
15 PLANNING AND ORGANISATION OF CONFERENCES

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There are many aspects in planning and organising Conferences. I shall deal specifically with the administration of conference Secretariat - the setting up and maintenance.

When Does Preparation for a Conference Begin

- (1) After the last conference;
- (2) Immediately after the decision to have a conference is given;
- (3) A stated period, say three months before the proposed date of the conference.

What is clear is that preparation for the organisation of a conference are done weeks or months before the date of the conference.

Planning Committee of Conference

The Chief Supervisor of the Secretariat is always a member of the Committee responsible for planning and organising the Conference. While the Chief Supervisor is interested in all aspects of the Conference, he/she is particularly interested in the following:

- (i) Size of the Conference — the number of delegates and observers attending the conference.
- (ii) Type of Conference —
 - (a) Conference of Prime Ministers
 - (b) Conference of Foreign Ministers
 - (c) Conference of Officials

The Supervisor of the Secretariat must liaise especially with the Conference Secretary and the Documents Officer.

Now, when the size of the Conference is known, the Supervisor will form a sub-committee to assist in the organisation and operation of the Secretariat.

Preparations for a 'large' Conference say for 500 persons or representatives from about 45/50 countries —

Conference Site:

- (a) Main Conference Hall

- (b) Discussion Rooms
- (c) Rooms for Conference Officials
- (d) Secretariat
- (e) Canteen Facilities
- (f) Rest Facilities, etc.

Let us suppose that at the Conference 4 languages are to be used —

English
French

Spanish
Arabic

Let us further suppose that the country where the Conference is to be held is English-speaking and there is little or no personnel to service the French, Spanish and Arabic units of the Secretariat. Personnel capable of typing and reading Spanish, French and Arabic must be obtained from outside the host country.

A decision as to the numerical strength of the Secretariat must now be determined:

- e.g. French typing pool — 9 type (12) for rotation
- Spanish typing pool — 6 type (8) for rotation
- English typing pool — 10 type (12) for rotation
- Arabic typing pool — 6 type and 2 typists for English typing.

Added: Conference Organiser/Chief Supervisor

Conference Supervisors - one supervisor for each category of typing pool; one for Office supplies.

Chief Messenger
Messenger

Now the Committee has settled the question of the typing personnel for the four units of the Secretariat. The layout of the entire Conference Secretariat and Hall must now be looked into. The following facilities must be located near to the typing services, i.e.

The Chief Translators and the Translators;
The Office Supplies;
The Printery/Duplicating Section;
The Interpreters' Rooms;
Documentation Registry or Store-Room; and
The Documentation Officer's Room.

Attached are two specimen layouts:

- (i) of a typing and interpreters section, etc., and
- (ii) the printing room of the secretariat

The Chief Supervisor and the committee should be acquainted with the entire layout of all the various halls and rooms which will be used during the Conference.

Let us recap on the facts that are now known to the Chief Supervisor and the committee:

- (a) Time and duration of conference;
- (b) Size;
- (c) The number of languages to be used at the conference;
- (d) The location and layout of the Secretariat, other departments, conference halls, etc.

The office equipment, stationery, etc., must now be ordered. The following must be taken into consideration —

- (a) The countries or firms from which supplies could be obtained, and
- (b) the time taken for the delivery of the equipment

I have attached an estimate for office supplies based on the following:

600 delegates
100 secretariat (interpreters/translators, et al)

This list is by no means final and it will be found that certain additional items must be obtained during the conference.

As stated before it was accepted that the Conference will take place in an English-speaking country. The competency of the stenographers and typists must now be ascertained. Typewriters for the various typing units must be obtained (e.g. Typewriter with French characters face, Spanish, Arabic).

As the date for opening of the Conference approaches, furniture and office equipment must be moved into the Secretariat and the offices laid out according to the plan. The Chief Supervisor must ascertain that all the rooms are adequately furnished and all his/her supplies are adequate. The entire Secretariat must take on the appearance of a well ordered and properly laid out office, which should ensure an easy flow of work with the operation fashioned to produce work accurately and quickly.

