



# CHIEF NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU INSTRUCTION

---

NG-J8  
DISTRIBUTION: A

CNGBI 8100.01  
29 September 2014

## NATIONAL GUARD CONFERENCE POLICY

References: See Enclosure H.

1. Purpose. This instruction establishes policy and assigns responsibilities (IAW) references a and b for planning, approving, and attending conferences (for example, meetings, symposiums, and some training events) and exempt events (for example, recruitment events and advisory committee meetings).
2. Cancellation. This instruction cancels and replaces CNGBI 9100.01, 16 July 2012, "Financial Administration National Guard Conference Policy."
3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all elements of the National Guard (NG).
4. Policy. It is NG policy that all conferences and exempt events involving NG attendance will be conducted IAW with references a through d, as well as this instruction and its manuals. Approved conferences and exempt events will:
  - a. Be planned to minimize taxpayer expense to the extent possible by examining alternatives to in-person events and allowing only mission-critical participation.
  - b. Be reviewed and approved IAW the tiered approval structure established in this instruction.
  - c. Be transparent to the public by following the conference reporting requirements included in this instruction.
5. Definitions. See Glossary.
6. Responsibilities. See Enclosure A.

**UNCLASSIFIED**

7. Summary of Changes. This instruction has been extensively revised. The major changes are due to recent policy revisions by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and Congressionally-mandated reporting requirements. This instruction:

- a. Explains the distinction between “conferences” and “exempt events.”
- b. Sets a tiered approval level structure primarily based on cost.
- c. Explains conference reporting requirements for public transparency.
- d. Explains the requirements for attending Department of Defense (DoD) and non-DoD conferences.
- e. Refers readers to Guard Knowledge Online (GKO) to download mandatory and standardized templates for request packets.

8. Releasability. This manual is approved for public release. Copies are available through <<http://www.ngbpdc.ngb.army.mil>>.

9. Effective Date. This instruction is effective upon publication and must be reissued, cancelled, or certified as current within five years of its publication.

  
FRANK J. GRASS  
General, USA  
Chief, National Guard Bureau

Enclosures:

- A -- Responsibilities
- B -- Determining Whether an Event is a Conference
- C -- Determining Whether an Event is Exempt
- D -- Conference Approval Authorities
- E -- Exemption Approval Authorities
- F -- Conference Policy
- G -- Attendance at Department of Defense and Non-Department of Defense Conferences
- H -- References
- GL -- Glossary

ENCLOSURE A  
RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Conference Approval Authorities. The approval authorities will:
  - a. Approve or disapprove conference hosting and attendance, in writing.
  - b. Review conference after action reports (AAR) for compliance.
  - c. Verify completion of reporting requirements.
  - d. Maintain electronic records of the approval memoranda and its request packet for no less than five years.
2. Exemption Approval Authorities. The approval authorities will:
  - a. Approve or disapprove exempt events, in writing.
  - b. Verify exempt events are clearly related to carrying out the NG mission, with expenses kept to a minimum and social participation limited to avoid the appearance of impropriety.
  - c. Maintain electronic records of the approval memoranda and its request packet for no less than five years.
3. Heads of Directorates and Equivalents. Directors on the National Guard Joint Staff; their National Guard Bureau (NGB) equivalents in the Office of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau (OCNGB), Army National Guard (ARNG), Air National Guard (ANG) and their State-level equivalents will:
  - a. Appoint an AO to plan conferences and exempt events.
  - b. Provide planning guidance to AOs.
  - c. Review conference request packets to limit the number of attendees to that which is mission-critical.
  - d. Forward AARs to the conference approval authority no later than 20 days after the conference is completed.
  - e. Budget for conference travel, per diem, security, facilities, and other cost in the annual agency budget request; if required, forward documentation to the resource manager for commitment of funds for the competitive procurement of conference facility or support contracts IAW timelines.

f. Report planned attendance at DoD and non-DoD conferences by individuals within the directorate through the reporting tool at the GKO website in accordance with timelines in Enclosure G.

4. Action Officers (AO). AOs will:

a. Provide approval authorities with request packets meeting requirements established in reference c.

b. Respond to all deficiencies noted by legal counsel, protocol offices, and United States Property and Fiscal Officers (USPFO) prior to providing request packets to approval authorities.

c. Submit conference request packets as follows:

(1) At the NGB level, to appropriate protocol offices at least 180 days prior to the conference start date.

(2) At the State level, to the USPFO and State Judge Advocate IAW State-level procedures and timelines.

d. Seek guidance throughout the approval process from appropriate legal counsel and protocol offices, as needed.

e. Report conference costs.

5. NGB Protocol Offices. The protocol offices for the OCNGB, ARNG, and ANG will:

a. Review NGB-level conference request packets for compliance.

b. Verify, in writing, that request packets contain information required IAW applicable conference policy before forwarding for legal review.

c. Return deficient request packets for correction, with an explanation of the deficiencies.

d. Advise AOs as requested and appropriate, as subject matter experts on conference policy.

e. Meet quarterly to assess the effectiveness and uniform application of this instruction.

