THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

FEB 20 2014

ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY,
AND LOGISTICS

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Participation in Technical and Industry Conferences

While we must be prudent stewards of Government resources, particularly in this challenging fiscal environment, maintaining the competence of the Department of Defense (DoD) workforce and communication with industry also remain high priorities. I ask each addressee, consistent with the November 6, 2013, Deputy Chief Management Officer (DCMO) guidance, "Implementation of Updated Conference Oversight Requirements," to give appropriate consideration to the importance of attendance at technical symposia and conferences that enhance communication between DoD acquisition professionals and their industry counterparts. I ask that you support properly justified attendance by DoD personnel to the extent possible, subject to the availability of resources, including travel funds.

The Department is the single largest employer of scientists and engineers in the United States. Maintaining professional currency is an important part of this investment in human capital. Science and technology (S&T) conferences and symposia, at which technical data and information is exchanged, are potentially beneficial both for maintaining technical competence and for the professional development of DoD scientists and engineers.

Please distribute this guidance throughout your organization to ensure full awareness by scientists, engineers, and other acquisition professionals. I believe that the Department can continue to apply the requisite scrutiny to DoD participation in acquisition related conferences while also ensuring that our interests are preserved.

Frank Kendall

DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER
9010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-9010

NOV - 6 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Implementation of Updated Conference Oversight Requirements

References: (a) Public Law Number 113-6 (P.L. 113-6), "Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013."

On May 11, 2012, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memorandum to promote further efficiency and cost consciousness in the federal government's operations. OMB's memorandum established new requirements to increase scrutiny of all conference spending and to elevate approval authority for conference hosting and attendance. In response to these requirements and in recognition of DoD's unique size and complexity, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued the memorandum, "Implementation of Conference Oversight Requirements and Delegation of Conference Approval Authority," dated September 29, 2012, outlining a tailored approach to conference oversight within the Department.

Based upon lessons learned from the implementation of this guidance, the overall budget uncertainty faced by the Department, and in light of recent changes in legislation, I am issuing updated conference guidance, in accordance with authority delegated by the Deputy Secretary of Defense. This updated conference guidance is attached. This updated guidance provides a clearer delineation between those events that should be considered a conference and those that should not, and slightly modifies the authorities and responsibilities of the conference approval authorities to allow for increased authority for some of the Department's most senior civilian and military leaders while maintaining accountability.

Additionally, this updated guidance implements the requirements of P.L. 113-6, "Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013," which Congress passed in March 2013 that imposed several additional requirements upon the conference oversight process. It required the addition or modification of several data elements to be included in the Department's annual report. It also established a requirement to provide specific information to the DoD Inspector General within 15 days of the conclusion of each DoD-hosted conference with an estimated cost of more than $20,000.

My point of contact for this issue is Michael Metzger, michael.j.metzger28.civ@mail.mil or 703-697-0302.

Elizabeth A. McGrath

Attachments:
As stated

DISTRIBUTION:
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Office of the
DEPUTY CHIEF
MANAGEMENT OFFICER

DoD Conference Guidance

Version 2.0

November 6, 2013

Version History

Version	Publication Date	Author	Summary of Changes
2.0	November 4, 2013	Michael Metzger	Updated to reflect approved Deputy Secretary of Defense changes and new legislative requirements.
1.0	September 29, 2012	Michael Metzger	Original

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I. Purpose

This document serves as Department of Defense (DoD)'s official conference policy, implementing Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Congressional, and other requirements relevant to conference oversight. This policy supplements conference provisions in applicable ethics regulations, the Joint Travel Regulations, and the Joint Federal Travel Regulations. This document supersedes the Deputy Secretary of Defense's September 29, 2012 memorandum, which is hereby cancelled, and will be issued as a DoD Instruction in the future. This guidance is effective November 20, 2013.

II. Background

The Department of Defense has always taken its duty to be an excellent steward of taxpayer dollars very seriously. Through the continued implementation of the Secretary's Efficiencies Initiative and the Administration's Campaign to Cut Waste, DoD has focused on reducing costs and ensuring that policies and controls are in place to prevent waste, duplication, or abuse, with specific attention paid to spending associated with conferences.

