

Army Regulation 1–50

Administration

Army Conference Policy

**Headquarters
Department of the Army
Washington, DC
30 August 2023**

UNCLASSIFIED

SUMMARY of CHANGE

AR 1-50
Army Conference Policy

This administrative revision, dated 18 September 2023—

- o Replaces references to “Department of Defense Deputy Chief Management Officer” with “Office of the Secretary of Defense Director of Administration and Management” (throughout).

This mandated revision, dated 30 August 2023—

- o Updates address for suggested improvements (title page).
- o Inserts records management requirements (para 1-5).
- o Updates website for the Army conferences home page and Army Conference Reporting and Tracking Tool (para 1-6a).
- o Updates email address for Army conferences inbox (para 1-6b).
- o Removes responsibilities of principal officials as approval authorities for actual expense allowances between 150 and 300 percent to align with changes to the Joint Travel Regulations granting such authority to authorizing officials (formerly paras 2-5c).
- o Removes restriction for approving multiple recurring conferences in a single memorandum to align with DoD Conference Guidance (paras 3-1j and 4-1c).
- o Incorporates changes to the Joint Travel Regulations granting authorizing officials actual expense authority up to 300 percent of the per diem rate (paras 4-1c, 4-4b, and 7-1f).
- o Removes references to principal official approval of actual expense authorizations between 150 and 300 percent (tables 4-1 and 4-2).
- o Updates website for the Federal Emergency Management Agency hotel-motel national master list (para 6-1b).
- o Updates General Services Administration website for state tax exemption information (para 7-1c).
- o Updates references (app A).

Administration
Army Conference Policy

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

RANDY A. GEORGE
*General, Acting United States Army
Chief of Staff*

Official:



MARK F. AVERILL
*Administrative Assistant to the
Secretary of the Army*

History. This publication is an administrative revision. The portions affected by this administrative revision are listed in the summary of change.

Summary. This Army regulation provides the basis for designated Army leaders to make informed decisions about hosting and attending conferences. It will also guide conference stakeholders throughout the requesting, approving, and reporting processes for conferences. The processes outlined in this policy are deliberately designed to ensure compliance with Office of Management and Budget and Department of Defense policies and to optimize the use of scarce resources. This regulation executes the Department of Defense conference guidance.

Applicability. This regulation applies to the Regular Army, the U.S. Army

Reserve, those organizations the Secretary of the Army is the designated Department of Defense Executive Agent for, and organizations whose activities the Army funds (regardless of the fund source), unless the Office of the Secretary of Defense has otherwise granted them approval authority. It does not apply to events fully funded with nonappropriated funds or foreign military sales. This policy covers conferences the Department of the Army hosts and co-sponsors, as well as conferences Army personnel attend. It does not apply to Army National Guard events. In accordance with Department of Defense policy, the Chief, National Guard Bureau will promulgate conference policy for the Army National Guard.

Proponent and exception authority. The proponent of this regulation is the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. The proponent has the authority to approve exceptions or waivers to this regulation that are consistent with controlling law and regulations. The proponent may delegate this approval authority, in writing, to a division chief within the proponent agency or its direct reporting unit or field operating agency, in the grade of colonel or the civilian equivalent. Activities may request a waiver to this regulation by providing justification that includes a full analysis of the expected benefits and must include formal review

by the activity's senior legal officer. All waiver requests will be endorsed by the commander or senior leader of the requesting activity and forwarded through their higher headquarters to the policy proponent. Refer to AR 25–30 for specific guidance.

Army internal control process. This regulation contains internal control provisions in accordance with AR 11–2 and identifies key internal controls that must be evaluated (see appendix B).

Supplementation. Supplementation of this regulation and establishment of command and local forms are prohibited without prior approval from the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army (SAAA–EX), 105 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310–0105.

Suggested improvements. Users are invited to send comments or suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, Special Programs Directorate, usarmy.belvoir.hqda-oaa.mbx.army-hqda-conferences-inbox@army.mil.

Distribution. This publication is available in electronic media only and is intended for the Regular Army and the U.S. Army Reserve.

Contents (Listed by paragraph and page number)

Chapter 1

Introduction, page 1

Purpose • 1–1, page 1

References and forms • 1–2, page 1

Explanation of abbreviations and terms • 1–3, page 1

Responsibilities • 1–4, page 1

Records management (recordkeeping) requirements • 1–5, page 1

Resources • 1–6, page 1

Intent • 1–7, page 1

Determination of a conference • 1–8, page 1

Types of conferences • 1–9, page 2

Exemptible events • 1–10, page 3

*This regulation supersedes AR 1-50, dated 2 July 2018.

Contents—Continued

Use of the Army Conference Reporting and Tracking Tool • 1–11, *page 4*

Chapter 2

Responsibilities, *page 4*

Secretary of the Army • 2–1, *page 4*

Chief of Staff of the Army • 2–2, *page 4*

Under Secretary of the Army • 2–3, *page 4*

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, Commanding Generals of Army commands, and Director of the Army Staff • 2–4, *page 5*

Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army • 2–5, *page 5*

Deputy commanding generals and civilian equivalents of Army commands, commanders of Army service component commands and direct reporting units, and principal officials of Headquarters, Department of the Army • 2–6, *page 5*

General officers, members of the senior executive service, and O–6/GS–15 commanders of Army medical centers and community hospitals • 2–7, *page 5*

Chapter 3

Roles, *page 6*

Approval authorities • 3–1, *page 6*

Command conference managers • 3–2, *page 6*

Requesters • 3–3, *page 7*

Conference leads • 3–4, *page 7*

Conference planners • 3–5, *page 7*

Conference participants • 3–6, *page 7*

Chapter 4

Conference Approvals, *page 8*

Approval documentation • 4–1, *page 8*

Army-hosted approval tiers • 4–2, *page 8*

Participation in non-Department of Defense-hosted conferences • 4–3, *page 9*

Approvals for special circumstances • 4–4, *page 9*

Office of the Chief of Army Reserve, U.S. Army Reserve Command, and Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command approvals • 4–5, *page 10*

Chapter 5

Conference Request Requirements, *page 10*

General • 5–1, *page 10*

Additional requirements for Army-hosted conferences • 5–2, *page 12*

Chapter 6

Hosting Policies, *page 12*

Selection of the conference site • 6–1, *page 12*

Conference attendees • 6–2, *page 13*

Conference fees • 6–3, *page 13*

Conference planners • 6–4, *page 13*

Honorariums and speaker fees • 6–5, *page 13*

Official representation funds • 6–6, *page 14*

Awards and gifts • 6–7, *page 14*

Entertainment-related expenses • 6–8, *page 14*

Contracting guidelines • 6–9, *page 14*

Army co-sponsored events • 6–10, *page 14*

Army-hosted events held in conjunction with non-Department of Defense-hosted events • 6–11, *page 15*

Chapter 7

Attendance Policies, *page 15*

General travel guidance • 7–1, *page 15*

Attending Army-hosted conferences • 7–2, *page 18*

Contents—Continued

Attending Department of Defense-hosted conferences • 7–3, *page 18*

Attending non-Department of Defense-hosted conferences • 7–4, *page 18*

Chapter 8

Reporting Requirements, *page 19*

General reporting information • 8–1, *page 19*

Types of conference reporting • 8–2, *page 19*

Appendixes

A. References, *page 20*

B. Internal Control Evaluation, *page 22*

Table List

Table 4–1: Army-hosted approval tiers, *page 8*

Table 4–2: Non-DoD-hosted approval authorities, *page 9*

Table 8–1: Reporting requirements, *page 19*

Glossary

Chapter 1

Introduction

1–1. Purpose

The approval of conference participation involves many factors governed by regulations and policies, including travel, fiscal, contracting, training, recordkeeping, and ethics. This policy establishes the framework to execute Department of Defense (DoD) conference policy; provides overarching guidance to help personnel requesting to attend conferences and planners hosting conferences; and guides various other stakeholders—legal advisors, resource managers, approval authorities, and so on—through the decision-making process. Commands, organizations, and activities are encouraged to establish internal policies and processes. However, any additional restrictions must be briefed to the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army (OAASA), Special Programs Directorate (SPD) before implementation. All implemented policies must balance the need to maintain oversight to ensure appropriate fiscal responsibility while also removing excessive burdens.

1–2. References and forms

See appendix A.

1–3. Explanation of abbreviations and terms

See the glossary.

1–4. Responsibilities

See chapter 2.

1–5. Records management (recordkeeping) requirements

The records management requirement for all record numbers, associated forms, and reports required by this publication are addressed in the Records Retention Schedule–Army (RRS–A). Detailed information for all related record numbers, forms, and reports are located in Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS)/RRS–A at <https://www.arims.army.mil>. If any record numbers, forms, and reports are not current, addressed, and/or published correctly in ARIMS/RRS–A, see DA Pam 25–403 for guidance.

1–6. Resources

These resources may help all conference stakeholders:

- a.* Army conferences home page and Army Conference Reporting and Tracking Tool (ACRTT): <https://oaacustomer.army.mil/cac/conferences.aspx> (common access card required).
- b.* Army conference inbox: hqda.conferences.inbox@army.mil.
- c.* SPD hotline: 703–545–8227.

1–7. Intent

The Army must always seek the most cost-effective and efficient methods to plan and manage missions, train personnel, and share information. A conference may be the appropriate means to accomplish certain Army objectives. The Army must remain a good steward of taxpayer dollars by keeping costs and attendance levels to the minimum necessary to accomplish the mission, while realizing the benefits of hosting or attending a conference. The participation of every conference attendee, including support staff, must be appropriately related to official duties and demonstrably benefit the Army. When conference participation is authorized, we must maximize the use of government and military facilities and exercise strict fiscal responsibility, good common sense regarding public perceptions, and ethical behavior in both hosting conferences and participating in DoD-hosted and non-DoD-hosted conferences. The Army's commitment to the oversight of conference activities—those we host and those we attend—must be a continuous effort and will remain an enduring mission.