Although the Printing room and the Documentary Registry are not the direct responsibility of the supervisor, during a large conference, in a 'small' conference, he/she will be responsible for all the departments of the Secretariat. Therefore in a 'large' conference the Chief Supervisor must ensure that the facilities of the printing room are adequate and that it is also geared for accurate and quick production.

The Secretariat should be in operation at least a week before the opening of the Conference. There are several reasons for this, the more important being:

- (i) the staff must be acquainted and become accustomed to working with each other;
- (ii) there is always preparatory typing to be done - documents etc.;
- (iii) the staff getting themselves acquainted with the layout etc., of the Conference site, buildings, etc.;
- (iv) there is sometimes a meeting of officials before the conference proper, when Conference Documents are prepared;
- (v) registration documents, cards, files, have to be typed and prepared;
- (vi) conference packets for delegates must be prepared.

On the notice board in the Secretariat there should be a copy of the Time-Table of the entire conference meetings and the location of the meeting of the various Committees and Workshops; Plan of the Secretariat and other important notices.

Each office or department must be boldly labelled, in a prominent place (with name of the supervisor and/or the section, e.g. Chief Supervisor Cde. X, Typing Pool, French Unit).

Operation of Secretariat During Conference

Chief Supervisor or an appointee must record or must receive a detailed description of every document given for typing. The Supervisor of each section should make a record of all documents submitted for typing and allocate work to each typist.

The Chief Supervisor must ensure that each document bears a number in numerical sequence according to code number/symbol decided on by the organising committee.

Attached is a specimen of a Document Control Card, the type of record keeping device that is essential to the different operation of a secretariat.

Typing staff should ensure that each conference document bears a specific number.

Display and presentation are most important. It is appreciated that accuracy is the most important element in all the documents presented.

We have been looking mostly at preparation for a 'large' conference, say like the Conference for Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries - but the conferences we are most

likely to be involved in are the small conferences with between 30 and 50 persons and under 100, where the Secretariat handles the entire operation from the prior preparation, order of equipment and furniture to the production and issue of the last or final communique.

Miscellaneous Points

- (i) Typing and printing sections must always be well arranged and tidy.
- (ii) Supervisors ensure that staff are happy and contented.
- (iii) Facilities: canteen, toilet, etc., are adequate.
- (iv) Security is well maintained
- (v) Adequate transportation
- (vi) Supplies constantly checked, sources of replacement available.
- (vii) The personnel available in the printing room may not be able to distinguish between French/ Spanish or other foreign languages so it could be decided to allocate different colours for each language used:
 - Blue — French
 - Green — Spanish
 - Pink — Arabic
 - Buff — English

In the printing room, printing of each language document should be restricted to particular machines which are properly labelled.

There are several other areas that could be elaborated upon, but which I hope would be discussed in the workshops.

Estimates for Office Supplies
Based on the following figures

600 Delegates - 100 Secretariat (Interpreters/Translators, etc.) and 60 documents of five pages each. These quantities should be increased in accordance with total anticipated number of documents.

