

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE (MD)

MD 3.11	CONFERENCES	DT-17-108
<i>Volume 3,</i>	Information Management	
<i>Part 1:</i>	Publications, Mail, and Information Disclosure	
<i>Approved by:</i>	Mark A. Satorius Executive Director for Operations	
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<i>Contact Name:</i>	Deborah Neff 301-415-5088	
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		
Directive and Handbook 3.11 have been revised to update organizational information and move information on NUREG publishing processes into Management Directive 3.7, “NUREG-Series Publications.”		

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I. POLICY

It is the policy of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to—

- Develop and manage NRC participation in NRC-sponsored or -cosponsored national and international conferences;
- Cosponsor national and international conferences developed and managed by other Government agencies, U.S. nongovernmental entities, foreign national governments and organizations, and international organizations;
- Develop and approve contracts for the conduct of these conferences;

- Approve new or major NRC policy statements to be made at these conferences.
- Follow current guidance available on the [Office of Administration Web site](#), under Meetings and Conferences, for all meetings and conferences hosted by the NRC.

II. OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that new or major NRC policy statements made at conferences receive the appropriate prior reviews.
- Ensure that proposals for NRC support of conferences are reviewed uniformly.
- Ensure that all financial transactions connected with the organization and conduct of NRC-sponsored or -cosponsored conferences are conducted in accordance with the relevant Federal statutes, regulations, and policy guidance.
- Ensure that NRC classified or sensitive unclassified information is not released at public conferences.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

A. Chairman

As stated in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-12-12, “Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations,” dated May 11, 2012, conferences sponsored or hosted by the agency, valued greater than \$500,000, are prohibited; however, the Chairman can authorize activities above this dollar threshold and—

1. Provide a waiver from this policy due to exceptional circumstances.
2. Document in writing why a single conference is the most cost-effective option to achieve a compelling purpose.

B. Executive Director for Operations (EDO)

Has senior level approval authority for all conference expenses in excess of \$100,000; however, has delegated this authority down to the Deputy Executive Directors for Operations (DEDOs). After presentation of plans by office directors, regional administrators, and division directors, the Executive Director for Operations (EDO)—

1. Approves NRC-sponsored and -cosponsored conferences involving more than one office or region.
2. Notifies the Commission if the conference involves new or major NRC policy issues or if a conference planner requests an endorsement of the conference by the

Commission or requests the involvement of a Commissioner to speak, act as an honorary chairman, or serve in some other capacity.

3. Notifies the Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA) if a conference planner requests the involvement of a member of Congress in the conference. Also notifies OCA if a senior NRC official is to appear in a State so that OCA can notify congressional members from that State.

C. Deputy Executive Directors for Operations (DEDOs)

Provide senior level approval of all conference expenses in excess of \$100,000.

D. Office of the General Counsel (OGC)

1. When requested by the Director, Acquisition Management Division (AMD), Office of Administration (ADM), reviews contracts for the conduct of a conference.
2. Provides patent review of papers to be presented at a conference, to the extent feasible, as requested.
3. Provides legal assistance on other matters concerning this directive.
4. Advises NRC staff in ensuring compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.
5. Advises NRC staff regarding potential conflict-of-interest issues for NRC Commissioners and employees.

E. Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)

Examines and pays properly approved vouchers for NRC financial support of conferences.

F. Director, Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA)

1. Notifies members of Congress of requests for their participation in NRC-sponsored or -cosponsored conferences and coordinates their participation, as appropriate.
2. Notifies members of Congress of visits of senior NRC officials to their respective States, as appropriate.

G. Director, Office of International Programs (OIP)

1. Coordinates NRC response to proposals for NRC sponsorship of, participation in, or financial support of international and foreign national sponsored conferences and other events, and makes recommendations to the sponsoring office, the EDO, the Chairman, and the Commission, as appropriate.

2. Works with other offices to ensure that the EDO and the Commission have been notified of NRC participation in an international conference involving new or major NRC policy issues.
3. Notifies the Commission if the international conference planner requests an endorsement of the conference by the Commission or requests involvement of a Commissioner to speak, act as an honorary chairman, or serve in some other capacity.
4. Advises the conference planner about NRC's international regulatory counterparts that may be participating in NRC-sponsored conferences.
5. Advises the conference planner regarding protocol.

H. Director, Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

Prepares public announcements and coordinates news media coverage of conferences, as appropriate.