1–8. Determination of a conference

The determination of whether an event is a conference and subject to this regulation is often a complicated, multistep process. The first step is to identify whether the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) definition of a conference applies to the event, and the next step is to identify and analyze whether the event has specific indicia of a conference. The JTR definition of a conference and the indicia for each individual event generally supply enough information for a fact-

based determination. Consult your legal counsel for assistance in determining whether an event is a conference. If you cannot make a clearcut determination, categorize the event as a conference and process it under this regulation. Commands, organizations, and activities will develop internal processes to ensure that conference determinations are made consistent with this regulation.

a. Definition of a conference. The JTR defines “conference” as “A meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or event that involves attendee travel. This definition also applies to training activities that are conferences under 5 CFR 410.404.”

b. Indicia of a conference. Conferences are often referred to as expositions, conventions, symposiums, seminars, workshops, exhibitions, or meetings. Regardless of how the event is titled, an event may still qualify as a conference under this regulation. In addition to attendee travel, indicia of a conference include, but are not limited to, topics of interest to, and the participation of, multiple agencies and/or non-federal participants; a registration process; registration fees; use of commercial facilities; a published substantive agenda (often on a website); scheduled speakers or discussion panels; multiple day agendas; guest speakers; affiliated social events; and the use of official representation funds in support of the event. Generally, the presence or absence of any one indicator is not enough to determine whether the event is a conference; you must weigh the presence of all the applicable indicia. In almost all cases, events that include government-funded travel and are conducted in commercial facilities instead of government-owned facilities are conferences.

c. Events not subject to the conference policy. After carefully reviewing the event in question against the JTR definition and the indicia, if the determination is that the event is not a conference, then the event is not subject to this regulation. If a clear-cut determination cannot be made, categorize the event as a conference and process it under this regulation. Events that are generally not considered to be conferences include individual participation in job fairs for the purposes of seeking employment; travel for the purpose of conducting investigations or audits; attendance at chaplain-led events (including Strong Bonds), widely attended gatherings as determined by appropriate legal counsel, industry days, and trade shows; participation in residency and fellowship programs; or enrollment in bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree programs. Events that are not characterized as a conference under this regulation do not require the conference request and approval process delineated in this regulation. However, attendees will follow DoD, Army, and their organization’s temporary duty (TDY) policies and abide by all pertinent travel policies and guidelines.

1–9. Types of conferences

Conferences can be categorized as Army-hosted, Army co-sponsored, DoD-hosted, or non-DoD-hosted. Each type of event may also qualify as a conference with unique circumstances or an exemptible event. The approval process differs based on these categories. Additional definitions for each type of conference are in the glossary.

a. Army-hosted conferences. Army organizations often plan, fund, or execute conferences. Generally, most of the participants are Army personnel and the conference topic is specific to the Army. These events may also be called Army-sponsored conferences.

(1) *Army co-sponsored conferences.* On occasion, an Army command (ACOM), organization, or activity may co-sponsor an event with another organization. The Army is a co-sponsor of an event when an ACOM, organization, or activity develops the substantive aspects of the event; provides substantial logistical support as defined by DoD 5500.7–R, or provides 50 percent or more of the speakers at an event. Army co-sponsored conferences are a type of Army-hosted conference.

(2) *Army-hosted events held in conjunction with non-Department of Defense-hosted events.* At times, the Army and a non-DoD organization may concurrently or sequentially host separate events in the same location. These events are separate and distinct despite sharing a time or location.

b. Department of Defense-hosted conferences. On occasion, another non-Army, DoD organization, such as the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, or Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), will host a conference where participation may benefit the Army. For conferences hosted by a DoD organization external to the Army, the host DoD component is responsible for estimating, approving, and reporting total DoD attendance and costs.

c. Non-Department of Defense-hosted conferences. The Army may find it beneficial to participate in conferences hosted by a non-DoD organization, such as another Federal Government agency or a non-federal entity (NFE). Non-DoD conference participation encompasses all Army employees attending or participating at Army expense, including speakers, presenters, panel members, awardees, or support staff, and may include the provision of exhibits and logistical support. To ensure fiscal responsibility and appropriate oversight, a limited number of non-DoD-hosted conferences, identified in an annual tasking memorandum signed by the Director of the Army Staff (DAS), will be assigned a conference lead. These conferences require approval at a higher level because of a number of potential factors, including cross-command participation, high costs, high visibility, or the involvement of proffered funds to the Army (excluding command or individual-specific proffers). Consequently, SPD will centrally manage these conferences.

d. Conferences with unique circumstances.

(1) *Local conferences.* Based on the JTR definition of a conference, local conferences generally are not subject to this policy, even if they involve reimbursable local travel costs (such as parking or local mileage). However, local conferences with registration or other similar fees are subject to this policy.

(2) *Virtual conferences.* Based on the JTR definition of a conference, participation in virtual conferences involving absolutely no attendee travel, even if virtual participation incurs a registration fee, is not a conference. No conference approval is required for virtual participation but attendees must adhere to all relevant policies. Participation in virtual conferences that require attendee travel meet the JTR definition of a conference and are subject to this regulation.

(3) *No-cost conferences.* At times, Army organizations may attend conferences at no cost to the Army. This can occur through waived registration fees, local attendance, or “gifted” travel benefits under 31 USC 1353. For conferences involving absolutely no reimbursable costs or other Army expenditures, conference approval is not necessary; follow your organization’s TDY or attendance policy. Miscellaneous official travel expenses, such as per diem on travel days, parking, and local travel, often are not covered by gifted travel benefits. If an Army attendee claims those expenses as reimbursable travel costs on an official travel voucher, the attendance is no longer “no cost,” and the attendee’s participation in the conference will require approval under this policy.

1–10. Exemptible events

Certain types of events may be exempted from this regulation, even if the event exhibits indicia of a conference. Only general officers (GOs) or members of the senior executive service (SESs) may determine an event is exempt from this regulation; however, legal counsel and SPD may offer assistance. No recordkeeping is required for exemption determinations; therefore, do not enter exemptions into ACRTT. Exemptions from this regulation will be granted only when events fully and unambiguously meet the definition and intent of the criteria. Determination of an exemption must be made on a case-by-case basis after a thorough review of the characteristics of an individual event. Categorical or blanket exemptions—that is, exempting a category rather than explicitly identified individual events—is prohibited. If an event clearly meets the exemption criteria, no conference action is required after the GO/SES determination; however, all other relevant policies, such as for travel, must be followed. Events that involve spouse travel at Government expense (except as specified in paragraph 1–10*d*) or are identified in the annual DAS tasking memorandum for non-DoD conferences are not exemptible; such events will be categorized as conferences and processed in accordance with this regulation. Events with costs exceeding \$500,000 require the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army (AASA)’s approval of the exemption; submit a conference request. These exemptions apply to Army-, DoD-, and non-DoD-hosted events. The following types of events are exemptible:

a. Meetings necessary to carry out statutory command and staff oversight functions. This exemption includes activities such as investigations, inspections, audits, or nonconference planning site visits. Other considerations are—

(1) The meeting is directly tied to language in a statute, Governmentwide regulation, or DoD regulation.

(2) The meeting is related to an official inquiry or investigation based on reported wrongdoing or reports of systemic problems. In these cases, the inquiry or investigation generally is conducted by a single official and is directed by a formal appointment memorandum.

(3) The exemption does not apply broadly to meetings designed to improve policies or processes or to prepare reports, such as “reengineering,” “strategic planning,” and the like, even if the product of the meeting is a report mandated by statute or regulation.

b. Meetings to consider internal agency business matters. This exemption includes activities such as meetings that take place as part of an organization’s regular course of business. Events will be exempt only if the Army is the host, the event is held in a government or military facility, attendees are predominantly government personnel, and the agenda usually does not exceed more than three days.

c. Meetings necessary to carry out planning or execution of operational or operational exercise activities or pre-deployment, deployment, or post-deployment activities. This exemption includes activities such as planning and preparation for, as well as execution of, war games, military exercises, and operational deployments.

d. Bilateral and multilateral international cooperation engagements. This exemption includes activities such as international military education and training events, traditional commander’s activities, and other regional assistance programs. It also includes many of the activities of the department’s regional security centers. Bilateral and multilateral international cooperation engagements provide a unique opportunity for the U.S. Army and its allies to develop and maintain beneficial international relationships and collaborate on necessary military matters. Therefore, if foreign participants’ spouses participate in an event in an official capacity, and an ACOM, organization, or activity determines that the Army would demonstrably benefit from the participation of U.S. Army spouses in an official capacity, they may do so without triggering conference approval. However, all relevant travel policies apply.

e. Formal classroom training. This exemption includes activities such as regular courses of instruction or training seminars. These activities may be offered by government organizations, institutions of higher learning or professional licensure or certification, or other training entities. However, events are not exempt simply because they offer continuing education credits or the equivalent. Even when a portion of a larger event involves formal classroom training, this does not mean the event as a whole falls within this exemption. For example, if the annual meeting of organization X has sessions that consist of formal classroom training but the remainder of the events do not, the event as a whole does not fall within the exemption. Formal classroom training conducted in a conference center, hotel, or other non-training commercial facility does not qualify for this exemption unless a college or university conducts the training. Some indicia of formal classroom training are—

- (1) The sole purpose is training, as opposed to networking, sharing best practices, or other similar purposes.
- (2) Continuing education credit is available for all event sessions other than meals.
- (3) The event is held in a government or military facility or a facility regularly used for training, such as a university classroom, and not a hotel or conference center.
- (4) The means of instruction is typically in a classroom setting with an instructor and not speaking with exhibitors or obtaining others' views through participation in small groups.

f. Other ceremonies. Change of command, official military award, funeral, or other such ceremonies.

g. Recruitment. Events where the primary purpose of DoD's participation is military or civilian recruiting and/or recruitment advertising.

h. Advisory committees. Meetings of advisory committees subject to DoDI 5105.04, where the membership of the committee consists of one or more individuals who are not full-time or permanent part-time Federal officers, employees, or military personnel.

1–11. Use of the Army Conference Reporting and Tracking Tool

ACRTT is an online system designed to increase efficiency and decrease errors in the conference request and reporting processes. To ensure audit readiness, ACRTT will be the central repository for all conference-related documents. Information in ACRTT helps generate required reports; therefore, the command conference manager will ensure that all information is both timely and accurate regardless of the approval authority. ACRTT will be used to—

- a.* Fulfill all reporting requirements.
- b.* Submit, via the submission module and before approval, all Army-hosted conference requests regardless of the approval authority.
- c.* Submit, via the submission module, all non-DoD-hosted conference requests requiring Secretary of the Army (SECARMY), Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), or AASA approval.
- d.* Report all GO/SES-approved participation in non-DoD-hosted conferences.
- e.* Maintain all conference-related documents.

Chapter 2 Responsibilities

Responsibilities for officials identified in the next paragraphs apply to hosting Army conferences and attending non-DoD-hosted conferences.

2–1. Secretary of the Army

The SECARMY will serve as a Tier One approval authority.

