

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

MD 9.11

**ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS,
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

DT-23-08

Volume 9: Organization and Functions

Approved By: Christopher T. Hanson, Chair

Date Approved: May 11, 2023

Cert. Date: N/A, for the latest version of any NRC directive or handbook, see the [online MD Catalog](#).

Issuing Office: Office of Public Affairs

Contact Name: Holly Harrington

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Management Directive 9.11, “Organization and Functions, Office of Public Affairs,” is revised with minor language changes.

In addition, the NRC has revised this management directive as part of its efforts to use more inclusive language in its publications. These changes, which include changing “Chairman” to “Chair” in some instances, are purely editorial and do not affect the meaning of the guidance in this document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. SUPERVISOR.....	2
II. FUNCTIONS	2
III. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR.....	3
IV. REDELEGATION OF AUTHORITY BY THE DIRECTOR.....	3
V. REDELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO THE SENIOR LEVEL ADVISOR/DEPUTY DIRECTOR	3
VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND INTERNAL ASSIGNMENTS.....	4
VII. REFERENCES.....	4

I. SUPERVISOR

The Office of Public Affairs is headed by a director, who reports to and is under the direction of the Chair, as the principal executive officer and spokesperson for the Commission as provided in Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1980.

II. FUNCTIONS

- A.** The office is responsible for developing and implementing effective communication strategies and tools that inform the public and the news media in a timely manner of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) policies, programs, and activities, and to inform NRC management of traditional and social media coverage of interest to the agency.
- B.** Specifically, the office—
1. Provides public affairs consultation and recommendations for direction to the Chair, as official spokesperson for the Commission, and to the Executive Director for Operations (EDO), EDO staff including regional administrators and officer directors/staff, and, as appropriate, for the Commission.
 2. Develops strategies, plans, and tools for the Chair approval or, when appropriate without explicit oversight, to facilitate the dissemination of information to the public and the news media concerning NRC policies, programs, and activities.
 3. Recommends timing and method of delivery, and drafts public statements to be made by the Chair, the Commission, the EDO, regional administrators, or office directors, when appropriate.
 4. In accordance with the guidance and decisions of the Chair, may work with Commission and staff offices to guide the timing and preparation of the public issuance of NRC information, except material covered under the Freedom of Information Act and matters under the authority of the Inspector General under the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.
 5. Provides the Chair, the Commission, the EDO, regional administrators, and NRC staff with information regarding external activities that might affect NRC interests, and, when appropriate, recommends NRC-related actions.
 6. Offers advice and guidance to other governmental agencies, when appropriate, to interdepartmental, intergovernmental, and international committees, boards, and similar organizations on matters concerning the preparation and dissemination of public information of importance to the NRC.
 7. Develops and administers public or media information programs, tools, or activities that raise awareness about the NRC, provide context for NRC decisions, promote

dialogue with the public, and/or provide information that supports the NRC's reputation as a credible regulator.

8. Reviews and consults on any decision by NRC staff to accept or deny requests from members of the media for unclassified or declassified nonprivileged information.
9. Manages the agency's social media program and assesses the viability and need for additions to the existing social media platforms and related policies.
10. Develops, maintains, tests, and implements, when necessary, a crisis/emergency communication strategy for the agency.
11. Performs any other functions assigned by the Chair.

III. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR

- A.** The director is authorized and directed to take any actions necessary to carry out the functions assigned by this directive, or other official directives or communications, subject to the limitations they may prescribe.
- B.** In addition, the director is specifically authorized to speak publicly for the NRC on routine matters; without advance clearance on nonroutine matters in those circumstances in which the director is unable to reach the Chair, other Commissioners designated to act for the Chair, or the EDO, in that order; or when the urgency of the circumstances does not permit sufficient time for advance clearance.

IV. REDELEGATION OF AUTHORITY BY THE DIRECTOR

The director may, except where expressly prohibited, redelegate in writing to others the authority delegated to the director by this or other official directives or communications, subject to the limitations stated below and to any other stipulations the director may deem necessary.

- A.** The director shall send a memorandum specifying the redelegation to the EDO, with a copy to the Secretary of the Commission, the General Counsel, and the Chief Human Capital Officer.
- B.** The director shall stipulate any limitations on further redelegations of authority.
- C.** The director shall maintain a file of all redelegations.

V. REDELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO THE SENIOR LEVEL ADVISOR/DEPUTY DIRECTOR

The senior level advisor or deputy director (if applicable) is authorized to act for the director during their absence.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND INTERNAL ASSIGNMENTS

The Office of Public Affairs is a single organizational component with no subdivisions. Organization charts and functional descriptions are posted on the [NRC OPA website](#).

VII. REFERENCES

Code of Federal Regulations

10 CFR Part 1, "Statement of Organization and General Information."

10 CFR 1.28, "Office of Public Affairs."

Nuclear Regulatory Commission Documents

NRC Management Directives website:

<https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/management-directives/volumes/vol-9.html>.

NRC Office of Public Affairs website:

<https://intranet.nrc.gov/opa>.

NRC website on Organization of the Agency:

<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization.html>.

United States Code

Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended (42 U.S.C. 5801 et seq.).

Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1980 (5 U.S.C. App. 1).