I. Director, Office of Administration (ADM)

1. Develops and maintains, in consultation with office directors and regional administrators, NRC policies, standards, procedures, and guides for conference sponsorship.
2. Provides consultation and comprehensive centralized multimedia services, including but not limited to, media streaming, audio and video production, and video teleconference setup and operations for local conferences (see NRC Management Directive (MD) 3.15, "Multimedia Services").

J. Director, Computer Security Office (CSO)

Provides guidance in accordance with NRC MD 12.5, "NRC Automated Information Security Program," and Computer Security Office policies, procedures and standards, when notified that a conference will contain classified or sensitive unclassified information.

K. Director, Office of Information Services (OIS)

1. Develops information technology (IT) support for conferences, including SharePoint, virtual meetings, social media, and NRC's Knowledge Center.
2. Provides technical guidance and direct assistance as needed to headquarters and regional offices concerning IT conference support.

L. Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS)

Initiates or reviews proposals for NRC financial support and attendance at conferences that involve State interests and makes recommendations to the sponsoring office, the EDO or the Office of the Secretary (SECY), and the Commission, as appropriate.

M. Director, Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR)

Provides guidance in accordance with MD 12.2, "NRC Classified Information Security Program," and MD 12.6, "NRC Sensitive Unclassified Information Security Program," when notified that a conference or conference proceeding will contain classified or sensitive unclassified information.

N. Director, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR)

Provides advice and guidance on accommodating individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency to permit participation in NRC-conducted programs and activities.

1. Ensures that affected NRC offices do not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in programs or activities conducted by the agency.
2. Assists NRC offices in understanding regulations and how to comply with requirements.
3. Assists offices in their efforts to provide accessibility to facilities, equipment, activities; appropriate auxiliary aids; effective communications; and reasonable accommodations.
4. Works with recipients of NRC Federal financial assistance to ensure they are aware of Federal and NRC disability regulations and how to comply with requirements.
5. Monitors recipient activities to ensure accessibility, reasonable accommodations are made, and other forms of discrimination are not present.
6. Provides an effective process for the receipt and prompt, fair, and impartial processing and disposition of discrimination complaints regarding access to NRC-supported meetings, as protected by the applicable Federal civil rights statutes, Executive orders, and NRC regulations.

O. Office Directors and Regional Administrators

1. Have senior level approval authority for all conference expenses of \$100,000 or below.
2. Initiate NRC-sponsored or -cosponsored conferences and budget for financial support.

3. Request AMD, ADM, to award a contract for the conduct of the conference.
4. Consult with the EDO, SECY, OIP, OPA, and/or OCA, as appropriate, regarding new or major policy issues and involvement of the NRC Chairman and Commissioners, another Government agency or its public officials, industry representatives, members of Congress, or the media.
5. Consult with OCFO regarding controls for the collection of funds from conference participants.
6. Work with OPA to develop a news item for release to the public through the appropriate avenue (e.g., press release, Web site notice, Twitter, Facebook, blog post).
7. Consult with OGC, as appropriate, regarding potential conflict-of-interest issues for NRC Commissioners and employees.
8. May delegate the responsibilities and authorities described in this section, as appropriate.

P. Director, Division of Facilities and Security (DFS), Office of Administration (ADM)

1. Provides guidance in accordance with MD 12.1, "NRC Facility Security Program," when notified that a conference or conference proceeding will include a classified meeting.
2. DFS staff provides requested security support for any onsite or offsite meeting. Requests for security support must be received at least 20 business days before the scheduled event.

Q. Director, Acquisition Management Division (AMD), Office of Administration (ADM)

In accordance with Management Directive 11.1, "NRC Acquisition of Supplies and Services," contracts with an appropriate vendor for conference-related activities.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Conference

Any formal national or international public meeting of interest to NRC that is convened for the exchange of views and information on the programmatic, managerial, and administrative aspects of the nuclear regulatory process and related confirmatory research.

Conference Sponsor

An organization that assumes the responsibility for organizing a conference. It may be a U.S. national, public, or private organization; a foreign organization; or a foreign national or international group.

Financial Support

Appropriated funds provided by NRC under contract to a conference sponsor to reimburse the sponsor for certain costs incidental to a conference.

V. APPLICABILITY**A. Employees**

The policy and guidance in this directive and handbook apply to all employees of all NRC organizations, except NRC boards and advisory committees. NRC employees who have specific questions regarding gifts or gratuities should see MD 7.9, "Ethics Approvals and Waivers."