6. Office of the National Guard Bureau Chief Counsel (NGB-JA). NGB-JA will:

- a. Provide timely legal reviews of conference hosting and attendance request packets requiring Tier I and Tier II approval, and NGB-level Tier III approval.
- b. Review NGB-level requests for event exemption before the determination is submitted to the approval authorities.
- c. Review Letters of Intent (LOI) created during the planning process for conferences requiring Tier I and Tier II approval, and NGB-level Tier III approval.
- d. Advise USPFOs on conference policy, as requested and appropriate.

7. State Judge Advocates. State Judge Advocates will:

- a. Provide timely legal reviews of conference hosting and attendance request packets requiring State-level Tier III approval.
- b. Review State-level requests for event exemption before the determination is submitted to the approval authorities.
- c. Review LOIs created during the planning process for conferences requiring State-level Tier III approval.

8. USPFOs. USPFOs will:

- a. Review State-level conference request packets for compliance before presentation to approval authorities.
- b. Verify attendance complies with travel policy.
- c. Return deficient conference request packets for correction, with explanation of the deficiencies.
- d. Review and report requests for attendance at DoD and non-DoD conferences through the GKO website.
- e. Seek guidance from NGB-JA regarding legal issues unresolved at the State level, for definitive determination, and alert the Directorate of Resource Management (NG-J8) about those issues.

9. NG-J8. NG-J8 will:

- a. Review NGB-level request packets for compliance.
- b. Advise USPFOs as requested and appropriate, regarding this instruction and its manuals.

c. Maintain this instruction and its manuals, to include future revisions, in compliance with higher-level authorities.

10. Operational Contracting (NGB-AQ) and Purchasing and Contracting (P&C). NGB-AQ, at the NGB level, and P&C offices, at the State level, will provide contracting support for all supplies and services ancillary to conferences (for example, conference meeting space, audiovisual support, and shuttle service) IAW applicable Federal procurement laws and regulations.

11. Activity Resource Managers and Budget Officers. Resource managers and budget officers for an activity will:

a. Coordinate funding authorization and commitment with the appropriate comptroller's office.

b. Coordinate appropriate acquisitions actions with NGB-AQ.

c. Coordinate, when appropriate, for reimbursable authority and collection for conference fees; this does not include landing fees.

d. Maintain copies of submitted AARs.

12. Office of the Inspector General (NGB-IG). NGB-IG will:

a. Advise NGB leadership on conferences and exempt events at the request of approval authorities.

b. Review quarterly the NGB conference calendar for appropriate use of NGB resources.

ENCLOSURE B

DETERMINING WHETHER AN EVENT IS A CONFERENCE

1. Definition of a Conference. The overarching definition of a conference, as established in references c and d, is 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.”
2. Other Names for Conferences. Conferences subject to policy are often called other than “conferences.” Common synonyms include the following:
  - a. Conventions.
  - b. Expositions.
  - c. Symposiums.
  - d. Seminars.
  - e. Workshops.
  - f. Exhibitions.
3. Additional Indicators of a Conference. Events that qualify as conferences will generally include some of these indicators, but do not need to include all.
  - a. Travel.
  - b. Registration fees.
  - c. Agenda, published and substantive.
  - d. Scheduled speakers.
  - e. Discussion panels.
  - f. Multi-day schedule.
  - g. Affiliated social events.
4. Training Events. Training events may qualify as conferences subject to this policy, particularly if they take place in a hotel or conference center.
5. Follow-on Exemption Determination. Events determined to be conferences may qualify for an exemption (see Enclosure C).

ENCLOSURE C

DETERMINING WHETHER AN EVENT IS EXEMPT

1. Definition of an Exempt Event. Certain events that qualify as conferences are exempt from conference policy when those events also meet the criteria in this enclosure. Exempt events differ from—and are not to be confused with—events that clearly do not meet the definition of a conference (for example, sometimes temporary duty (TDY) is just TDY).
2. Standards for Exempt Events. Although exempted from conference policy, these events will:
  - a. Relate clearly to carrying out the NG mission.
  - b. Be attended by only those with a mission-critical need.
  - c. Take place at a site that minimizes taxpayer expense.
  - d. Be limited in terms of associated social events.
  - e. Avoid the appearance of impropriety.
3. Exempt Events Requiring Further Approval. Exempt events (that would otherwise meet the definition of a conference) that require further approval are subject to the procedures in this instruction's manuals. The following is a list of exempt events that require approval by the approval authorities set out in Enclosure E:
  - a. Meetings to consider internal agency business matters (for example, meetings that take place as part of the regular course of daily business).
  - b. Events where the primary purpose of participation is military or civilian recruitment, or recruitment advertising.
  - c. Meetings of advisory committees IAW reference e, where membership consists of at least one individual who is not a full-time, or permanent part-time, Federal officer or employee.
4. Exempt Events Requiring No Further Approval. Exempt events that do not require further approval are not subject to the procedures in this instruction's manuals. For use by heads of directorates, the following is a list of NG events that do not require an exemption approval authority to determine exempt status:
  - a. Strong Bonds.



