MANUAL FOR ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF TEXITE MEETINGS

TEXAS DISTRICT, INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS

FINAL: March 30, 2016

(Adopted by the TexITE Executive Board on March 30, 2016 as an Official Policy)

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Hosting a TexITE meeting is a challenging and complex task. The purpose of this manual is to serve as a guide to the membership, officers, and local arrangements committee (LAC) members in planning and conducting the meetings.

The intent of this manual is to:
- Provide a framework that will ensure completeness in the planning and organization of the meetings.
- Provide guidance in planning the various components of the meeting, including providing answers to questions identified by previous committees.
- Provide a reasonable degree of consistency and uniformity in the conduct of the meetings.

It is not the intent of this manual to unduly restrict the freedom of the host community to tailor a meeting to take best advantage of its unique opportunities. Accordingly, the TexITE Executive Board will approve deviations to the policies set forth in this manual as circumstances warrant.

Key Groups/Players

Several key groups and players are associated with a TexITE meeting. These groups or players are discussed in the following sections.

Local Arrangement Committee (LAC)

The Local Arrangement Committee is the group that plans the TexITE meeting. All TexITE members and section affiliates who reside or work in the host section area are eligible for membership on the LAC and are encouraged to participate actively. In larger sections, the LAC membership may be large enough that no member will have to serve on more than one subcommittee. It should be noted, however, that many successful meetings have been held in cities which have a small number of TexITE members and affiliates.

The full responsibility and authority for hosting a meeting is vested in the LAC, subject to the advice and counsel of the Executive Board.

The LAC chair may assign specific task responsibilities to individual committee members or subcommittees. Typical task areas can include (but not be limited to) the following:
- Hotel Arrangements and Contract (works with Event Services).
- Budget.
- Transportation.
- Socials.
- Spouse and children's activities.
- Speakers for kickoff lunch.

- Technical tours.
- Technical training workshop.
- Student posters.
- Sports socials (e.g., sporting clay, golf, etc.)
- Speaker gifts.
- Door prizes.
- Poker.

TexITE Executive Board

The TexITE Executive Board shall designate one of the members of the LAC to serve as chair for the TexITE meeting. That individual, who may be either a voting member or a section affiliate of TexITE, shall: (1) chair the LAC and oversee all of its activities; and (2) serve as its point of contact with the Executive Board and with other groups both internal and external to TexITE.

The Executive Board must approve the meeting budget before online registration can open.

Event Services

TexITE contracts for conference support services because groups with such experience are able (1) to better negotiate with hotels and (2) to provide the staff needed for registration. This group – named Event Services – provides the following types of services to TexITE:
- **Pre-planning** including coordinating hotel site visits and negotiating meeting room, event room, and sleeping room contract.
- **Planning** including coordinating with hotel for room set up, food, beverages, and layout for exhibits; securing contract for audio/visual (AV) and electrical needs; and developing event set up letter.
- **Registration** including hosting the conference registration website, and processing the registration fees.
- **On-site event management** including overseeing AV and food arrangements, onsite registration, and assistance with onsite changes and additions.

The specific services provided by the Event Services group, and the company that has the contract, are negotiated by the TexITE Executive Board approximately every year.

Highway Products Groups (HPG)

The HPG, which is an organization of vendor and manufacturers' representatives who are members or affiliates of TexITE, typically participates in TexITE meetings in one or more of the following ways:
- By organizing and conducting product exhibits.
- By contributing to the technical program.
- By hosting a vendor reception on Wednesday night and a continental breakfast on Thursday morning.

Three of the HPG's typical concerns are:
- **Location.** Exhibits located near meeting rooms.
- **Space.** Adequate exhibit space must be available with an easily accessible power supply for each HPG member booth.
- **Food during vendor reception.** Food and beverages during the Vendor Reception needs to be in the same space as the exhibits. This space needs to be large enough to accommodate the food and beverages stations along with the attendees being able to move between food stations and the vendor's exhibits during the reception.

Except as specifically authorized by the LAC chair, HPG activities shall not be scheduled to conflict with other meeting functions or activities.

The HPG is encouraged to participate in the meeting's technical program, which is arranged by the Vice President. The HPG should contact the Vice President at least 6 months prior to the meeting with any suggestions concerning technical session topics and speakers. HPG-sponsored presentations, if included in the meeting's technical program, should focus on new or improved technology and not be used for promotion of specific products.

Sponsors

To help offset the cost of the meeting and to provide marketing opportunity to show support, TexITE created a sponsorship program. The sponsorships help to defer the meeting costs, such as providing refreshments at breaks or audio-video equipment during the meeting. Currently Sponsors are sought for:
- Overall meeting.
- Networking events.

TexITE Webmaster

The TexITE Webmaster maintains the district website. Material for the meeting needs to be provided to the Webmaster in a timely fashion. Text material can be submitted in Word format. Photographs should be submitted as separate attachments (not embedded in a Word document). The Webmaster has a standard meeting template that should be followed. Contact the Webmaster for the links to the previous meeting that can be used as examples for creating material for the upcoming meeting.

