

GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF A  
REGIONAL CHAPTER OF THE ACOUSTICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
(050113)

The objective of these guidelines is to make operating a Chapter as effortless as possible. The suggestions contained in this document are compiled from the experience of past Chapters. Members and officers of other Chapters will have additional helpful suggestions. All Regional Chapters follow the same rules and guidelines except in a few cases where some variation is called out for Student Chapters. If any part of these guidelines is in conflict with the Rules or Bylaws of the Acoustical Society of America, then please follow the Rules (Encl 1) or Bylaws (found on [asa.aip.org](http://asa.aip.org)).

Support and assistance for Regional Chapters of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA) is available from the ASA Committee on Regional Chapters and from the ASA Headquarters Office. Information is also available on the ASA Website ([asa.aip.org](http://asa.aip.org)) under Chapters, Chapter Resources. Members and officers of other Chapters will also be available to help.

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## A. Meetings

Some Chapters hold monthly meetings from September through May or June. Some have in addition an all day Saturday "Family/Technical" meeting with tours scheduled during the technical portion of the meeting for those family members not excited about technical issues. Chapters, like the North Carolina Chapter, which cover a wide geographical area have two 1-2 day meetings annually much like "mini" ASA regular meetings. Types of meetings also include quarterly dinner meetings with speakers and/or facility tours with catered meals. Designing meetings to encourage student membership are highly recommended. Please see the ASA website under Chapter Resources for more ideas.

There are no exact rules for Chapter meetings. Each Chapter is free to develop its own identity and character best suited to serve the local membership. Officers of new Chapters are urged to speak with representatives of other Chapters to determine what might have worked out well in the past. The following is a partial list of suggestions for initial consideration in planning the Chapter's activities.

### 1. Technical Programs

- a. Periodically survey Chapter membership interests and ask for suggestions for future topics and speakers. (Some Chapters do this with the first meeting notice of the meeting year.)
- b. Appoint an energetic program Chair (consider the Vice Chair for this position). This person may be responsible for the scheduling and implementation of the meetings. He/She may be head of the Program committee.
- c. Consider joint meetings with other local groups interested in acoustics such as Audio Engineering Society (AES), Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (IEEE), American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), American Institute of Architects (AIA), Aerospace Industries Association (AIA), Institute of Noise Control Engineering (INCE), American Guild of Organists (AGO), The American Industrial Hygiene Association, (AIHA), etc.
- d. Most meetings should include at least one interesting topic and speaker. However, as noted above, some Chapters schedule a weekend social type meeting in conjunction with a technical meeting to which families are invited and separate programs for the "non-technical" can be organized.
- e. Preview of papers to be given at forthcoming regular Society meetings has been a successful formula for meetings especially Chapters near universities with strong acoustics programs. Also consider the presentation of honor award papers by the student awardees if the Chapter has a technical paper student award program as the basis for the technical portion of a Chapter meeting.

### 2. Chapter Business

- a. Usually a short business session before or after the technical meeting will be sufficient to address chapter business. Some Chapters find that a single comprehensive annual "business/planning" meeting at the end of the Chapter year is desirable to plan the program for the subsequent year. Assign Executive Committee members to organize individual meetings and otherwise conduct other business of the Chapter. The latter keeps the business subject matter separate from the regular Chapter meetings.
- b. Between 4 and 8 chapter meetings during the Chapter year is most common.
- c. To the extent possible, meetings should be held on a regular day of the month (for example, the third Monday, second Tuesday, etc. avoiding times that are likely to conflict with National or State holidays.

- d. An average of 20 to 25 persons per meeting is usually a fair attendance. Occasionally a very good speaker or topic can draw attendance in excess of 100. Field trips to manufacturing plants or to construction sites are usually popular.
- e. Simple refreshments before or after the technical meeting can encourage attendance. Some Chapters organize a meeting at a suitable restaurant with the technical program taking place immediately following the meal. This obviously involves more preplanning and collecting of dinner fees, etc. Other Chapters make suggestions for "no host" optional dinner at a nearby restaurant and formally invite the speaker for the meeting and Chapter officers to dinner beforehand.
- f. It is occasionally advisable to rotate the meeting place but a good permanent "home base" at a university or local institutional conference room has advantages if one is available for little or no cost. For newly starting Chapters the idea of keeping a regular meeting place for a while is good until the Chapter becomes stabilized.
- g. Lapel name cards and guest sign in rosters, etc. facilitates meeting new comers. The Chapter Officers usually handle this "hospitality" function and sometimes formally introduce new members or guests at the meeting.
- h. Sample copies of ASA publications, ASA membership forms etc., may be displayed at the meeting location with ASA book ordering forms etc. One of the Executive Committee members may take this on as a regular duty at meetings.