- b. Yellow Ribbon Program.
- c. Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention.
- d. Training for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response.
- e. Training for suicide prevention.
- f. Meetings required for statutory command and staff oversight functions (for example, investigations, inspections, audits, and nonconference planning site visits).
- g. Formal classroom training, such as regular training seminars offered by government organizations or institutions of higher learning. Other examples include events in the Army Training Requirement and Resource System and the Military Personnel Data System. However, events are not exempt simply because they offer a continuing education credit or its equivalent.
- h. Meetings required to plan or execute activities that are operational, operational exercise, pre-deployment, deployment, or post-deployment in nature. This includes preparation for war games, military exercises, and operational deployments.
- i. Bilateral and multilateral international cooperation engagements. This includes International Military Education and Training events, Traditional Commander's Activities, State Partnership Program activities, other regional assistance programs, and many of the activities of the DoD Regional Centers for Security Studies.
- j. Ceremonies that include or are similar to changes of command, official military awards, and funerals.

ENCLOSURE D

CONFERENCE APPROVAL AUTHORITIES

1. Approval Levels for Conferences. Events determined to be conferences and not exempt are approved by authorities designated by tier. This instruction, IAW reference b, is a written delegation of authority from the Chief of the National Guard Bureau (CNGB).

2. Tier Designations. Tiers are designated by conference costs. Additionally, each tier differentiates between the costs of conferences hosted by NG and the costs of conferences hosted by a non-DoD entity.

3. Tier I.

- a. Approval Authority. CNGB. No further delegation is permitted.
- b. Host is NG. Total cost over \$500,000.
- c. Host is Non-DoD. Total cost of NG attendance over \$100,000.

4. Tier II.

- a. Approval Authorities. No further delegation is permitted.
  - (1) Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau (VCNGB).
  - (2) Director of the Army National Guard (DARNG).
  - (3) Director of the Air National Guard (DANG).
- b. Host is NG. Total cost between \$100,000 and \$500,000.
- c. Host is Non-DoD. Total cost of NG attendance between \$20,000 and \$100,000.

5. Tier III.

- a. Approval Authorities.
  - (1) NGB-level Conferences. No further delegation is permitted.
    - (a) General Officers (GO).
    - (b) Senior Executive Service (SES) members.

(2) State-level Conferences. The Adjutant General (TAG). No further delegation is permitted.

b. Host is NG. Total cost below \$100,000.

c. Host is Non-DoD. Total cost of NG attendance below \$20,000.

6. Spouse Travel. CNGB must approve all conferences, regardless of cost, that include government-funded spouse travel. No further delegation is permitted.

ENCLOSURE E

EXEMPTION APPROVAL AUTHORITIES

1. Approval Levels for Exempt Events. Events determined to be conferences and also exempt IAW the criteria in paragraph 3 of Enclosure C are approved by authorities designated by organizational level and cost.
2. Approval Authority Designations. Approval authorities are designated by organizational level and conference costs. Additionally, conferences below the \$100,000 threshold differentiate between those held in government facilities and those held in commercial facilities.
3. NGB-level Event Exemption Approval Authorities.
  - a. Total Costs Over \$500,000. CNGB. No further delegation is permitted.
  - b. Total Costs Between \$100,000 and \$500,000. No further delegation is permitted.
    - (1) VCNGB.
    - (2) DARNG.
    - (3) DANG.
  - c. Total Costs Below \$100,000.
    - (1) Held in a Government Facility. No further delegation is permitted.
      - (a) GO at NGB.
      - (b) SES at NGB.
    - (2) Held in a Commercial Facility. Further delegation is permitted, in writing, to the GO- and SES-level at NGB.
      - (a) VCNGB.
      - (b) DARNG.
      - (c) DANG.
4. State-level Event Exemption Approval Authorities.
  - a. Total Costs over \$500,000. CNGB. No further delegation is permitted.

b. Total Costs Between \$100,000 and \$500,000. No further delegation is permitted.

(1) VCNGB.

(2) DARNG.

(3) DANG.

c. Total Costs Below \$100,000. Approval must be coordinated with the USPFO in State.

(1) Held in a Government Facility. TAG. Further delegation is permitted, in writing, to a GO in State.

(2) Held in a Commercial Facility. TAG. No further delegation is permitted.