On May 11, 2012, OMB issued a memorandum to promote further efficiency and cost consciousness in the Federal government's operations. OMB's memorandum contained new requirements to increase scrutiny of all conference spending and required agencies to report publically on an annual basis, starting January 31, 2013, on agency-sponsored conferences over $100K. The Deputy Secretary of Defense issued initial guidance, implementing OMB's requirements, on June 4, 2012 and issued further guidance on September 29, 2012. In addition, the Deputy Secretary directed DoD components, in January 2013, to further curtail spending on travel, training, and conferences in light of the overall budget uncertainty faced by the Department. In February 2013, the Deputy Secretary amended his September 29, 2012 guidance, based on lessons learned.

OMB's original requirements were then modified and codified in law in March, 2013, through Public Law Number 113-6 (P.L. 113-6), "Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013." Differences with OMB's original requirements included the addition or modification of several data elements to be included in the Department's annual report. It also established a requirement to provide specific information to the DoD Inspector General within 15 days of the conclusion of each DoD-hosted conference with an estimated cost of more than $20,000. This guidance document implements the changes included in P.L. 113-6.

DoD has attempted to take a balanced approach to increasing scrutiny of conference spending while also retaining the benefits that conferences provide to the Department. The intent of DoD's conference oversight requirements is not to negatively impact operations critical to the day-to-day execution of our national security mission, but to ensure that conferences the Department sponsors are executed in a responsible manner and that the Department is prudent when sending personnel to conferences hosted by others. It is important to maintain that balance as the Department moves forward.

III. Responsibilities

1. Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense are accountable for all of the Department's conference related activities. They oversee DoD's conference policies and controls and maintain visibility and accountability for the conduct of conferences hosted by the Department and attended by Department employees through Component reporting on, at least, a quarterly basis.

2. DoD Deputy Chief Management Officer

The DoD Deputy Chief Management Officer is responsible for DoD's conference oversight on behalf of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, to include issuing and maintaining guidance and executing the reporting requirements contained in Section VI. The Deputy Chief Management Officer is authorized to act on behalf of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on all conference related matters, pursuant to this guidance.

3. Conference Approval Authorities

In recognition of DoD's unique size and complexity, and with OMB concurrence, DoD has implemented a tiered approval structure to assist in carrying out conference oversight responsibilities. This structure builds upon the existing foundation of trust and accountability already in place for senior civilian and military leaders, who have responsibility for billions of taxpayer dollars and hundreds of thousands of our service members' lives. The general structure of the Conference Approval Authority regime is depicted in the table below. Details are provided in subparagraphs 3a through 3c of this section.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">DoD Conference Approval Authority Structure</th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Type of Conference</th></tr>
<tr><th>Value ($)</th><th>DoD Hosted Conference</th><th>Attendance at a Non-DoD Entity Conference</th></tr>
<tr><td>> 500K</td><td>Tier One Approval Authorities</td><td rowspan="2">Tier One Approval Authorities</td></tr>
<tr><td>100K - 500K</td><td>Delegated Tier Two Approval Authorities</td></tr>
<tr><td>20K - 100K</td><td rowspan="2">Delegated Tier Three Approval Authorities</td><td>Delegated Tier Two Approval Authorities</td></tr>
<tr><td>< 20K</td><td>Delegated Tier Three Approval Authorities</td></tr>
</table>

a. Approval Authority Tier One

For conferences that a DoD Component hosts with a total cost in excess of $500,000, as well as for conferences hosted by a non-DoD entity where the total cost of attendance to a DoD Component is in excess of $100,000, the officials designated below are authorized to act as approval authorities without further delegation. In accordance with OMB guidance, DoD organizations should not incur net expenses greater than $500,000 on a single conference, unless the relevant approval authority

issues a waiver after determining that exceptional circumstances exist whereby spending in excess of $500,000 on a single conference is the most cost-effective option to achieve a compelling purpose. The grounds for any such waiver must be documented in writing.