TexITE Chief Financial Secretary

The TexITE Chief Financial Secretary maintains a spreadsheet that includes the number of attendees for previous meetings. This individual also has experience with previous meetings and is an excellent resource.

SELECTION OF MEETING LOCATION

Approximately 20 to 18 months in advance of the meeting, the TexITE Secretary-Treasurer will distribute via email to all TexITE members a request to identify who is willing to host a TexITE meeting. This approach reflects the decision by the Executive Board to have meetings

take place in any part of the state rather than having the meeting rotate between regions. Therefore, all TexITE members are eligible to participate and volunteer to host the upcoming meeting.

Stage 1 is a simple statement of interest (a reply email is sufficient) indicating that an individual and organization (e.g., TexITE Section, County, or City) would like to be considered as meeting host. The next step, Stage 2, consists of a presentation made to the Executive Board during the Executive Board Meeting at the TexITE Meeting approximately 18 months in advance. The presentation must be made by the TexITE Member who is proposing to serve as the local host for the meeting site. Following the presentations, the Executive Board will vote to select the host site. The Executive Board will then work with the selected host on the refinement of the proposal to include specific information about the conference hotel contract and room rates, local contact(s), and potential meeting dates.

SELECTION OF MEETING DATES

Typically, TexITE has two meetings a year – one in the spring and one in the fall. The preferred dates for the spring meeting would be in March or April while the preferred dates for the fall meeting would be in October. **The dates selected for a TexITE meeting tend to be dependent on hotel meeting space availability.** Recent experiences have demonstrated that a fall meeting in September may create challenges for student attendance. Insufficient time is available for the student chapter leaders to identify those students interested in presenting a poster and even their ability to attend the meeting because registration deadlines occur prior to the start of the University classes and because students are concerned with missing classes so early in the semester. A spring meeting near spring break may be affected due to members being on vacation; however, a recent meeting did not appear to be unduly affected by the spring break dates.

TYPICAL SCHEDULE FOR MEETING

Examples of typical schedules are available in the Schedule at a Glance layout included in the printed program for previous meetings. The LAC is encouraged to obtain the printed program for several previous meetings to use as examples.

PLANNING TIMELINE

Table 1 lists suggested timeline for several items associated with the meeting. Identifying when key items must be completed could help avoid rushing in the final months before the meeting, especially if a meeting is scheduled two to three months following a major holiday.

Key registration dates that the LAC should establish include:
- When does the hotel room block open and close?
- When does early registration begin and end? The LAC may want to match the end of early registration with the date the hotel room block is no longer reserved.

- When is the end of online registration? This would also be the final day to register as a sponsor. Previous meetings have set this date as being one week prior to the start of the meeting.

The goal is for the TexITE website to be populated with information about one month before registration opens.

Table 1. LAC key dates for meeting

Item	Key Player or Group	Time Prior
Identify meeting location	LAC and Executive Board	20–18 months
Identify subcommittees and make assignments	LAC	18–6 months
Identify hotel meeting room needs	LAC	18–12 months
Negotiate with hotel	LAC, Event Services	18–12 months
Sign hotel contract	President	12 months
Set registration dates	LAC	12 months
Develop budget	LAC	12–4 months
Email blast – save the date	Webmaster	6 months
Develop technical program	Vice President, Program Committee, HPG, LAC Chair	6–3 months
Meeting logo	LAC to Webmaster	6–4 months
Verify online hotel registration works	LAC	4 months
Budget to Executive Board for approval	LAC to Executive Board	4 months
Meeting schedule (overview)	LAC to Webmaster	3 months
Networking/social events (descriptions, cost)	LAC to Webmaster	3 months
Guest activities for the area	LAC to Webmaster	3 months
Technical tours (descriptions, cost)	LAC to Webmaster	3 months
Technical training workshop (descriptions, cost)	LAC to Webmaster	3 months
Technical program	Vice President to Webmaster	3 months
Changes to sponsorship page	LAC to Webmaster	3 months
Email blast announcing preliminary information	Webmaster	3 months
Meeting website complete	Webmaster	2.5 months
Registration page opens	Event Services	2 months
Email blast announcing registration is open	Webmaster	2 months
Email blast – LAC email to TexITE members	LAC and Webmaster	5–6 weeks
Email blast – reminder of early bird ending	Webmaster	3–4 weeks
Early registration ends	Event Services	3–4 weeks
Poster titles and speaker names	Student Chapter Coordinator to LAC and Webmaster	2–3 weeks
Event Services create initial draft of printed program from material on the website	Event Service and LAC	3 weeks
Online registration ends	Event Services	1 week
Final revisions to printed program	LAC to Event Services	11 days
Meeting – SHOW TIME!	**All**	**0 days**
Thank-you letters	LAC, President	1 month after meeting
Finalize budget	LAC to Chief Financial Secretary	3 to 4 months after meeting

BUDGET

Develop Draft

An initial duty for the LAC Chair is to develop a draft budget. Typically the chair will start with the budget spreadsheet from a recent meeting and then update to reflect unique elements of the upcoming meeting. Examples of areas – such as estimating attendance and event cost – that require LAC Chair decisions are discussed in the following subsections.