ENCLOSURE F

NATIONAL GUARD CONFERENCE POLICY

1. Framework. NG conference policy is comprised of 10 subsidiary policy goals set out below.

2. Goal 1—Minimize Taxpayer Expense.

a. Limit Participation to Mission-Critical Attendees. The participation of all conference attendees must be justified as mission-critical. There is no specific definition of “mission-critical” to cover all situations; approval authorities will therefore use the term’s plain meaning and their judgment. Generic assertions that attendees are mission-critical are unacceptable. Requests will be detailed and supported by facts (for example, a request that explains how a specific NG mission will be affected if the proposed attendance is not approved).

b. Evaluate the Use of Government Facilities. Government facilities, which include military facilities, will be the first venue, and therefore the first geographic site, evaluated. Commercial facilities will only be used when government facilities are found to be more expensive or otherwise insufficient as determined by the approval authority, or due to an overriding operational need. AOs are encouraged to consider multiple government facilities but are required to include at least one in the overall site selection analysis. When a government facility is unavailable or unsuitable for conference requirements, the request will include a detailed explanation supporting that determination.

(1) Requests must demonstrate an effort to research a geographic site that contains the most suitable government facility. It is unacceptable to manipulate the analysis by deliberately selecting a government facility that weighs the analysis in favor of commercial facilities.

(2) Government facilities may not be ruled out as suitable venues solely because the facility is unavailable on exact dates desired by the sponsor. AOs must demonstrate an effort to adjust conference scheduling to fit the government facilities’ availability.

(3) AOs will consider the capacity of government facilities when planning conference size. If a conference size cannot be contained to the capacity of the government facility nearest to the majority of attendees, AOs must demonstrate why the conference’s goals cannot be met by a smaller conference size.

c. Compare a Minimum of Three Geographic Sites. Conferences should be held in the least expensive location that meets the conference requirements. AOs must evaluate a minimum of three geographic sites before making a selection decision. Factors to consider include:

- (1) Per diem expenses.
- (2) Local transportation costs.
- (3) Distance from the majority of attendees.
- (4) Differences between peak and off-season rates.

d. Compare a Minimum of Three Venues Within Lowest-Cost Geographic Site. Within the lowest-cost geographic site, AOs will consider a minimum of three venues. When selecting public accommodation, such as a hotel, the venue must be on the Hotel-Motel National Master List of approved accommodations maintained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency at reference f. Factors to consider include:

- (1) Availability of on-post lodging.
- (2) Participation in the Army's Lodging Success Program.
- (3) Willingness to exempt taxes for lodging.
- (4) Distance to nearest major airport.
- (5) Availability of free shuttle service.
- (6) Availability of rooms at or below the established per diem rate.
- (7) Public perception of wasteful or extravagant spending.

e. Create a Credible Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) of the Selected Site. AOs will provide a credible and standardized CBA that includes an explanation of other options (such as video teleconference) and data supporting the selected site and venue. If a government facility is not selected, the CBA will include a justification for the use of a commercial facility with a cost comparison between the considered venues.

(1) In addition to the DoD-required Cost Guidance calculator maintained by Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, AOs are required to use the cost estimation table in the NG GKO template to provide more detailed calculations.

(2) Estimated costs must include expenses for all DoD-funded attendees. Requests that consist only of costs for NG-funded attendees are unacceptable. NG activities that host a conference will gather cost estimate data on non-NG attendees from other DoD components.

(3) The following costs are exempt from conference cost calculations:

- (a) Government employee time for conference plans and preparation.
- (b) Government employee time for conference attendance or traveling.
- (c) Security to ensure the safety of government officials in attendance.
- (d) Use of Government-owned transportation.

3. Goal 2—Avoid Even the Appearance of Impropriety. Conferences will be held IAW reference g. Additionally, personnel will take public perception of conference activities into consideration.

- a. Resort-like venues will be scrutinized for genuine low-cost suitability.
- b. Relevant award and gift policies will be enforced.
- c. Funds will not be used for prohibited entertainment-related expenses. Examples include:

- (1) Motivational speakers.
- (2) Musicians or entertainers (with an exception for military bands).
- (3) Unrelated promotional items.
- (4) Extraneous decorations.
- (5) Tickets to recreational activities outside the conference setting.
- (6) Audiovisual material without substantive content.

4. Goal 3—Maintain Proper Relationships with Non-DoD and Non-Federal Entities.

a. Co-sponsored Conferences. The NG is a co-sponsor of an event when the NG develops the substantive aspects of the event or provides substantial logistical support, as defined by reference g, or the NG provides 50 percent or more of the speakers at a single conference. Co-sponsored conferences must abide by the requesting, hosting, and travel policies for all NG-hosted conferences. The approval authority for a co-sponsored conference is the same as for a NG-hosted conference.

(1) Co-sponsored with a Non-Federal Entity (NFE). Co-sponsoring an event with a NFE is a highly regulated area IAW reference g that must be handled very carefully to ensure all rules, ethics and other, are followed. Such co-sponsored conferences are generally prohibited unless they meet the narrow



exceptions in Section 3.206 of reference g. Close involvement with the servicing legal office and the sponsor's designated ethics advisor is mandatory through the planning process.

