Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: PATRICIA DEHMER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR SCIENCE PROGRAMS
OFFICE OF SCIENCE

GEORGE MALOSH
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR FIELD OPERATIONS
OFFICE OF SCIENCE

SUBJECT: Oversight of Office of Science (SC) Laboratory Conferences

REFERENCES: IG Report on "Office of Science Laboratory Conferences" (DOE/IG-0794)

Appropriate management of contractor and SC-supported conferences, and compliance by DOE federal and contractor employees with Federal Travel Regulations are critical to the ethical, legal and effective prosecution of the Office of Science's mission.

The SC laboratories frequently manage conference for us and other government clients. When they do this, they must ensure that the conference conforms to the requirements of DOE Order 110.3A. This can at times be difficult given the high prices in some of the cities in which we hold meetings. In cases in which there is any question about the reasonableness or allowability of costs, the laboratories must get written approval from the appropriate contracting authority (Site Office) to proceed. No one in the SC science program offices has the authority to make these determinations.

The Office of Science Management Systems (SCMS) currently contains guidance regarding conference management including: 1) A letter from Under Secretary Orbach, dated February 7, 2007, in which responsibility for approval of requests and oversight of contractor conference management was delegated to the Site Office Managers; 2) DOE Order 110.3A; and 3) a "Guidance for Conference Management" document that has been review by all SC Associate Directors (ADs) and Field Offices, and which requires that Site Offices and their contractor develop, implement, and maintain a compliant and auditable conference management record keeping system. All SC ADs and Field Managers must be familiar with the SCMS guidance, and Field Managers are to implement oversight processes that are consistent with this guidance.

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Field Managers should inform their contractors in writing that:

1) Employees attending a conference, in which the conference fee includes meals, unless an individual has special dietary restrictions that cannot be met by the conference organizers, employees must reduce the meal per diem charged to the contract (and thus the government) for meals received.

2) If a laboratory contractor manages a conference for SC or any other government client, the contractor must ensure compliance with the requirements of DOE Order 110.3A. In doing so, laboratories must ensure that conferences conform to the requirements of DOE Order 110.3A. In cases in which there is any uncertainty in the reasonableness or allowability of costs, laboratories must obtain written approval from the appropriate contracting authority (Site Office) to proceed. As SC Programs do not have contracting authority, approval from science programs is not valid authorization.

3) If a laboratory contractor questions the direction or guidance they are receiving from any customer(s) related to conferences or workshops, they should contact their Site Office Manager directly. The Site Office will assist in determining the appropriate path forward.

Anna Lising will serve as the point of contact on this issue. She can be reached at 202-586-8684 or via email at Anna.Lising@science.doe.gov.

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cc:
Anna Lising, SC-3
Devon Streit, SC-32
Janet Venneri, SC-41