(1) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Department of the Army:

(a) Secretary of the Army
(b) Under Secretary of the Army

(2) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Department of the Navy:

(a) Secretary of the Navy
(b) Under Secretary of the Navy

(3) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Department of the Air Force:

(a) Secretary of the Air Force
(b) Under Secretary of the Air Force

(4) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the National Guard:

(a) Chief, National Guard Bureau

(5) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from organizations under their purview in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Defense Agencies, and DoD Field Activities:

(a) Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology & Logistics)
(b) Under Secretary of Defense (Policy)
(c) Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)
(d) Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness)
(e) Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence)

(6) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Defense Agencies, and DoD Field Activities that do not report to one of the Under Secretaries of Defense:

(a) Deputy Chief Management Officer

(7) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

(a) Director, Joint Staff

(8) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Combatant Commands:

(a) Commander, US Africa Command
(b) Commander, US Central Command
(c) Commander, US European Command
(d) Commander, US Northern Command

(e) Commander, US Pacific Command
(f) Commander, US Southern Command
(g) Commander, US Special Operations Command
(h) Commander, US Strategic Command
(i) Commander, US Transportation Command

b. Approval Authority Tier Two

For conferences that a DoD Component hosts with a total cost between $100,000 and $500,000, as well as for conferences hosted by a non-DoD entity where the total cost of attendance to a DoD Component is between $20,000 and $100,000, the Tier One Approval Authorities designated in section 3(a) may delegate approval authority to the officials below. Delegation must be granted in writing. No further delegation is permitted.

(1) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Department of the Army:

(a) Chief of Staff of the Army
(b) Vice Chief of Staff of the Army
(c) Commander, US Army Forces Command
(d) Commander, US Army Training and Doctrine Command
(e) Commander, US Army Materiel Command
(f) Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army

(2) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Department of the Navy:

(a) Chief of Naval Operations
(b) Commandant of the Marine Corps
(c) Department of Navy/Assistant for Administration
(d) Director, Navy Staff
(e) Director, Marine Corps Staff/Staff Director, Headquarters Marine Corps

(3) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Department of the Air Force:

(a) Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force
(b) The Air Force Surgeon General
(c) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Combat Command
(d) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Education and Training Command
(e) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command
(f) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Force Materiel Command
(g) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Force Reserve Command
(h) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command
(i) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Force Space Command
(j) Commander and Vice Commander, Air Mobility Command
(k) Commander and Vice Commander, Pacific Air Forces
(l) Commander and Vice Commander, United States Air Forces in Europe
(m) Superintendent, United States Air Force Academy
(n) Commander, Air Force Research Lab

(4) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the National Guard:

(a) Vice Chief, National Guard Bureau
(b) Director, Army National Guard
(c) Director, Air National Guard

(5) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from organizations under their purview in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Defense Agencies, and DoD Field Activities:

(a) Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology & Logistics)
(b) Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Policy)
(c) Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)
(d) Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness)
(e) Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence)
(f) Assistant Deputy Chief Management Officer
(g) Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)
(h) Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs)
(i) DoD Chief Information Officer
(j) Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation
(k) Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Intelligence Oversight)
(l) Director, Administration & Management
(m) Director, Net Assessment
(n) Director, Operational Test & Evaluation
(o) DoD General Counsel
(p) DoD Inspector General
(q) Director, DARPA
(r) Director, DeCA
(s) Director, DCAA
(t) Director, DCMA
(u) Director, DFAS
(v) Director, DISA
(w) Director, DIA
(x) Director, DLSA
(y) Director, DLA
(z) Director, DSCA
(aa) Director, DSS
(bb) Director, DTRA
(cc) Director, MDA
(dd) Director, NGA
(ee) Director, NRO
(ff) Director, NSA
(gg) Director, PFPA
(hh) Director, DMA
(ii) Director, DPMO
(jj) Director, DTIC
(kk) Director, DTSA
(ll) Director, DoDEA

(mm) Director, DHRA
(nn) Director, TRMC
(oo) Director, DHA
(pp) Director, OEA
(qq) Director, WHS

(6) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

(a) Vice Director, Joint Staff

(7) For conferences hosted by or with attendees from the Combatant Commands:

