

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Subject:	Planning, Approval, and Reporting Conference Related Activities for Spending
Purpose:	This Directive and Standard (D&S) provides the Bureau of Reclamation's implementing instructions for hosting, sponsoring, and attending conferences, in compliance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Department of the Interior's requirements. The D&S identifies roles and responsibilities and outlines the processes and controls to monitor, plan, approve, and report conference-related activities and spending.
Authority:	Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, December 16, 2014 (Pub. L. 113-235, Division E, Title VII, Section 739); Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Pub. L. 113-76, Division E, Title VII, Section 742; 128 Stat. 242); 5 U.S.C. § 4101; 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 410.404, Determining if a conference is a training activity; Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) 41 CFR 300 and 301; Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 48 CFR 1 and 14; Executive Order 13589, Promoting Efficient Spending; OMB memoranda M-17-36 and M-12-12; General Services Administration (GSA) Bulletin FTR 14-02, Clarification of Agency Reporting Requirements for Conferences; Financial Management Memoranda (FMM) 2021-021 (Vol. VI.B), Reporting Guidance on Conference-Related Activities and Spending; FMM 2014-011 (Vol. X.A.), Issuance of Revised Temporary Duty Travel Policy; FMM 2017-003 (Vol. X.K), Use of Home Rental Services and Similar Non-Conventional Lodging Services; Departmental Manual (DM) 205 DM 2, Attendance at Meetings and Acceptance of Contributions; 205 DM 15.6, Travel and Transportation – Conference Travel; 255 DM 2, General Administrative Delegations; and the Department's Temporary Duty Travel Policy, dated August 2018.
Approving Official:	Director, Mission Support Organization (MSO)
Contact:	MSO, Finance Policy and Programs Division (FPPD), Programs and Budget Services Branch (PBS) (84-27430)

1. **Introduction.** Reclamation hosts or sponsors conferences, and employees attend external conferences annually to carry out Reclamation's mission. This D&S establishes processes required by Reclamation to obtain internal and Department approval for employee attendance and participation in hosted, sponsored, and external conferences.
2. **Applicability.** This D&S applies to all Reclamation employees involved in hosting Reclamation-hosted conferences, sponsoring, and attending externally hosted conferences.
3. **Requirements and Responsibilities.**