2–2. Chief of Staff of the Army

The CSA will—

- a.* Serve as a Tier Two approval authority for the Offices of the CSA, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA), DAS, and Sergeant Major of the Army; Army service component commands (ASCCs); and direct reporting units (DRUs) reporting directly to the CSA.
- b.* Fulfill the roles and responsibilities of conference approval authorities outlined in paragraph 3–1.

2–3. Under Secretary of the Army

If delegated authority by the SECARMY, the USA will—

- a.* Serve as a Tier One approval authority.
- b.* Act on conference actions on behalf of the SECARMY in the SECARMY's absence.

2-4. Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, Commanding Generals of Army commands, and Director of the Army Staff

- a.* These senior officials will—
- (1) Serve as Tier Two approval authorities.
 - (2) Fulfill the roles and responsibilities of conference approval authorities as outlined in paragraph 3-1.
- b.* The VCSA and DAS are Tier Two approval authorities for the Offices of the CSA, VCSA, DAS, and Sergeant Major of the Army; ASCCs; and DRUs reporting directly to the CSA.

2-5. Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army

The AASA will—

- a.* Serve as the Army Conference Manager with responsibility to—
- (1) Publish Army conference policy.
 - (2) Assign conference leads on behalf of the SECARMY and in coordination with the DAS, who also has authority to assign conference leads.
 - (3) Review all conference request packages requiring the SECARMY's approval.
 - (4) Respond to congressional inquiries about the Army's conference activities as appropriate.
 - (5) Provide assistance to conference stakeholders through SPD.
 - (6) Provide the liaison between the OSD Director of Administration and Management (DA&M) and the Army.
 - (7) Serve as the approval authority for requests for exceptions to this regulation.
- b.* Serve as a Tier Two approval authority. As a Tier Two approval authority, the AASA will—
- (1) Fulfill the roles and responsibilities of conference approval authorities outlined in paragraph 3-1.
 - (2) Act on conference requests with costs less than \$500,000 when the designated approval authority is unavailable.
- c.* Establish and maintain Armywide conference management support within SPD. SPD will—
- (1) Draft Army conference policy.
 - (2) Manage and provide training for ACRTT.
 - (3) Review conference request packages for SECARMY or AASA approval.
 - (4) Report the Army's conference activities to the OSD DA&M as appropriate.
 - (5) Facilitate the assignment of conference leads.
 - (6) Act as the subject matter expert and primary point of contact on behalf of the Army during all internal and external audits of the Army's conference activities.
 - (7) Draft responses to congressional inquiries on the Army's conference activities for the approval and signature of the SECARMY or AASA.
 - (8) Provide guidance and assistance to conference stakeholders.
 - (9) Draft and publicize required templates for conference requests and after action reports (AARs).
 - (10) Serve as the liaison between the Office of the OSD DA&M and the Army.

2-6. Deputy commanding generals and civilian equivalents of Army commands, commanders of Army service component commands and direct reporting units, and principal officials of Headquarters, Department of the Army

When the position is held by a GO or SES, these officials will—

- a.* Serve as Tier Three approval authorities for Army-hosted conferences.
- b.* Delegate further, at their discretion and when appropriate, Tier Three conference approval authority in writing to GOs or SESs within their command, organization, or activity.
- c.* Fulfill the roles and responsibilities of conference approval authorities outlined in paragraph 3-1.

2-7. General officers, members of the senior executive service, and O-6/GS-15 commanders of Army medical centers and community hospitals

These personnel have limited approval authority for participation in non-DoD conferences. In this capacity, these officials will—

- a.* Serve as the approval authority for participation in non-DoD-hosted conferences with costs less than \$100,000 and fewer than 50 Army attendees within his or her purview.
- b.* Ensure all approval memorandums are loaded into ACRTT in accordance with the timelines set forth in this regulation.
- c.* Fulfill the roles and responsibilities of conference approval authorities outlined in paragraph 3-1.

Chapter 3

Roles

Roles for officials identified in the next paragraphs apply to hosting Army conferences and attending non-DoD-hosted conferences. Roles may be filled by one or more persons at various levels throughout the Army.

3–1. Approval authorities

Conference approval authorities will—

a. Review all conference requests thoroughly for compliance with this regulation; the DoD conference policy; and all applicable laws, regulations, and policies (such as travel and ethics). Particular areas of focus are purpose and justification, funding and contracts, cost-benefit analysis, attendees, registration fees, refreshments (Army-hosted), honoraria or speaker fees (Army-hosted), per diem and any provided meals, and estimated costs.

b. Approve only those requests that are demonstrably beneficial to the Army and appropriately related to attendees' official duties; are cost-effective; and are in the best interests of the Army, the U.S. Government, and taxpayers.

c. Consider not only the return on investment, but also the public perception of each event to ensure that participation benefits the Army.

d. Scrutinize any requests for actual expense allowance (AEA), rental vehicles, and local TDY to ensure that actual cost reimbursement is justified. Refer to paragraphs 7–1*d*, 7–1*f*, and 7–1*g* for information on rental vehicles, AEA, and local TDY.

e. Scrutinize any requests involving exhibits for a demonstrable return on investment. Exhibits tend to have high visibility and the potential to be expensive. Therefore, each exhibit must be carefully and thoroughly evaluated to ensure appropriate oversight and fiscal responsibility.

f. Document approval or disapproval in accordance with paragraph 4–1.

g. Disapprove requests when the return on investment is not evident, the number of participants is excessive, the request does not establish a demonstrable benefit to the Army for the participation of each proposed Army-funded attendee, the event appears to be an improper use of Government funds, the event has public perception issues, or the request otherwise lacks sound justification.

h. Be accountable for their decisions.

i. Maintain audit readiness.

j. As appropriate, and in accordance with DoD Conference Guidance, execute authority by discretion to provide one-time approval for recurring Army-sponsored or -hosted conferences (for example, annual conferences) within the overall limits of their approval authority for no more than 3 years. Approvals must be in a formal written memorandum and include control conditions based on historical execution of these events such as, but not limited to, cost limits, event durations, maximum attendance, location restrictions, and a statement that the actual conference execution is still subject to selection of conference site in accordance with paragraph 6–1, reporting requirements in accordance with chapter 8, and subject to availability of funding.

3–2. Command conference managers

Each Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) principal official, ACOM, ASCC, and DRU will have one primary command conference manager and one alternate. The name, phone number, and email address of these managers must be provided to SPD monthly and updated as changes occur. Each HQDA principal official, ACOM, ASCC, and DRU may have multiple subordinate organization conference managers, as necessary, to accomplish the conference mission. However, the command conference manager will be the point of contact for all component and subordinate organization conference matters. Command conference managers will—

a. Publicize command-level policies and procedures.

b. Prepare conference requests for the approval authority's review.

c. Review all requests and reports in ACRTT within the timelines identified in this regulation.

d. Submit all requests requiring SECARMY, CSA, or AASA approval via ACRTT. (SPD will accept requests only from the command conference manager.)

e. Ensure that requesters and other conference stakeholders within the organization, as necessary, are trained and proficient in the use of ACRTT.

f. Make sure all requests and reports use the required templates.

g. Maintain approval, request, and supporting documentation on file for a minimum of 5 years or longer to meet Army records management requirements. Electronic copies in ACRTT are acceptable and encouraged to maintain audit readiness.

h. Be the primary point of contact between SPD and the manager's respective command, organization, or activity for all conference matters.

i. Be the primary point of contact between the conference lead and the manager's respective command, organization, or activity.

3-3. Requesters

All persons or organizations submitting a conference request are called "requesters." Requesters will—

a. Submit requests for only those conferences that are demonstrably beneficial to the Army; appropriately related to official duties; cost-effective; and in the best interests of the Army, the U.S. Government, and taxpayers.

b. Ensure that requests comply with this regulation; the DoD conference policy; and all applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Particular areas of focus are purpose and justification, funding and contracts, cost-benefit analysis, attendees, registration fees, refreshments (Army-hosted), honoraria or speaker fees (Army-hosted), per diem and any provided meals, security (Army-hosted), estimated costs, use of rental vehicles, requests for AEA, requests for local TDY, and attendance by statutory volunteers.

c. Use and adhere to all instructions on required templates for conference requests and AARs.

d. Submit requests to the command conference manager via ACRTT.

e. Enter all requests and reports in ACRTT within the timelines identified in this regulation and command conference policies.

f. Provide information to the command conference manager for the timely submission of required reports as appropriate.

g. Adhere to all command, organization, or activity conference policies and command conference manager directions.

3-4. Conference leads

If the AASA or DAS assign a conference lead, the conference lead will—

a. Comply with all tasking instructions from the AASA, the DAS, or SPD, as appropriate.

b. Collect Armywide attendance information and cost estimates via ACRTT for submission to the approval authority.

c. Provide a copy of the approved request and approval memorandum to the command conference manager of all ACOMs, organizations, or activities identified in the request.

d. Ensure that Army participation does not exceed approved levels.

e. Compile individual AARs into a single Armywide AAR for the approval authority.

f. Maintain request, approval, and supporting documentation for 5 years or longer to meet Army records management requirements. Electronic copies in ACRTT are acceptable and encouraged to maintain audit readiness.

3-5. Conference planners

Army host organizations, specifically those personnel involved in the planning and execution of a conference, will—

a. Plan and execute the conference in the most cost-effective format possible.

b. Invite only the minimum number of personnel to accomplish the mission and whose participation is appropriately related to official duties and whose attendance demonstrably benefits the Army.

c. Consider government or military facilities first to conduct the event.

d. Not obligate any funds for nonrefundable expenses before obtaining written conference approval from the appropriate approval authority.

e. Adhere to all command, organization, or activity conference policies and command conference manager directions.

3-6. Conference participants

Conference participants are those personnel hosting, attending, or facilitating any conference, whether Army-, DoD-, or non-DoD-hosted. This includes the support staff of conference hosts or attendees. Conference participants will—

a. Represent the Army in a manner consistent with the Army's core values.

b. Participate in the most cost-effective method possible, including use of available options for virtual participation.

c. Participate only when the approval authority has determined that both the conference and the individual's participation is appropriately related to official duties and benefits the Army.

d. Provide attendance information and justification, cost estimates, and any requested information to the command conference manager.

e. Provide necessary information, identified in paragraph 5–1, to the conference lead (if assigned) through the command conference manager; adhere to conference lead-directed timelines; and participate only to the level the conference lead identified.

f. Not obligate any funds for nonrefundable expenses (such as registration fees or hotel reservations) before obtaining written conference approval from the appropriate approval authority.

g. Adhere to all command, organization, or activity conference policies and command conference manager directions.