(a) OSD policy requires "enhanced scrutiny" of all conferences co-sponsored with an NFE. Requesters and approval authorities must ensure that they do not create the appearance of government impropriety, endorsement of the NFE, or preferential treatment provided to the NFE.

(b) Reference g requires written agreements for conferences co-sponsored with an NFE. These agreements must be reviewed by the sponsor's ethics advisor and forwarded to the designated deputy agency ethics official or his or her designated officials for action. Approval of the co-sponsorship agreement is separate and distinct from approval of the conference.

(c) NG personnel may not officially endorse the NFE co-sponsor(s) or activities.

(d) NG personnel may not show preferential treatment to similar NFEs that have a demonstrable interest in the subject matter of the conference; generally, no preferential treatment of one NFE over another.

(e) It must not appear that the NFE co-sponsor role in, or support of, the conference will improperly influence NG personnel in other official matters that the NFE may have an interest in.

(f) The conference cannot be a profit-making endeavor for the NFE co-sponsor(s), including vendor exhibitions.

(g) When a NG activity co-sponsors a conference and the co-sponsor incurs costs, the co-sponsor is permitted to collect registration fees from non-Federal attendees to cover its costs. Co-sponsors who collect fees from NG attendees or commingle fees collected from non-Federal and NG attendees will comply with the provisions in reference h. If a varied conference fee structure is used (such as, certain categories of attendees pay different amounts), no individual category of attendees will bear an unreasonable burden of the costs.

(2) Co-sponsored with DoD or Non-DoD Government Entities. These conferences may be co-sponsored with DoD, non-DoD, Federal, State, and local municipalities or multi-government organizations (for example, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization). Although many provisions in reference g do not apply to these types of co-sponsored events, the NG activity involved should enter into written agreements to detail what support each party will provide to the conference (for example, services-in-kind). Close involvement with the servicing legal office is mandatory throughout any such planning process.

Planning for such co-sponsored events should follow the same process as a NG-hosted conference. Reporting requirements apply.

b. Exhibitors at NG Conferences.

(1) Exhibitors are government or non-government entities who provide or intend to provide a good, service, or information relevant to the conference purpose, usually in a display area and not presented as a formal part of the agenda.

(2) Non-government exhibitors are not subject to the same ethical limitations that government exhibitors are, even though they may be commingled with government exhibitors in the exhibit area.

(3) Prohibitions. The following prohibitions are not exhaustive. AOs will consult with servicing legal offices.

(a) Giving preferential treatment to particular exhibitors.

(b) Permitting the appearance that the conference is a joint venture of NG and an exhibitor.

(c) Endorsing an exhibitor.

(d) Permitting an exhibitor to sponsor receptions or other meetings that give the vendor special access to senior NG personnel.

(e) Allowing exhibitor logo on filler slides.

(f) Allowing and recognizing exhibitor sponsorship of a session in exchange for a fee.

(g) Granting an exhibitor naming rights to the conference.

(h) Giving special access to DoD senior officials for a sponsorship fee, usually in the form of a reception or meal in which only NFE employees and DoD personnel are invited.

c. No-Cost Conference Planners. Use of no-cost conference planners is strongly discouraged. However, it is acceptable to contract with a NFE for help in planning and executing a NG-hosted conference or exempt event. Any such arrangements should be coordinated through a federally warranted contracting officer to ensure that all procurement statutes, regulations, and policies are followed.

d. Hotel Agreements. The only authorized format is the LOI available on the GKO website.

5. Goal 4—Provide Public Transparency. Conference activities will be reported in accordance with reference a. All conferences with costs over \$20,000 are reported using the Deputy Chief Management Officer tool, while NG-hosted conferences with costs over \$100,000 are also publicly reportable on the OSD website. For NG-hosted conferences, reported costs and attendee numbers will include totals for all DoD-sponsored attendees.

a. During the Planning Process.

(1) CNGB will notify the Army and Air Force of high visibility conferences or conferences exhibiting unusual circumstances that involve the personnel of that Service. According to Service, direct conference correspondence to:

- (a) Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army.
- (b) Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force.

(2) “Unusual circumstances” tend to exhibit the following characteristics:

- (a) Particularly high-cost, whether total cost or cost-per-attendee.
- (b) Critical interest garnered from Congress or the media.
- (c) Involvement of potentially controversial topics or event sponsors.
- (d) Questionable planned recreational activities on the agenda that may be inappropriate use of taxpayer funds or official time.

b. Within Five Days of Conference Approval. Approved request packets are forwarded to the appropriate protocol office no later than five business days after approval. The packet includes the required reporting information:

- (a) Date.
- (b) Location.
- (c) Number of attendees.
- (d) Estimated costs.
- (e) Description of used contracting procedures.

c. Within 20 Days of Conference End. AARs are provided to approval authorities and protocol offices no later than 20 days after the end of the

approved conference with costs over \$20,000. Failure to provide an AAR may result in future rejection of similar conferences.