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- A. **Annual Conference Planning.** The Department requires Reclamation to submit an annual list of conferences by October 31st each fiscal year with quarterly updates to the annual plan 15 days after the end of the quarter. Periodic updates are requested and added to the plan between quarterly updates. The quarterly updates allow the Directorate Conference Coordinators (DCC) to report unplanned conference attendance/hosting within the 90-day advance requirement for reporting conferences each quarter.
- (1) **Annual Plan Requirements.** The Annual Plan must include:
- (a) **Reclamation-Hosted Conferences.** A conference is Reclamation-hosted when a Reclamation Leadership Team (RLT) member's organization performs the logistical preparations for events that encompass workshops, meetings, seminars, symposia, or similar events. Preparation tasks include, but are not limited to, creating an agenda, scheduling presenters and/or panels, and reserving conference rooms, conference facilities, hotel room blocks, audiovisual equipment, etc.
 - (i) All Reclamation-hosted conferences planned by an RLT member's organization and attended by Reclamation employees at any cost greater than \$0.01 are reported on the *Conference Annual Plan/Quarterly Update* (Appendix A).
 - (ii) All Reclamation-hosted conferences planned by an RLT's organization and attended by Reclamation and/or other bureau/Department employees with an estimated cost of \$25,000 or more, are reported on the *Department Conference Activity and Spending Plan* (Appendix B).
 - (b) **Externally Hosted Conferences.** Externally hosted conferences are hosted by other entities (bureaus, agencies, or another entity), not Reclamation, to include workshops, meetings, seminars, symposia, or similar events attended by Reclamation employees.
 - (i) All externally hosted conferences attended by Reclamation employees at any cost greater than \$0.01 are reported on Appendix A.
 - (ii) All externally hosted conferences attended by Reclamation employees with an estimated cost of \$25,000 or more, are reported on Appendix B.
 - (c) **Sponsored Conferences.** A conference is sponsored when an RLT member's organization is expending funds in support of a conference hosted by another bureau within the Department and/or another entity, including membership or advertising.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- (i) The RLT member's organization must consult with the Deputy Ethics Counselor for Reclamation prior to committing to Sponsor a conference with any non-Federal entity.
- (ii) The RLT member must use the following criteria to base this decision on whether to sponsor a conference:
 - (aa) The sponsorship will contribute materially to the mission of Reclamation by advancing a specific initiative, priority, or program;
 - (bb) The sponsorship provides benefits beyond those that would be realized with the simple attendance of Reclamation employees at the conference;
 - (cc) The sponsorship supports cooperative efforts and/or partnerships with other Federal agencies, States, Tribes, and non-governmental entities, and
 - (dd) The sponsorship will not imply or commit Reclamation to costs for travel (including per diem and lodging) above the government rate.
- (iii) All Reclamation sponsored conferences planned by an RLT member's organization and attended by Reclamation employees at any cost greater than \$0.01 are reported on Appendix A.
- (iv) All Reclamation sponsored conferences planned by an RLT member's organization and attended by Reclamation employees with an estimated cost of \$20,000 or more, are reported on the Appendix B.
- (d) **Virtual Attendance.** Conferences attended by video/teleconference platform such as, but not limited to, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Video Teleconference (VTC) system, etc., are considered virtual attendance.
 - (i) **Virtual Conference.** Externally or Reclamation-hosted conferences hosted on a virtual platform only, regardless of cost, are not reported to the Department, do not require approval, and are not tracked if no attendees incur cost for travel. This excludes sponsored conferences with the sponsorship cost that exceeds \$.01.
 - (ii) **Hybrid Conference (Virtual and In-Person Options).** Externally or Reclamation-hosted conferences with an in-person and virtual attendance option attended by Reclamation, at any cost greater than \$0.01:

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- (aa) are not reported, do not require approval, and are not tracked if all attendees participate virtually, incurring no travel costs¹.
- (bb) are reported, requires approval, and are tracked if there is a combination of employees attending virtually and in-person, incurring travel costs for in-person attendance.
- (cc) are reported and are tracked if there is a sponsorship cost of at least \$0.01 and requires approval if there is a sponsorship cost of \$20,000 or more, regardless if attendance is a combination for virtual and in-person, or all virtual.
- (dd) conferences attended by Reclamation employees if there is a combination of virtual and in-person attendance with an estimated cost of \$25,000 or more, are reported on the Appendix B.
- (e) **Attendee Responsibility.** External and Reclamation-hosted conference attendees are responsible for the following:
 - (i) **Obtaining Supervisor Approval.** Working through their supervisor to obtain the appropriate approval for conferences they are planning to attend.
 - (ii) **Annual and Quarterly Planning.** Notifying the DCC of supervisory approval for inclusion on the annual plan and quarterly updates.
 - (aa) are not reported, do not require approval, and are not tracked if all attendees participate virtually, incurring no travel costs;
 - (iii) **Acceptance of Benefits².** Complying with Ethics requirements regarding acceptance of benefits. Prior to accepting any benefits, including the waiver of registration fees or travel costs associated with attendance at a conference, the employee, supervisor, or DCC will consult with a Reclamation ethics official and receive the appropriate approvals.
- (2) **Annual Plan Reporting.** The originating office inputs and surnames the Annual Plan, Quarterly Update, or Periodic Update through their DCC in the Document Tracking System (DTS) and follows the Conference Annual Plan Reporting Procedures Appendix C. The Annual Plan and the Quarterly Updates are reported

¹ All attendees include Department and other bureau employees.

² Refer to [5 C.F.R. § 2635.202, General prohibition on solicitation or acceptance of gifts](#), [31 U.S.C. 1353, Acceptance of travel and related expenses from non-Federal sources](#), and [Reclamation Manual Policy ETH P01, Bureau of Reclamation Ethics Program](#).