B. Other Conferences

This directive does not cover Commission meetings; press conferences; meetings of advisory committees; formal or informal NRC staff meetings (including those to which applicants, vendors, or contractors may be invited); meetings of informal working groups with or without participation of non-NRC personnel; conferences called to discuss the various aspects of adjudicatory proceedings and rulemaking; or public meetings convened for the purpose of obtaining comments on proposed regulations, standards, or regulatory guides.

VI. CONFERENCES WITH CLASSIFIED AND SENSITIVE UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION

MD 3.11 addresses NRC-sponsored conferences. Meetings in which classified or sensitive unclassified information is to be discussed are not covered by this directive. Information on these types of meetings is available in MD 12.1, MD 12.2, "NRC Classified Information Security Program," and MD 12.6, "NRC Sensitive Unclassified Information Security Program."

VII. CRITERIA FOR NRC FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF CONFERENCES**A. Eligibility for NRC Financial Support**

A conference must meet one or more of the following criteria to be eligible for financial support:

1. Provide an opportunity for NRC staff to acquire information to advance NRC programs.
2. Provide an opportunity for the discussion and dissemination of unclassified scientific and technical information to the public.
3. Support an activity mandated by Congress or the President.

B. Allowable Conference Support Costs

Government appropriations to support conferences may be used for administrative costs of conferences, such as secretarial, clerical, editorial, and translation services, and for communications, printing, office supplies, and computer support

C. Allowable Attendee Costs

NRC may use appropriated funds to pay for travel, meals, and other per diem costs related to NRC-sponsored conferences under the conditions and subject to the approvals specified in MD 14.1, "Official Temporary Duty Travel," including—

1. Travel and per diem in accordance with the rules governing invitational travel for foreign and U.S. participants who perform a direct service for the Government at a conference, such as presenting a paper or chairing a workshop.
2. Travel and per diem for NRC employees attending the conference who work outside the NRC's boundary for local travel.
3. Local travel and a meal for NRC employees, if it is provided as part of a formal NRC meeting or conference within the NRC's boundary for local travel and all criteria are met as specified in MD 14.1, "Official Temporary Duty Travel."
4. Local travel expenses for NRC employees attending the conference who work within the NRC's boundary for local travel.

VIII. DISPOSITION OF FUNDS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC**A. NRC Control of Received Funds**

All money received by the NRC conference organizer in connection with an NRC-sponsored or -cosponsored conference must be by check and made payable to the "U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission." The conference organizer is responsible for making a check receipt log and providing both the checks and the log to the Division of the Controller, OCFO, 1 working day after receipt. In compliance with 31 U.S.C. 3302, "Custodians of Money," the Division of the Controller will deposit the check in the U.S. Treasury no later than 3 days after the conference organizer receives the money.

B. Contractor Control of Received Funds

A third-party conference organizer under contract to NRC must account for all fund transactions associated with the conference by submitting a financial statement to the NRC project officer according to guidelines specified in the statement of work.

IX. DIRECTIVE HANDBOOK

Handbook 3.11 provides guidelines for planning and managing conferences, and for contracting for support of conferences.

X. REFERENCES***Nuclear Regulatory Commission***

Memorandum from R. W. Borchardt, Executive Director for Operations, to Those on the Attached List, "Agency-Sponsored Meeting and Conference Spending," dated November 9, 2011 (available at [https://adamsxt.nrc.gov/WorkplaceXT/IBMgetContent?vsId={EEC22775-A8C2-49DE-A988-86AE91A112A2}&objectType=document&id={2182851F-D3FE-4BEE-8DF7-6BA9050E32E6}&objectStoreName=Main...Library\).](https://adamsxt.nrc.gov/WorkplaceXT/IBMgetContent?vsId={EEC22775-A8C2-49DE-A988-86AE91A112A2}&objectType=document&id={2182851F-D3FE-4BEE-8DF7-6BA9050E32E6}&objectStoreName=Main...Library).)

Management Directive—

- 3.1, "Freedom of Information Act."
- 3.2, "Privacy Act."
- 3.4, "Release of Information to the Public."
- 3.5, "Attendance at NRC Staff Sponsored Meetings."
- 3.7, "NUREG-Series Publications."
- 3.9, "NRC Staff and Contractor Speeches, Papers, and Journal Articles on Regulatory and Technical Subjects."
- 3.12, "Handling and Disposition of Foreign Documents and Translations."
- 3.13, "Reproduction and Distribution."
- 3.14, "U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Public Web Site."
- 3.15, "Multimedia Services."
- 3.23, "Mail Management."
- 3.25, "Graphic Design and Production Service."
- 7.9, "Ethics Approvals and Waivers."
- 11.1, "NRC Acquisition of Supplies and Services."
- 12.1, "NRC Facility Security Program."
- 12.2, "NRC Classified Information Security Program."