(a) Deputy Commander, US Africa Command
(b) Deputy Commander, US Central Command
(c) Deputy Commander, US European Command
(d) Deputy Commander, US Northern Command
(e) Deputy Commander, US Pacific Command
(f) Deputy Commander, US Southern Command
(g) Deputy Commander, US Special Operations Command
(h) Deputy Commander, US Strategic Command
(i) Deputy Commander, US Transportation Command

c. Approval Authority Tier Three

For conferences that a DoD Component hosts with a total cost below $100,000, as well as for conferences hosted by a non-DoD entity where the total cost of attendance to a DoD Component is $20,000 or below, the Tier One Approval Authorities designated in section 3a may delegate approval authority at their discretion to General Officers/Flag Officers/Senior Executive Service members in their organization. Delegation must be granted in writing. No further delegation is permitted.

4. Legal Compliance

Approval authorities must ensure compliance with all applicable laws and policy in making their approvals and, therefore, may not approve a conference without coordination with legal counsel, when appropriate.

5. Signature Requirement

Approval authorities must document their approvals in writing. For each conference with a cost exceeding $500,000 an approval/waiver memo that is specific to that individual conference must be signed. For those conferences with a total cost below $500,000, an approval memo may cover more than one conference, but each conference must be individually listed in the memo.

6. Document Management

Approval authorities must maintain electronic records of documentation used in making their decisions for not less than five years, or in accordance with their authorized implementation of DoD Directive 5015.2, whichever is greater.

7. Conference Alternatives

When making conference approval decisions, approval authorities must confirm that physical co-location of DoD employees in a conference setting is necessary and cost-effective and consider alternative means of delivering the relevant information, including usage of remote collaboration tools (e.g., teleconferencing, videoconferencing, webinars, online sharing applications) and other real-time communication methods that would mitigate the need for physical co-location of DoD employees. While determinations should be made on a case-by-case basis, there are many circumstances where the proliferation of these tools and technologies may make physical co-location unnecessary. Such circumstances warrant increased scrutiny before moving forward with a conference. Approval authorities should begin their reviews by presuming that physical co-location as part of a conference is not required in the majority of cases.

8. Prohibited Conference Expenses

Entertainment-related expenses are expressly prohibited as part of DoD conferences. Approval authorities must ensure that funds, including those paid through travel disbursements or conference fees, are not used to pay such expenses. Illustrative examples of entertainment-related expenses that are prohibited include paying for motivational speakers (as contrasted to speakers with specific subject-matter expertise in the topic of the conference), hiring musicians other than military bands or other entertainers to perform at conferences, procuring extraneous promotional items, decorations, or other goods and services for participants that are unrelated to the purpose of the conference, procuring tickets to recreational activities outside of the conference setting, or using funds to produce non-substantive audio/visual materials. Common sense and good judgment must be used throughout the conference planning process. If there is any doubt as to the appropriateness of certain expenses, coordinate with appropriate officials, including legal counsel.

9. Grants and Contracts

Grants or contracts funded by appropriated funds may not be used for the purpose of defraying the costs of a conference that is not directly and programmatically related to the purpose for which the grant or contract was awarded, such as a conference held in connection with planning, training, assessment, review, or other routine purposes related to a project funded by the grant or contract.

10. DoD Hosted Conference Approval

In the case where a single DoD Component hosts a conference, it is the responsibility of the conference host to obtain approval for the conference on behalf of the entire DoD. DoD Components that are sending attendees to a DoD-hosted conference may rely on the approval obtained by the conference host.

11. Jointly Hosted Conferences

In the case where more than one DoD Component is hosting a conference jointly, those Components should designate one of the Components to obtain approval for the conference through their Component's appropriate approval authority on behalf of the entire Department.

