

Military Operations Research Society (MORS) Communities of Practice (CoPs)

***Keeping the Analytical Momentum Going
Year 'Round***



- **Background**
- **Function**
- **Meetings**
- **Maintenance**
- **Summary**

- **The questions to be asked are:**
 - Are we collaborating to grow analysts, expand our toolsets, and improve analysis?
 - Are we following up to special meetings and reporting back to our MORS Sponsors?
- **The answers to both questions is:**
 - NO

MORS CoP Background

History



- **The backbone of MORS is the annual symposium's Composite Group / Working Group Structure**
- **Previous MORS Meetings were based on information sharing and not collaborating**
 - Annual Symposium
 - Present papers and exchange business cards
 - Special Meetings / Workshops
 - Work together on selected, specific issues
 - Could be developed from symposium discussions for a one-time event
- **There was *no* opportunity to work together between symposia or after special meetings**



MORS CoP Background

Research of Community of Interest Guidance



- **Community of Interest (COI) definitions**
 - DoD's Net-Centric Data Strategy: A collaborative group of users who must exchange information in pursuit of their shared goals, interests, missions, or business processes and who there must have shared vocabulary for the information they exchange.
 - Commercial: Bringing together stakeholders from different Communities of Practice (CoPs) to solve a particular problem or common concern.
- **Key DoD COI Attributes**
 - Formed to meet a specific data sharing mission or fulfill a task
 - Composed of stakeholders cooperating on behalf of various organizations, with emphasis on cross-component activities
 - Members committed to actively sharing information in relation to their mission and/or task objectives
 - Recognize potential for authorized but unanticipated users and therefore, strive to make their data visible, accessible, and understandable to those inside and outside their community

- **Five different types of communities**
 - **Interest:** Communities of people who share the same interest or passion.
 - **Action:** Communities of people trying to bring about change.
 - **Place:** Communities of people brought together by geographic boundaries.
 - **Practice:** Communities of people in the same profession or undertake the same activities.
 - **Circumstance:** Communities of people brought together by external events / situations.
- **In a Community of Practice, the goal is to**
 - Document best practices,
 - Encourage members to share their best advice,
 - Filter out the good from the bad, and
 - Orientate discussions toward what lies upon the latest and greatest within the sector.

MORS CoP Background

Result: MORS Chose CoPs



- MORS members are Operations Research Analyst *Practitioners*
- As a result of the research and above, MORS Communities of *Practice* (CoPs) were established to
 - Provide an opportunity to meet regularly throughout the year
 - Continue discussions from the annual Symposium and Special Meetings
 - Work on any outstanding issues from Special Meetings that weren't resolved
 - Share best practices, working being done, etc.
 - Work on projects

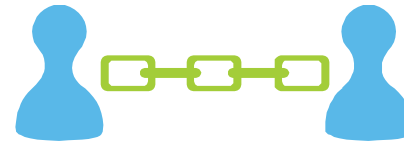


MORS CoP Background

Relationship to Symposium & Special Meetings

- **Goal:**

- Each Community of Practice to be tied / linked with one (or more) of the annual symposium's composite groups (CGs) or working groups (WGs)



- **Meetings:**

- CoPs meet regularly throughout the year
- Mostly virtual, but one face-to-face during annual symposium

- **Personnel: (an example)**

- CG or WG Chair is the CoP Deputy
- CG or WG Advisor is the CoP Chair
- A CoP Advisor (past CoP Leader)
- A linkage between the Symposium CG or WG and the CoP

MORS Communities of Practice



Agenda

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MORS CoP Function

Types

- **Now that you have considered forming a MORS CoP, what will the purpose be?**
 - How can you determine the purpose?
 - By conducting a survey of potential members
- **Once the function is known, then the CoP can be organized to support the purpose, i.e.,**
 - Activity / Project Based
 - Organized around activities or projects
 - Sharing Information
 - Organized around sharing information, collaborating with other like groups
 - A Combination of the above



MORS CoP Function

Community of Practice Examples



- **Experimentation** (a activity / project based CoP)
 - Lexicon / Glossary Team
 - Personnel, Methods & Tools Database Team
 - “How To” Guide Team
 - Training & Peer Review Program Teams
 - ➔ Organized around recommendations from the Workshop
- **Human Behavior & Performance** (a combination CoP)
 - Personnel Attributes Team
 - Catalogue Team
 - Collaboration Team
 - External Outreach Team
 - Sharing & Training Team
 - ➔ Organized around the discussions from the Symposium Focus Session