Chapter 4 Conference Approvals

Conference approval authority is hereby delegated, and restricted, to those personnel listed in tables 4–1 and 4–2 and paragraph 4–2. Further delegation is prohibited unless provided for in this regulation or in writing by the SECARMY. Assumption of command authority does not extend to conference approval authority. Only those officials authorized by this policy may sign approval memorandums. For the purposes of this policy, the USA, if delegated, has the same authority as identified for the SECARMY. If an approval authority is unavailable to act on a conference request, the next higher approval authority may do so. The AASA may approve any conference with costs less than \$500,000 when the designated approval authority is unavailable. The SECARMY may grant a waiver for conferences with costs exceeding \$500,000; however, waivers will be limited and strictly scrutinized. If it becomes apparent, as the date of an Army-hosted conference approaches, that the total cost will exceed the estimated cost and breach the next approval threshold, approval must be obtained from the higher-level approval authority as soon as possible.

4–1. Approval documentation

All conference approvals, whether Army-, DoD-, or non-DoD-hosted, must adhere to the following:

a. Approval authorities will provide written approval or disapproval by memorandum. Other written approval or disapproval, such as email, line throughs, and internal routing documents (such as DA Form 5 (Army Staffing Form)), will not be considered written approval.

b. The memorandum must provide the conference name, dates, and location; number of attendees; estimated cost; local TDY (if approved); AEA (if approved); and spouse travel (if approved). For conferences requiring an AAR, the approval memorandum must state the requirement and suspense. Disapprovals must provide the rationale for disapproval.

c. Each event must have an approval memorandum and ACRTT entry. Approval authorities are authorized to provide one-time approval for recurring conferences in accordance with paragraph 3–1j.

d. A single memorandum may not serve as both the conference request and conference approval. The approval or disapproval memorandum must be separate and distinct from the request.

Table 4–1
Army-hosted approval tiers

Tier	Cost Threshold
One	DoD costs greater than \$500,000 ¹
Two	DoD costs less than or equal to \$500,000
Three	DoD costs less than or equal to \$100,000
SECARMY, Four-Star GOs, AASA	Conferences involving spouse travel at Army expense regardless of conference cost

Note:

¹ Generally prohibited but may receive a written waiver.

4–2. Army-hosted approval tiers

Officials identified in the following paragraphs may approve conferences their command, organization, or activity hosts. The approval authority is based on total cost to DoD, not just costs to the Army, and on the hosting organization. If two or more Army organizations co-sponsor a conference, the organization executing or funding the conference will obtain approval through its chain of command.

a. *Tier One.* This tier consists of the SECARMY and USA (if delegated authority by SECARMY). Requests requiring SECARMY approval must be endorsed by a Tier Two official and routed through the AASA.

b. *Tier Two.* This tier consists of the CSA; VCSA; Commanding General (CG), U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM); CG, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command; CG, U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC); CG, U.S. Army Futures Command; AASA; and DAS. See paragraphs 2–2 and 2–4 for the organizations the CSA, VCSA, and DAS are the approval authorities for. All other activities not reporting directly to an ACOM will route their requests to the AASA. Requests requiring AASA approval must be endorsed by a Tier Two official (if from a Tier Two organization) or Tier Three official (if from a Tier Three organization), or the most senior official in the requesting organization when the organization has no approval authority.

c. *Tier Three.* This tier consists of the Deputy CGs and civilian equivalent of ACOMs; commanders of ASCCs and DRUs; and HQDA principal officials when the position is held by a GO or SES. This authority may be further delegated in writing to GOs or SESs. Delegations are not effective until SPD receives a copy of the written delegation. Only those Tier One, Two, and Three officials explicitly identified in this policy may further delegate Tier Three authority; once delegated authority, Tier Three officials may not further delegate. In the case of ACOMs, the CG or Deputy CG may sign the delegation of authority.

Table 4–2
Non-DoD-hosted approval authorities

Approval Authority	Criteria
SECARMY	Army costs greater than \$500,000 ¹
CSA ² or AASA	Army costs \$100,000 to \$500,000, more than 50 attendees, on the DAS tasking memorandum, or proffered funds
GO/SES ³	GO/SES costs less than \$100,000 and fewer than 50 attendees within his or her purview
See Table 4–1	Spouse travel

Notes:

¹ Generally prohibited but may receive a written waiver.

² See paragraph 2–2 for organizations the CSA is the approval authority for.

³ A list of O–6 commanders of U.S. Army Medical Command military treatment facilities with conference approval authority is on the OAASA Conferences home page. No other medical treatment facility commanders are authorized conference approval authority.

4–3. Participation in non-Department of Defense-hosted conferences

The Army does not use tiered authorities to approve participation in non-DoD-hosted conferences. Generally, participation in these conferences should be treated like travel requests; a conference request and legal review are not required. However, the approval authority in table 4–2 must approve participation in a formal, written memorandum and report it in accordance with table 8–1. To ensure appropriate oversight and fiscal responsibility, a limited number of conferences with high costs or unusual circumstances, generally identified on the annual DAS tasking memorandum, require a full conference request and higher approval.

Note. Although a conference request and subsequent legal review may not be required, attendees may require an ethics legal review if they participate as a speaker or panel member in connection with the non-DoD-hosted conference or receive travel benefits (meals, lodging, or travel) paid for by an NFE. See paragraphs 5-1i and 7-1j.

4–4. Approvals for special circumstances

The following special circumstances apply to Army-, DoD-, and non-DoD-hosted conferences:

a. *Conferences involving spouse travel at Army expense.* Refer to table 4–1 for approval authorities. The SECARMY or AASA, as appropriate based on conference costs, are the approval authority for all commands, organizations, or activities without a four-star GO in their direct chain of command. OSD policy requires “enhanced scrutiny” of all conferences involving spouse travel at Government expense. Conferences involving spouse travel require a full conference request using the required request template regardless of the cost of the conference or approval authority. The conference and spouse travel requests cannot be separated to reduce the conference approval authority. Spouse travel at no cost to the Army does not fall into this special circumstance.

b. Conferences involving actual expense allowance. Conference approval authorities may approve conferences with AEA up to 300 percent when sufficient justification is provided; however, such instances should be rare. AEA will be approved only in those rare circumstances when compelling justification is provided.

Note. This does not include O–6 commanders of military treatment facilities with non-DoD-hosted conference approval authority.

c. Conferences involving proffered funds. Refer to table 4–2 for approval authorities. Proffers made directly to a command or individual may be approved via normal gift acceptance procedures.

4–5. Office of the Chief of Army Reserve, U.S. Army Reserve Command, and Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command approvals

a. Office of the Chief of Army Reserve events. The SECARMY, AASA, or Chief of Army Reserve (CAR), as an HQDA principal official, may approve conferences sponsored, hosted, or executed by the Office of the CAR when the primary purpose is to address specific Reserve Component-level issues. Determination of the approval authority must be based on the organization hosting or executing the event, not the proponent for the program, event topic, or original funding source. As an HQDA principal official, the CAR must obtain legal reviews from the Office of the Judge Advocate General, not FORSCOM or U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) legal counsel, for all conference requests the CAR approves.

b. Reserve Command events. Conferences USARC or one of its subordinate units sponsors, hosts, or executes must be routed to the CG, USARC (if delegated conference approval authority from the CG, FORSCOM); Deputy CG or CG, FORSCOM; or the SECARMY as appropriate. Determination of the approval authority will be based on the organization hosting or executing the event, not the proponent for the program, event topic, or original funding source. For example, the CG, USARC (if delegated conference approval authority from the CG, FORSCOM); Deputy CG or CG, FORSCOM; or the SECARMY as appropriate—not the CAR—must approve a Family programs training event a USARC subordinate unit hosts.

c. Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command events. Because the command is an ASCC, the CG may approve conferences as a Tier Three official. However, as a major subordinate command to AMC, command must forward conferences requiring Tier One or Two approval to the CG, AMC.

Chapter 5 Conference Request Requirements

A conference request is required for all Army-hosted conferences and participation in those non-DoD-hosted conferences requiring SECARMY, CSA, or AASA approval. Submit all conference requests to the approval authority through ACRTT regardless of the approval authority. All requests must use, and adhere to guidance on, the required templates. (Refer to paragraph 1–6 for the location of the templates.) Failure to provide detailed information or explanations may result in a delayed decision, return of the request without action, or disapproval. Unless the approval authority requires otherwise, participation in non-DoD-hosted conferences with costs less than \$100,000 and fewer than 50 attendees within a GO's/SES's purview do not require a conference request, only a written approval memorandum. All conferences requiring SECARMY, CSA, or AASA approval must have a full conference request; be endorsed by the HQDA principal official or ACOM, ASCC, or DRU commander (or civilian equivalent); and be submitted via ACRTT. For auditing purposes, all conference-related documents must be submitted in ACRTT. Use of ACRTT meets OSD's requirements for the retention of conference records. In addition to ACRTT-required fields, note the following requirements for conference requests.

5–1. General

a. Staffing. Staff all requests through the chain of command to the approval authority. The request must be signed or endorsed one tier lower than the approval authority or by the HQDA principal official or ACOM, ASCC, or DRU commander (or civilian equivalent), whichever is higher, or by the senior most official in the requesting organization if the organization does not have approval authority. SPD will accept requests only from command conference managers to ensure proper routing, approval, and reporting.

b. Timelines. All conference requests must be submitted to the approval authority at least 30 days before the date the approval authority's decision is needed. The 30 days should be calculated from the earliest deadline relating to the conference, such as the date to process travel orders, submit visa requests, qualify for early registration fees, enter contracts, and so forth. This date is often much earlier than the conference start date and should be clearly identified in the conference request. Every effort must be made to take advantage of any discounted registration fees for early

registration. The approval process should not be excessively burdensome or onerous and generally should not exceed 30 days. The approval process begins when the approval authority receives a complete, accurate, and appropriately staffed request package and ends with notification to the requester of the approval authority's decision.

c. Dates. Conference dates must include travel days. The length of the conference is strictly determined by mission requirements. Ice breakers, receptions, socials, golf tournaments, military balls, or other ancillary activities will not be held during duty hours (for Army-hosted conferences) or used to extend the duration of a conference. Award ceremonies held during a conference may be considered official business but may not extend the conference.

d. Purpose and justification. The justification for hosting or attending the conference must overcome the presumption that face-to-face collocation of personnel is not necessary. The justification must also specifically address how hosting or attending the conference will further the Army's mission.

e. Cost-benefit analysis. Include a detailed and credible cost-benefit analysis that includes an explanation of other options considered (such as video teleconference, train-the-trainer, or local conferences).

f. Estimated total costs. Provide a detailed and accurate breakdown of all costs associated with the conference. Exhaust all local and less expensive means before considering TDY conference participation.

