Antarctic Organisations' PR groups, other international organisations like COMNAP, IASC, Science Media Center, etc.

**Budget Implications:** A standard publication budget of \$2000; additional requests are made as required. In order to update the SCAR website \$10,000 was allocated in 2011.

## **Other Communications Activities** (social networking, publications, SCAR Newsletter, etc.)

### ***Introduction***

SCAR aims to improve knowledge of the benefits of Antarctic science that affect the wider community in member countries; promote better understanding by governments, the media, academia, the general public and others of Antarctic and Southern Ocean issues; and improve communication with funding institutions about key Antarctic research initiatives and future directions. The task of communicating SCAR's message is shared between the SCAR Secretariat acting internationally and SCAR National Committees reaching national communities. SCAR encourages each national member to establish a web site and communication protocols and to regularly disseminate news about SCAR activities.

Strategic partnerships with other organizations also raise SCAR's profile and help to disseminate the SCAR message to an even wider range of audiences (see IP 6). SCAR partners with organizations such as the Science Media Centre in London to disseminate news about Antarctic science.

### ***Methods of Communication***

SCAR mainly uses electronic means to communicate, publish and distribute news and materials of interest. All material is made available on-line for both reduction in the use of paper, and ease of access. The [Antarctic Climate Change and Environment](#) review (ACCE, 2009), is available online as a free download as are the annual updates. "[Science in the Snow](#)", a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book, that looks at SCAR's contributions over the past 50 years, has been published as has the Initial Science and Implementation plan of the Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS, [www.soos.aq](http://www.soos.aq)). SCAR has also supported the publication of the IPY Summary book in 2011. SCAR also reports to ATCM and CEP, and our reports are available to the public on our web site and through the ATS web site.

The ever popular "Notes from the President", is a monthly email written by the SCAR President directly to the SCAR Delegates focusing on issues of importance to SCAR Members. Additional information about SCAR activities is available at numerous Standing Scientific Group and Scientific Research Program web sites. SCAR communicates its message through a variety of meetings that include business meetings, conferences, symposia, workshop, and other meetings. In addition, individual SCAR groups commonly arrange workshops or seminars that may be held in association with other major events. SCAR Open Science Conferences have been well attended and most importantly, draw together an interdisciplinary community including early career researchers. SCAR also has groups on social networking sites such as 'Facebook', a resource used extensively by younger scientists and the general public, and 'LinkedIn', which is aimed at the business community.

SCAR's goal is near "real time" transmission of documents that support decision-making, and has adopted a procedure of posting Working and Information Papers in support of the biennial Delegates and Business Meetings in advance. SCAR is committed to streamlining its meetings by preparing documents in standard formats with page limits, providing all presentations as slide shows with simplified text for non-native English speakers, and producing a guide to the Delegates Meeting that contains an annotated agenda and one-page, standardized summaries of the contents of all papers.

### ***SCAR Merchandise:***

SCAR merchandise is now updated, with a SCAR tie (in two designs) and cloth badge and will be expanded to further establish the SCAR brand and image. A Google shop-front has been set up (currently to purchase the ACCE and Science in the Snow) and will be expanded to include ties, and other merchandise to enable people to shop online for SCAR merchandise.

### ***Social Media***

General polar news items (both scientific and others) and Press Releases are posted on a regular basis, both on the SCAR website, Facebook page, as well as through various mailing lists (ClimateL, BiodiversityL, DCMC, CCF, etc.) for optimum dissemination of information. A newsletter is issued quarterly and several SCAR programmes issue their own newsletters. The SCAR newsletter has been updated and given a professional look. In addition SCAR responds to a wide range of requests for information received at info@scar.org.

### ***Need for a Social media policy***

Communicating online is different from communicating in person or printed messages. People need to be aware of all the different aspects of social media – who sees your message, who is sharing messages and what are they sharing. Since this way of communication is quite new for most people, it is advisable to have a document which provides guidance on the usage of social media. Delegates are asked to note the Draft Social Media Policy which is given as an appendix to this paper.

### ***The SCAR Website***

Please see IP17

### ***The SCAR Communications Plan***

Effective communication with those that have an interest in SCAR is essential and SCAR utilizes a range of tools to ensure timely and frequent contact with various communities and entities. SCAR aims to explore mechanisms and technologies to improve communication of its mission, relevance and accomplishments and is committed to transparency in all of its actions. The SCAR Communication Plan identifies target communities each requiring specifically tailored messages. However looking at the speed of changing ways of communications, it suggested that the SCAR Communications plan be revised (via the CBET committee in the first instance, and EXCOM). A revised plan will be submitted to the EXCOM Meeting in July 2013.

## APPENDIX

### SCAR's Social Media Policy

The term 'social media' refers to methods allowing any users to publish content online, such as through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs. It is simple to use and provides a great opportunity to engage with SCAR's audience, inspire the public and enhance SCAR's and users' profile.

This policy provides a guide on how to use social media correctly and manage your social media accounts.