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

to the Reclamation Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Department's Office of Financial Management (PFM), Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the Deputy Ethics Counselor for Reclamation. The timeline for coordinating the submission of an Annual Plan is as follows:

- (a) **Annual Updates.** The Bureau Conference Coordinator (BCC) will request all DCCs to identify conferences meeting the above criteria and list them on Appendix A.
 - (b) **Quarterly Updates.** The BCC will request all DCCs update the Annual Plan with their office's/region's upcoming conference attendance meeting the criteria above. The DCCs must use the templates provided within that request.
 - (c) **Periodic Updates.** If circumstances warrant, a DCC can submit additional updates to the Annual Plan outside of the normal annual or quarterly schedule. The DCCs must communicate the need for a periodic update to the BCC before updating the Annual Plan.
 - (iv) All Reclamation-hosted conferences planned by an RLT member's organization and attended by Reclamation employees at any cost greater than \$0.01 are reported on the *Conference Annual Plan/Quarterly Update* (Appendix A).
 - (v) All Reclamation-hosted conferences planned by an RLT's organization and attended by Reclamation and/or other bureau/Department employees with an estimated cost of \$25,000 or more, are reported on the *Department Conference Activity and Spending Plan* (Appendix B).
- B. Financial Commitments.** Financial/contractual commitments of any amount are not permitted until the approvals required by this D&S are received and distributed by the BCC to the DCC. See the *Conference Approval and Reporting Matrix* (Appendix D).
- (1) **Venue Commitments.** Any commitment(s) between Reclamation and a hotel venue for accommodations related to the planning of Reclamation meetings/designated work areas during an external conference; hosting and/or sponsoring conferences. Elements of the hotel agreement can include, but are not limited to, meeting rooms, audio/visual equipment, etc. Reclamation must not commit to any hotel agreements, regardless of dollar amount (including those under the micro-purchase threshold), until:
 - (a) **DCC and RLT Member Point of Contact (POC).** The DCC and/or RLT member's designated POC coordinates with the local acquisitions offices and assigns a conference planner at the start of the conference planning process; and prepares the purchase requisition (PR) package that includes the required

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

preliminary PR documentation (i.e., scope of work, market research, cost estimates, etc.)³.

- (b) **Regional Acquisitions Conference Coordinator (RACC).** The RACC ensures all requirements are implemented and maintained in accordance with RAC 20-02. This includes but not limited to: performing market research on the cost and availability of private conference facilities (e.g., hotels) and other procurement items on behalf of hosts and sponsors; negotiating and executing appropriate contracts for conference facilities; ensuring Reclamation's liability is minimized for site cancellation fees in the event the conference is cancelled by having a properly executed hotel agreement that is signed by a warranted Contracting Officer; and ensuring the contract includes the mandatory cancellation clause in the agreement.
- (2) **Meals and Refreshments.** All externally hosted, Reclamation-hosted, or sponsored conferences providing meals and/or refreshments to attendees and participants must refer to RAC 20-02 for information regarding requirements, guidelines, and rules applicable to the inclusion of meals and refreshments to the hotel agreement.
- (3) **Speakers/Presenters.**
 - (a) **Invitational Speakers/Presenters.** Invitational speakers/presenters refer to government employees with Federal, State, or local agencies invited by the hosting office to speak/present at a Reclamation-hosted conference. Although speaking or consulting fees may not be incurred, the hosting office may provide funding for travel (i.e., airfare, meals, and incidental expenses (M&IE), transportation, and lodging, not to exceed local published per diem rates)⁴.
 - (b) **Professional Speakers.** Professional speakers refer to individuals offering professional services who are asked to speak/present at a Reclamation-hosted conference. This includes private sector consultants or speakers/presenters that require a fee for services rendered⁵.

³ Refer to [Reclamation Acquisition Circular \(RAC\) 20-02, Conference Related Expenses and Purchase of Entertainment](#).

⁴ Travel funded for invitational speakers/presenter may be provided following the local published per diem rates on the [General Service Administration Per Diem Rates website](#).