(1) Estimated costs for Army-hosted conferences must include expenses for all DoD-funded attendees, not just Army-funded attendees. Host organizations are responsible for gathering cost estimate data on attendees from other DoD components.

(2) Approval levels for Army-hosted conferences are based on total DoD conference costs, which are the net of any revenue received. Although conference fees and other revenues may be used to defray the Army's costs for hosting a conference, revenue should never be sought as a way to reduce approval levels.

(3) Estimated costs will exclude Federal employee time for planning, executing, and attending the conference; security costs during the conference (does not exclude travel, per diem, and associated costs for personal security details); use of government-owned transportation; and costs related to contractor attendance.

(4) Revenue includes all direct or indirect conference fees paid to the Army, as allowable by 10 USC 2262 and applicable regulations. Revenue includes, but is not limited to, registration fees from non-DoD sources, exhibitor fees, sponsor fees, and grant monies (unless otherwise prohibited). Any revenue in excess of the Army's costs must be deposited in the U.S. Treasury as miscellaneous receipts. See paragraph 6-3 for further restrictions on the collection of conference fees.

g. Attendees. Supply a breakdown of attendees and a separate attendance justification for each attendee. The attendance numbers must include all participants: support staff, aides, guest speakers, presenters, and non-Army personnel. Provide attendee justification including the rationale and criteria applied to scope the attendee population and the justification for each requested attendee. Senior officials should seek to limit the attendance of aides, executive officers, and similar personal staff to one support staff person for each principal. Limiting support staff does not extend to personal security details. A general justification for attendance is not sufficient; each individual attendee must have a specific justification. If attendee names are not known at the time of the request, justifications may be based on duty positions. You may use a separate document, such as an Excel spreadsheet, for justifications. The JTR requires that attendance is restricted to only the minimum number of attendees required to complete the mission.

h. Agenda. The agenda must be substantive and span the proposed conference from start to finish; list planned speakers, programs, and other activities; and identify any official after-hour events or activities. Agendas that simply annotate "breakout sessions" are not sufficient. If breakout sessions are planned, the agenda must explain the purpose for each session. Avoid agendas that are excessively long; instead, provide an "at a glance" agenda or program overview. Although the Army does not control non-DoD agendas, every effort must be made to obtain an agenda spanning the entire duration of the conference that details speakers, programs, and other activities.

i. Legal review. All conference requests require a legal review. At a minimum, the legal review will address all fiscal, ethics, contracting, and travel issues, including a comprehensive assessment of whether the conference complies with applicable regulations and policy. Particular areas of concern to be addressed in each legal review are purpose and justification, cost-benefit analysis, attendance information and justifications, funding and contracts, registration fees, refreshments (Army-hosted), honoraria or speaker fees (Army-hosted), per diem and any provided meals, security (Army-hosted), estimated costs, use of rental vehicles, local TDY, and requests for AEA. Any legal objections must be mitigated before submission of the conference request. Although no required format is prescribed, it is strongly recommended that counsel use the template available on OAASA's Army Conferences home page. A legal review that provides an analysis of DoD 5500.7-R must accompany any request from an NFE for agency personnel to provide speaker or panel member support in connection with the non-DoD sponsored conference. The Office of the General Counsel and the Office of the Judge Advocate General will accept requests only from the command conference manager.

5–2. Additional requirements for Army-hosted conferences

Each Army-hosted conference request must include these items—

a. Site selection. Each request must contain a narrative describing the site selection process. Detailed information on the site selection process is in paragraph 6–1.

b. Security assessment. A security assessment is required for each iteration of each conference held in a commercial facility. The security assessment will include—

(1) A force protection assessment, including threat and vulnerability assessments for the conference facility site and any specific security requirements for the conference facility. Different military installations may have different security requirements for hosting conferences on the installation, so check with the installation Provost Marshal for security requirements.

(2) A statement indicating whether foreign government representatives will attend the conference. If so, the assessment will include a statement that the conference sponsor coordinated the screening of foreign national attendees with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G–2 and will comply with all procedures set forth in AR 380–10.

(3) A statement indicating whether the conference will involve classified information and, if so, the name and location of the secure U.S. military installation, other U.S. Government facility, or cleared U.S. contractor facility where the conference will be held. Follow the procedures in AR 380–5 and coordinate directly with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G–2 for additional guidance.

c. Pre-decision contract documents. The requester must include any contract-related documents that would assist the approval authority, such as the letter of intent from the venue, a request for proposal, or proposals from vendors and/or speakers.

Chapter 6 Hosting Policies

Conference hosts, planners, and organizers must take note of the following requirements.

6–1. Selection of the conference site

The overarching goal of the site selection process is to conduct the conference in the least expensive location and venue that can meet requirements. Maintain a record of the site selection process, including the costs of each alternative site and venue considered, and submit it with the conference request.

a. Geographic selection. Planners must evaluate and consider a minimum of 3 geographic sites (cities) for conferences with more than 30 attendees in a TDY status before selecting a site (city) for the conference, even if a government or military facility is selected. Consider at least three credible geographic sites to conduct each conference (a site selection process conducted on previous conferences will not necessarily be accurate for future iterations). Factors to be considered when determining a geographic location for a conference include, but are not limited to—

(1) Per diem expenses.

(2) Travel costs, including local travel and ground transportation.

(3) Distance from most attendees (if one area has a significant concentration of attendees, that location generally will be the most cost-effective option).

(4) Consideration of lower off-season rates or peak seasons.

(5) Availability of government or military facilities.

b. Facility selection. Once a particular city is chosen as the site, planners must evaluate a minimum of three venues in that city be considered. Give preference toward government or military facilities. If no government or military facilities exist and a public venue (for example, a hotel) is chosen, the hotel must be on the national list of approved accommodations maintained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (the hotel-motel national master list is at <https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/hotel/>). In addition, factors to be considered when selecting the venue for a conference include, but are not limited to—

(1) Availability of on-post lodging.

(2) Willingness to exempt taxes for lodging.

(3) Distance to the nearest major airport and the availability of free shuttle service.

(4) Cost of the venue (if commercial space is to be rented).

(5) Availability of rooms at or below the established per diem rate. ACOMs, organizations, and activities should never host a conference in a facility that does not honor the prevailing per diem rate for that locale.

(6) Public perception. Although no venue may be prohibited from selection solely because of its location, reputation, or amenities, the requester and approval authority must avoid the appearance of the inappropriate use of taxpayer funds.

c. Government and military facilities. The JTR requires maximum use of government-owned or government-provided conference space as possible. Consider government facilities (Federal, State, or local) and military installations first. The sponsor must carefully consider public perception as well as cost in selecting the conference venue. Generally, a government or military facility should be the primary venue of choice, even if it is slightly more costly than a commercial facility. If a government or military facility is not available or suitable to meet the conference requirements, the request must include an explanation.

(1) Conference hosts must make an effort to adjust the conference scheduling to fit the availability of government or military facilities. Government and military locations may not be ruled out as a conference venue solely because the facility is not available on the exact dates the sponsor wants to hold the conference.

(2) Conference hosts must make an effort to limit the number of attendees at the conference to the capacity of government or military facilities. Organizations must take into account the capacity of government or military facilities closest to the majority of attendees when planning the size of the conference, or explain in the conference request why limiting attendance to the capacity is not feasible if the goals of the conference are to be met.

d. Commercial facilities. Commercial facilities will be used only when demonstrated to cost less than government or military facilities, a fact-based determination indicates insufficiency of government or military facilities, or an overriding operational requirement necessitates use of a commercial facility. If government or military facilities are not used for these reasons, the conference request must include detailed justifications. Although some commercial facilities may prove to cost less than government and military facilities, perception issues may reasonably lead decisionmakers to opt to use a government or military facility.

e. Local policies. In accordance with DoDI 5305.05, requesters also must obtain approval from the Director, Space Portfolio Management Division, Defense Facilities Directorate, Washington Headquarters Services to contract for short-term conference space. Coordinate commercial venue selection through OAASA's SPD.

6-2. Conference attendees

Host organizations will minimize attendees to those individuals whose participation is appropriately related to official duties and demonstrably benefits the Army. Aides and executive officers provide unique and important support to their principals while in a travel status. However, senior officials should limit the attendance of aides, executive officers, and similar personal staff as much as possible. Limits on support staff do not extend to personal security details. Further, every effort must be made to contain attendance to the capacity of government or military facilities. Conference hosts will not issue invitations before conference approval.

6-3. Conference fees

10 USC 2262 allows the Army to collect fees in advance of a conference, either directly or through a contractor, from individuals and commercial participants attending Army-hosted conferences. Such fees may only be used to offset the host organization's reasonable and allowable costs. Fees will not be collected as a way to reduce the approval authority for the conference. Fiscal limitations on the expenditure of appropriated funds for conference expenses also apply to the use of collected fees. In addition, collected fees may not be used for prohibited expenses, such as paying for food for attendees not in a TDY status or for entertainment.

a. Army host organizations who use contractors, including those under no-cost contracts, to collect fees are permitted to structure the contracts to allow the contractors to offset from the collected fees the actual costs the contractor incurred (including its fee) to provide conference-related services. Contractor costs must be allowable costs authorized by the JTR and other applicable laws and regulations, including this regulation.

b. Fees that exceed the cost of hosting the conference must be deposited in the U.S. Treasury as miscellaneous receipts. Host organizations may not keep or use excess fees for any other purpose.

c. DoD 7000.14-R requires all organizations to report the collection of conference fees. Conference sponsors should contact their resource managers for further instructions.

6-4. Conference planners

As appropriate and cost-effective, the Army may contract with an NFE for help in planning and executing a conference. However, enhanced scrutiny is necessary to ensure that no prohibited expenses are involved and the conference circumstances do not create the appearance of Government impropriety.

6-5. Honorariums and speaker fees

In most cases, honorariums and fees for speakers are limited to \$2,000 a speaker (see DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 10). For organizations within HQDA, the AASA is the approval authority to exceed \$2,000 for a speaker; for all other organizations, the VCSA is the approval authority. Organizations must route a separate request to exceed the threshold

to the appropriate approval authority before submitting a conference request. Submit the signed approval to exceed the honorarium threshold with the conference request.