The budget must be approved by the TexITE Executive Board several weeks prior to opening registration for the meeting.

Estimating Attendance

A critical step in the budgeting process is to estimate the total number of registrants by category and the number of attendees at each meal or event.

Historical information from the past meetings indicates that a meeting in a major metropolitan area (e.g., Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, etc.) will have substantially greater attendance than a meeting in a less-populated area. The attendance of individual events, particularly evening social functions, is more difficult to estimate.

Attendance by event, hotel room nights, and registration fees for recent TexITE meetings are available from the TexITE Chief Financial Secretary.

Gratis Registrations and Event Tickets

The Executive Board has established the policy that several categories of individuals will receive free registration and/or complimentary event tickets:

- **Candidates for International ITE Vice President** will not be charged a registration fee and will receive complimentary tickets for all meeting functions.
- The **International President** sometimes is able to attend a TexITE meeting. If so, that person receives complimentary registration and tickets for all meeting functions.
- **Local dignitaries** (Mayor, City Manager, etc.) and the keynote speaker may receive complimentary tickets to the kickoff lunch at the discretion of the LAC.
- **Speakers** in the technical program will not be charged a registration fee for the session in which they are speaking, <u>if they are only attending that session</u>. Preference is for all speakers to register and attend the entire meeting. Previous experience, however, has shown that some speakers will only be available to attend the session in which they are speaking. Since they are not attending any of the meals or participating in the breaks; they can be granted a speaker-only badge. These badges are printed in a different color to demonstrate that they will only be present for their session.
- **Spouses and children** will not be charged a fee for "registration" but will be charged the ticket price for events they wish to attend. Spouse's tickets should be priced the same as member/section affiliate tickets for the same event (although a lower price for children's tickets is acceptable and even encouraged).

Gratis registrations and event tickets affect both costs and revenues. Therefore, their number must be estimated before the registration and event prices are established and reflected in the budget.

Student Registration

ITE Student Chapter members are charged a reduced registration fee. The student registration fee includes everything that a regular member registration fee includes.

Targeted Profit or Loss

The targeted amount of profit or loss for each meeting is determined in conjunction with the establishment of the annual TexITE budget and will vary from meeting to meeting depending upon the location of the meeting, time of year (i.e., whether spring or fall), and other factors that affect anticipated attendance and costs. The Secretary-Treasurer will advise the LAC chair as to the targeted profit or loss amount.

Preferred Pricing Strategy

The following pricing strategy has been used for recent meetings:
- Registration for members and students includes all meeting events, but not the technical tours, training workshop, or sporting events.
- Price sporting event tickets (sporting clay shoot, golf, tennis, etc.) to cover the full cost of the event, including any food and prizes provided.
- The price of the technical training workshops or technical tours should cover their anticipated expenses.
- Guests pay no registration, but may purchase individual event tickets, which are individually priced to cover the entire incremental event cost, including: meals, admission tickets, and the event's fixed costs (such as transportation, room rental, entertainment, door prizes, etc.).
- A sponsorship program was introduced in order to keep the per member registration cost low.

Although the Executive Board will consider alternate pricing strategies, this preferred pricing strategy shall be used to guide the LAC's preliminary financial planning for the meeting.

Sponsorship Program

TexITE has implemented a sponsorship program to aid in covering costs associated with the meeting. Currently, sponsorship donations are collected as part of the registration process for the following:
- Overall meeting.
- Thursday night social.
- Wednesday athletic social.
- Wednesday poker tournament.

Table 2 shows the elements of the sponsorship program used for the 2015 spring meeting. The LAC should review the sponsorship program to determine any changes are needed for their meeting.

The LAC chair and the TexITE President are responsible for ensuring that the promised benefits are provided for the Sponsors, such as displaying of logos when appropriate or providing verbal recognition at the lunch(es).

Thank-you letters to the sponsorship donors are sent after the meeting from the LAC chair and the TexITE president.

Table 2. Example of sponsorship levels used in previous meeting

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS
The Local Arrangement Committee (LAC) greatly needs and appreciates your support and generosity in assisting us keep meeting cost low to our membership. To help offset the cost of the meeting and to provide you with a special marketing opportunity to show your support, TexITE has created three sponsorship levels. These sponsorships will be used to help defer the meeting costs, such as providing refreshments at breaks, audio-video equipment during the meeting, and other general meeting costs.

MEETING SPONSORSHIPS
The sponsorship levels are as follows:
Platinum ($1000). As a platinum sponsor, you will receive the following benefit in return for your sponsorship:
- Recognition in the TexITE Meeting program and on the TexITE website;
- 17.5 square inch display of logo at registration desk;
- Display of company logo during breaks; and
- Display of company logo and verbal recognition at one of the lunches,
Gold ($750). As a gold sponsor, you will receive the following benefits in return for your sponsorship:
- Recognition in the TexITE Meeting program and on the TexITE website;
- 15.0 square inch display of logo at registration desk; and
- Display of company logo during breaks.
Silver ($500). As a silver sponsor, you will receive the following benefits in return for your sponsorship:
- Recognition in the TexITE Meeting program and on the TexITE website; and
- 12.5 square inch display of logo at registration desk.