(1) Initial Submission.

(a) Host is NG. The head of directorate signs and submits the AAR.

(b) Host is Non-DoD. The requesting organization submits the AAR.

(3) AAR Content.

(a) Detailed assessment of measurable results achieved.

(b) Lessons learned and future recommendations.

(c) Estimated actual attendance and expenditures.

(d) Actual attendance (a list of attendees by name) and expenditures.

6. Goal 5—Ensure the Security of Participants.

a. General Safety. The sponsoring activity will coordinate proposed venues with the appropriate security directorate to request security reviews.

b. Classified Conferences. The sponsoring activity will coordinate with the appropriate security directorate before budget approval and after developing the guest list. The following criteria must be met at the time of coordination:

(1) Point of contact for security clearance requests.

(2) Threat Assessment.

(3) Vulnerability Assessment.

(3) Site selection suitable for classified material.

7. Goal 6—Follow Contracting Policy.

a. Obligate Government Funds Only with Approval.

(1) Do not commit the government to conference facilities or support, through signing a LOI, until the approval authority approves the conference. No contract or task order related to conference requirements will be awarded, and no funds will be obligated for a conference, until that conference has been approved.

(2) Prior to approval, personnel may visit facilities, discuss space needs, collect pricing information, develop cost estimates, and request other conference-related information.

b. Sign Conference-Related Contracts Only When Authorized. Warranted contracting officers, or authorized government purchase cardholders, must sign all conference-related contracts. Agreements signed by other personnel are unauthorized commitments, with the exception of the LOI.

(1) Support contractors cannot enter into contracts for conference arrangements on behalf of the government.

(2) Government employees cannot direct or recommend that a support contractor take action that purports to bind the government in any way.

(3) Government employees who lack authority to bind the government may be held personally liable if he or she signs an agreement for conference facilities or other conference support.

(4) Requirements cannot be split to reduce the costs to within the limits of a cardholder's authority.

8. Goal 7—Follow Travel Policy.

a. Travel by DoD Personnel. Travel will be IAW references c and d.

(1) Defense Travel System (DTS). DTS is used by government travelers unless a waiver is granted. Travelers will select "conference" in the purpose field and select the appropriate conference name from the dropdown box; if the name is unavailable, "other" is selected and the full conference name is typed.

(2) Travel Certification Statement. A standard statement is used in the DTS or on DD Form 1610 when proposing TDY.

(a) Personnel will use the following statement: "The travel objective cannot be satisfactorily accomplished less expensively by alternate methods."

(b) This statement must be supported by data in the CBA and, when possible, related AARs.

(3) Rental Vehicles.

(a) Where possible, shuttle buses or taxis will be used to reduce the need for individual rental vehicles.

(b) Individual requests must be preauthorized on travel orders.

(c) Minimize expenses by maximizing number of passengers.

(4) Government-Provided Meals. Government-provided meals are those provided through government contracts or government-funded conference fees. This includes light refreshments served during meal hours. The cost of meals provided cannot exceed the meal component of the location's per diem rate.

(a) Per Diem. Attendees will annotate government-provided meals on travel vouchers.

1. All Meals Funded. When the government provides all meals, travelers will be reimbursed incidental expenses component on those days, even if travelers choose not to accept the provided meals.

2. Some Meals Funded. When the government provides some but not all meals, travelers will receive the proportional meal rate (PMR). PMR plus the cost of provided meals cannot exceed the meal component of the location's per diem rate.

(b) Refreshments. Refreshments are a personal expense and may not be funded with appropriated or nonappropriated funds unless the refreshments are nonsegregable and nonnegotiable.

1. Nonsegregable. Refreshments cannot be eliminated from the conference venue contract or registration fee.

2. Nonnegotiable. Venues will not offer lower rates if refreshments are not provided.

(5) Actual Expense Allowance (AEA). AEA is discouraged. Only approval authorities may authorize AEA and then in very rare circumstances. Once the approval authority authorizes AEA, the activities sending NG attendees may approve AEA on attendee travel orders.

(a) When AEA is requested, packets must include a justification for AEA and a legal review that addresses the sufficiency of this justification.

(b) For AEA to be authorized, the packet approval memorandum must specifically state whether AEA is approved or disapproved.

(c) Attendees will attempt to obtain lodging at or below established General Services Administration per diem rates for the location. If conferences are held at commercial facilities that do not honor government per diem rates, attendees will attempt to locate nearby hotels that honor the rate.

(6) Local Attendees. Lodging and meals provided at government expense to local attendees are seldom authorized.

(7) Local TDY. Local TDY is discouraged.

(8) Permissive TDY and Annual Leave. When attending conferences in an unofficial capacity, personnel will not give the appearance of representing NG in an official capacity (for example, giving official speeches).

b. Travel by Non-DoD Personnel.

(1) Contractors. Costs for contractor employees will be IAW reference i.