MORS CoP Function

Community of Practice Webpages



- **For a complete listing of current MORS CoPs**
 - Go to the MORS Communities page at www.mors.org/events/mors_communities.aspx
- **There is an overview of each MORS CoP, including the following information**
 - CoP Name
 - When the CoP was established
 - Reason the CoP was established
 - CoP meeting frequency / date of next meeting
 - Tie to Symposium / Special Meeting
 - CoP Points of Contact

- Background
- Function
- Meetings
- Maintenance
- Summary

MORS CoP Meetings

Overview



- **Now that you have decided to create a CoP and determined it's purpose, the next step is to develop the meetings.**
- **Items to consider include:**
 - How often will your CoP meet?
 - Monthly, every other month, quarterly, etc.
 - What method will you collaborate?
 - Live or virtual?
 - For virtual: telecom, Defense Connect On-Line, GoTo Meetings, etc.
 - How will you communicate results?
 - Updated briefs, minutes, web-posts, etc.

MORS CoP Meetings

Frequency

- **When determining how often the CoP will meet, considerations to include:**
 - The CoP Members are volunteers and the CoP is a coalition of the willing → they may not have much time to meet
 - Providing time for the activity-based teams to work on their projects between meetings
 - Providing time for briefers to develop presentations to share their work / best practices
- **Ask your members at the kick-off meeting for consensus on:**
 - How often to meet
 - What day & time to meet
 - Remember about your members in different time zones



- **When determining how the CoP will collaborate, there are several options:**
 - Telecom, sending briefs as read-aheads
 - Must ensure briefs sent out a couple of days in advance
 - Must ensure page numbers so briefer can let everyone know what slide they are on
 - Defense Connect On-Line (DCO) with telecom or VOIP
 - Will need a government CoP Member to be the host
 - All contractors can connect as guests
 - Other Methods:
 - GoToMeeting with VOIP
 - Mil Suite
 - Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) Online Access Controlled



MORS CoP Meetings

Real-Time Collaboration – Defense Connect Online (DCO)



- **Interactive Site with 6 Boxes or Pods, as an example –**
 - Agenda and action items
 - Whiteboard and application sharing
 - Chat
 - List of attendees
 - File sharing (.doc, .xls, .ppt, etc)
 - Camera and voice (VoIP & web cams)
- **Some DCO highlights –**
 - Real Time Document Sharing and Collaboration with audio, video, and chat
 - DCO Client provides group chat, instant messaging & presence/awareness
 - Available to all DoD personnel and Contractors with a CAC
 - Non-DoD users can be included as guests
 - DoD IA approved enterprise solution
 - Personalized persistent online rooms
 - <https://www.dco.dod.mil> or <https://www2dco.dod.mil>

MORS CoP Meetings

Real-Time Collaboration – DCO Screen Shot Example

The screenshot displays the MORS CoP Meeting interface with several numbered callouts (1-6) highlighting key features:

- 1. Agenda and action items:** Located in the 'MORS Experimentation COP Meeting Agenda' panel on the left, showing topics for the 26 Feb meeting and action items from the last meeting.
- 2. Whiteboard and application sharing:** Located in the central 'Share' area, which includes options to share 'My Computer Screen...', 'Documents', and 'Whiteboards'.
- 3. Chat:** Located in the 'Chat 26 Feb Mtg' panel at the bottom, showing a list of messages from participants like Rick Rigazio, Euker.B.ctr(US) Langley, and Greg Hutto.
- 4. List of attendees:** Located in the 'Attendee List (1)' panel on the right, showing the status of participants like Kirk Michealson.
- 5. File sharing:** Located in the 'File Share' panel at the bottom right, showing a list of shared files such as 'Methods and Tools Tables', 'Exp COP_4th Mtg', and 'COP Member Form.pdf'.
- 6. Camera and voice (VoIP & web cams):** Located in the 'Camera and Voice' panel on the top left, showing icons for a camera and microphone.

- **Some GoToMeeting highlights –**
 - Not accessible from most DoD sites
 - GoToMeeting is the extremely simple, extraordinarily powerful way to hold unlimited online meetings with up to 25 attendees
 - Start a meeting and share your screen with just a click
 - Collaborate face to face with video conferencing
 - Save with integrated audio conferencing (via VoIP and telephone)
 - Attendees can join from a Mac, PC, iPad, iPhone, or Android device.