⁵ Refer to RAC 20-02.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- (4) **Non-Conventional Lodging**⁶. Non-conventional lodging for travel accommodations includes accommodations where advance payment (deposits) and other fees (i.e., cleaning fees) charged at the time of booking.
 - (5) **Conference Registration/Fees**⁷. Conference approval is required prior to payment of registration fees. Registration fees are paid at the time of registration and funds are committed, obligated or expended.
 - (6) **Conference Travel Expenses**. Travel arrangements made prior to conference attendance are considered a financial commitment if funds are committed, obligated, or expended at the time accommodations are made. This includes, but are not limited to, airfare, hotel lodging, car rental, M&IE, booking fees, and other related travel expense identified and defined in the *Department Temporary Duty Travel Policy*⁸.
- C. **Conference Approval Thresholds**. All conference expenses require approval at various levels of the organization with an estimated cost of \$0.01 and more. The criteria for approver level thresholds are outlined below and can also be found in Appendix D. Refer to Appendix E for the Conference Approval Package Checklist:
- (1) **Externally Hosted and Reclamation-Hosted Conferences**.
 - (a) **\$10,000 or Less**. The RLT member officially approves conferences below \$10,000 by reviewing and approving, by surname, the Annual Conference Plan submitted by their Region/Directorate during the Annual and Quarterly Updates.
 - (b) **\$10,001 -\$20,000**. The RLT member approves conferences between \$10,001 to \$20,000. Approvals for this level are required at least 30 days prior to the start of the conference. The RLT member submits an approval package to the BCC for records management prior to the start of the conference.
 - (c) **\$20,001 to \$75,000**. The RLT member and Reclamation CFO approve conferences between \$20,001 and \$75,000. Approvals for this level are required at least 30 days prior to the start of the conference. Upon approval,

⁶ For guidance on non-conventional lodging, refer to [FMM 2017-003, Use of Home Rental Services and Similar Non-Conventional Lodging Services](#).

⁷ Refer to the [Department Temporary Duty Travel Policy, Section 6.1.3 Conference Related Travel: Reimbursing Advanced payment of Conference Registration Fees](#).

⁸ Refer to the [Department Temporary Duty Travel Policy](#) and the [Reclamation Travel Hub](#) for policies and additional information/guidance. Note when making reservations for conference travel through Reclamation's Electronic Travel System (ETS)/DOI Travel Management Center (TMC) will assess booking fees, which are considered a financial commitment.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

the BCC notifies the DCC and POC of the approval and prepares the approved package for records management.

- (d) **\$75,001 to \$150,000.** The Department Deputy CFO approves conferences between \$75,001 and \$150,000. Approvals for this level are required at least 30 days prior to the start of the conference. The RLT member submits an approval package through Reclamation's CFO, Commissioner, and the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science (AS/WS) to the Department Deputy CFO for approval. Upon approval, the BCC notifies the DCC and POC of the approval and prepares the approved package for records management.
- (e) **\$150,001 to \$300,000.** The Assistant Secretary Policy, Management and Budget (AS-PMB) approves conferences between \$150,001 and \$300,000. Approvals for this level are required at least 30 days prior to the start of the conference. The RLT member submits an approval package through Reclamation's CFO, Commissioner, AS/WS, and the Department's Deputy CFO to the Department's for AS-PMB for approval. Upon approval, the BCC notifies the DCC and POC of the approval and prepares the approved package for records management.
- (f) **\$300,001 to \$499,999.** The Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) or Deputy Secretary approves conferences between \$300,001 and \$499,999. Approvals for this level are required at least 60 days prior to the start of the conference. The RLT member submits an approval package through Reclamation's CFO, Commissioner, AS/WS, Department's Deputy CFO and the Department's AS-PMB to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary for approval. Upon approval, the BCC notifies the DCC and POC of the approval and prepares the approved package for records management.
- (g) **\$500,000 or More⁹.** Reclamation, with other Department bureaus and offices, are not to incur expenses of \$500,000 or more on a single conference they host, attend, or sponsor. Reimbursement from other Federal entities should not be deducted from the total conference cost when deriving the expense amount. The conference approval is to address all Federal funds under the control of the bureau or office.
 - (i) **Waivers.** The Secretary may grant a waiver from this limitation if exceptional circumstances exist. The RLT member must submit a