If you have any questions regarding the content, then please contact [info@scar.org](mailto:info@scar.org). SCAR is keen encourage the use of social media to promote its work and raise its profile. Therefore the more the supporters of SCAR communicate about its accomplishments, events and opportunities it offers, the better.

Please be aware of the following:

**Monitoring and updating frequency:** The number of updates/postings by SCAR will vary. During some periods, SCAR may tweet more or less frequently than average. Users should expect postings during regular working hours, Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

#### **Representing SCAR on social media platforms**

- **Do not spam others to promote SCAR.** Be cautious how you communicate with others on the platform and ensure your communications will be of interest.
- **Always be honest.** Be transparent and identify yourself as a SCAR staff member, when posting anything relating to SCAR on another website or social media platform. Your honesty will be noted in the social media environment. If you are writing about SCAR or a member of ICSU (the International Council for Science), use your real name, state you work for SCAR and be clear about your role. Furthermore do not hide your identity when promoting anything to do with SCAR, because if others find out your identity, then you may damage SCAR's reputation on that site.
- **Never represent SCAR or yourself in a false or misleading way.** All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be substantiated.

#### **What is and is not acceptable when commenting on SCAR's social media platforms**

SCAR welcomes comments on its social media sites, such as facebook, and expects that conversations will follow the general rules of respectful civil discourse. Individual users are fully responsible for everything they submit in comments, and all posted comments are in the public domain. Submissions must be relevant and civil. Please be aware of the following:

- **Representing yourself and SCAR.** Please remember you are representing SCAR. If you are currently using social media for your personal use, make it clear your views are your personal opinions and are not necessarily representative of SCAR.
- **Be accurate and provide references,** when necessary, as to where the information came from. Do not hide your mistakes, but instead update the page explaining your error (e.g. this blog post contains an explanation below the main image).
- **Be courteous.** The majority of the content that you post will be public, and it may not be possible to remove once posted.

Comments that are deemed offensive to an individual or an organization, rude in tone or abusive, will not be tolerated. SCAR does not discriminate against any opinions, but reserves the right to edit and remove any comments that are deemed:

- Racist, hateful, sexist, homophobic, slanderous, insulting, or life-threatening messages.
- Serious, unproven, unsupported, or inaccurate accusations against individuals or organisations.
- Abusive, aggressive, coarse, explicit, vulgar, violent, obscene, or pornographic comments.
- Personal attacks and/or defamatory statements.
- Comments that encourage or suggest illegal activity.
- Messages where the sender is not the author (nor the copyright holder if applicable).
- Solicitations, advertisements, or endorsements of any financial, commercial or non-governmental agency. Similarly, we do not allow attempts to defame or defraud any financial, commercial or non-governmental agency.
- Announcements from labour or political organizations.
- Messages written in a language other than English.
- Comments not sent by the author and/or posted by anonymous or robot accounts.
- Repetitive posts copied and pasted by multiple users.
- Unintelligible or irrelevant messages.
- Messages posted using all ‘CAPS’ (it is difficult to read and is interpreted as yelling).
- Messages that are too far off-topic.
- Any other message that the forum moderators feel will not add to the normal flow of debate.

Any individual user acting against any of these rules, may be temporarily or permanently excluded from the dialogue spaces on SCAR’s social media sites.

Please note the following important points:

- SCAR is not able to reply to every comment posted, but will attempt to engage in conversations when possible.
- The views of participants commenting on these pages do not necessarily represent the views of SCAR
- Individuals participate at their own risk, taking personal responsibility for comments, username and any information provided.
- **Privacy:** To protect SCAR's privacy and the privacy of others', please do not include phone numbers or email addresses in the body of comments.

## Managing visitor's comments

The majority of social media platforms allow visitors to comment and discuss tweets, pages, blog posts, videos etc. SCAR recommends that you:

- **Encourage comments and be responsive.** Actively communicate with your visitors and you will hopefully build up a community and gain trust from others.
- **Deal with negative feedback.** If users post complaints or have other problems, follow them up promptly and positively, before many others join in.
- **Monitor all comments.** Where possible, always choose to be emailed when a user comments. This is not possible in all social media sites, so make sure you check them reasonably regularly. Use your discretion to remove spam, comments and advertisements that are defamatory, hateful and obscene. When necessary notify the websites support team.
- **Notify your followers if you or your team is unable to monitor comments for a short period of time** (e.g. due to Easter or Christmas closures). Otherwise users may become annoyed if their questions are not being answered after a couple of days.
- If visitors have questions, refer them to information on your website when possible, rather than directly answering their queries within the social media platform.

## Private communications via social media platforms

SCAR recommends that private communications between staff and other individuals are made using SCAR email. This is due to the following:

- The social media platform used may not guarantee how long it will archive communication records, some of which may be needed at a later date.
- Using a social media site for private communication increases the risk of a confidentiality breach, as websites or account holders may change their privacy settings.



