

**§ 302.709**

the time of termination of such conference.

**§ 302.709 Scope of conferences.**

The mail rate conferences shall be limited to the discussion of, and possible agreement on, particular issues and related factual material in accordance with sound rate-making principles. The duties and powers of DOT employees in rate conferences essentially will not be different, therefore, from the duties and powers they have in the processing of rate cases not involving a rate conference. The employees' function in both instances is to present clearly to the DOT decisionmaker the issues and the related material facts, together with recommendations. The DOT decisionmaker will make an independent determination of the soundness of the employees' analyses and recommendations.

**§ 302.710 Participants in conferences.**

The persons entitled to be present in mail rate conferences will be the representatives of the carrier whose rates are in issue, the staff of the U.S. Postal Service, and the authorized DOT employees. No other person will attend unless the DOT employees deem his or her presence necessary in the interest of one or more purposes to be accomplished, and in such case his or her participation will be limited to such specific purposes. No person, however, shall have the duty to attend merely by reason of invitation by the authorized DOT employees.

**§ 302.711 Conditions upon participation.**

(a) *Nondisclosure of information.* As a condition to participation, every participant, during the period of the conference and for ninety (90) days after its termination, or until the Department takes public action with respect to the facts and issues covered in the conference, whichever is earlier:

(1) Shall, except for necessary disclosures in the course of employment in connection with conference business, hold the information obtained in conference in absolute confidence and trust;

(2) Shall not deal, directly or indirectly, for the account of himself or

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herself, his or her immediate family, members of his or her firm or company, or as a trustee, in securities of the air carrier involved in the rate conference except that under exceptional circumstances special permission may be obtained in advance from the DOT decisionmaker; and

(3) Shall adopt effective controls for the confidential handling of such information and shall instruct personnel under his or her supervision, who by reason of their employment come into possession of information obtained at the conference, that such information is confidential and must not be disclosed to anyone except to the extent absolutely necessary in the course of employment, and must not be misused. (The term "information", as used in this section, shall refer only to information obtained at the conference regarding the future course of action or position of the Department or its employees with respect to the facts or issues discussed at the conference.)

(b) *Signed statement required.* Every representative of an air carrier actually present at any conference shall sign a statement that he or she has read this entire instruction and promises to abide by it and advise any other participant to whom he or she discloses any confidential information of the restrictions imposed above. Every representative of the U.S. Postal Service actually present at any conference shall, on his or her own behalf, sign a statement to the same effect.

(c) *Presumption of having conference information.* A director of any air carrier that has had a representative at the conference, who deals either directly or indirectly for himself or herself, his or her immediate family, members of his or her firm or company, or as a trustee, in securities of the air carrier involved in the conference, during the restricted period set forth above, shall be presumed to have come into possession of information obtained at the conference knowing that such information was subject to the restrictions imposed above; but such presumption can be rebutted.

(d) *Compliance report required.* Within ten (10) days after the expiration of the time specified for keeping conference