

§ 1275.105

14 CFR Ch. V (1–1–08 Edition)

Federal agency is underway or under active consideration, the OIG shall determine what information, if any, may be disclosed to the Respondent or to NASA employees.

(e) To the extent possible, the identity of sources who wish to remain anonymous shall be kept confidential. To the extent allowed by law, documents and files maintained by the OIG during the course of an inquiry or investigation of misconduct shall be treated as investigative files exempt from mandatory public disclosure upon request under the Freedom of Information Act.

(f) When the OIG proceeds with its own inquiry, it is responsible for ensuring that the inquiry is completed within 60 days after it is commenced. The OIG may extend this period of time for good cause.

(g) On the basis of what the OIG learns from an inquiry, and in consultation as appropriate with other NASA offices, the OIG shall decide whether a formal investigation is warranted.

§ 1275.105 Conduct of the OIG investigation of research misconduct.

(a) The OIG shall make every reasonable effort to complete a NASA research misconduct investigation and issue a report within 120 days after initiating the investigation. The OIG may extend this period of time for good cause.

(b) A NASA investigation may include:

(1) Review of award files, reports, and other documents readily available at NASA or in the public domain;

(2) Review of procedures or methods and inspection of laboratory materials, specimens, and records at awardee institutions;

(3) Interviews with parties or witnesses;

(4) Review of any documents or other evidence provided by or properly obtainable from parties, witnesses, or other sources;

(5) Cooperation with other Federal agencies; and

(6) Opportunity for the Respondent to be heard.

(c) The OIG may invite outside consultants or experts to participate in a NASA investigation.

(d) During the course of the investigation, the OIG shall provide a draft of the investigation report to the Respondent, who shall be invited to submit comments. The Respondent must submit any comments within 20 days of receipt of the draft investigation report. This period of time may be extended by the OIG for good cause. Any comments submitted by the Respondent shall receive full consideration before the investigation report is made final.

(e) At the end of the investigation proceedings, an investigation report must be prepared that shall include recommended findings as to whether research misconduct has occurred. A recommended finding of research misconduct requires that:

(1) There be a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community for maintaining the integrity of the research record;

(2) The research misconduct be committed intentionally, knowingly, or in reckless disregard of accepted practices; and

(3) The allegation be proven by a preponderance of evidence.

(f) The investigation report must also be transmitted with the recommendations for administrative action, when recommended findings of research misconduct are made. Section 1275.106 lists possible recommended administrative actions and considerations for use in determining appropriate recommendations.

(g) NASA OIG may elect to proceed with its administrative investigation processes in lieu of a research misconduct investigation under this part when the allegation is against a civil service employee (an intramural researcher).

§ 1275.106 Administrative actions.

(a) Listed in paragraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) of this section are possible administrative actions that may be recommended by the investigation report and adopted by the adjudication process. They are not exhaustive, and are in addition to any administrative