6–6. Official representation funds

Requests to use official representation funds must be explained in the conference request. The request for official representation funds must be approved separately from the conference request and in accordance with AR 37–47. Any requested official representation funds must be included in the total cost of the conference.

6–7. Awards and gifts

Conferences involving awards or gifts must follow all relevant award and gift policies, such as AR 1–100 and AR 600–8–22.

6–8. Entertainment-related expenses

OSD policy expressly prohibits entertainment-related expenses as part of DoD-hosted conferences. Approval authorities must ensure that funds, including those paid through travel disbursements or reimbursable conference fees, are not used to pay these expenses. Prohibited expenses include motivational speakers; musicians or entertainers (with the exception of military bands, as permitted by regulation); extraneous promotional items, decorations, or other goods and services for participants that are unrelated to the purpose of the conference; tickets to recreational activities outside the conference setting; and audiovisual materials that do not offer substantive content.

6–9. Contracting guidelines

Include all contract-related documents in ACRTT. The following provisions and guidelines apply:

a. It is impermissible to commit the Government to use any facility, sign any agreement, or otherwise obligate the Government for conference facilities or support before the approval authority approves the conference. Personnel may visit facilities, discuss space needs, collect pricing information, develop cost estimates, make tentative space reservations (only if at no cost and without any liability to the Government), and request other conference-related information. However, no contract or task order related to conference requirements will be awarded and no funds will be obligated for a conference until the conference has been approved. Any actions and all documents related to the contract will be included with the conference request to assist decision-making.

b. A warranted contracting officer or, when authorized, a Government purchase cardholder must sign all conference-related contracts. Requirements will not be split to reduce costs to within the limits of the cardholder's authority. Personnel cannot make any commitment until a warranted contracting officer or, when authorized, a Government purchase cardholder signs a written agreement. Support contractors are not authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Government for conference arrangements.

c. An agreement signed by anyone other than a warranted contracting officer or, when authorized, a Government purchase cardholder is an unauthorized commitment. A Government employee who lacks the authority to bind the Government could be held personally liable if he or she signs an agreement for conference facilities or other conference support. Additionally, Government employees are prohibited from directing or recommending that a support contractor take any action that purports to bind the Government in any way.

6–10. Army co-sponsored events

The Army is a co-sponsor of an event when an ACOM, organization, or activity develops the substantive aspects of the event, provides substantial logistical support as defined by DoD 5500.7–R, or provides 50 percent or more of the speakers and panel members at a single conference. Generally, avoid situations where the circumstances are or suggest that we are “paying to hear ourselves speak.” Co-sponsored conferences must abide by the requesting, hosting, and travel policies for Army-hosted conferences. The approval authority for a co-sponsored conference is the same as for an Army-hosted conference.

a. Co-sponsorships with other U.S., foreign, or multinational organizations. These conferences may be co-sponsored with other DoD, Federal, State, or local municipalities or multinational organizations (such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)). Although many provisions of DoD 5500.7–R do not apply to these types of co-sponsored events, hosts should enter into written agreements to detail what support each party will provide to the conference (resources, services in kind, and so on).

b. Co-sponsorships with a non-federal entity (other than above). NFEs can include associations, societies, non-profit organizations, charities, and so on. Because the Army does not control all aspects of the planning for an event, use caution to ensure compliance with Army conference policy.

(1) *Scrutiny.* OSD policy requires “enhanced scrutiny” of all conferences co-sponsored with an NFE. Requesters and approval authorities must ensure they do not create the appearance of Government impropriety or endorsing or providing preferential treatment to the NFE.

(2) *Co-sponsorship agreements.* DoD 5500.7–R requires written agreements for conferences co-sponsored with an NFE. The sponsor’s ethics advisor must review the agreement and forward it to the designated deputy agency ethics official for action. Approval of the co-sponsorship agreement is separate and distinct from approval of the conference.

(3) *Endorsement.* Army personnel may not officially endorse the NFE co-sponsor(s) or its activities.

(4) *Preferential treatment.* Army personnel may not show preferential treatment to similar NFEs that have a demonstrable interest in the subject matter of the conference. Generally, this means no preferential treatment for one NFE over another.

(5) *Improper influence.* The NFE co-sponsor’s role in or support of the conference must not appear to improperly influence Army personnel in other official matters the NFE may have an interest in.

(6) *Restriction.* The conference cannot be a profit-making endeavor for the NFE co-sponsor(s), including any vendor exhibition.

(7) *Fees.* When an ACOM, organization, or activity co-sponsors a conference and the co-sponsor incurs costs, the co-sponsor is permitted to collect registration fees from non-federal attendees to cover its costs. Co-sponsors who collect fees from Army attendees or commingle fees collected from non-federal and Army attendees will comply with the provisions in 10 USC 2262. If a varied conference fee structure is used (certain categories of attendees pay different amounts), no individual category of attendees will bear an unreasonable burden of the costs.

6–11. Army-hosted events held in conjunction with non-Department of Defense-hosted events

Army and NFE events will be separate and distinct; they will not be commingled. All official Army activities, including award ceremonies and outbriefings, will be held as part of the Army event and will not be scheduled so that Army personnel must attend events an NFE hosts. Army conference activities will not be scheduled immediately before and after an NFE event (known as “bookending”) to create a captive audience for the NFE event. Moreover, the Army conference will not be scheduled or the venue chosen to accommodate, benefit, or promote attendance at the NFE event.

a. Holding an Army conference at the same location as an NFE event does not relieve the Army conference sponsor of the requirement to comply with applicable law, regulation, and policy, including the provisions of this regulation. The requester must still demonstrate that he or she did a thorough site selection and justify the final choice of city and venue.

b. Non-DoD organizations may not provide services, facilities, or support to an Army conference unless the support has been acquired through normal acquisition procedures or the event is co-sponsored.

c. Army personnel will not officially sanction a non-DoD-hosted event. Senior leaders must use caution when distributing information about non-DoD-hosted conferences so that they do not appear to endorse the conference.

Chapter 7 Attendance Policies

7–1. General travel guidance

All Army personnel traveling in conjunction with conference participation must abide by the JTR and Army and DoD travel policies. Obtaining approval for the conference does not negate the requester’s need to obtain approval to travel.

a. Defense Travel System. DoD has mandated use of the Defense Travel System (DTS) for all Government travelers unless a waiver has been granted. The Army requires travelers using DTS or other approved automated travel systems to list their travel as “conference” in the purpose field and select the appropriate conference name in the dropdown box. If the conference name is not available, select “Other” and enter the full, unabbreviated conference name.

b. Travel certification statements. The JTR requires individuals to attest that the proposed TDY travel is essential by including the following statement on their DD Form 1610 (Request and Authorization for TDY Travel of DoD Personnel) or in the DTS request for authorizations/orders: “The travel objective cannot be satisfactorily accomplished less expensively by alternate methods (correspondence, secure video teleconferencing or other web-based communication).” This statement must be supported by data in the conference request’s cost-benefit analysis.

c. Tax-exempt status. Conference participants will request the tax exemption of lodging as appropriate. Information about tax exemption in individual states is at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/state-tax-exemption-information-for-government-charge-cards>.

d. Rental vehicles. Conference planners must be aware of decisions that would require or encourage the use of rental vehicles. When necessary, shuttle buses, taxis, or other public transportation will be used to reduce the need for individual rental vehicles. Rental vehicles will not be used for the attendee's convenience. Rental vehicles will be used only when a thorough cost-benefit analysis yields a benefit to the Army. In general, rental vehicles will not be authorized for participation in conferences held in major metropolitan areas with public transportation options. Any individual request for rental cars must be preauthorized on travel orders. When rental cars are used, expenses must be minimized, such as by maximizing the number of passengers in a vehicle. Further, the legal review of the conference request must specifically address the use of rental vehicles.

e. Government-provided meals, per diem, and refreshments. Generally, meals and refreshments are a personal expense. However, note the following:

(1) *Government-provided meals.* Meals provided via Government contract or government-funded conference fees are considered government-provided meals. The JTR states that light refreshments served during meal hours constitute a government-provided meal. Travel approval authorities should verify whether meals are included in registration fees to ensure that travelers properly annotate their vouchers and are not incorrectly reimbursed for meals that were government-funded. The cost of meals the Government provides must not exceed per diem (meals component) for the location.

(2) *Per diem.* When the Government provides meals, attendees must be instructed to appropriately annotate the provided meals on their travel vouchers. If the Government funds one or two meals, the attendee must receive the proportional meal rate (PMR). If PMR is used, the cost of meals the Government provides plus PMR must not exceed the per diem rate (meal component) for that location. If the Government funds all meals, on those days the traveler will be reimbursed only the incidental expenses component. This rule applies even if an attendee chooses not to consume the provided meal(s) or refreshment(s) unless documented medical or religious reasons prevent the attendee from taking the meal(s) or refreshment(s).

(3) *Refreshments.* Refreshments at conferences are a personal expense and may not be funded at Army expense unless the refreshments are non-segregable (cannot be eliminated from the conference venue contract or registration fee) and nonnegotiable (the venue will not offer a lower rate if refreshments are not provided).

(4) *Meals and refreshments provided through a nonreimbursable registration fee.* At times, a conference host may charge an optional, nonreimbursable registration fee to cover meals and/or refreshments. Meals and refreshments provided through a nonreimbursable fee are permissible and do not constitute government-provided meals, and the attendee is therefore entitled to full per diem. However, attendees may not claim the nonreimbursable fee on official travel vouchers.

f. Actual expense allowance. All attendees are expected to obtain lodging at or below the established U.S. General Services Administration per diem rate for that locale. If a conference is held at a commercial facility that does not honor the Government per diem rate, attendees are expected to locate nearby hotels that honor the rate. Army personnel lodging in lavish, resort-like accommodations may create the appearance of inappropriate use of taxpayer funds and lead to a negative public perception. AEA will not be approved simply to stay in the conference hotel for the attendee's convenience or networking benefits. Use of AEA must provide a benefit to the Army and not subject the Army to potentially negative public perception. The legal review of the conference request must specifically address the use of AEA. AEA will be approved only in those rare circumstances when compelling justification is provided and in accordance with the JTR. If the conference approval authority specifically authorizes AEA in the approval memorandum, individual agencies sending Army attendees may approve AEA on the attendees' travel orders.

