

SOA Executive Committee

Minutes of the Meeting

16th January 2013

The SOA Executive Committee met on the 16th January 2013 in the PAO conference room (attendance apologies received from Jean-Marie Boulet and Dariusz Kacperczyk). The following agenda items were discussed and the consequent actions noted below:

1. **Approval of the previous minutes and approval of the Agenda:** The Minutes and Agenda were approved. The open items were addressed as indicated in this report.
2. **Action Items from the SOA Executive Committee meeting of 11th October 2012 and the 52nd General Assembly:**
 - a. To further involve the NMR echelon in SOA activities and address the declining membership of active service officers in the SOA, a letter was prepared by the Chairman of the US Chapter for SACEUR's signature as President of the SOA. This letter was personally addressed to each NMR and the following extract of the text captures the agreed actions:
“ To that end, I would like to offer Honorary Membership in the SOA to all NMRs. As members you would be able to see the advantages, both operationally and socially of participating in SOA activities. As members, you would also be in a position to encourage your countrymen to join the SOA. As an incentive, the SOA would extend a one-year free membership to all new members.”
 - b. The Acting Chairman of the SOA would continue to extend this invitation to each new NMR incumbent and hopes to provide a full SOA briefing this year to the NMR echelon (Action GB).
 - c. To ensure that any 'local' SOA activities were available to all SOA members, all members would be invited to every SOA event, beginning with the 2013 New Year 'Happy Hour' at the SHAPE Club on 16th January 2013. The NMR echelon will be included in all SOA information emails (Action DK).
 - d. The date and location for the SOA General Assembly attracted some debate. A survey will therefore be conducted and alternatives proposed at the next SOA General Meeting. The 2013 SOA Symposium will remain at SHAPE.
3. **Symposium 2013**
 - a. The 2013 Symposium will follow the same format as that of 2012, with a welcoming Happy Hour on the evening of 10th October, the General Assembly and Annual Dinner on the 11th of October, and a Social Programme on the 12th of October. Possible options for the Social Programme include a tour of Leuven or a trip to the Car Museum.
 - b. Some minor adjustments will be made to improve the administrative arrangements:
 - i. Coffee will be arranged for both the morning and afternoon sessions of the General Assembly.
 - ii. Local members attending the Annual Dinner will need to pay a week beforehand. This is to avoid the losses incurred at the last dinner due to no-show reservations.
4. **Activities Planned for 2013**
 - a. The Acting Chairman recapped the plans for 2013 social events and requested further suggestions that could be 'aired' at the Happy Hour following the Executive Committee meeting. A numbers of options were proposed including:

- i. Wine Lecture and Tasting
 - ii. Canal Boat Trip
 - iii. Speaker Luncheon
 - iv. Happy Hour for all SHAPE Officers
 - v. NATO HQ Tour & Luncheon
 - vi. Cultural event such as a Choir Performance
- b. The Executive Committee would commit to organising two of the events and members were welcome to volunteer for any additional activities.

5. AOB

- a. The SOA Brochure needs to be updated and re-printed (Action JW).
- b. The Membership Review was not discussed due to the absence of the Database manager but a statement should be prepared for the next meeting (Action JMB).
- c. The potential candidate for the Chairman of the SOA will be approached at the end of February to confirm his interest (Action CH).
- d. The Scholarship awards will be presented at the Happy Hour and contributions for the fund requested. It was agreed that the SOA operating fund would match any individual contributions. (Action SS).
- e. Mony Marsh had previously volunteered to lead the SOA involvement for “Mons 2015 City of Culture” and she would be invited to attend the next SOA Executive Committee meeting (Action GB).
- f. Secretary’s Note: At the Happy Hour following the Executive Committee meeting:
 - i. The Acting Chairman welcomed over 30 of our SOA members, gave an overview of the General Assembly actions and presented the Social Programme options for 2013. A proposal was added for a local hiking tour. The hiking tour includes a one hour lecture on Casteau’s history and a 5 km hike to St Denis. Albert Lefebvre volunteered to lead the hike and suggested the last Sunday of August when the brewery at St Denis has an open door day for the ‘Art et Saveur’ event. The hike is not a round-trip and one would need transportation to return to the start. The Wine Tasting, NATO HQ visit and Hiking Trip seemed to carry general favour.
 - ii. Scott Sunquist recapped the Scholarship Awards and promoted contributions to the fund.
 - iii. Mony Marsh confirmed her willingness to take on the “Mons 2015 City of Culture” task and Jean Vanderwal also volunteered to assist.

6. Next Meeting

- a. Wednesday 20th March 2013 at 14.30 in the SHAPE PAO Conference Room.