

Committee: Government Affairs

Date/Time: March 22, 2022, 3:00 pm Eastern

Participants: Loucas Tsakalacos, Josh Caldwell, Alex Chortos, Linda Olafsen, Justus Ndukaife, Christopher Schuck, Jeffrey Aguilar, Boris Dyatkin, Sean Hearne, Damon Dozier, Natalie Larocco

Unable to participate: Babu Chalamala, Jen Nekuda Malik, Daniel Becerra, Mayra Castro, Jennifer DiStefano, Elias Garratt, William Hammetter, Sean Langan, Jyoti Malhotra, Nick Moroni, Juan Claudio Nino, Suyog Padgaonkar, Dave Parrillo, Dio Placencia, Erin Ratcliff, Colleen Scott, Clarissa May Towle, David Steuerman, Steven Smith, Margo Staruch, Cathy Tway, Jeremy Ward, Stan Wong, Ashley White

Next call	April 26, 2022, 3:00 pm Eastern	
Responsibility	Action Items	Due
Damon	Send the Ukraine link to officers regarding the next step. Send list of resources used for FY22 funding information Begin sending CVD invitation letters and develop list of people to target	
Boris	Send the Ukraine link to those who have positions to list	
Josh	Get started on the invitation letters	
Members	Contact Damon regarding budget items of interest	Before April Meeting

AGENDA

Washington Update
CVD
Materials Voice Letters

Loucas Tsakalacos, Government Affairs Committee Chair, opened the meeting. He welcomed Natalie Larocco, a staff member of the MRS Volunteer Affairs Department, to the meeting, introduced Paula Mahar who will be taking minutes, and thanked Kris Uher for her diligent work with GAC as she moves on to other assignments.

MRS Government Affairs liaison Damon Dozier was approached by MRS members as well as the Board of Directors regarding a response to the war in Ukraine. GAC issued a statement followed by a more directed series of articles and actions. The new statement appeared in the MRS *Bulletin* and Materials 360. The political nature of the situation is what prompted GAC leadership to seek MRS Board endorsement prior to issuing the statement.

MRS Fellow **Sasha DiSalvo** has created a website listing positions available for Ukrainian scientists and postdocs. **Boris will send the link** for anyone who knows of positions and opportunities. Loucas said that, while his personal preference for a science organization is to avoid partisanship, this was a humanitarian response, as was the statement issued previously on the situation in Afghanistan.

Damon will forward the link to the officers who are interested in the next steps. It's helpful to know the discussion is taking place and that GAC is using its resources and networks to help.

Washington DC

GAC is in the process of looking for topics for Materials Voice letters. The 2023 budget will be coming out on March 28. Due to the date for the release, Congressional Visit Day may take place later so that the budget numbers can be digested first.

Damon will send a list of the references he used to review F22 funding. It's not yet known if the Biden budget will reflect plus-ups for agencies of GAC concern. House and Senate marks for DOE, NIST and NSF were not met.

The hope for 2023 is that the budget will reflect the aspirational nature of the House and Senate. Cuts have been restored in the 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 accounts; this information is being sent to Paula for distribution to GAC. It will be sent around again for questions after review.

Once the budget is announced and hearings are scheduled, GAC adds comments. Contact Damon regarding topics—quantum, supersonic, rare earth—of interest and he'll present the information at the April meeting.

Update on MRS S22 Meeting

Damon reported that there are over 3000 attendees registered, with 500 attending virtually. Indoor mask mandates are being dropped in Hawaii this week. Registration at this point is going well. Some Far Eastern countries are restoring requirements regarding quarantine periods for citizens traveling out of the country; this discourages people from traveling. The BA.2 variant's influence remains a question.

The Congressional Fellows session will take place after the poster sessions. S22 may include one-on-one sessions with the agency representatives. MRS may try to set up ad hoc meetings.

Workgroup Reports

Grassroots Advocacy

Boris is editing the white papers, one on nuclear fusion, one on space, on a series of challenges and asks that will be finalized soon. The white papers are accessible to nontech personnel for use with congressional staff on CVD.

Materials Voice letters will launch for S22. Live presentations will attract people to the volunteer-staffed kiosk.

Discussion of the asks related to the budget

- 1) Increase in sustained, uninterrupted funding. Discuss exact numbers; inflation might influence the purchasing power of labor and materials.
- 2) USICA bill, in light of supply chain challenges; Damon will take the lead.
- 3) Construction costs related to critical infrastructure have been neglected across several agencies. What accounts might need those funds the most (DOE, several DOE facilities)?
- 4) Ukraine; Ukrainian scientific facilities have suffered significant damage.

Damon noted that one of the accounts is the STRS account at NIST. NIST infrastructure is old, decaying and out of date. Each year, MRS is part of the NIST funding coalition; each year, more funding is requested but not enough is provided.

Federal Agency Summit

Josh can be available if it's necessary to schedule a call to Schumer's office.

One of the topics is which partners to reach out to and in what way. Whether to do this in person or not can be deferred to the next GAC call.

The challenge to doing something in CVD is whether or not the OMB report has come back with budget guidelines. They'll wait until next month to decide; if there's no further guidance, plan on the meeting being virtual.

Research Funding Opportunity sessions are typically scheduled the week after the hybrid meeting, which is May 23-25.

Scheduling Options

Target some of the sessions May 30 to June 3 or look at in-between weeks.

Availability for Josh

Afternoon dates work

Semester ends after May 30

Qualifying exams 11 to 1 eastern

Going to Massachusetts before June 18

Damon will begin sending standard invitation letters and targeting a list of people to see for CVD in late May/early June. He proposes coming up with other dates so that the visits are finished by mid-June to avoid the summer recess.

Josh will get started on the invitation letter.

The GAC meeting ended at 3:40 pm.