Note. This does not include O-6/GS-15 commanders of military treatment facilities with non-DoD-hosted conference approval authority.

g. Local temporary duty. ACOMs, organizations, or activities hosting a conference must take care that the agenda does not require attendees to travel during unreasonable hours, thereby necessitating lodging for local attendees. In addition, mealtimes and activities must be planned so that local attendees have the opportunity to purchase meals or bring their own and are not required to participate in government-provided meals. The conference request and supporting written legal review must specifically address all requests for lodging and/or meals for local attendees for the conference approval authority's review and approval. The approval memorandum must specifically address local TDY. Local TDY will be approved only in rare circumstances.

h. Permissive temporary duty or annual leave. Personnel must use discretion while attending conferences in an unofficial capacity. When military personnel are on permissive TDY or civilians are on annual leave, they generally may not make official speeches or appear to represent the Army when they make public presentations. Consult your legal or ethics advisor for guidance on conference attendance while in a permissive TDY or leave status.

i. Travel by non-Department of Defense personnel.

(1) *Contractors.* Travel costs for Government contractors and contractor employees are governed by the rules in Federal Acquisition Regulation section 31.205–46. A contractor is not eligible for an invitational travel authorization during the execution of a contract. Contractor attendees cannot receive per diem or be reimbursed for travel and/or travel-related expenses except as specified in the contract. Contractor attendance will be billed pursuant to the appropriate contract. Lodging, travel, or meal expenses for contractors will not be included in conference costs.

(2) *Spouses.* Every instance of accompanied spouse travel represents an exception to policy. Therefore, as a general rule, spouses may not be placed on invitational travel authorizations to accompany Army personnel on official business at Government expense. In addition, spouses on accompanying travel are authorized per diem only for conferences the AASA has designated as Service-endorsed training. Refer to table 4–1 for approval authorities for conferences involving spouse travel. For more information on spouse travel, refer to the prevailing Army travel policy, currently Army Directive 2017–05. If a conference includes spouses, provide a separate and substantive spouse agenda with the conference request.

(3) *Statutory volunteers.* Statutory volunteers are a limited category of volunteers authorized by Federal statute (10 USC 1588) to provide services in certain DoD activities, such as morale, welfare, and recreation functions; Family programs; and chaplain programs. At times, statutory volunteers may be issued invitational travel authorizations to participate in a conference based on their expertise in a particular subject matter of interest to conference attendees, not for being an Army spouse or dependent. Statutory volunteer status will not be used to circumvent approval authority for accompanied spouse travel. Contact your legal advisor for more information on statutory volunteers. Legal reviews for conference requests that include statutory volunteers will specifically address the request’s compliance with the applicable requirements. If personnel participate in a statutory volunteer status, all required statutory volunteer documentation must be loaded into ACRTT with the estimated actuals. Army spouses in an approved statutory volunteer status are not considered spouses for the purposes of this regulation.

j. Travel and fees funded by others.

(1) *1353 travel.* On occasion, an NFE may offer to provide travel benefits to Army personnel participating in a non-DoD-hosted conference. Usually, such offers are for “in kind” travel benefits, such as the waiver of the registration fee or meals and lodging at the conference. If certain conditions are met, the travel approval authority may authorize the attendee to accept such travel benefits on behalf of the Army under the authority of 31 USC 1353. All “1353 travel” benefits represent a gift to the Army. Solicitation of travel benefits is strictly prohibited. Travel benefits may only be accepted when personnel are attending the event in an official TDY travel status (that is, on TDY travel orders); acceptance of 1353 travel benefits is not authorized for attendance at a local conference. Approval authorities must receive written concurrence from their ethics counselor before approving acceptance of travel benefits, and any such approval must be issued in writing before the travel starts. Finally, if the total value of the accepted travel benefits exceeds \$250, within 30 days of completing the travel, the traveler must coordinate and file with their ethics counselor a report of all travel payments received from the NFE under 31 USC 1353 using standard form (SF) 326 (Semiannual Report of Payments From a Non-Federal Source). Meals accepted under 31 USC 1353 constitute government-provided meals for travel voucher purposes.

(2) *Non-Department of Defense Federal agencies.* Other Federal agencies external to DoD may offer to provide travel benefits to Army personnel in exchange for their participation in their official capacity. The offer can be accepted, if appropriate, under the terms of 31 USC 1535 (known as the Economy Act of 1932). Contact your assigned legal advisor as soon as an offer is received.

(3) *Acceptance of proffered funds.* While most offers of travel benefits are for “in kind” benefits, an NFE may “proffer” funds in advance of a conference, under 31 USC 1353, to be used to pay for an attendee’s TDY travel-related costs, such as travel, per diem, and registration fees at their conference. To avoid the appearance that Army personnel may be improperly influenced by the NFE, GOs and SESs will not attend conferences using cash gifts proffered to the Army. They may, however, continue to accept “in kind” 1353 travel benefits (for example, an offer of a hotel room or specific meals while attending the event) when otherwise legally acceptable. The SECARMY, CSA, or AASA must approve and accept gifts of proffered funds (excluding commandor individual-specific proffers), and then each travel approval authority must approve the use of the proffered funds for individual travelers. An overall legal review of the acceptance of proffered funds, and local legal reviews for each traveler using proffered funds, must be completed before final acceptance of any proffered funds under 31 USC 1353. An NFE’s proffer of funds for anything other than attendee travel benefits may not be accepted under 31 USC 1353. Commands should consult with their respective legal office if the NFE makes such a proffer (for example, transport of an exhibit) to determine if the proffer may be accepted under another authority.

7–2. Attending Army-hosted conferences

Generally, personnel attending an Army-hosted conference do not need to submit a request to participate. The host organization is responsible for estimating, approving, and reporting all Army attendees. Individual attendees should follow their organization’s TDY policy.

7–3. Attending Department of Defense-hosted conferences

Generally, a conference request is not required to attend a DoD-hosted conference; therefore, do not create an entry in ACRTT unless SPD instructs you to do so. The host DoD organization is responsible for estimating, approving, and reporting all DoD attendees. Attendance will be limited to those personnel included in the host’s approved request and costs will be kept to a minimum. However, the attendee is not responsible for determining if the hosting DoD component appropriately approved the conference. Army attendees must follow DoD, Army, and their organization’s TDY policies for approval and abide by all pertinent travel policies and guidelines. The SECARMY or AASA may limit attendance, or require a conference request, for Army participation in DoD-hosted conferences when they determine it is necessary.

7–4. Attending non-Department of Defense-hosted conferences

Although travel for individuals is approved locally, attendance at a conference must be approved in accordance with this regulation. (Refer to table 4–2 for approval authorities.) Generally, a request is not required to participate in non-DoD-hosted conferences with costs less than \$100,000 and fewer than 50 attendees within a GO/SES’s purview. However, an approval memorandum submitted via ACRTT is required.

a. Registration fees. Every effort must be made to take advantage of reduced fees for early registration or group registration. (If the Army collectively will qualify for a reduced fee for group registration, organizations must make an effort to secure the group rate. However, organizations should never construe this as encouragement to increase participation solely to qualify for group registration rates). Often, conferences charge registration fees that include lavish meals, socials, and other entertainment events. The requesting organization is responsible for contacting the conference host to request a “no frills” registration fee excluding any unnecessary expenses. In addition, if registration fees include meals, local attendees must contact the organization to request a reduced fee that excludes meals. If no such fee is available, local attendees may pay the full fee and consume the meals. Approval authorities must use their best judgment when approving participation in non-DoD-hosted conferences when registration fees may be used to offset expenses that would be prohibited for a DoD-hosted conference. In such cases, approval authorities must balance the value of the conference against the elevated risk of an appearance of impropriety. Approval authorities should instruct attendees not to attend inappropriate events conducted during the conference.

b. Continuing education units. The Army is authorized, but not required, to pay for training resulting in continuing education units and associated expenses, such as examinations or processing fees. The training must directly benefit the Army and the conference request must sufficiently explain the benefit. The sole purpose of Army attendance at a conference may not be to receive continuing education credits or other similar requirements to maintain licensing or credentialing that are a minimum requirement to hold an Army position. The Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) is the proponent for the Army Credentialing Program. Consult the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) and/or the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G–3/5/7 for training guidance.

c. Army speakers or panel members. Army personnel serving as speakers or panel members at conferences must comply with this policy and DoD 5500.7–R. Speakers and panelists must take care to safeguard and prevent the dissemination of Army procurement, technology, classified, and nonpublic information and must make sure they do not appear to endorse the NFE. Approval authorities should consult with their legal advisor before authorizing participation as a speaker or panel member at an NFE conference.

d. Additional information for attending non-Department of Defense-hosted conferences with a conference lead. The conference lead will compile Armywide cost and attendance information into a single request for approval. All requesting organizations must submit their attendance information via the non-DoD conference submission module in ACRTT—including estimated cost and attendance numbers, attendance justifications, and endorsement memorandum signed by the first GO/SES in the requester’s chain of command—to the conference lead. Individual requesting organizations must also update the conference record in ACRTT with actual cost and attendance information and submit an AAR signed by the first GO/SES in the requester’s chain of command. Conference lead organizations are authorized to set additional deadlines to meet the timelines set forth in this policy. Conference leads are further authorized to establish signature authority requirements for AARs submitted by individual requesting organizations. All organizations will adhere to the attendance rules the conference lead establishes.

Chapter 8 Reporting Requirements

8–1. General reporting information

SPD will compile and submit all reports to comply with OSD and Office of Management and Budget guidance and annual National Defense Authorization Act requirements. Reporting requirements are detailed in table 8–1 and paragraph 8–2. Reported costs and attendee numbers for Army-hosted conferences must include totals for all DoD-sponsored attendees. Organizations may institute additional timelines to ensure that SPD receives reports in accordance with the timelines established in this policy.

Table 8–1
Reporting requirements

Conference type	Approval authority	Before the conference	After the conference
Army-hosted	All	Mark ACRTT record as “approved”	“Estimated actuals” and AAR
Non-DoD-hosted	SECARMY, CSA, and AASA	Mark ACRTT record as “approved”	“Estimated actuals” and AAR
Non-DoD-hosted	GO/SES	Submit approval memo and provide requisite information in ACRTT	Not applicable

8–2. Types of conference reporting

The following paragraphs detail the reporting requirements in table 8–1:

a. Before the conference (within 10 business days of approval).

(1) *Approved non-Department of Defense-hosted conferences.* Upload the signed approval memorandum and provide the required ACRTT information. SPD will complete this reporting requirement for conferences the SECARMY or AASA approve. The Office of the DAS will complete this reporting requirement, including making sure the request package and related documents are loaded into ACRTT, for conferences the CSA approves.

