ACSAC Session Chair Handbook
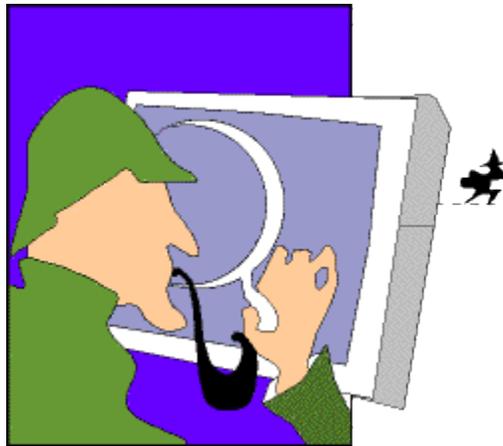
The purpose of this document is to guide session chairs at the Annual Computer Security Applications Conference (ACSAC) how to prepare and moderate their session. This document makes many suggestions that can help make sessions run smoothly, but please note that not all suggestions will make sense in all circumstances.

Obtain the list of papers that are scheduled for your presentation.

Obtain the contact information for the speaker(s) of each presentation in your session.

Contact the speakers early:

– Identify and introduce yourself as their session chair

– Confirm the
   – name and location of the conference
   – name, date, and track of the session
   – time slot and location of the session
   – name and time slot for the presentation

– Confirm for each speaker
   – their name, affiliation, and e-mail address
   – that they know they are expected to register, attend, and present
   – that they are supposed to send a one paragraph biography to you well before the conference.

– Inform each speaker of
   – the fact that switching sessions or changing the order of presentations within a session are not possible
   – the room and projection facilites for presentations. E.g.,
      – room size ~100
      – conference attendance ~200
      – availability of microphone, LCD video projector
      – no facility to project 35mm slides or overhead transparencies
   – the expectation that they follow the instructions in the ACSAC speaker's handbook that's published on the ACSAC web site.
      (Current URL: `http://www.acsac.org/speakers.pdf`)
   – when and where to meet you at the conference. The speaker reception usually presents a good opportunity for a first meeting, however, not everyone arrives that early. Alternatively, you could meet during the

break, 30 minutes before your session starts.

– Specify how you are going to run the session. Here is an example for a 90 minutes session with 3 scheduled presentations:
  – first you will spend a few minutes with administrative remarks and introduction of the session
  – then, for each of the 3 presentations:
    – you will introduce the speaker using the bio that s/he supplied
    – the speaker will have 20 minutes for the paper presentation
    – you will give attendees 5-8 minutes for questions
  – you may make some comments wrapping up the session, possibly making further administrative announcements
  – you will keep the speaker informed about the time remaining by holding up cards.

– A few more ideas that have helped in the past make sessions go smoothly:
  – Have all presenters connect their laptops to the video projector in the break before the session to make sure it all works.
  – Preload all presentations onto a single laptop (this can be done prior to the conference, or in the break before the session.)
  – Ask presenters to bring their presentations not only on their laptop, but also on CDROM, ideally in a portable format such as pdf, not ppt!
  – Read the papers before the session.
  – Prepare two questions for each paper so you can ask questions if none are coming from the audience.

And finally a sample contact e-mail (example for ACSAC 21):

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Greetings.

My name is _____ and I will be chairing the session on
_____ at the 21th Annual Computer Security
Applications Conference in Tucson, AZ, USA this year. As you
know, your paper is scheduled to be presented in this session.
It is on _____, December _____, 2005, from _____am-_____pm
MST. The room name will be announced at the conference.

This mail gives you some information to ensure that the session
will run smoothly. It also contains some action items for you, so
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please read it carefully and act in a timely manner.

The paper presentations will be given in the order in which they are listed in the program. Before each presentation I will introduce the speaker and mention the title of the paper. For that I need a one paragraph biography from each of the speakers. Please keep your bio below 50 words and send it to me by November 25. Please prepare a presentation that is 20 minutes long.

I will hold up signs notifying you when 5, 1, 0 minutes are left. If you see a '-1' sign in bold red letters, you are about to give up the floor involuntarily :-) Out of courtesy to conference attendees and your fellow presenters, please try and stay within these time constraints.

I will mention at the beginning of the session that questions should be held until after each presentation. We'll leave about 5-8 minutes for Q&A after each presentation.

There will be a projector in the room for you to present your electronic presentation. While connecting laptops to projector has become less troublesome over the years, it still sometimes does not work. To minimize this risk, I would like to ask all of you to meet me at _____am in the room of our session. We can then verify that the laptops connect without problems to the projector. Furthermore, please bring an electronic copy of your presentation on a CDROM. I once witnessed a laptop crash a few minutes before the talk and the presentation slides died along with the Windows installation... If you have your presentation on a CD, we can display it off another computer.

Ideally, I would like to load all presentations onto a single laptop ahead of time. We'll try and do that at _____am. Can anyone volunteer their laptop? When the Q&A of the previous speaker starts, please be ready (and have your laptop ready). When the Q&A is over and the applause starts I will get up to introduce you. At that time, please connect your laptop, so that you are ready to start your presentation when I am done with the introduction.

Please read the speaker's guide that are published on the ACSAC web pages before you prepare your talk or present. It is accessible at http://www.acsac.org/speakers.pdf.

REGISTER! Our web site registration is now open. Everyone, including committee members, is required to register and pay the conference fees. A significant early registration discount is avaiable through Nov. 16. Make your travel reservations early and save!

You are welcome to join us at the speaker reception on Monday
evening, Dec. 5.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.
I very much look forward to meeting you and to hearing your
presentations.

See you in Tucson!
--_____