



SHOT E-Newsflash 14 September 2023

Annual Meeting Update: next steps following poll

Dear SHOT community,

179 of you responded to our poll about the annual meeting next month. Separately, we also received some direct communication from members. Discussions have arisen on social media, where union reps directly requested that SHOT should not use the Hyatt Long Beach.

Nearly three-quarters of the respondents tell us that they will not attend if there's an active labor dispute. Many expressed deep solidarity with the hotel workers. Nevertheless, few love the prospect of an online meeting, even if they're willing to tolerate it under the circumstances.

A sizable fraction have also told us that they would suffer financial consequences if the meeting got cancelled and they don't travel to LA, since their airplane tickets are not changeable. Some have already incurred the expense of getting a visa (not to mention enduring months of waiting for visa appointments). Early career scholars and those from underfunded institutions are especially vulnerable, not just from a financial but also from a professional perspective.

The officers greatly appreciate those of you who acknowledged how difficult this situation is. And we are deeply grateful to those who shared creative ideas for how to address it, and who volunteered to help. So far we have made two decisions:

- Unless the labor issues get resolved, we will propose to the SHOT Executive Council not to hold conference sessions or events at the Hyatt Long Beach.
- We will not cancel the annual meeting. Many of you wrote about how much you value the SHOT annual meeting, and we appreciate this.

We're currently exploring a range of alternatives. These possibilities include:

- Holding the entire meeting at one or more LA-area campuses. We're pursuing discussions with colleagues at several of these university venues to see what we can manage.
- Converting the full conference program into an online meeting, while also organizing in-person satellite-workshop events for the same weekend in a few different regions, including the LA area. These small gatherings would be open to anyone who wanted to connect with colleagues face to face, to hear and discuss the SHOT conference papers together, and to network. We would hope to convene at least one in-person satellite workshop on the US East Coast and at least one in Europe, hoping that members would volunteer to help with these efforts. And we would hold one live satellite workshop for this weekend in the Los Angeles area (avoiding hotels under labor dispute). This would provide an official event to attend for anyone who has a non-refundable plane ticket, or who needs a professional rationale for travel in order to get expenses reimbursed by a home institution.

For now, we ask you to please hang tight. Don't cancel your tickets if you have them; don't buy tickets if you don't. We're working as hard and fast as we can to achieve a viable solution. If the stars align, we may have a solid plan by the end of next week. If not, we'll send another update with as much information as possible.

Thanks for your patience and solidarity!

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