12. Enhanced Scrutiny

Approval authorities should apply enhanced scrutiny to conferences that involve the following circumstances:

a. Spousal Travel

Approval authorities must ensure that for conferences where spousal travel is involved, the spousal travel is authorized in accordance with the Joint Federal Travel Regulations and the Joint Travel Regulations.

b. Co-Sponsorship with a non-Federal Entity

Approval authorities must ensure that a conference DoD is co-sponsoring with a non-federal entity is planned in accordance with this guidance, to include ensuring that no prohibited conference expenses are involved, and that the conference circumstances do not create the appearance of government impropriety.

c. Conference Planners

It is acceptable to contract with a non-federal entity for help in planning and executing a DoD hosted conference, including the use of a no-cost contract when circumstances warrant, as long as proper contracting procedures are followed. Approval authorities must, however, ensure that the conference is planned in accordance with this guidance, to include ensuring that no prohibited conference expenses are involved, and that the conference circumstances do not create the appearance of government impropriety.

13. Notification of Delegation

Components must inform the DoD Deputy Chief Management Officer, in writing, of all approval authority delegations.

14. Approval Timing

Organizations should not finalize conference plans or make any commitments to vendors or hotels that obligate the government to pay funds until the requisite approval from the appropriate approval authority has been obtained. This includes commitments addressing costs if a conference is cancelled or where DoD participation may need to be withdrawn. Further, DoD entities should not enter into a co-sponsorship relationship, no cost contract, or other arrangement with a non-Federal entity until the requisite approval has been obtained. Since this approval will normally occur early in the conference planning stages, the approval authority shall exercise continuing oversight of the

conferences, as necessary, to ensure that the entire conference is being carried out in a manner that is fully consistent with this guidance.

15. Escalation Circumstances

If, as the date of a DoD-hosted conference approaches, it becomes apparent that its total cost will exceed the estimated cost and breach the next approval threshold, approval must be obtained from the higher level approval authority as soon as possible.

If, based on historical costs or other means, a DoD Component initially estimates that the total cost to that DoD Component of attendance at a non-DoD hosted conference will exceed $100,000, the conference shall be approved by the DoD Component's Tier One approval authority. There will be circumstances where multiple Tier Two or Tier Three approval authorities within a DoD Component will approve attendance of employees to the same non-DoD hosted conference. In some cases, the aggregated total cost of these approvals will breach the next approval threshold. This is acceptable. If, however, as the date of the non-DoD hosted conference approaches, it becomes apparent that the total aggregated cost to that DoD Component of attendance at the non-DoD hosted conference will exceed $500,000, approval, in the form of a written waiver, must be obtained from the DoD Component's Tier One approval authority.

Additionally, in the case of a conference that is particularly high-visibility or exhibits unusual circumstances, DoD Components should inform the Deputy Chief Management Officer of the circumstances of the conference and the DoD Component's approval decision.

16. National Guard Bureau

The Chief, National Guard Bureau is required to inform the Army and Air Force of high-visibility conferences or conferences exhibiting unusual circumstances involving their personnel. The National Guard Bureau shall direct appropriate conference correspondence to the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army and the Assistant for Administration to the Secretary of the Air Force, respectively.

17. DoD Cost Guidance Portal

Please note that while government manpower costs for planning and attending conferences are not required for the total cost of a conference under this guidance, they remain a required cost element within the DoD Cost Guidance Portal. Additional information can be accessed at the following link: https://www.CAPE.osd.mil/CostGuidance.

18. No Cost to the DoD

Approval is not required for conferences that have no cost to the DoD, including no cost for attendee travel, in accordance with this guidance. This includes instances when all costs are paid for by a non-DoD entity in accordance with DoD gift acceptance rules.

IV. Determination of a Conference

1. General Definition

"Conference" is defined in the Federal Travel Regulation, Joint Federal Travel Regulations, and Joint Travel Regulations as, "[a] meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or event that involves attendee travel. The term 'conference' also applies to training activities that are considered to be conferences under 5 CFR 410.404." However, this definition is only a starting point. What constitutes a conference for the purpose of this guidance is a fact-based determination centered on an evaluation of the criteria established in this section.

2. Additional Indicia of a Conference

Conferences subject to this guidance are also often referred to by names other than "conference." Other common terms used include conventions, expositions, symposiums, seminars, workshops, or exhibitions. They typically involve topical matters of interest to, and the participation of, multiple agencies and/or non-governmental participants. Indicia of a formal conference often include, but are not limited to registration, registration fees, a published substantive agenda, and scheduled speakers or discussion panels. Individual events may qualify as conferences without meeting all of the indicia listed above, but will generally meet some of them. Please note that some training events may qualify as conferences for the purposes of this guidance, particularly if they take place in a hotel or conference center.