800	pencils with eraser (for delegates and secretariat)
800	writing pads half-size (legal) (delegates and secretariat)
100	thousand sheets for printing on both sides (double this quantity for printing on one side only)
50	tins of printing ink
1,000	stencil sheets
30	bottles of stencil correcting fluid
200	folders to keep stencils
200	plastic sheets to be used with stencils
15	two-hole perforators
5	staplers (heavy duty able to staple more than 100 sheets)
24	regular staplers
24	staple removers
15	scissors
20	rolls of gummed paper
1,000	sheets copy paper, legal size
1,000	sheets copy paper letter size
1,000	envelopes legal size
2,000	sheets bond paper, letter size
2,000	sheets bond paper, legal size
10	folders with lever
100	manila envelopes, legal size
100	manila envelopes, letter size
100	manila folders, legal size (Oxford type)
150	labels for manila folders
10	thick felt pen
30	fine felt pen (various colours)
12	boxes of carbon paper, legal size
40	shorthand pads (Gregg and Pitman ruled)
6	ruled paper pads (100 sheets each)
6	boxes of tacks
50	boxes of clips
30	typewriter erasers
12	typewriter cleaner rubber knead
12	blotting paper pads (for desks)
1	box of rubber bands (40 mm.)
1	box of rubber bands (80 mm.)
1	box of rubber bands (100 mm.)
200	ball-point pens
12	rulers (12 inch)
2	ink pads for seals
2	ink bottles for seals
30	waste paper baskets
30	boxes of staples (standard 26/6)

5	boxes of Acco-fasteners
10	desk pencil-sharpeners
12	in and out trays
1	dozen of bi-coloured pencils
2	blackboards for information
2	blackboard erasers
1	box of white chalk
5	dozens of 1" binders
1	ball of string

DOCUMENT CONTROL CARD

SYMBOL:		SHORT TITLE:	
AGENDA ITEM:	ORIGINAL:		No. of Pages:
Consulting Officer:			Tele:
<u>TRANSLATION</u>		Rec'd. on:	Hour:
Into:		Due on:	Hour:
<u>TYPING POOL</u>		Rec'd on:	Hour:
		Due on:	Hour:
<u>PRINTING</u>		Rec'd on:	Hour:
No. of Copies:		Due on:	Hour:
DISTRIBUTION:		Delegates:	Others:
Due on:	Hour:	Interpreters:	Registry:
CONFERENCE ROOM:		Rec'd by:	
		Date:	Hour:
<u>DOCUMENTS CONTROL</u>		Rec'd on:	Hour:
Job Number:		OUT:	Hour:
<u>Special Instructions:</u>		<u>Reference:</u>	

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT: A card is to be established for each document and each language, although it bears the same symbol.

This card should be printed in five copies, each one of a different colour, and bear a special mention:

- ORIGINAL: White on heavy bond paper with mention bottom right
Documents Control
- 1st copy : Yellow on thick copy paper with mention bottom right
Translation
- 2nd copy : Light Green on thick copy paper with mention bottom right
Typing Pool
- 3rd copy : Pink on thick copy paper with mention bottom right Printing
- 4th copy : Light Blue on thick copy paper with mention bottom right
Documents Control

The manner in which these cards are to be used is indicated below:

- (1) DOCUMENT CONTROL establishes the card with all indications available at the time the document arrives for registration:
 - (i) Keeps the light blue copy;
 - (ii) Sends document with WHITE ORIGINAL and YELLOW copy to TRANSLATION;
 - (iii) At the same time, sends LIGHT GREEN copy alone to TYPING POOL, and PINK copy alone to PRINTING, to advise them of the coming of the document ahead of time in order to enable them to plan the work.
- (2) TRANSLATION keeps YELLOW copy after entering respective indication on both the WHITE ORIGINAL and the YELLOW copy and sends document with WHITE ORIGINAL to the Typing Pool.
- (3) TYPING POOL receives document and fills out WHITE ORIGINAL together with LIGHT GREEN copy and sends document and WHITE ORIGINAL back to DOCUMENT CONTROL.
- (4) DOCUMENT CONTROL, after entering information appearing on WHITE ORIGINAL onto its LIGHT BLUE copy, sends document with WHITE ORIGINAL to PRINTING.
- (5) PRINTING, after filling out its PINK Copy with information appearing on WHITE ORIGINAL and entering its own information on both, sends document in the number required to DOCUMENT CONTROL with WHITE ORIGINAL.
- (6) DOCUMENT CONTROL remits documents for distribution to Documentation Officer, enters respective information on both WHITE ORIGINAL and LIGHT BLUE copy and clips them together and file into Kardex system.