
From: Centerwide Announcement [CenterWide@arcwmail.arc.nasa.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 06, 2008 3:14 PM
To: Recipient List Suppressed
Subject: Conference Limitation

TO: Resident Staff

FROM: Paul R. Agnew, Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

SUBJECT: Conference Limitation

The NASA Authorization Act, H.R. 6063, which has passed both the House and the Senate, is awaiting signature by the President. It contains a new provision restricting NASA's total authorized spending on conferences to \$5 million in FY 2009. The specific language is:

SEC. 1121. LIMITATION ON FUNDING FOR CONFERENCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated not more than \$5,000,000 for any expenses related to conferences, including conference programs, travel costs and related expenses. No funds authorized under this Act may be used to support a Space Flight Awareness Launch Honoree Event conference. The total amount of the funds available under this Act for other Space Flight Awareness Honoree-related activities in fiscal year 2009 may not exceed 1/2 of the total amount of funds from all sources obligated or expended on such activities in fiscal year 2008.

This limit represents an over two-thirds reduction in spending from FY 2008. NASA's systems and processes will need to be updated to ensure compliance with this new requirement.

Until further notice, no FY 2009 funds are to be committed, obligated or disbursed to sponsor, travel to, or pay admission to an international or domestic conference. No commitments or obligations to conference facilities or hotels may be made using FY 2009 funds. Conferences that are planned in the current quarter, or attendance at conferences in the current quarter, may proceed as long as only FY 2008 funds are used for all participants.

For example, any travelers attending the Advancement of Safety Conference this month may only use FY 2008 funds for travel or fees. Until we can fully assess the amount and availability of FY 2008 funds center management asks that all civil service attendances using 2008 funds be strictly limited and with the approval of the deputy center director.

The limitation on FY 2009 funds also applies to NASA's cost-reimbursable contracts, including NASA's contract with JPL. Contractors must be instructed that they may not participate in any conference in FY 2009 for which they directly charge the costs of travel or attendance to NASA using FY 2009 funds.

The following activities are not categorized as conferences (unless titled as such) and will not be included in the \$5 million budget limitation, and may proceed as planned in FY 2009:

- Travel to conduct programmatic reviews or meetings with only NASA civil service and NASA-funded contractors in attendance for which no fees are charged and no food is provided
- Training at NASA facilities or Federal training facilities such as OPM's Federal Executive Institute
- Open houses, technology or research symposiums conducted on NASA facilities for which no fees are charged and no food is provided; these may include non-NASA speakers
- Technology or science exhibits, and staff required to support them, at public events in the United States, for which no admission fees are paid by NASA.
- Attendance at air shows

Additionally, NASA and JPL salaries are not considered to be conference expenses that count against the \$5 million budget limitation. NASA civil servants and JPL employees may attend conferences on approved invitational orders that fully reimburse NASA or JPL for travel and fees to present papers upon request. As always approved reimbursable travel arrangements should be approved in advance and should not be solicited.

This direction is intended to be temporary, to ensure that we do not create a problem before we have time to establish new processes. NASA's Office of the Chief Financial Officer and the Office of the General Counsel will be establishing more detailed guidance and processes as well

as budget allocations for organizations for conference activities in FY 2009. Once that guidance becomes available then we will provide that direction to the center.

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