Event Sponsorships
Multiple sponsorship opportunities are also available for our social events. Your sponsorship will be used to help offset the cost of these events in order to minimize the cost to our membership for these events. In return for your generous contribution, you will receive the following:
- Recognition as an event sponsor in the TexITE Meeting program and on the TexITE website;
- Verbal recognition at the social event sponsored; and
- Placement of your company logo in a prominent location at the event.
Our event sponsorship levels are as follows:
- Thursday Night's Evening Social -- $500
- Wednesday's Sporting Clay Competition -- $250

Meeting Bank Account

TexITE has established a checking account for the district meetings. All meeting bills shall be paid out of this account, and all meeting revenues shall be deposited into it. The LAC chair shall contact the Chief Financial Secretary to establish access to the meetings account. The

LAC chair must maintain complete financial records for all meeting-related transactions.

Tax Exempt Status

TexITE is exempt from sales taxes. Our tax ID number is 20-4378623. The LAC Chair should contact the Chief Financial Secretary for a copy of the TexITE tax exempt form.

HOTEL

Contract

The LAC will assist Event Services in negotiating the hotel contract. Some key items to consider:

- **Room block.** The room block represents the minimum number of sleeping rooms that TexITE guarantees will be used by our members. The size of the block can affect the room rate (guarantee more rooms could result in a lower per night rate). The tradeoff is that if we do not meet our room block number, TexITE will have to pay a penalty.
- **Availability of number of rooms at room rate.** If possible, have the hotel contract indicate if the negotiated room rate will only be available for the number of rooms listed in the room block or if it will be available for additional rooms if the hotel is not sold out.
- **Room rate.** The preferred room rate matches the federal or state hotel reimbursable rate so that those who work for cities and the state are able to have all their hotel costs reimbursed by their employer. There are trade-offs for lower room rates in that the hotel may require higher set-aside for food.
- **Cutoff date.** The cutoff date for making hotel reservations reflects the point when the hotel will no longer accept reservations at the negotiated hotel room rate. Desired is that this date be as close to the start of the meeting as some TexITE members do not make a decision to attend the meeting until just prior to the start of the meeting.
- **Attrition (penalty).** Hotels contracts typically include a statement about attrition charges that will occur if TexITE does not use sufficient number of hotel sleeping rooms or spends less on food than set in the contract. The hotel may allow consideration of dates prior to and following the actual meeting dates for determining if the room block was met; however, that information must be included in the contract. In addition, consideration should be given to reducing the attrition penalty if some or all of the unsold rooms in the block are ultimately sold by the hotel to other guests; this must also be specified in the contract.
- **Comp and upgrade rooms.** The number of complimentary and room upgrades (typically a function of the number of sleeping rooms reserved and used) should be clearly stated in the contract.
- **Room assignments.** Previous experiences have shown that the hotel contract should include a table listing TexITE functions per day along with the preliminary room assignments. When this information is not included in the contract, the hotel has the right to move our functions into other, perhaps less desirable, space. Table 3 shows the typical meeting space needed. The version that would be included in a contract would have another column on the far right that names the specific hotel room.

Table 3. Hotel meeting space

Day	Function	Space Characteristics
Wednesday	Registration	Prefer that this space be what attendees initially see when entering the area. A bulletin board should be provided in the registration area for announcements.
	Executive Board	Room that can seat about 40 people.
	Committee meetings	Multiple rooms that can seat about 20 to 40 people (typically 2 to 3 rooms).
	Training workshop	Multiple rooms that can accommodate expected attendance for training workshop.
	Ethics Seminar	Room that can seat about 100 with theatre-style seating.
	Exhibit hall/reception	Located near the session rooms so attendees can easily move from session to exhibit hall. Accommodate vendors' booths and tables along with meal / breaks.
	Poker Tournament	If held, sufficient size to accommodate the necessary number of round tables.
Thursday	Registration	See above.
	Committee Meetings	See above.
	Exhibit hall breakfast/and breaks	See above.
	General Session	Large enough to accommodate all attendees. Include a lectern with microphone, screen, and needed AV. If panel is anticipated, than there should be a raised head table that can accommodate speakers.
	Lunch	Unique space from sessions to allow setup/takedown time. Need space for head table as well as dining tables.
	Sessions	Minimum of two rooms with each room having theatre-style seating that can accommodate 60 percent of the estimated registrants. These rooms should be located near each other. For spring meeting, one of the rooms should accommodate the traffic bowl
	Posters	Located near refreshments. Sufficient space to allow needed circulation.
Friday	Registration	See above.
	Committee Meetings	See above.
	Breakfast	Preferred having the space accommodate some seating. Previous meetings have used the exhibit hall space reserved for the vendors for Wednesday and Thursday.
	Sessions	See above.
	Break and Posters	See above.
	Lunch	See above.

