



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

**UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

FEB 29 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER  
VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS  
DIRECTOR, COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM  
EVALUATION  
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER  
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT  
DIRECTOR, NET ASSESSMENT  
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES  
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSDP  
(P&R)) Conference Guidance in Support of the Presidents Campaign to Cut Waste

Reference: (a) Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, December 21, 2011  
(b) Executive Order 13589, Cutting Waste and Promoting Efficient Spending in  
Government  
(c) Under Secretary of Defense Memorandum, February 7, 2012

It is essential that all Components listed in (Reference (a)) implement controls to support the President's order to cut waste and promote efficient spending in all areas, including conferences (Reference (b)). As responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars, we must seize every opportunity to improve Government management and pursue efficiencies so that we save money and deliver the highest quality of service. Exercising strict fiscal responsibility in planning, attending, and hosting conferences and changing the "business as usual" mindset as it relates to conferences is just one of these areas. Experience has shown that conferences are an expensive means to train, plan, collaborate and disseminate information. When it is determined that only a conference will suffice to accomplish official business, we must ensure that all conference-related events comply with law, regulation and policy.

Each Military Department, Defense Agency, Department of Defense Field Activity, Combatant Command and Principle Staff Assistant (PSA) appointed a Responsible Official (RO) in accordance with the references. The ROs shall ensure that conferences for their organization are in compliance with all applicable guidance. The ROs shall ensure that attendees to conferences are kept to the minimum number required and that attendance at a conference supports mission requirements. Alternatives to attending and hosting conferences such as local-

area meetings, teleconferencing, and video conferencing shall be ruled out before committing government funds. The utility and frequency of conferences shall be mitigated by the advances and investments we have made with video conferencing.

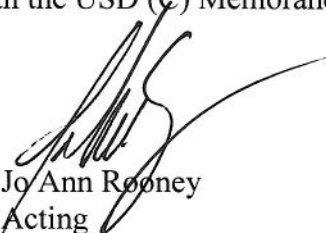
In addition to cost consideration, the selection of the conference site shall be sensitive to public perception. When sponsoring a conference, Components shall review and adhere strictly to all applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including this memorandum. Only conferences that comply with such laws, regulations, and policies, and represent your organizations in a manner consistent with the highest ethical standards, shall be approved.

Each Component shall adopt a local-first policy for conference site selection. To the extent possible, Federal Government facilities shall be utilized. Ensuring that we are good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars is everyone's responsibility. The ROs are responsible for reviewing internal procedures for attending and hosting conferences and monitoring the progress within their organizations. Internal procedures and all travel regulations shall be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance as updates and amendments are issued. I charge each of you to consider how you can contribute to cost savings and the elimination of waste in conference planning. Responsible Officials are expected to disapprove conference requests that do not comply with governing laws, regulations, policies, including this guidance.

OUSD (P&R) in conjunction with the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) (USD (C)), Deputy Chief Management Officer, and Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE), is developing a set of best practices for conference spending. The Director, CAPE is currently updating the cost analysis tools used for hosting and attending meetings based on the inputs of the Components. When completed, these tools, in addition to the data being collected by USD (C), will be used to establish an acceptable cost range for conferences. Determining what constitutes an "acceptable cost range" can only be accomplished if all Components accurately report and track their conference expenditures. Once established, the best practices and cost range will be promulgated to the ROs and will be intended to serve as a guideline for planning.

The Military Departments have led the way in implementing strict controls and reducing costs associated with conferences. Continue to improve upon the progress you have made and maintain the momentum in supporting the President's campaign to cut waste. All of us shall exercise fiscal restraint and ensure that tax payer's dollars are only spent when they support mission requirements.

The ROs will be required to report the specific steps and controls they have put into action to support this guidance in accordance with the USD (C) Memorandum (Reference (c)).

  
Jo Ann Rooney  
Acting