12.5, "NRC Cyber Security Program."

12.6, "NRC Sensitive Unclassified Information Security Program."

12.7, "NRC Safeguards Information Security Program."

14.1, "Official Temporary Duty Travel."

Office of Administration Web site, Meetings and Conferences:

http://www.internal.nrc.gov/ADM/conference_loaner/conferencing.html.

NRC Forms Library on SharePoint:

<http://fusion.nrc.gov/nrcformsportal/default.aspx>.

NRC Purchase Card Handbook, available on the NRC Enterprise Acquisition Toolset (NEAT) at <http://neat.nrc.gov/Categories/CategoryDetails.aspx?CategoryID=4>.

NUREG/BR-0224, "Guidelines for Conducting Public Meetings," June 2006 ([ML061710199](#)).

Office of Management and Budget Memorandum

M-11-35, "Eliminating Excess Conference Spending and Promoting Efficiency in Government," dated September 21, 2011 (available at [http://www.internal.nrc.gov/ADM/conference_loaner/Eliminating Excess Conference Spending and Promoting Efficiency in Government.pdf](http://www.internal.nrc.gov/ADM/conference_loaner/Eliminating_Excess_Conference_Spending_and_Promoting_Efficiency_in_Government.pdf)).

M-12-12, "Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations," dated May 11, 2012 (available at http://www.internal.nrc.gov/ADM/conference_loaner/OMB-M-12-12.pdf).

United States Code

"Custodians of Money" (31 U.S.C. 3302).

"Expenses of Meetings" (31 U.S.C. 1345).

Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2).

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION DIRECTIVE HANDBOOK (DH)

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I. APPROVAL PROCESS FOR CONFERENCES

- A. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued Memorandum 11-35 (M-11-35) entitled, "Eliminating Excess Conference Spending and Promoting Efficiency in Government," dated September 21, 2011 (available at http://www.internal.nrc.gov/ADM/conference_loaner/Eliminating_Excess_Conference_Spending_and_Promoting_Efficiency_in_Government.pdf), which instructed Deputy Secretaries (or their equivalents) to properly evaluate conference-related policies and procedures. To expand further on this initiative, OMB issued a subsequent memorandum (M-12-12) entitled, "Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations," dated May 11, 2012 (available at http://www.internal.nrc.gov/ADM/conference_loaner/OMB-M-12-12.pdf), which defined the review and approval process by Deputy Secretaries (or their equivalents) for conference-related expenses in excess of \$100,000 and prohibited conference-related expenses in excess of \$500,000, unless the head of the agency has provided a waiver. The Deputy Secretary equivalent at the NRC is the Executive Director for Operations (EDO). The EDO has delegated conference-related review and approval authority at the levels noted below. Offices must obtain the appropriate approval(s) before the award of any contract or order for meeting space.
- B. If it is determined, at any time during the approval process by an individual with signature authority, that the requested meeting or conference is not deemed necessary and is not approved, the NRC Form 452, "Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences" (available in the NRC Forms library on SharePoint at <http://fusion.nrc.gov/nrcformsportal/default.aspx>), will be returned to the requestor, unsigned with a brief explanation.

II. APPROVALS FOR ALL ACQUISITIONS LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO \$100,000

- A. The EDO memorandum dated November 9, 2011, Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML112980527 (available at <https://adamsxt.nrc.gov/WorkplaceXT/IBMgetContent?vsId={EEC22775-A8C2-49DE-A988-86AE91A112A2}&objectType=document&id={2182851F-D3FE-4BEE-8DF7-6BA9050E32E6}&objectStoreName=Main. .Library>), delegated authority to ODs and RAs to review all offsite meeting or conference requests that involve appropriated funds. Furthermore, ODs and RAs must obtain the appropriate approvals for any meeting that will include the procurement of food and/or refreshments or provide overnight lodging for guests before committing the NRC for these expenses. The OD or RA's signature of this review on the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences may not be redelegated below the OD or RA authority level.
- B. An approved copy of the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences must be included in all offsite meeting and conference requests sent to Administrative Services Center (ASC) or to AMD for processing.