- **AV.** Audio/visual charges can represent a significant portion of the meeting cost (approximately 10 percent in previous meetings); therefore, the AV requirements for the meeting need to be identified and a written quote obtained from the hotel.
- **Service charge.** Have the contract clearly state the service charge for food and for AV (if relevant), as well as whether that service charge counts toward required expenses to meet the defined guarantees.
- **Meeting rooms.** Hotels will almost always provide meeting rooms on a complimentary basis (i.e., no direct charge to TexITE) provided that some agreed-

upon minimum number of guest rooms are reserved and used by the meeting's attendees (i.e., we meet the room block). The catering cost may also impact the complimentary use of the meeting room. Accordingly, it is very important that all conditions for the complimentary use of meeting rooms be spelled out explicitly during the negotiations with the hotel.

- **Refreshment locations.** When planning the meeting space, attempt to have any refreshment locations (e.g., breaks) located close to the exhibit hall. The location of the student posters should also be close to the refreshment location to encourage attendees to be near the students during breaks.
- **Guarantee meals.** Hotels almost always impose the requirement that the minimum number of meals to be paid for be guaranteed in advance, often as much as one week prior to the event. The hotel will charge TexITE for this number of meals even if actual attendance is less; usually, however, the hotel will also agree to be prepared for and serve up to some number of additional meals (typically 10%) without additional charge. All hotel policies concerning meal guarantees should be discussed and clearly understood at the time of initial negotiations. The LAC may wish to note on the registration form that meals cannot be guaranteed if a registration is received after a specific date, such as one week before the meeting.

The contract between the hotel and TexITE will be signed by the TexITE President upon advice from the LAC chair and the Event Services.

Meals

Key items to consider with respect to meals include the following:

- **Head table.** Each of the lunches will have a head table. The head table should be elevated and have a lectern with microphone at the center. Those typically seated at the head table are listed in Table 4. The LAC should confer with the TexITE President regarding the desired seating order at the head table. The head table arrangement is to be included on the agenda for the lunch.
- **Place cards.** The LAC is to provide Event Services with the list of names for the head table so that place cards are made and set for each position at the head table.
- **Plated or buffet style.** Past experience has been that the kickoff lunch meal should be served at the tables as opposed to buffet style. With the former format, the meeting agenda (head table introductions, etc.) can begin almost immediately. With buffet style format, it is impractical to begin the meeting agenda before everyone has been through the serving line. The business lunch is sufficiently less formal than the kickoff lunch that buffet style can be considered in the event of a substantial difference in meal price. Any such options should be discussed with the Executive Board as the preliminary budget is being developed.
- **AV equipment.** The LAC should verify the AV needs for each lunch including consideration of AV needs for the keynote speaker and the international VP candidates.
- **Menu.** The LAC has complete discretion as to menus. Provisions should be made with the hotel for individuals with special diets (e.g., vegetarian).
- **Price.** Effort should be made to keep the ticket prices for the kickoff and business

lunches in line with the prices for those events at other recent TexITE meetings.

- **Number of meals to guarantee.** As much as one week before the function, Event Services in consolidation with the LAC will have to guarantee payment for some number of meals. Selecting this number is not an exact science. If total attendance (including complimentary meals) is expected to be 150 and the hotel will serve up to 110% of the guaranteed number, the LAC might opt to guarantee only 136 meals. Therefore, all 150 expected attendees can be accommodated yet the cost to the meeting budget will be minimized in the event attendance turns out to be less than expected. On the other hand, the hotel may not be able to accommodate additional meals if actual attendance exceeds 150. Therefore, the LAC might instead opt to guarantee all 150 meals to ensure that the hotel will be prepared to serve at least 165. There is no exact formula for determining the number of meals to guarantee. Ultimately, Event Services and the LAC will have to use their best judgment and hope for the best.
- **Ticket collection.** If tickets are going to be collected at the door, one or more LAC members should be posted at each door to collect the tickets. For recent meetings, the LAC has asked students to do this task.
- **Count.** A member of the LAC should count the number of attendees (tickets can be used as an estimate) so that the information is available when planning future meetings. Following the end of the meeting, the LAC should provide these numbers to the Chief Financial Secretary.
- **Door prizes.** The tickets for a meal can be in a two-part format and separated when the person is entering the lunch. The collected ticket is used for drawing the door prizes when the other end of the ticket is kept by the attendee.

Table 4. Head table

Kickoff Lunch	Business Lunch
- TexITE President - TexITE Vice President - TexITE Secretary-Treasurer - TexITE Immediate Past President - International Director - ITE President and/or Executive Director (if attending) - Keynote Speaker - Mayor, City Manager, etc.(if attending) - LAC Chair	- TexITE President - TexITE Vice President - TexITE Secretary-Treasurer - TexITE Immediate Past President - International Director - ITE International VP President candidates (if attending) - LAC Chair.

Sleeping Rooms/Hotel Room Block

The preference is for a single hotel to accommodate all TexITE members attending a meeting; therefore, seek proposals from hotels that are large enough to accommodate the meeting.

The hotel contract will specify the size of the "block of rooms". A challenge for the LAC is to select an appropriate block size. If the block is too large and registration is lower than expected, hotels typically include a penalty charge.

The Chief Financial Secretary can provide information on the number of guest rooms set aside for and actually used at past TexITE meetings.

