

Proposal for Improved Functioning of SSGs

Goal: By 2010 streamline the SSGs' meetings to develop a higher level of strategic thinking, more focus on scientific outputs and less on the mechanics of administration, and the production of a streamlined report following a specified template, so as to engender more excitement at Delegates' meetings about SCAR's mission and work.

The Issue: The organizational transformation of SCAR has been completed with ongoing continuous improvement. The next step is to rethink how SCAR conducts its business, emphasizing improved communication, inclusion and consultation. 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. Two key steps are involved:

- (i) reforming the SSG Business meetings (this paper)
- (ii) reforming the Delegates meetings (paper WP 21).

SCAR's biennial meetings provide a critical communication opportunity through which to demonstrate the benefits of SCAR's membership to the Delegates, so these meetings must be organized and managed in such a way as to exploit to the full the potential for communicating exciting developments and plans to the Delegates. These are our first-order customers as they finance the organization, and the future of SCAR is critically dependent on its member nations feeling that they are getting value for their investment.

The Objective: The conduct of SCAR's business begins at the formulation of reports by the SSGs, SRPs, SCs and others and ends with final adoption of the report by the Delegates. All steps along the way need to be orchestrated within a coordinated structure as the last step is dependent on the first step and each step in the process sets the stage for each succeeding step. The overarching objective is to regularize how SCAR conducts business, to free all of us to concentrate our efforts on the substantive internal and external issues we need to address as a team. A secondary purpose is to reduce the paper burden at all levels. Overly long papers are not read and important items are often lost or obscured in the process. The conduct of SCAR business is essential but it should not inordinately consume our limited time, resources, and attention. It is hoped that once these reforms are adopted our time and effort on these duties will be decreased, the meetings are conducted in a more methodical fashion, and the Delegates feel that they are an essential and integral part of the process.

In regard to SSG Business Meetings that provide substantial input to the Delegates' meetings:

1. **SSG reports to conform to a common Working Paper standard** – 10 pages maximum, application of standard template, with 1 page maximum summary highlighting scientific achievements and outcomes (NOT activities). PowerPoints to be used to summarize the main points at Delegates meetings.
2. **SSG business meetings not to exceed 2 days.** Some SSG meetings might even be shorter depending on their agenda and careful prior planning. SSGs should conduct business in one and _ days plus a plenary session discussed below in item 5. It is recognised that the SSG-LS has a particularly heavy workload because of ATS-related responsibilities, but all efforts should be made to contain all SSG business meetings to 2 days.

3. **Reports to SSGs should be in 15-minute segments** with no report exceeding two segments or 30 minutes. As much time as possible should be set aside for discussion. All reports should be in the form of PowerPoint presentations.
4. **All SSGs must operate from an annotated agenda**, similar in format to that used for the Delegates meeting and provided well in advance of the meeting. If COs have trouble with producing annotated agendas the Secretariat should assist to ensure completion prior to the meeting.
5. **Conduct a COs meeting (15-30 minutes) prior to the business meetings** to emphasize the procedures and use of the standard reporting templates (note- with clever management, COs can fill in parts of the report template BEFORE their meeting, to gain time. The COs meeting will be led by the President and Executive Director, e.g. at breakfast on the first day of Business Week.
6. **Supporting written papers should be posted in a timely manner to the SSG home page along with the annotated agenda two months in advance of the meeting** to allow national representatives ample time to prepare and for briefing their National Committees.
7. **Prior posting of PPTs would also be useful but may not be feasible.** At a minimum SSG Secretaries should collect PPTs and post them to the SSG web site immediately following the meeting, as a resource for representatives and Delegates for post-meeting briefings of National Committees and others.
8. **On the morning of the first day of the business meetings all SSGs meet together in plenary to hear common agenda items** (SRP reports, SCATS reports, SCAR report, etc.) and to introduce specific items from the Delegates' meetings agenda that require SSG comment and advice. A standard, brief verbiage to be prepared on each of these common items and provided to each SSG to include in their report. In the SSG Plenary the President and Executive Director will remind the SSGs what their function and role is in SCAR, provide instructions on reporting formats, advise on budget issues, review recommendation formats and procedures, and highlight any other important issues.
9. **A SCAR sponsored "SSG Science Luncheon" on one of the days of the SSG business meetings should be scheduled to highlight a science topic, an emerging issue, or a high profile SSG activity.** All SSG members should be requested to attend. The SCAR EXCOM should be in attendance and participate in a question and answer session at the end of the luncheon. The luncheon to be 1_ hours and the _ hour of time recouped by convening the SSG meetings earlier that day.
10. **Reports on reports should be eliminated in SSG reports and a simple reference provided to the original source paper on the SSG web page.** Reports on reports are often providing inaccurate information about what is in reports. Only SSG specific requests or important information relevant to a specific SSG from a report on a report should be reported.
11. **Reports should contain numbered action items for the future biennium (these include what were formerly termed internal recommendations).** Action items are the basis for the SSGs' biennial work

programme, which must be devised by the SSGs Officers in response to the groups' requirements. All actions should be expressed in the SSG report in plain and simple English (not the elaborate language of past recommendations), stating who is to do what and by when. Actions should be briefly summarized in the Report Summary.

12. **External Recommendations requiring Delegate discussion and approval should begin with a brief justification and a simple recommendation that X organization do action Y to achieve objective Z in time T.** If necessary additional background and context setting can be provided in the SSG report and the Delegates referred to this more extensive text. Brief recaps of external recommendations should be summarized in the report Summary.
13. **An EXCOM representative should be assigned to each SSG** to answer questions that may arise, ensure that procedures are followed, and facilitate discussions when necessary, not to interfere with the SSGs conduct of their business.
14. **No competing sessions should be scheduled during the time of the SSG meetings.**
15. **Ideally all non-SSG meetings shall be scheduled prior to the SSG meetings,** since such meetings frequently involve the Action and Expert Groups that will later report to the SSGs.
16. **The non-SSG and SSG meetings shall normally precede the OSC.**
17. **SSG reports shall be completed at latest on the Saturday following the OSC.** This recognizes that OSCs will usually take place from Tuesday to Friday and that the Delegates Meeting will begin the following Monday. It also allows for the report to be made available to Delegates at the latest on the Sunday afternoon prior to the Delegates meeting.
18. *SRP reports will continue to be produced following instructions to SRP leaders, and made available to SSG COs prior to their SSG meetings.*
19. *SRP Leaders will be asked to provide one-page summaries and PowerPoints as itemized above.*
20. *Standing Committee (SCATS, JCADM, SCAGI) reports to conform to the new report standards.*
21. *Any other reports not generated by SSGs, SRPS, or SCs to conform to the new report standards.*
22. *Copies of all PPTs should be provided to the Secretariat to develop a library of presentations on each SSG, SRP and SC web page as a resource for member nations.*

Conclusions: For these reforms to produce the intended effect, careful planning and consultation is necessary with those producing reports prior to the meetings. Once the procedures become routine less consultation will be needed.