**CSS Implementation:**

**Common Understanding of Major Meetings**

**CEOS Self-Study: Key Recommendation on Objectives of Meetings**

*“Develop coordinated objectives and formats for the CEOS Plenary meeting, SIT meeting(s), and SEC telecons to encourage discussion and decision-making. Balance reporting with strategic discussions that engage and utilize participation from all CEOS functional groups.”*



**Charge to the Topical Team on a Common Understanding Of Major Meetings:**

*The charge to this Topical Team is to analyze the flow of the CEOS year and the kinds of business that need to be accomplished in each major meeting, and to suggest options for adjusting the current flow to improve meeting utility, to ensure a balance between reporting and discussion/decision-making, and to ensure that Working Groups and Virtual Constellation needs are met. The Team should consider not only the purpose and structure of existing meetings, but whether the current number and schedule of major meetings are optimum for CEOS as it moves forward.*

The CEOS year has a flow, with several major meetings and periodic leadership teleconferences, each of which historically conducts a particular kind of business. In addition, the Working Groups and Virtual Constellations conduct their own schedules of meetings and work sessions. There are many expectations for the purpose of each major meeting, including the kinds of discussions, decisions, and outcomes that can be expected, and the segment(s) of the CEOS membership that generally populate each meeting.

CEOS is now composed of so many parallel activities that simple brief reporting on the progress of each can occupy many hours of each major meeting, and in consequence, time for discussion, guidance and feedback among CEOS Leadership and Working Groups and Virtual Constellations suffers. The CEOS Self-Study received substantial input that there is a great need to ensure that major meetings are crafted in such a way that essential business gets done, but that redundancy is minimized and that reporting does not overwhelm the opportunity for discussion and decision-making.

The common themes running through responses to the CSS included frustration with the format and content of CEOS major meetings; the chief concerns expressed were that a) the meetings are dominated by reporting and review of small tasks at the expense of the big picture, i.e. discussion, coordination, and decision-making; and b) that the major in-person meetings contain repetitive material and fail to leverage the opportunity represented by having multiple space agencies in the same room.

The established venues for reporting progress are the annual Plenary meeting and the major SIT meetings. However, although these meetings are typically well-run and important, there is a clear sense of missed opportunities due to the focus on routine, GEO-related task reporting at the expense of other CEOS technical coordination issues. CSS participants expressed a strong desire to see CEOS actions receive an investment of time, tracking and measurement of progress that is in balance with the investment given to CEOS-GEO actions, and to provide better opportunities for guidance and feedback to and from Working Groups, Virtual Constellations, and SBAs.

These are challenges not unfamiliar to any busy organization with multiple activities proceeding in parallel, especially when there are external customers awaiting progress reports of which CEOS Leadership needs to be aware. That said, the outcomes of major meetings are critical to the success of CEOS, and the use of major meetings for routine, redundant reporting represents a missed opportunity to make progress on issues of strategic relevance. In order to reclaim the missed opportunity, the recommendation of the CEOS Self-Study as accepted by the Plenary was to develop a unified meeting plan, in which the scope, format, and purpose of the CEOS Plenary and SIT meetings for the entire year are developed, and the issues that must be addressed at SIT and Plenary meetings be better defined to create a complementary rather than repetitive structure.

Viewed across the context and flow of the entire year, the evalulation and redefinition of the purpose and goals of CEOS major meetings, and the restructuring of meeting formats, should be aimed at providing complementary rather than redundant major meetings and teleconferences scheduled over the course of each year in order to:

* reduce repetition and routine reporting;
* promote engaged participation;
* facilitate strategic discussion and decision-making across CEOS; and
* provide sufficient time for discussion and guidance regarding Working Group, Virtual Constellation, and SBA Team priorities.

The charge to this Topical Team is to analyze the flow of the CEOS year and the kinds of business that need to be accomplished in each major meeting, and to suggest options for adjusting the current flow to improve meeting utility, to ensure a balance between reporting and discussion/decision-making, and to ensure that Working Groups and Virtual Constellation needs are met. The Team should consider not only the purpose and structure of existing meetings, but whether the current number and schedule of major meetings are optimum for CEOS as it moves forward.

Process:

* This *white paper* sets up the discussion for your topic. The charge to your Team is to produce an *options paper* (not a single closed-form solution) for your topic.
* Team work is conducted entirely by teleconference and email.
* A draft version of your options paper should be submitted to the SIT Chair Team by September 1, so that it can be distributed before the SIT Technical Workshop.
* A breakout session on the Monday prior to the SIT Technical Workshop will be devoted to your Team’s topic, to share Team results, gather input, and answer questions.
* Your Team leadership will present a brief report within the SIT Technical Workshop on either Tuesday or Wednesday.
* After the SIT Technical Workshop, your paper should be refined based on input gathered, so that a clean draft can be distributed prior to Plenary.
* At Plenary, decisions will be made regarding the best set of options for CEOS to implement, based upon the material that your Team has prepared.