3. Local Conferences

Events within the local duty location that do not require advance travel authorization may also qualify as a conference for the purposes of this guidance.

4. Exemptions

For the purposes of this guidance, the types of activities listed below should not be considered conferences even if the event meets the general definition of a conference as outlined above. Should an event be considered exempt from this guidance, organizations are expected to continue to apply strict scrutiny to DoD's participation to ensure the best use of government funds and adherence with not only all applicable laws and policy, but the underlying spirit and principles. Additionally, all events, regardless of whether they are considered exempt should be clearly related to carrying out the mission of the organization. This includes ensuring that only personnel that have a mission-essential need to attend events do so, that expenses be kept to a minimum, and that participation in any associated social events be limited and restrained to the greatest degree practicable to avoid the appearance of impropriety. Exemptions from this guidance should be granted sparingly and only when events fully meet the definition and intent of the criteria below:

a. Meetings necessary to carry out statutory command and staff oversight functions. This exemption would include activities such as investigations, inspections, audits, or non-conference planning site visits.

b. Meetings to consider internal agency business matters. This exemption would include activities such as meetings that take place as part of an organization's regular course of daily business.

c. Meetings necessary to carry out planning or execution of operational or operational exercise activities or pre-deployment, deployment, or post-deployment activities. This exemption would include activities such as planning and preparation for, as well as execution of, war games, military exercises, and operational deployments.

d. Bi-lateral and multi-lateral international cooperation engagements. This exemption would include activities such as International Military Education and Training events, Traditional Commander's Activities, and other regional assistance programs. It would also include many of the activities of the Department's Regional Security Centers.

e. Formal classroom training. This exemption would include activities such as regular courses of instruction or training seminars. These activities may be offered by government organizations, institutions of higher learning or professional licensure/certification, or other training entities. However, events are not exempt simply because they offer continuing education credits or the equivalent.

f. Change of command, official military award, funeral, or other such ceremonies.

g. Events where the primary purpose of DoD's participation is military or civilian recruiting and/or recruitment advertising.

h. Meetings of advisory committees subject to DoD Instruction 5105.04, where the membership of the committee consists of one or more individuals who are not full-time or permanent part-time Federal officers or employees.

V. Definition of Conference Costs

1. Conference Expenses

The expenses of a conference include all direct and indirect conference costs paid by the Department, in accordance with 41 CFR 301-74.2. As previously indicated, each category of conference expenses should be reduced or eliminated to the greatest extent practicable. For the purposes of this guidance, conference expenses include, but are not limited to:

a. Authorized travel and per diem expenses for all DoD sponsored attendees, including both government and non-government attendees

b. Hire of rooms for official business

c. Audiovisual and other equipment usage

d. Computer and telephone access fees

e. Light refreshments or other food and beverage

f. Printing

g. Registration, exhibitor, sponsor, or conference fees for all DoD sponsored attendees, including both government and non-government attendees

h. Ground transportation and/or parking fees

i. Outlays for conference preparation and planning

j. Speaker fees

k. Administrative expenses

l. Translation and interpretation expenses

2. Expenses Not Included in Calculation of Conference Expenses

For the purposes of this guidance, the following expenses should not be included in the calculation of conference expenses:

a. Federal employee time for conference preparation and planning

b. Federal employee time for attendance at the conference or en route

c. Security costs to ensure the safety of attending governmental officials

d. While the Department determines if a feasible way exists to accurately capture these costs, contractor attendance costs charged to a contract that is not associated with the hosting or running of the conference

3. Revenue

Revenue is all direct or indirect conference costs collected from or reimbursed to DoD by non-DoD entities. For the purpose of this guidance, revenue includes, but is not limited to:

a. Registration fees collected

b. Exhibitor fees collected

c. Sponsor fees collected

4. Total Conference Cost

Total conference costs should be the net value of the conference expenses, regardless of the source of government funding, less any fees or revenue received by the Department through the conference.