- **Some milSuite highlights –**
 - <https://www.milsuite.mil/>
 - MilTech Solutions is the provider of milSuite
 - A behind-the-firewall version similar to sites like Facebook / LinkedIn and Wikipedia
 - Conglomeration of sites including milBook, milWiki, milBlog and milTube
 - Provides avenues of communication for more than 140,00 users across the Armed Forces

- **Some DTIC Online Access Controlled (DOAC) highlights –**

- <https://www.dtic.mil/>
- DTIC's core functions are
 - Providing a repository of Science, Technology, Research and Engineering information and knowledge,
 - Managing Information Analysis Centers, and
 - Creating tools to facilitate discovery, dissemination and collaboration
- DOAC provides a gateway to DTIC services such as DoDTechipedia, Ask a Librarian, and Aristotle
 - DoDTechipedia: DoD's S&T wiki
 - Ask a Librarian: Digital, collaborative reference service
 - Aristotle: Professional networking tool for federal government, DoD employees, and contractors in the S&T community

MORS CoP Meetings

Communicating Results



- All CoP Members will not be able to participate in all meetings
- Therefore, to communicate the results of the CoP meetings, the CoP Chair can send an e-mail, post the information, or both
- Information to include:
 - Updated brief based on meeting discussions
 - Meeting minutes with attendees listed, discussions, and actions



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MORS CoP Maintenance

Keeping the CoP Going



- **Once you have created and started your CoP, how do you keep it going?**
- **There are several items to know:**
 - People
 - Leadership
 - MORS Board and CoP Committee Chair
 - Charter

- The key to a successful CoP is the people

- First:



- Remember, the CoP Members are volunteers and the CoP is a coalition of the willing → therefore, they may not have much time to meet

- Second:

- To keep a CoP going, the leadership should be energetic, interested in the topic, have time available, and the ability to motivate the other CoP Members

- Again, the *key* is energetic, motivating individuals



- Each CoP shall have a chair, one or more co-chairs, and members
- At the discretion of the CoP, each may have other designated personnel for project / activity leads
- A recommended linkage to annual symposium is:
 - CG or WG Chair is the CoP Deputy
 - CG or WG Advisor is the CoP Chair
- Past CoP Leadership stay on as CoP Advisor

MORS CoP Maintenance

Charter

- **Once you have determined the CoP's purpose, organization, and leadership, it's time to develop the charter**
- **Items to include in a charter:**
 - Background
 - Purpose
 - Activities / Projects
 - Maintenance
 - A template is available in the MORS Organization Manual
- **To be an approved MORS CoP:**
 - The CoP Chair submits the rationale for existence and the charter to the MORS CoP Committee Chair
 - The MORS CoP Committee Chair submits the rationale and charter to the MORS Board for approval



MORS CoP Maintenance

MORS Board



- **The MORS CoP Chairs report to the CoP Committee Chair under the Member and Society Services Vice President**
- **The CoP Committee Chair will:**
 - Report the status of each CoP to the MORS Board
 - Ensure continued growth and viability of existing CoPs
 - Recommend new CoPs to the MORS Board
 - Recommend dissolving inactive CoPs to the MORS Board
 - Working with the Program Chair and WG / CG Coordinator to ensure each CoP meets in one of the existing Composite Groups / Working Groups during the annual symposium



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MORS CoP Summary

Final Thoughts



- **CoPs are a result of annual symposium discussions and / or special meeting recommendations that allow like-minded people to meet throughout the year.**
- **CoP's purpose / function can be:**
 - Activity / Project Based
 - Sharing Information
 - A Combination of the Above
- **CoP members are volunteers and the CoP is a coalition of the willing.**
- **The *key* to a successful CoP is energetic, motivating individuals in the leadership positions.**
- **CoPs are successful entities that add value to the profession, to MORS-affiliation, and offer the potential to recruit MORS members.**

MORS CoP Summary

Questions



- Are you ready to start a new CoP or volunteer for an existing CoP?
- Do you have any questions about maintaining a CoP?
- For more information, please contact MORS CoP Committee Chair Member, Kirk Michealson, FS, at kirk.michealson@1979.usna.com.