Complimentary Sleeping Rooms

Hotels will almost always provide some number of complimentary guest rooms (comp) or suites for the organization's use provided that some agreed-upon number of guest rooms is used by the meeting's attendees.

Table 5 lists how those comp rooms are to be assigned. Those holding the positions listed for priority 1 should have their hotel room covered. If an insufficient number of complimentary room-nights are available, the additional costs for these rooms are to be covered by the meeting budget. Note: just the cost of the meeting rooms are covered, additional charges such as for internet service should be covered by the individual. If additional rooms are available, then the complimentary rooms can be applied in order listed for priority 2 of Table 5.

Note: the recipients of the complimentary rooms MUST make a reservation within the hotel room block for the hotel to comp the room. The LAC could check that those who should have their room comp have registered at the hotel in a timely manner. The availability of comp rooms may need to be communicated to the International VP candidates.

Table 5. Assignment of complimentary hotel rooms

Priority	Description	Position
1	Hotel rooms to be covered for the following, either via complimentary rooms or via part of the meeting budget:	• TexITE President. • LAC chair. • Two candidates for International ITE Vice President for two nights of the meeting.
2	If additional complimentary rooms are available, provide for (in this order):	• TexITE Vice-President. • TexITE Secretary-Treasurer. • TexITE International Director. • TexITE Chief Financial Secretary.

Committee Meetings

Rooms are to be reserved for potential committee meetings for Thursday and Friday (see Table 3).

Parking

Even in the larger cities, most hotels in Texas provide free parking for hotel guests. If there are any parking fees for a hotel, this information should be provided on the TexITE website.

HPG members sometimes desire to display vehicular equipment (e.g., bucket trucks, trailer-mounted signs, etc.). Efforts should be made to secure advance permission for such equipment to park in an area convenient to the technical session space.

TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

Technical Program

The Vice President, as chair of the Program Committee, is responsible for planning the technical program and arranging for speakers and moderators. The Program Committee consists of the Section Representatives, the LAC Chair, the Webmaster, and other interested individuals. This group selects the topics and arranges the speakers for the Technical Sessions; however, the LAC arranges the facilities. The Vice President will also coordinate with the speakers regarding their specific visual aids needs and advise the LAC accordingly.

The LAC should designate one of its members to check each technical session meeting room prior to the start of each session. Items to be checked include:
- Are the required AV equipment properly set up and fully operational?
- Are the microphone and lectern light working properly?
- Are the room lights and light controls working properly?
- Is the room too hot or too cool?

The designated LAC member should know who to contact, as well as the best way to contact that person, in the event any of the hotel's facilities or equipment require attention.

A member of the LAC should count the number of attendees in each session so that the information is available when planning future meetings. Following the end of the meeting, the LAC should provide these numbers to the Chief Financial Secretary.

Moderator Meeting

Every session requires a moderator. The program committee is responsible for selecting moderators for each session. A short (30 minutes) moderator meeting should be scheduled for Thursday morning (same time as committee meetings). The purpose of this meeting will be to ensure moderators understand their duties and to achieve consistency in how sessions are run. A moderator guideline document can be found in the leadership section of the website.

Technical Tour(s) (Wednesday)

At the option of the LAC, one or more technical tours may take place on the first morning and/or afternoon (Wednesday). Typical tour destinations might be a traffic signal system control center or a transit facility. The separate registration fee for the tour(s) needs to cover anticipated expenses such as bus transportation, entrance fees, or lunch (if provided). Having a fee also helps to ensure that registrants will attend the tour.

A member of the LAC should count the number of attendees in each session so that the information is available when planning future meetings. Following the end of the meeting, the LAC should provide these numbers to the Chief Financial Secretary.

Technical Training Workshop(s) (Wednesday)

TexITE meetings include the option for one or more technical training workshops to be held on Wednesday. These training workshops should require a separate registration fee, which is set to cover anticipated expenses such as printed materials or instructor fees. Having a fee also helps to ensure that registrants will attend the workshop.

Professional Ethics Seminar

The Ethics session was added to the meeting so to provide our members with a convenient way to meet the requirements of the Texas Board of Professional Engineers for ethics training. The workshop is part of the meeting registration (i.e., there should be no additional cost to attend) and meets on Wednesday afternoon after the technical workshops and tours and before the vendor exhibit reception.

A member of the LAC should count the number of attendees in each session so that the information is available when planning future meetings. Following the end of the meeting, the LAC should provide these numbers to the Chief Financial Secretary.