⁹ Refer to [Financial Management Memorandum \(FMM\) 2021-021, US Department of the Interior, Office of Financial Management Reporting Guidance on Conference Replated Activities and Spending, Section VIII. A. Conference Spending, Limitation on Conference Cost and Waiver Process.](#)

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

memorandum requesting a waiver that includes the following (see Secretarial Waiver Memorandum (Appendix F)):

- (aa) The rationale for considering the proposed conference as having exceptional circumstances or compelling purpose;
- (bb) Demonstration that the conference is the most cost-effective option to meet mission needs; and
- (cc) The signature of the Reclamation's Head of Contracting Activity who has reviewed and validated that all plan contracting actions are compliant with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR), as appropriate.
- (dd) The following must be noted as part of the Secretarial Waiver submission:
 - a. The DCC and POC shall complete Secretarial waiver before completing the conference attendance package for those conferences expected to cost \$500,000 or more.
 - b. Waiver request must be received by the Secretary's office no later than 90 days before the proposed conference or obligation of funds for the conference, including securing services for conference planning or securing a venue.
 - c. The Secretary's approval of the waiver will be included in the conference approval package.

(2) Sponsorships.

- (a) **Up to \$20,000¹⁰**. The Reclamation CFO officially approves sponsorships up to \$20,000. Approvals for this level are required at least 30 days prior to the start of the conference. The RLT member submits an approval package for Reclamation CFO approval. Upon approval, the BCC notifies the DCC and POC of the approval and prepares the approved package for records management.
- (b) **\$20,001 to \$499,999**. The Deputy Secretary officially approves all conferences between \$20,001 and \$499,999. Approvals for this level are required at least 60 days prior to the start of the conference. The RLT submits an approval package through Reclamation's CFO, Commissioner,

¹⁰ Refer to [FMM 2021-021, Section VIII. C. Sponsorships and Appendix 1 – Summary of Planning, Approval and Reporting Requirements](#).

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

ASWS, Department's Deputy CFO and the Department's AS-PMB to the Deputy Secretary for approval. Upon approval, the BCC notifies the DCC and POC of the approval and prepares the approved package for records management.

(c) **\$500,00 or More.** Approvals for Sponsorships over \$500,000 follows the Secretarial Waiver process outlined in Paragraph 3.C.(1)(g) of this D&S.

(3) **International Conferences.** Attendance for international conferences follow the same conference approval requirements discussed in Paragraph 3.C. However, international travel is subject to additional approval time outlined in Reclamation and the Department policies and guidance for international travel¹¹. International conference planners should consider timelines and requirements accordingly.

D. **Conference Approval Package Process.** All conferences require approval for attendance and financial commitment according to Appendix D. A list of the required documents for the conference approval package according to the appropriate levels, are identified in Appendix E. Refer to Conference Approval Package Procedures (Appendix G), for preparing and submitting a conference approval package. Tasks are assigned appropriately to:

- (1) identify the RLT member for preparation of the conference approval package;
- (2) identify the appropriate approval process and prepare the conference approval package; and
- (3) identify actions required after conference approval process is complete.

A. **Post Conference Reporting.** Post conference reporting for externally hosted and Reclamation-hosted conferences is required by the Department for thresholds identified in Appendix D, under Post Conference Reporting. Refer to the Post Conference Reporting Procedures (Appendix H), for preparing and submitting a report of actual conference cost. The following criteria addresses conferences that require post conference reporting:

- (1) all conferences with actual cost exceeding 10% of the approved estimated cost or exceeds into the next approval threshold are reported to Reclamation's CFO;
- (2) all Reclamation-hosted conferences over \$20,001 are reported to PFM;