(a) Contractors may not be issued invitational travel authorizations (ITA) during the contract's execution.

(b) Contractors cannot receive per diem or be reimbursed for travel(-related) expenses, except as specified in the contract.

(c) Contractor attendance will be billed IAW the appropriate contract.

(2) Spouses and family members. As a general rule, spouses or other family members may not accompany NG personnel, either military or civilian, on official business at government expense.

(a) Any such spouse/family travel at government expense is accomplished as an exception to policy. Such exceptions are normally limited to the spouses of senior officials and only in very limited circumstances.

(b) Any spouse/family travel at government expense must be accomplished in accordance with Appendix E of Reference C.

(3) Statutory Volunteers.

(a) Statutory volunteers may be issued ITAs only when invited as speakers or to otherwise take part based on related subject matter expertise.

(b) Statutory volunteers are authorized reimburse of incidental expenses IAW references c and j.

9. Goal 8—Account for Conference Fees. NG may collect fees in advance of an NG-hosted conference from the conference's participants, whether individual or commercial. The collection of fees, whether directly or through a contractor, is reported IAW chapter 32 of reference k. Conference fees are discouraged for NG conferences attended primarily by NG attendees.

a. Limitations on Use. Fiscal laws governing expenditure of appropriated funds for conference expenses apply to conference fees. Collected fees may be used only to offset the NG's reasonable and allowable costs. Collected fees may not be used for an otherwise prohibited expense, such as entertainment.

b. Collection by Contractors. When a contractor collect fees, the NG may structure this contract to allow the contractor to offset, from the collected fees, the actual costs the contractor incurs providing conference-related services. Contractor costs must be allowable IAW references c and d and other applicable policy.

c. Depositing Excess Fees. Fees exceeding the cost of hosting a conference must be deposited as miscellaneous receipts in the U.S. Treasury. Excess fees will not be retained or reused for other purposes.

10. Goal 9—Meet Deadlines. AOs who do not meet these deadlines risk the rejection of request packets.

a. Conference Request Packets.

(1) 120 Days for NGB-level Requests. Fully staffed NGB-level packets are submitted to approval authorities no later than 120 days before the conference start date.

(2) State-level Requests. State-level packets are processed IAW State-specific deadlines.

(3) 60 Days for Non-DoD Requests. Regardless of organizational level, fully-staffed requests for attendance at non-DoD conferences are submitted to approval authorities no later than 60 days before the start date of the conference.

b. Exempt Event Request Packets.

(1) 90 Days for NGB-level Exemption Requests. Fully staffed NGB-level packets are submitted to approval authorities no later than 90 days before the event's start date.

(2) State-level Exemption Requests. State-level packets are processed IAW State-specific deadlines.

11. Goal 10—Use Standardized Documents. AOs must use the standardized documents available on GKO at reference 1 throughout the planning process. These documents are as follows:

a. Conference Request Memorandum.



- b. Exemption Request Memorandum.
- c. CBA.
- d. Non-DoD Conference Attendance Request Memorandum.
- e. LOI.
- f. AAR.
- g. Gratuitous Service Agreement.

ENCLOSURE G

ATTENDANCE AT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
AND NON-DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONFERENCES

1. NG Attendance at DoD Conferences.

a. The NG may find it beneficial to participate in conferences hosted by other DoD components (for example, conferences hosted by the Army or the Defense Information Systems Agency).

b. Heads of Directorates at the NGB and USPFOs in the State will report requests for attendance at DoD conferences as soon as possible and no less than 120 days prior to the start of the conference. Requests are reported using the form on the GKO website. These requests do not require a legal review but will include justification of how each individual's attendance is mission-critical.

2. NG Attendance at Non-DoD Hosted Conferences.

a. The NG may find it beneficial to participate in conferences hosted by non-DoD organizations. This type of participation includes NG employees attending at NG expense (including speakers, presenters, or panel members) and NG-provided exhibits and logistical support. Individual travel is approved locally, but attendance at these conference are approved IAW this instruction.

b. The NG consolidates all NG attendance at non-DoD conferences when calculating the total NG cost. For example, when 10 States send attendees to the same non-DoD conference with a per-State cost of \$15,000, the total NG cost is consolidated from all 10 States for a total of \$150,000. Accordingly, NG attendance at this hypothetical event, and others like it, require Tier I approval as opposed to Tier III approval.

c. Due to this consolidation and higher tier approval authorities, Heads of Directorates at NGB and USPFOs in the States will report requested attendance as soon as possible and no less than 120 days prior to the start of the non-DoD conference. Requests are reported using the form on the GKO website. Request packets will include legal reviews, agendas, and justification of how each individual's attendance is mission-critical.