III. APPROVALS FOR ACQUISITIONS GREATER THAN \$100,000 BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO \$500,000

- A.** As part of the review and control process, the OD or RA must obtain prior approval of conference activities from the EDO for meetings valued greater than \$100,000 but less than or equal to \$500,000. This has been delegated by the EDO to the Deputy Executive Directors for Operations (DEDOs). The DEDO's signature of this review on the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences may not be redelegated below the DEDO authority level.
- B.** Offices must submit, for approval, the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences to their respective DEDO or the EDO for those offices that do not report directly to one of the DEDOs. Notification of the EDO/DEDO's response will be issued within 30 days, depending on the complexity of the request. If approved, the EDO or DEDO will sign and return the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences to the requestor. An approved copy of the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences must be included in all offsite requests sent to AMD for processing.

IV. WAIVERS FOR ACQUISITIONS GREATER THAN \$500,000

As part of the review and control process, the OD or RA must obtain a waiver from the Chairman for conference activities valued greater than \$500,000. Offices must submit the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences to the EDO or DEDO for approval, then to the Chairman's office for approval. Notification of the Chairman's response will be issued within 60 days, depending on the complexity of the request. If approved, the Chairman will sign and return the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences to the requestor. An approved copy of the NRC Checklist for Offsite Meetings and Conferences must be included in all offsite requests sent to AMD for processing.

V. PLANNING AND MANAGING CONFERENCES

A. Scheduling and Site Selection

1. The lead time required for program planning and site selection will vary with the type of program and site.
2. For a conference of national or international significance or where the public may be expected, you may need 1 to 2 years to obtain a commitment for physical facilities at a major conference center or hotel. Similarly, if nationally and internationally recognized participants preside or speak, you may need to extend invitations a year or more in advance of the conference to obtain their commitment. See NUREG/BR-0224, "Guidelines for Conducting Public Meetings," for more information on public meetings ([ML061710199](#)).

3. For a conference (a) that is of interest to local staff, consultants, contractors, and a limited number of licensees; (b) that can be held in NRC-controlled facilities; and (c) for which speakers will be selected from among the technical peers attending, you may need 3 to 6 months for program planning and site selection.
4. For the most up-to-date planning guidance and for additional information regarding the meeting and conference process, correspondence memoranda, and Frequently Asked Questions, please visit the [Office of Administration Web site](#), under Meetings and Conferences.

B. Funding

1. **\$0-\$3,000 (micropurchase threshold).** A conference that costs up to \$3,000, including facility, equipment, and services, can be funded through the Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration (ADM), by submitting a completed NRC Form 452, "Checklist for Offsite Meetings/Conferences," to the Administrative Services Center (ASC).
2. **Greater than \$3,000 (above the micropurchase threshold).** Any conference that costs greater than \$3,000 requires action by the Acquisition Management Division (AMD), ADM. A completed NRC Form 452, along with any other supporting documents, should be submitted to AMD, ADM, via the Strategic Acquisition System (known at "STAQS"), for processing. For additional assistance, please contact the Business Advisory Center.

C. Conference Arrangements

1. Although the complexity of conference arrangements will vary, some of the factors to be considered are—
 - (a) Meeting announcements,
 - (b) Registration and badges,
 - (c) Information desks for speakers and attendees,
 - (d) Press room or news releases (newspaper, magazine, radio, television),
 - (e) Exhibits and displays,
 - (f) Security,
 - (g) Public address systems, projectors, flip charts, video teleconferencing, Webstreaming, and other presentation aids (contact ASC to obtain audiovisual support and equipment), and
 - (h) Arrangements for individuals with disabilities and limited English proficiency.

2. Consult early with the ADM Publications Branch to arrange for the production and associated costs of graphics design and editorial services.
3. Consult early with the Office of Information Services Web staff (WebWork.Resource@nrc.gov) regarding posting conference information on the public Web site.
4. Consult early with the Office of International Programs regarding international participation.
5. Review NRC Form 753, "Conference Planning Checklist" (available in the [NRC Forms Library](#) on SharePoint) or the Office of the Executive Director for Operations Web site, under "Communications" (available at <http://www.internal.nrc.gov/communications/policy.html>).

D. Speaker Arrangements

The complexity of speaker arrangements will vary with the number and types of speakers. Some of the factors to be considered are—

1. Protocol,
2. Honorary and officiating conference heads,
3. Session leaders,
4. Conference expenses, and
5. Visas for international participation.