

SOPC LUNCH GUIDANCE NOTES

1. These notes provide guidance for those tasked with organizing an SOPC lunch.

WHAT IS AN SOPC LUNCH?

2. An SOPC lunch is held each month between October and May. Each lunch is hosted by a different nation, or on occasion by the SOPC Executive Committee itself. The lunches provide a great way to meet new friends, try new foods, and learn about another culture. Normal attendance at a lunch is between 150-200 guests.

3. When organizing a lunch keep in mind the specific purpose of a lunch is to:

- i. Promote international friendships;
- ii. Demonstrate the culture of a country; and
- iii. Support the SOPC designated charities.

WHO HOSTS A LUNCH?

4. Each of the NATO member and partner nations take it in turns to host the monthly lunches. The SOPC relies on countries volunteering to ensure eight lunches occur during a calendar year.

5. The national representative who sits on the SOPC board would normally be responsible for volunteering their country, but should seek the support of their compatriots before doing so. A proposal to host a lunch should be submitted to the SOPC Chairperson at e-mail: chairperson@sopc.us. The SOPC Board decides on the lunch schedule for the following year in October.

6. In practice each representative would be expected to host one lunch in the 3/4 years they sit on the Board. Nations may host a lunch individually or as part of a group of countries. Help and support will always be provided by SOPC Board members. Countries with very few SOPC members may request extra assistance.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE ROLE?

7. The national representative to the SOPC is often the spouse of the National Liaison Representative (or Partner NLR) at NATO, but it is acknowledged that circumstances may vary from nation to nation. In practice the national representative often leads the organization of their country's lunch and may speak at the event, along with the partner of any Flag/General Officer from their country.

8. Each country should, however, make their own decision over who should lead the organization of the event, and speak on the day.

ORGANIZATION OF THE LUNCH

9. The main tasks for the representative of each nation when organizing a lunch are:

a) Raffle Prizes

At each lunch up to 10 prizes for the raffle should be provided, plus a door prize. Ideally these prizes should be representative of the nation, but should not be extravagant. When making requests by e-mail or letter for the provision of prizes the SOPC logo may be used. The prizes should be brought to the venue on the day and placed on the designated table.

Members of the host country do not normally win the prizes offered in the raffle. Instead, they often purchase raffle tickets to share with guests seated at their table. When any guest wins a raffle prize they should then share any remaining tickets with the other guests at their table. This will prevent more than one prize being won by a guest.

b) Menu

The SOPC Reservations Team will assist in making contact with the venue to discuss menu options. Agreement will need to be reached on a two-course lunch that the venue is able to produce. It will need to be within the \$25 per person fee, which covers food, service and taxes. The SOPC does not benefit from this money. Special dietary requirements can be catered for. A nation may bring in one food item (e.g. a tray of local cheeses for guests to sample).

The provision of beverages at the table, other than water and coffee, will need to be agreed between the nation and the venue, and the nation will be responsible for meeting the cost. A cash-bar may be requested by the nation (at present the Norfolk Yacht Club venue charge \$100 for this service).

c) Printed Program

A program should be provided for each guest at the lunch. It should give the menu for the lunch, but may also include information about the nation and acknowledge those who have supported the event.

The program, which is currently printed for free at ACT, should be e-mailed as a .pdf document, to Roger Snell, Head of ACT Graphics, at e-mail: Roger.Snell@act.nato.int at least 3 weeks before the lunch. If help is required with the design or format of the program Roger should be contacted at least 6 weeks before the event.

d) Table Decorations

Centerpieces can be provided by the venue. They can also be provided by the host nation as a prize for one of the guests at the table. Exact number of tables will depend on the final guest list, available from the reservations team on e-mail: reservations@sopc.us . There are normally 15 to 20 tables. In this case the nation should confirm to the SOPC Chairperson how each centerpiece can be won.

e) Entertainment

It is up to each nation to decide how they would like to promote their country at the lunch. Many hosts have chosen to give short speeches, accompanied by a slideshow, or short films. Others have demonstrated their culture in different ways, such as traditional dances, music, quizzes or short stories. Keep in mind, however, the limited time available on the day, usually 15 to 30 minutes, and any language issues.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO DO BEFORE THE DAY?

10. A number of tasks need to be completed before the day of the lunch:

a) Newsletter

One month prior to the lunch an article should be submitted to the SOPC Newsletter Editor on e-mail: editor@sopc.us . The article might talk about the nation generally, or cover just one aspect of the country's culture. The deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 18th and the text, with photos attached separately, should be sent before this date to allow for proof-reading.

b) Timetable for the Day

A timetable for the lunch should be provided to the SOPC Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson detailing the timing for each element of the lunch, and who will be doing what.

c) Guests

The host nation may request a specific seating plan for those speaking at the lunch or those with key roles, as well as important guests of their country. The national representative may use the guest allowance of the partner of a Flag/General Officer if one is not attending (4 guests in total).

IS THERE ANYTHING TO DO AFTER THE EVENT?

11. A number of tasks need to be completed after the lunch is over:

a) Finance

The SOPC will provide up to \$350 to support each lunch. The SOPC Treasurer will reimburse up to this amount by check (through the mail) once all final receipts have been provided after the event. An advance of this money may be available in certain circumstances. The SOPC would like to encourage prudence in the financing of the events and a financial burden should not be placed on individuals or a nation.

b) Recipes

The Newsletter Editor will require a copy of the recipe/s for the event to be provided for the edition of the newsletter following the lunch.

CONCLUSION

12. The success of the lunches is because each nation is different and therefore the organizing and delivery of each lunch will depend on the nation hosting it. These notes provide a very general guide on the activities to be undertaken.

13. At Annex A is a short summary of the split of responsibilities between the Host Nation and the SOPC, with an approximate timeline.

14. Amendments to these guidance notes should be submitted to the Chairperson of the SOPC at e-mail: chairperson@sopc.us.

BOARD OF THE SOPC
Agreed 8th February 2010

Annex A

WHO DOES WHAT?

HOST NATION	TIMELINE	SOPC
Volunteers to host	6 months before lunch at least	Agrees calendar of events
Obtains raffle and door prizes	Start as soon as lunch is confirmed	Sells raffle tickets
Agrees menu with venue	1 month before lunch at the latest	Assists with contact with venue
Decides how to promote country	Start as soon as lunch is confirmed	Assists with liaison with venue on provision of equipment, i.e. display tables
Writes newsletter article and submits to Editor	18 th of the month before lunch at the latest	Proof-reads article and issues newsletter
Submits program for printing and brings to venue	6 weeks before lunch, at least, if support required 3 weeks before lunch, at least, if support required	Promotes lunch
Confirms guests and seating requirements	2 weeks before event	Takes bookings
Provides centerpieces (if decided)	On the day of the event	Organizes seating plan and nametags
Provides timetable for the day	1 week before the event	Chairs event
Provides entertainment and gives out prizes	On the day	Sells raffle tickets
Submits recipe/s for newsletter to Editor	18 th of the month after the lunch, at least	Takes photos
Provides receipts for reimbursement	Up to 2 weeks after the lunch	Issues funds up to \$350