ENCLOSURE H

REFERENCES

PART I. REQUIRED

- a. P.L. 113-6, "Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013"
- b. DoD Deputy Chief Management Officer Memorandum, 06 November 2013, "Implementation of Updated Conference Oversight Requirements"
- c. Joint Federal Travel Regulations, Volume 1
- d. Joint Travel Regulations, Volume 2
- e. DoD Instruction 5105.04, 06 August 2007, "Department of Defense Federal Advisory Committee Management Program"
- f. Hotel-Motel National Master List <<http://apps.usfa.fema.gov/hotel>> 27 June 2014
- g. DoD Regulation 5500.07, August 1993, Incorporating Changes, 17 November 2011, "Joint Ethics Regulation"
- h. 10 U.S.C. § 2262 "Department of Defense Conferences: Collection of Fees to Cover Department of Defense Costs"
- i. Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 31.205-46
- j. 10 U.S.C. § 1588, "Authority to Accept Certain Voluntary Services"
- k. DoD Regulation 7000.14, Volume 12, "Special Accounts, Funds, and Programs"
- l. Conference Policy Portal Guard Knowledge Online <<https://gkoportal.ng.mil/arng/STAFF/B01/MEC/SitePages/Home.aspx>> 27 June 2014

PART II. RELATED

- m. 5 U.S.C. § 5703, "Per Diem, Travel, and Transportation Expenses; Experts and Consultants; Individuals Serving Without Pay"
- n. 31 U.S.C. § 1353, "Acceptance of Travel and Related expenses from Non-Federal Sources"

- o. 31 U.S.C. § 1342, "Limitation on Voluntary Services"
- p. 31 U.S.C. § 3302, "Custodians of Money"
- q. 5 C.F.R. § 410.404, "Determining if a Conference is a Training Activity"
- r. 48 C.F.R. § 31.205-46, "Travel Costs"
- s. DFAS-IN Regulation 37-1, "Army Financial Management"
- t. USAF Secretary of the Air Force Memorandum, 28 October 2011, "Air Force Memorandum-Conferences"
- u. Army Directive 2014-01, 18 December 2013, "Army Conference Policy"
- v. USAF Acting Secretary of the Air Force Memorandum, 13 December 2013, "Air Force Conference Policy Update"
- w. USAF Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force Memorandum, 13 December 2013, "Air Force Conference Policy Business Rules"

## GLOSSARY

### PART I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

|        |                                                   |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------|
| AAR    | After Action Report                               |
| AEA    | Actual Expense Allowance                          |
| ANG    | Air National Guard                                |
| AO     | Action Officer                                    |
| ARNG   | Army National Guard                               |
| CBA    | Cost Benefit Analysis                             |
| CNGB   | Chief of the National Guard Bureau                |
| DANG   | Director of the Air National Guard                |
| DARNG  | Director of the Army National Guard               |
| DNGJS  | Director of the National Guard Joint Staff        |
| DoD    | Department of Defense                             |
| DTS    | Defense Travel System                             |
| FO     | Flag Officer                                      |
| GKO    | Guard Knowledge Online                            |
| GO     | General Officer                                   |
| IAW    | In Accordance With                                |
| ITA    | Invitational Travel Authorization                 |
| NFE    | Non-Federal Entity                                |
| NG     | National Guard                                    |
| NGB    | National Guard Bureau                             |
| NGB-AQ | Operational Contracting                           |
| NGB-IG | Office of the Inspector General                   |
| NGB-JA | Office of the National Guard Bureau Chief Counsel |
| NG-J8  | Directorate of Resource Management                |
| OCNGB  | Office of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau  |
| OSD    | Office of the Secretary of Defense                |
| P&C    | Purchasing and Contracting                        |
| PMR    | Proportional Meal Rate                            |
| SES    | Senior Executive Service                          |
| TAG    | The Adjutant General                              |
| TDY    | Temporary Duty                                    |
| USPFO  | United States Property and Fiscal Officer         |
| VCNGB  | Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau           |

### PART II. DEFINITIONS

Activity -- The sub-organization hosting the conference.

After Action Report -- A report consisting of both qualitative and quantitative data on an event. Required within 20 days after every conference with costs greater than \$20,000.

Approval Authority -- An official who may approve the request.

Conference -- A meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or event that involves attendee travel. In addition to travel, indicators of a conference often include, but are not limited to: registration fees; a published substantive agenda and scheduled speakers or discussion panels; multi-day agendas; and affiliated social events. Individual events may qualify as conferences without meeting all of these indicators but will generally meet some of them.

Host -- The organization that funds the event, all or in part, or is responsible for developing the substantive aspects of the event, or provides substantial logistical support. Also known as “sponsor.”

National Guard Conference -- An event with sufficient indicators of a conference hosted or sponsored by a National Guard activity. The National Guard is considered the host when it plans or funds the event. Generally, most participants will be National Guard personnel and the topic or purpose is specific to the National Guard.

Resource Manager -- An individual that activities consult regarding resource issues, budgeting, and funding. The resource manager may be at varying levels, depending on the organization and structure of a particular directorate.

Statutory Volunteers -- Individuals providing voluntary services set forth in reference j.