#### B. Financial support from the Society and reporting requirements

The Acoustical Society of America supports its Regional Chapters through a yearly provision of \$500.00 and \$5 per attendee per meeting (total annual attendance). Also, activities such as science fair awards and speaker travel expenses and honorarium are reimbursed. It is not necessary for a Chapter to collect dues; however some chapters are very active and would not be able to afford all of their activities if they did not charge dues. The Society will disburse funds covering acceptable reported expenses not to exceed a year end bank account balance of \$2000.00. A Chapter may request a different cap should their Chapter's activities warrant the change. The Guidelines for annual reporting of Chapters and the Annual Financial Status Report form are included (enclosures 2 and 3). A list of reimbursable expenses can also be found in the Rules (ASA home page, Chapters, Chapter resources).

#### C. Publicity

##### 1. Notice of meetings

- a. The regular Chapter mailing list should include all local academic institutions, and laboratories. Newspapers as well as University Papers also might be interested in Chapter technical programs.
- b. Attendance at meetings is increased if all Society members receive notices, whether they are Chapter members or not. Mailing labels from ASA headquarters are available for this purpose as are broadcast emails.
- c. Include a summary of previous meeting and synopsis of future meetings in the meeting notice whenever possible. This gives recipients an opportunity to anticipate the "next" meeting if they cannot make a particular meeting. Remember, too, that duplicate mailings never hurt with a newly starting Chapter.

##### 2. Election of new officers.

Local newspapers are usually interested in such information (usually the science editor of the larger daily papers) and Student Chapters should consider publishing this information in their University Paper. Also, consider the smaller weekly papers in the home communities of the newly elected Officers.

The "Acoustical News USA" Editor for JASA should receive short news pieces of Chapter activity of Society-wide interest. This can include summaries of past meetings with illustrative photographs if available, special announcements of broad interest to the Society. Note that these news items for JASA should be in ready to publish format since the news editor is really not in a position to develop a story on the basis of cryptic announcements or meeting notices themselves, etc. Please remember too that the "Acoustical News USA" section of the journal is the principal communication vehicle for the activities of the Chapter to other members of the Society and to other regional Chapters.

Letter head stationery with listing of current officers is always good publicity for the Chapter and for the individuals for all Chapter correspondence and meeting notices, etc. Chapters may print letterhead on a laser printer as needed rather than getting a large quantity commercially printed. This is especially advisable if you put officers names on it or if the address changes frequently. Many years ago, before the advent of laser printers, a chapter had 1000 sheets of letterhead printed after obtaining a P. O. Box as a permanent address. Within a couple of months, the Post Office changed the Zip Code for the P. O. Box. They are still trying to use up that stationery and writing in the new Zip Code.

#### D. Miscellaneous

##### 1. Elections

For Regional Chapters, the Chapter Chair should appoint a nominating committee at least 2 meetings prior to the final meeting of the Chapter year if elections are to be held at that time. Past Chairs or interested senior Chapter members who have no desire to assume officer positions are usually good members for the nominating committee. The elections should be held in accordance with the Chapters' own By-laws. Most Chapters utilize a rotating system of offices with progression of people from members-at-large on up through the secretary, treasurer, vice Chair, Chair and national Liaison positions. This gives good continuity of Chapter execution direction since the new officers have several years of training and experience before they assume the senior most positions. Nominations from the membership are also welcomed and can be requested, for example, in meeting announcements and at general meetings.

Student Chapter elections will be left to the discretion of the Student Chapters and their particular University guidelines.

##### 2. Education and local scientific society support activity

Many local areas have Academy of Science or other engineering/scientific organizations that can provide support for joint activities to enhance the mutual objectives of the Chapter and these groups. Some Chapters provide scientific liaison to State Legislature groups considering noise related legislation and other activities of interest to the Chapter members. Remember an organized group like the Chapter can be far more effective than single interested individuals in promoting the cause of acoustics.

##### 3. Acoustical Society of America twice yearly meetings

Local Chapters are usually called upon to assist in the organization and arrangements of the Society's regular meetings when they are scheduled within the Chapter's geographical area.

##### 4. A final note

The local Regional Chapters provide excellent opportunities for people of a wide range of interest in acoustics and related fields to get together during the year. All the Regional Chapters can provide an ideal opportunity for new Society members to learn about the Society and to gain experience in managing the affairs of the Society. The Chapters should encourage not only membership in the Society but attendance at the Society's regular meetings as well.