¹¹ Refer to the [DOI International Travel Guidance for DOI Employees, NIA 01-01, Reclamation's International Affairs Program](#), and the [Reclamation Travel Requirements – International Affairs Intranet \(usbr.gov\)](#) for policies, requirements and further guidance on international travel.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- (3) all conferences requested over \$100,000 are reported to PFM;
 - (4) all conferences requested over \$500,000 are reported to PFM with the conference description and Secretarial Waiver Approval and posted on the Department website by PFM;
 - (5) all conferences not reported on the Annual Plan or the Quarterly Update that exceed \$25,000 are reported to the PFM within 15 calendar days following conclusion of the conference.
4. **Internal Reviews.**
- A. **Reclamation Leadership Team Member.** The RLT member shall implement internal processes and procedures, and ensure adequate internal controls are established as it pertains to conferences in accordance with this D&S and the OMB Circular No. A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Controls*¹².
 - B. **Budget Services Branch.** PBS will conduct periodic internal control reviews of the regions and directorates conference processes and procedures to ensure compliance of this D&S and the OMB Circular No. A-123.
5. **Records.** Recordkeeping protocols shall be sufficient to answer possible future inquiries regarding Reclamation's role in conferences, including cost and benefit to Reclamation. Records for all conferences are maintained in accordance with Reclamation's Information Management Handbook and RCD 05-01, Information Management.
6. **Definitions.**
- A. **Annual Plan.** A consolidated list of Reclamation-hosted or external conferences and sponsorships planned for a given fiscal year.
 - B. **Attendee.** A person who is physically attending (i.e., not virtually) a conference.
 - C. **Bureau Conference Coordinator (BCC).** Reclamation's conference liaison between the Department, the DCCs and is Reclamation's POC for coordinating the approval and reporting of Reclamation-hosted conferences, externally hosted conference attended by Reclamation employees, and Reclamation sponsored conferences.

¹² Refer to the OMB Circular website for [OMB Circular A-123](#).

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

D. Conference.

- (1) A conference is a meeting, workshop, retreat, seminar, symposium, or other event that involves attendee travel and the following travel conference attendance purpose code definition applies:
 - (a) Travel performed in connection with a prearranged meeting, workshop, retreat, convention, seminar, or symposium for consultation or exchange of information or discussion. Example includes the participation in a planned program as a speaker/panelist or other form of presenter, host, planner, or other designated role to oversee the conference; attendance with no formal role; or as an exhibitor.
- (2) If the Mission (Operational) or Training Attendance purpose codes apply to the travel, then it is NOT considered a conference:
 - (a) ***Mission (Operational) Purpose Codes.*** Travel to a particular site to perform operational or managerial activities. Travel to attend a meeting to discuss general agency operations, review status reports, or discuss topics of general interest. Examples: Employee's day-to-day operational or managerial activities, to include, but not be limited to hearings, site visit, chartered Reclamation team meetings, information meeting to include only government personnel, inspections, audits, investigations, and examinations. Employees participating in such operational or managerial events should record the travel purpose code as Mission (Operational).
 - (b) ***Training Attendance Purpose Codes.*** Travel in conjunction with educational activities to become proficient or qualified in one or more areas of responsibility. Section 4109 of Title 5, United States Code (5 U.S.C. § 4109), states Agencies may sponsor an employee's attendance at a conference as a developmental assignment under 5 U.S.C. § 4110, when:
 - (i) The announced purpose of the conference is educational or instructional;
 - (ii) More than half of the time is scheduled for a planned, organized exchange of information between presenters and audience which meets the definition of training in 5 U.S.C. § 4101(4);
 - (iii) The content of the conference is germane to improving individual and/or organizational performance; and
 - (iv) Development benefits will be derived through the employee's attendance.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- (v) Training attendance requires an SF-182 Form to be processed¹³.
- E. **Directorate Conference Coordinator (DCC).** The subject matter expert on conferences for their office/region. The DCC is also the principal POC for the BCC to coordinate the reporting and approval of conferences under their area of responsibility.
- F. **Document Tracking System (DTS).** DTS is a web-based application designed to manage the tracking and surnaming of electronic documents.
- G. **Externally Hosted Conference.** Hosted by other entities (bureaus, agencies, or another entity) that include workshops, meetings, seminars, symposia, or similar events that Reclamation employees attend.
- H. **Program and Budget Services Brand (PBS).** The PBS is a division within MSO and is the implementing and originating office of the conference program. The PBS ensures implementation and maintenance of the program throughout Reclamation.
- I. **Responsible Reclamation Leadership Team (RLT) Member.** An RLT member directs the Reclamation office which has been identified by the BCC as having the greatest proposed attendance costs of Reclamation employees at an externally hosted conference of \$10,000 or more or an RLT member express interest in leading the conference approval package.
- J. **Reclamation Chief Financial Officer (CFO).** Reclamation's Deputy Commissioner of Policy, Administration, and Budget identified in FMM 2021-021 as the Senior Bureau/Office Management.
- K. **Reclamation-Hosted Conferences.** A conference hosted by Reclamation when an RLT member's organization performs the logistical preparations for the conference such as:
- (1) creating an agenda;
 - (2) scheduling presenters and/or panels; and
 - (3) reserving conference rooms, conference facilities, hotel room blocks, audiovisual equipment, etc.
- L. **Reclamation Leadership Team (RLT) Member Organization.** An RLT member's organization are all Reclamation regional, area, field and other offices in which the RLT member directs. This does not include organizations external to Reclamation

