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Letter to the Editor—Possible Improvements in Society Meetings

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$$p_{n(0-t+h)} = [p_{n(0-t)}][1 - \lambda h - r\mu h - C_{n-r}(T, t)h] + [p_{n+1(0-t)}][C_{n-r+1}(T, t) + r\mu h] + [p_{n-1(0-t)}][\lambda h] \quad (n \geq r) \quad (13)$$

Let C_α equal the steady state value of $C_\alpha(T, t)$. Following FELLER [2] (same reference as in the original letter), we establish the differential equations and pass to the steady state. From equations (11), (12), and (13) and the fact that the sum of the probabilities of all states must be unity,

$$0 = -\lambda p_0 + \mu p_1, \quad (n=0) \quad (14)$$

$$0 = [\lambda + n\mu] p_n + [(n+1)\mu] p_{n+1} + \lambda p_{n-1}, \quad (1 \leq n \leq r-1) \quad (15)$$

$$0 = -[\lambda + r\mu + C_{n-r}] p_n + [r\mu + C_{n-r+1}] p_{n+1} + \lambda p_{n-1}, \quad (n \geq r) \quad (16)$$

$$\sum_0^\infty p_n = 1, \quad (17)$$

where, following Barrer^[3] (same reference as in original letter),

$$C_\alpha = [r\mu \exp(-r\mu T/\alpha)]/[1 - \exp(-r\mu T/\alpha)] \quad (18)$$

Equations (14), (15), (16), and (17) form a set of simultaneous equations with as many unknowns as equations. Therefore, the set can be solved assuming that there is an m such that p_{m+1} , p_{m+2} , ... approach zero, are of no interest, and can be neglected.

If we continue to designate the number of customers in the system by the subscript, n , and the number of servers by the subscript, r , then

$$v_0 = \sum_0^r p_n, \quad (n \leq r) \quad (19)$$

$$v_{n-r} = p_n, \quad (n > r)$$

$$\text{and} \quad V_{n-r} = 1/\lambda p_n \quad (n \geq r) \quad (20)$$

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS IN SOCIETY MEETINGS

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(Received October 19, 1960)

FROM 9 to 10 A M on October 12, 1960, at the Detroit meeting, some 30 members of the SOCIETY (including all four officers and three past meeting chairmen) met extemporarily under the chairmanship of T. L. SAATY, Detroit Program Chairman, to suggest improvements in the organization of meetings. It was clear from their comments that many of those present feel that papers given at ORSA meetings are not of the quality to be expected in a professional society. Suggestions were entirely directed to the improvement in technical sessions, and by implication the other arrangements were considered above reproach.

It was recognized that technical sessions are intended for free expression of new ideas, and that SOCIETY Members have a right to be heard. None-the-less, speakers

have a responsibility to avoid rehashing old material or rambling about among disconnected ideas. According to Article II of the Constitution, the SOCIETY's purpose is "advancement of the *science* of operations research," that is, to fit new ideas into a recognizable structure of knowledge. Moreover, meetings should allow 'feedback' on new ideas through discussion. The most prevalent criticism was that meaningful discussion does not, in fact, take place at ORSA meetings.

Constructive suggestions to future Program Chairmen were formulated as follows:

1 Arrange more discussion sessions—panels, symposia, etc.—some of them based on *papers already published*, where the audience has something definite to discuss.

2 Require Session Chairmen to control speakers' time so that there is always adequate time for discussion.

3 Encourage authors to try out their papers in regional Section meetings or other gatherings before the presentation at the ORSA meeting, and to consider carefully the visual aids needed.

4 Advance the deadline for abstracts of contributed papers to four months or more before the meeting so that Program Chairmen can plan topical sessions more carefully. Although this action may reduce the number of contributed papers, that result is not considered entirely undesirable.

ABSTRACT OF PAPER

SUBMITTED for presentation at the ORSA Meeting on (date) _____

(IN ORDER to be included in the program, abstracts must be submitted to the Program Chairman before the announced deadline)

THIS PAPER (has) (has not) previously been presented (at _____)

VISUAL AIDS needed: blackboard _____, slides number _____, size _____, other (specify) _____

CHECK ONE ☐ Paper ready for publication, two draft copies will be provided at least two weeks before meeting

☐ Paper in preliminary form, no discussion necessary

THE MAJOR OR contribution in this paper is _____

TITLE _____

AUTHOR(S) _____

INSTITUTION(S) _____

To BE presented by _____

SPONSORED by _____ (a full Member of the SOCIETY)

(TYPE ABSTRACT double-spaced, ready for the printer, starting here, no more than 300 words in length, no displayed equations, no tables, no footnotes. Submit also one carbon copy on plain white paper.)

5. Require each paper presented to be sponsored by a Member of the SOCIETY (in many cases the author), who is responsible for its quality. The Council members present noted that this requirement is soon to be proposed as an amendment to the By-laws.

6. Require each author to classify his paper at the time of submitting his abstract either as (a) *ready for publication*, in which case two draft copies of the complete paper are to be provided as a basis for discussion, or (b) *in preliminary form*, in which case no discussion need be planned by the Program Chairman. The Session Chairman could then ensure that at least two members of the audience see the complete paper *before* the session, in order to start fruitful discussion.

The last suggestion (No. 6 above) probably offers the most improvement. The Secretary was urged to send Members in advance of the deadline an *Abstract Form*, such as is used by many other scientific societies. The sample herewith is based on all the suggestions I heard in Detroit and on the form used by the American Astronomical Society. In final form it should be printed on standard 8½ x 11-inch typewriter paper. Since a good deal remains to be said on this topic, your readers are urged to send further suggestions directly to the Secretary of the SOCIETY.