SCAR appreciates that using email to contact social media users is not always possible. For example, a SCAR fellowship applicant may get in touch via social media to discuss personal details in their application. Depending on the platform, they may not be contactable using email, therefore they have to be contacted using the site's own private communication system. In these cases, SCAR recommends that you contact the individual using a non-personal social media account, such as SCAR's account. This is because:

- If you are away or unavailable, someone else can check the account and answer the user's queries.
- Using your personal account can sometimes reveal your personal details, depending on your site's privacy settings.

If this is not possible, ask the individual to send an email to your SCAR email, refer them to another member of SCAR staff or to e-mail [info@scar.org](mailto:info@scar.org).

## General tips

**Do not become too dependent on a single social media site.** This is in case of any major changes are made to the site, such as the site may impose charges, significantly change over time or even close. These changes may have detrimental impacts on your work or profile. Therefore ensure you have an exit strategy in place for any work that does rely on a social media network.

## Measuring social media

Measuring social media can be very difficult and overwhelming, as there are numerous elements to consider analysing. You therefore need to plan ahead.

**Firstly, consider your objectives for your social media activity.** For example, is it to engage more with the public, network with other researchers or to draw more people to SCAR's website?

Once you have a clear objective, your 'key performance indicator(s)' for achieving that goal will become clear. For example, if you wish to engage more with the public, an indicator of your success could be the number of interactions you have had with the public on a social media site.

**Secondly, consider what statistics will help you know if you have achieved these objectives.**

If you wish to review the interactions you have had with the public in social media, you may want to measure metrics such as the number of @replies to your Tweets.

The following social media measurement tools provide the metrics required to measure your success, as described above. Social media platforms also have their own specific analytics interfaces, such as Facebook Insights.

**Google Analytics:** <http://www.google.com/analytics/>

- Measures traffic to your website from social media platforms.

**bitly:** <https://bitly.com/>

- If you use bitly to shorten urls in your Tweets, you may find statistics on people who have followed the links.

**Twitter Counter:** <http://twittercounter.com/>

- Shows you your Twitter statistics.
- Easy to use and understand.

**TweetStats:** <http://tweetstats.com/>

- You can use this to graph your twitter statistics, includes a tweet timeline, who has replied to you etc...

**Tweetreach:** <http://tweetreach.com/>

- Tracks how far your tweet has reached.

**Klout:** <http://klout.com/home>

- Measures your influence on your social network platform.

### **Good links to external social media tutorials:**

**Nicky Kriel blog:** <http://www.nickykriel.com/blog/>

- Blogs about how to use social media effectively and keeps up-to-date with the changes occurring on a variety of social media sites.

### **Twitter:**

- How to get started with Twitter:

<https://support.twitter.com/groups/31-twitter-basics/topics/104-welcome-to-twitter-support/articles/215585-twitter-101-how-should-i-get-started-using-twitter>

### **Facebook**

- How to use Facebook:

[http://www.ehow.com/videos-on\\_108\\_use-facebook.html](http://www.ehow.com/videos-on_108_use-facebook.html)

- Managing your Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/help/?page=168617716530627>

### **Privacy**

Users are encouraged to read each social media sites' respective privacy policies.

To protect your own privacy and the privacy of others, SCAR recommends that you do not include personal information in your comments or other content you post. Personal information includes; home addresses, telephone numbers, photographs containing images of identifiable individuals and any other information consisting of personal information.

Please note the following:

- **Do not invade SCAR's or others privacy.** For example, do not post private information about individuals.
- **Do not infringe copyrights.** Do not post others' content online without their permission. Ensure you have permission from SCAR before posting SCAR images onto an external site (the images may only be licensed to be used on the SCAR domain). For more information please e-mail [info@scar.org](mailto:info@scar.org).
- **Use of SCAR branding.** If you intend to use SCAR branded icons on your social media platform, check first, you have permission from SCAR; please e-mail: [info@scar.org](mailto:info@scar.org).
- **Check before you use others' branding on your social media platform.** Ensure you have permission to use a social media website's icon, or other content, on your social media platform. For example, see Twitter's guidelines for use of the Twitter trademark: <https://support.twitter.com/articles/77641-guidelines-for-use-of-the-twitter-trademark>.

### Disclaimers:

- **Add a disclaimer when necessary.** It is important when using social media channels, especially for your personal use, that you make it very clear, the content posted is not necessarily representative of SCAR. For example, on a facebook page, your blog, discussion forum or Twitter. This is easy to do, simply state the following: *These views are personal or mine only*. To view an example of a disclaimer for a blog, follow this link: (blog disclaimer document).
- **Availability:** We accept no responsibility for the social media sites' networks becoming unresponsive or unavailable due to circumstances beyond our control.
- **Links to Other Websites:** Links to websites not under the control of SCAR and to other social media websites are provided solely for the convenience of users. SCAR is not responsible for the accuracy, currency or reliability of the content on these sites. SCAR does not offer any guarantee in that regard and is not responsible for the information found through these links, nor does it endorse the sites and their content.