¹³ All training attendance should refer [5 U.S.C. § 4101 \(4\) et seq.](#) and [HRM 01-01, Bureau of Reclamation Learning and Employee Development Program.](#)

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

such as Federal, State, local and stakeholder organizations that an RLT member is a member of or participates in as a representative of Reclamation.

- M. **Regional Acquisition Conference Coordinator (RACC).** The principal point of contact for the DCC to assist with preparation of the justification package to host a conference.
- N. **Sponsorship/Sponsored Conference.** Committing funds for conference sponsorship, membership, support, or advertising in accordance with sponsorship as discussed in the DOI FMM. Sponsorship does not include attendance fees.
- O. **Total Conference Expenses.** Total conference expenses include all direct and indirect conference costs paid by the Government, whether paid directly by agencies or reimbursed by agencies to travelers or others associated with the conference, but do not include funds paid under Federal grants to grantees.
- (1) Conference expenses include but are not limited to:
 - (a) any associated authorized travel and per diem expenses;
 - (b) rental of rooms for official business;
 - (c) audiovisual use;
 - (d) light refreshments;
 - (e) registration fees;
 - (f) ground transportation; and
 - (g) other expenses as defined by the FTR including:
 - (i) preparation and planning expenses, excluding Federal employee's time for conference preparation,
 - (ii) sponsorships;
 - (iii) advertising;
 - (iv) conference set-up; and
 - (v) speaker fees.
 - (2) For the purposes of this D&S, total conference expenses do not include costs to ensure the safety of attending Government officials or the wage/labor expense.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- P. **Virtual Conference/Attendee.** Conferences hosted on a virtual platform only, such as, but not limited to, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Video Teleconference (VTC) system, etc. There is no attendee incurred cost for travel. A virtual attendee attends the conference via a virtual platform.
7. **Review Period.** The originating office will review this release every 4 years.
8. **Appendices.**
- Appendix A Conference Annual Plan/Quarterly Update
 - Appendix B Department Conference Activity and Spending Plan
 - Appendix C Conference Annual Plan Reporting Procedures
 - Appendix D Conference Approval and Reporting Matrix
 - Appendix E Conference Approval Package Checklist
 - Appendix F Secretarial Waiver Memorandum
 - Appendix G Conference Approval Package Procedures
 - Appendix H Post Conference Reporting Procedures
 - Appendix I Report of Actual Conference Costs and Checklist
 - Appendix J Conference Approval Request Form
 - Appendix K Cost Estimated Worksheet
 - Appendix L Note to Reviewer (NTR) – Conference Review
 - Appendix M Memorandum for Conference Approval
 - Appendix N Department Multi-City Worksheet
 - Appendix O Department Checklist for Evaluation of Proposed Conference
 - Appendix P Sponsorship Memorandum
 - Appendix Q List of Acronyms