For DoD-hosted conferences, the total conference cost must be calculated by the hosting DoD Component and must include funds paid by **all** DoD Components, not just the host.

For non-DoD hosted conferences, total conference cost must be calculated by each DoD Component that sponsors attendees, including both government and non-government attendees.

VI. Reporting

1. Annual Reporting

In accordance with OMB's memorandum and P.L. 113-6, the following data will be reported publically on an annual basis for conferences which the Department ***hosts***, where the total expenses associated with the conference are in excess of $100,000. This data will be captured by each DoD Component and reported through the DoD Conference Tool, as part of the Ongoing Reporting requirement described below. It will be validated by each DoD Component prior to posting.

a. The name of the conference

b. The Component hosting the conference

c. The date of the conference

d. The location of the conference

e. The total conference expenses incurred by the DoD for the conference, including a breakdown of those costs by:

   (1) The cost of all food and beverages
   (2) The cost of audio-visual services
   (3) The cost of government sponsored attendee travel
   (4) Other conference expenses

f. The total number of participants attending the conference (e.g., all attendees including those who are not affiliated with the government)

g. The number of government sponsored participants attending the conference (e.g., attendees whose participation costs are paid for by the government)

h. A brief description of the conference's purpose and how it advanced the mission of the agency

i. A discussion of the methodology used to determine which costs relate to the conference

j. A description of the contracting procedures used, including whether contracts were awarded on a competitive basis and a discussion of any cost comparison conducted in evaluating potential contractors for the conference

2. Ongoing Reporting (DoD Hosted and Non-Hosted Conferences)

As authorized personnel approve DoD hosted conferences and attendance at non-DoD hosted conferences, where the total conference expenses associated with each conference is in excess of $20,000, each conference shall be entered into the DoD Conference Tool within **ten working days** of the waiver/approval memorandum being signed. DoD Components should, if centrally

collecting this information, also report those conferences below $20,000 through the DoD Conference Tool, although it is not required. The following data must be recorded in the DoD Conference Tool for each conference entry:

a. DoD Hosted Conferences

1) The name of the conference

2) The Component hosting the conference

3) The date of the conference

4) The location of the conference

5) The total conference expenses incurred by the agency for the conference, including a breakdown of those costs by:

    a) The cost of all food and beverages
    b) The cost of audio-visual services
    c) The cost of government sponsored attendee travel
    d) Other conference expenses

6) The number of participants attending the conference

7) The number of government sponsored participants attending the conference

8) A brief description of the conference's purpose and how it advanced the mission of the agency

9) A discussion of the methodology used to determine which costs relate to the conference

10) A description of the contracting procedures used, including whether contracts were awarded on a competitive basis and a discussion of any cost comparison conducted in evaluating potential contractors for the conference

b. Non-DoD Hosted Conferences

1) The name of the conference

2) The date of the conference

3) The location of the conference

4) The number of government sponsored participants attending the conference

5) The total conference expenses incurred by the agency for attending the conference, including a breakdown of those costs by:

a) Attendee Cost (registration fees, travel, lodging, food, etc.)
b) Other Cost (booth or exhibit fees, etc.)

6) A brief description of the conference's purpose and how it advanced the mission of the agency

Within **30 days** of the completion of each conference, the DoD Component will update the conference's entry in the DoD Conference Tool with the estimated actual expenses associated with the conference. To complete this step, the DoD Component shall update their previous estimates based on any new information, such as adjusting the number of participants that attended or the cost factors that went into the cost estimate. However, final invoiced costs are not required to complete this step.

Aggregated reports from the DoD Conference Tool will be provided to the Deputy Secretary of Defense on a quarterly basis.

Access to the DoD Conference Tools can be requested at the following link: https://dcmo.osd.mil/Pages/Collaboration%20Request%20V2.aspx.

3. DoD Inspector General Access to Conference Reporting

To comply with P.L. 113-6, "Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013," personnel from the DoD Inspector General's office have been granted access to the DoD Conference Tool to view information about conferences that have been completed.