Student Posters

Poster sessions are a valuable opportunity for students to present papers and meet with interested attendees for in-depth technical discussions. Elements of concern to the LAC include:
- **Location of the poster.** The LAC should try to locate the posters where there will be sufficient space for moving among the posters. In addition, the posters should be located near the refreshments to encourage the meeting attendees to talk to the student while also enjoying their break.
- **Number of posters and name/title for printed program.** The number of posters to be expected will be provided to the LAC by the Student Chapter Coordinator. The Coordinator will send an email to the student chapter advisors and leaders requesting information on the names and presentation titles of any students interested in presenting a Student Poster at the meeting. The email will contain a date for when the author name and presentation title must be received in order to be in the printed program or to have space allocated to the student.
- **Supporting boards.** In previous years, TexITE has purchased large boards to use for displaying the posters only to throw away the boards because of the inability to transport or store them. Some attempts have been made to have a smaller size for the poster – and many students are bringing the smaller size posters. Some students, however, are re-using their poster from TRB which has a larger poster size. Therefore, the LAC should be prepared to provide boards that the students can use that can accommodate either the TRB poster size (4 ft × 8 ft) or the smaller size that is used by other professional groups (36 inches × 48 inches).
- **Easels.** Event Services currently provide reusable, portable easels where the boards rest on the easels. Two easels are used for the larger boards. Large clips are used to attach the student's poster to the boards.

NON-TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

Sports Social (Wednesday)

A sporting event on the first day is one of the oldest traditions of TexITE. Previously, a golf tournament was the preferred event. Currently a sporting clay tournament at a shooting range is attracting a sizable attendance.

A member of the LAC should count the number of attendees in each session so that the information is available when planning future meetings. Following the end of the meeting, the LAC should provide these numbers to the Chief Financial Secretary.

Vendor Reception (Wednesday Night)

The HPG typically opens their exhibit space and provides food and beverages from 6 to 8 pm on Wednesday night. Lessons learned from previous meeting include the following:
- **AV.** A wireless microphone is needed for the vendor room to announce the door prizes.
- **Drink tickets.** Vendors would like the option to buy additional drink tickets when they register so they have them in their packets when they arrive (many of the vendors indicated it is much more conducive to them conducting business to have the drink tickets in hand before the event starts).

Poker (Wednesday Late Night)

Another social event that has been held during previous TexITE meetings is a poker tournament that follows the vendor's reception.

Social (Thursday Night)

The primary social event of the meeting is held on Thursday from 6 to 9 pm or later. The event, which usually includes dinner and entertainment, is often held away from the hotel. The event should be designed as a family outing, and has been held in a science museum, an aquarium, horse track, and on a boat. The entertainment has included outdoor theater, comedy shows, and live music. If the event is held away from the hotel, transportation is typically provided for the members and guests. Depending on the event, provisions should be made to return some members to the hotel early and other guests to the Younger Member Social.

If group transportation is being provided, the LAC should have members assigned to assist with the loading of the buses (and collection of the tickets if that is being done as the buses are boarded). Those LAC members should also be able to give directions to the event since some people usually will choose to take their own cars. To accommodate anyone who may be running late, it is also a good idea to post directions to the event on the meeting bulletin board or provide the address of the site in the printed program.

One or more members of the LAC should remain with the group at all times during an out-of-the-hotel event. Each such member should know the names and telephone numbers of the

staff persons to contact for assistance, both at the event being attended and at the company which is providing the buses.

If a meal or alcohol is being provided at the event, an LAC member should be assigned the responsibility of verifying the number of meals or drinks served. Preferably, this would be done jointly with a representative of the event or their caterer.

A member of the LAC should count the number of attendees in each session so that the information is available when planning future meetings. Following the end of the meeting, the LAC should provide these numbers to the Chief Financial Secretary.

Younger Member Social (Thursday Late Night)

The Younger Member Committee typically hosts a social that begins following the meeting social held on Thursday evening.

Buses for Tours and/or Thursday Socials

Charter buses typically represent a substantial portion of the cost of an out-of-the-hotel function. Most bus companies have a fixed rate per bus for some minimum time with an additional charge per hour after the minimum. In some cases, the minimum time may be as much as five hours.

Accordingly, if the event is reasonably close to the hotel, it may be substantially less expensive to have one or two buses operate a continuous shuttle than to provide enough buses to transport all attendees at the same time. Even if the particular event is such that a shuttle is not practical, it may be cheaper to keep the buses at the event rather than have to pay a second per-bus minimum charge for the return trip.

Also, if buses are required for both spouse and children's events, it may be both possible and economical to schedule the events such that the same buses take one group to its destination and then return to the hotel to take the other group to its destination.

Traffic Bowl

During the spring meeting, one of the sessions should be dedicated to hosting the district qualifying round of the ITE Collegiate Traffic Bowl. The International ITE committee that oversees the Collegiate Traffic Bowl can provide to the LAC details on room arrangement, game equipment, rules, and AV needs.

TexITE is experimenting with hosting a "TexITE Feud" to fill in the session time when the traffic bowl does not take the full 90 minute session, which can be the case if only three university teams are competing.

Kickoff Lunch Program

The kickoff lunch traditionally has the following speakers, which the LAC arranges:
- **Mayor.** Very short presentation that welcomes the meeting attendees to the community.
- **Keynote speaker.** The keynote speaker should present on a topic of interest to our members.

OTHER ITEMS

Door Prizes

Traditionally door prizes are distributed at the vendor reception (Wednesday evening), kickoff lunch (Thursday), and the business lunch (Friday). The number of prizes and the dollar value for each of the prizes varies. These prizes can reflect local characteristics (e.g., case of Dr. Pepper sodas in Waco) or can be purchased. If gift cards are used, they should be for restaurants or stores that are located though out the state. There is a preference to have at least one major prize for the vendor reception.

Speaker Gifts

Traditionally, appreciation of their time and energy is shown to speakers through a speaker gift. The characteristics of the speaker gifts have varied, for example, a meeting where the social was at a local barbecue restaurant provided a jar of barbecue sauce, kitchen towel, and other related items for the speaker gift.

A bottle of water for each speaker provided at the start of the session will help keep our speakers hydrated.

The LAC will also need to decide who to include for these gifts, for example, recognition of the time and energy donated to TexITE by the moderators and members of the LAC is also appropriate.

Printed Program

Much of the text for the printed program will be available on the TexITE website; however, there will be several items that the LAC will need to provide. Examples include the addresses of the various event locations (e.g., Thursday Social), whether pre-registration is required for an event, and local photographs for the cover (if desired).

Currently, the layout or format of the program is done by Event Services. Elements that have not always been included, but have recently shown value include the following:
- Hotel address.
- Addresses for all offsite events.
- Map of hotel showing the location of sessions, exhibit hall, etc. It should also show the location of bus pickup, if relevant.

- Whether an event required pre-registration (e.g., training workshop).
- Whether an event requires a separate fee (e.g., tours).

After a draft of the printed program is ready, the LAC will have the opportunity to review. The LAC will need to approve the document before it is printed. Table 1 includes the suggested timeline for the printed program development.

TexITE Website

Information should be provided to the TexITE Webmaster so that it can be posted on the TexITE webpage as it is finalized. The TexITE website will have a link to the registration page when online registration is open.

The TexITE website has included the following subpages for a meeting:
- Meeting schedule overview.
- Technical program.
- Technical tours.
- Technical training workshops.
- Networking events descriptions.
- Descriptions of potential guest activities.
- List of sponsorship opportunities.
- List of Sponsors for the meeting.
- Information for exhibitor.
- List of exhibitors who have purchased a table or booth for the meeting.
- Link to the registration page.
- Link to hotel for room registration.

PDH Certificate

The Webmaster will set up a self-reporting PDH certificate page following the meeting. TexITE is not an IACET-certified CEU provider. The self-reporting certificate is for the convenience of the attendees. If requested, the engineer may need to provide additional evidence that they attended the meeting to satisfy the engineering board continuing education requirements.

Registration Page

The registration page is maintained by Event Services and is the location where our members can register for the meeting. The TexITE website provides a link to this page. TexITE does not accept on-line payments. This function is handled by Event Services.

Meeting Logo

The logo for the meeting should be developed by the LAC to reflect unique characteristics of the meeting location. The logo will be used on the meeting website, the printed program, and

the name badges. The logo should be designed as a high-resolution graphic (.jpg or .png) that can be imported to other applications. The Webmaster can assist as his/her schedule allows.

Meeting App

In recognition of how information is currently being distributed and shared, the TexITE Webmaster is developing a meeting app for each meeting.

Publicity

At least one, preferably two, email distributions should be sent announcing the meeting. The initial email distribution should be about 8 to 10 weeks prior to the meeting and announces the opening of registration. The second email distribution is typically about 6 to 5 weeks prior to the meeting and includes a letter from the LAC Chair that provides reasons TexITE members should consider attending the meeting. The timing of the email blasts should consider holiday schedules. The Webmaster sends out the emails but the LAC chair develops the content.

Guest Activities

Previous meetings have developed scheduled spouse and/or children activities. Typical activities have included museum tours, sightseeing trips, and stained glass classes. For children, the activities have included skating parties, miniature golf tournament, or a trip to the zoo. Unfortunately, these activities have been poorly attended.

LACs are now typically providing suggested spouse and children local activities on the meeting website rather than offering scheduled events.

Spouses, families, and guest are encouraged to attend the social events, such as the welcome reception/vendor night, Thursday evening social, and the kickoff lunch.

AFTER THE MEETING

After the meeting, the following should be accomplished:
- **Letters of appreciation – local guests.** On behalf of the LAC, the LAC chair should write letters of appreciation to local guests (Mayor, City Manager, etc.) and to other groups and individuals (Convention Bureau, spouses of LAC members, etc.) who have contributed to the success of the meeting.
- **Letters of appreciation – keynote speaker.** The LAC chair should coordinate with the President to determine who will send a letter of appreciation to the Keynote Speaker.
- **Letters of appreciation – speakers.** The Vice President is responsible for writing letters of appreciation to the technical session participants.
- **Letters of appreciation – sponsors.** The LAC chair and the TexITE president will generate letters expressing appreciation to the Sponsors of the meeting and social events. The letters are to be signed by both the chair and the president.
- **Finalizing the meeting account.** After all bills have been paid, the LAC chair should

contact the TexITE Chief Financial Secretary to close the books for the meeting. The LAC chair shall provide a complete financial report to the Chief Financial Secretary.

- **Meeting report.** Not later than four months after the meeting, a final meeting report shall be sent to the TexITE Secretary/Treasurer.
- **Updating the attendance numbers.** The TexITE Chief Financial Secretary shall update the meeting history with the meeting report provided by the LAC chair.