(2) *Approved Army-hosted conferences.* The command conference manager must upload the approval memorandum to the existing ACRTT record and mark it as approved. Once a record is marked “approved” in ACRTT, the initial reporting requirement has been met. For conferences the SECARMY or AASA approved, SPD will mark the conference as “approved” and upload the approval memorandum. The record must contain the signed approval memorandum and request package. See chapter 5 for request package requirements (the package and details should have been entered before approval).

b. After the conference (within 45 business days).

(1) *Estimated actuals.* Update the ACRTT record with “estimated actuals,” which include the actual attendance figure and estimated actual cost information based on final attendance. If the actual cost or attendance figure varied from the estimated cost or attendance figure by 10 percent or more, include a plausible justification for the variance.

(2) *After action report.* In addition, submit an AAR for every Army-hosted conference and for participation in non-DoD-hosted conferences the SECARMY, CSA, or AASA approved. AARs must be signed by the first GO/SES in the requester’s chain of command. For conferences the SECARMY or AASA approved, the command conference manager must upload in ACRTT the AAR signed (or endorsed) by the HQDA principal official or ACOM, ASCC, or DRU commander (or civilian equivalent) and SPD will sign acknowledging receipt. Required templates for AARs are available on OAASA’s Army Conferences home page. Failure to submit an AAR may result in disapproval of future requests to participate in recurring conferences.

Appendix A

References

Section I

Required Publications

DoD Conference Guidance

(Cited in para 3–1j.) (Available at https://dam.defense.gov/portals/47/documents/products_services/conference_policies/dod%20conference%20guidance%20version%204.0%20with%20memo.pdf.)

Joint Travel Regulations

(Cited in para 1–8). (Available at <https://www.travel.dod.mil/policy-regulations/joint-travel-regulations/>.)

Section II

Related Publications

Unless otherwise indicated, Department of the Army publications are available on the Army Publishing Directorate website at <https://armypubs.army.mil/>. DoD issuances are available at <https://www.esd.whs.mil/dd/>. The Code of Federal Regulations is available at <https://www.ecfr.gov/>. The USC is available at <https://uscode.house.gov/>.

AR 1–100

The Army Gift Program

AR 11–2

Managers' Internal Control Program

AR 25–30

Army Publishing Program

AR 37–47

Official Representation Funds of the Secretary of the Army

AR 380–5

Army Information Security Program

AR 380–10

Foreign Disclosure and Contacts With Foreign Representatives

AR 600–8–22

Military Awards

Army Directive 2017–05

Secretary of the Army Policy for Travel by Department of the Army Senior Officials

DA Pam 25–403

Army Guide to Recordkeeping

DoD 5500.7–R

Joint Ethics Regulation (JER)

DoD 7000.14–R, Volume 10

Contract Payment Policy (Available at <https://comptroller.defense.gov/fmr/>.)

DoD 7000.14–R, Volume 12

Special Accounts, Funds and Programs (Available at <https://comptroller.defense.gov/fmr/>.)

DoDI 5105.04

Department of Defense Federal Advisory Committee Management Program

DoDI 5305.05

Space Management Procedures for the National Capital Region and Washington Headquarters Services-Serviced Components

Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 31.205–46

Travel costs (Available at <https://www.acquisition.gov/>.)

Public Law 114–113

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Available at <https://www.congress.gov/>.)

5 CFR 410.404

Determining if a conference is a training activity

5 CFR 2635.204(g)(2)

Widely attended gatherings

41 CFR Subtitle F

Federal Travel Regulation System

10 USC 1588

Authority to accept certain voluntary services

10 USC 2262

Department of Defense conferences: collection of fees to cover Department of Defense costs

31 USC 1353

Acceptance of travel and related expenses from non-federal sources

31 USC 1535

Agency agreements (known as the Economy Act of 1932)

Section III

Prescribed Forms

This section contains no entries.

Section IV

Referenced Forms

Unless otherwise indicated, DA Forms are available on the Army Publishing Directorate website at <https://armypubs.army.mil/>. DD Forms are available at <https://www.esd.whs.mil/directives/forms/>.

DA Form 5

Army Staffing Form

DA Form 11–2

Internal Control Evaluation Certification

DA Form 2028

Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms

DA Form 4162

Volunteer Service Record

DA Form 4713

Volunteer Daily Time Record

DA Form 5671

Parental Permission

DD Form 1610

Request and Authorization for TDY Travel of DoD Personnel

DD Form 2793

Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities

SF 326

Semiannual Report of Payments Accepted From A Non-Federal Source (Available at <https://www.gsa.gov/reference/forms>.)

Appendix B

Internal Control Evaluation

B–1. Function

The function covered by this evaluation is the Army conference policy.

B–2. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to assist commanders in evaluating the key internal controls outlined here. HQDA principal officials and the CGs of ACOMs, ASCCs, and DRUs should use this evaluation. It is not intended to cover all controls, but you must evaluate all of the controls applicable to your command, organization, or activity.

B–3. Instructions

Answers must be based on the actual testing of key internal controls (for example, document analysis, direct observation, sampling, simulation, other). These key internal controls must be formally evaluated at least once every 5 years. Certification that this evaluation has been conducted must be accomplished on DA Form 11–2 (Internal Control Evaluation Certification). Answers that reveal deficiencies must be explained and corrective action indicated in supporting documentation.

B–4. Test questions

- a.* Is a command, organization, or activity policy established to ensure all conference requests are reviewed thoroughly for compliance with this regulation, DoD Conference Guidance, and other applicable regulations and policies?
- b.* Are conference approval authorities establishing a climate of fiscal responsibility by authorizing only those requests that are demonstrably beneficial to the Army and appropriately related to attendees' official duties; cost-effective; and in the best interest of the Army, the U.S. Government, and taxpayers?
- c.* Are all conferences approved by the appropriate approval authority in writing, including those Armywide requests identified in the DAS tasking memorandum?
- d.* Are all conference-related documents—including approval or disapproval memorandum, request package, legal review, and agenda—uploaded into ACRTT and maintained for 5 years or longer to meet requirements for Army records management?
- e.* Are conferences approved before obligating funds for nonrefundable expenses?
- f.* Do command conference managers submit both the initial and final reporting requirements (including AAR as applicable) within 10 business days of approval and 45 business days after the conference, respectively?

B–5. Supersession

This is an initial evaluation for the Army conference policy.

B–6. Comments

Help make this a better tool for evaluating internal controls. Submit comments to the OAASA's SPD (AARP–SP).

Glossary

Section I

Abbreviations

AAR

after action report

AASA

Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army

ACOM

Army command

ACRTT

Army Conference Reporting and Tracking Tool

AEA

actual expense allowance

AMC

U.S. Army Materiel Command

AR

Army regulation

ARIMS

Army Records Information Management System

ASCC

Army service component command

CAR

Chief of Army Reserve

CFR

Code of Federal Regulations

CG

Commanding General

CSA

Chief of Staff of the Army

DA Form

Department of the Army form

DA&M

Director of Administration and Management

DAS

Director of the Army Staff

DD Form

Department of Defense form

DoD

Department of Defense

DRU

direct reporting unit

DTS

Defense Travel System

FORSCOM

U.S. Army Forces Command

GO

general officer

GS

general schedule

HQDA

Headquarters, Department of the Army

JTR

Joint Travel Regulations

NATO

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NFE

non-federal entity

OAASA

Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army

OSD

Office of the Secretary of Defense

PMR

proportional meal rate

RRS–A

Records Retention Schedule–Army

SECARMY

Secretary of the Army

SES

senior executive service

SF

standard form

SPD

Special Programs Directorate

TDY

temporary duty

USA

Under Secretary of the Army

USARC

U.S. Army Reserve Command

USC

United States Code

VCSA

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army

Section II**Terms****Actual expense allowance**

Authorization for reimbursement for actual lodging expenses that exceed per diem.

Advisory committee

Any committee, subcommittee, board, commission, council, panel, task force, or other similar group established by statute or reorganization plan, established or used by the President of the United States, or established or used by one or more agencies to obtain advice or recommendations for the President or one or more Federal agencies or employees.

Does not include any committee that is composed solely of full-time or permanent part-time Federal employees or any committee created by the National Academy of Sciences or the National Academy of Public Administration.

After action report

A report consisting of qualitative and quantitative data about an event. Required 45 business days after attendance at non-DoD-hosted conferences the SECARMY, CSA, or AASA approved and every Army-hosted conference.

Army

The Regular Army, Army Reserve, and those organizations the SECARMY is the designated DoD Executive Agent for and the Army funds their activities.

Note. The Army National Guard follows National Guard Bureau conference policy and reports through the Chief, National Guard Bureau.

Army commands

- a. FORSCOM.
- b. U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.
- c. AMC.
- d. U.S. Army Futures Command.

Army Conference Reporting and Tracking Tool

A web-based tool that allows users to track, edit, and report conference details and information. It is the required system for submitting conference requests and reports.

Army service component commands

- a. U.S. Army Pacific.
- b. U.S. Army Europe.
- c. U.S. Army Central.
- d. U.S. Army North.
- e. U.S. Army South.
- f. U.S. Army Africa/Southern European Task Force.
- g. U.S. Army Special Operations Command.
- h. Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.
- i. U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Strategic Command.
- j. U.S. Army Cyber Command.

Army-hosted conference

An event with sufficient indicia of a conference an Army organization is hosting or sponsoring. The Army is considered the host when it plans and/or funds the event. Generally, most participants will be Army personnel and the conference topic or purpose is specific to the Army.

Attendee

Individual participating in the mission of the event, including speakers and support staff of conference participants. Does not include the staff of a contracted venue.

Batch request/batch approval

Requesting and/or approving multiple conferences, or multiple iterations of a single conference, under one memorandum.

Command conference manager

A single command, organization, or activity point of contact at the HQDA principal official, ACOM, ASCC, or DRU level for conference questions, policies, requests, and reports. This individual is responsible for publicizing command-level procedures, preparing conference requests, and submitting required reports. Subordinate organizations may have subordinate command conference managers.

Commercial facility

A facility owned or leased by an organization other than the government or military. These facilities are often, but not always, owned by profit-making organizations and can include hotels, conference centers, privately owned building, and so forth. Facilities owned by federally funded research and development centers are commercial facilities under this policy.

Conference

The JTR defines “conference” as “a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or event that involves attendee travel. Also applies to training activities that are conferences under Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, section 410.404.” However, any event exhibiting sufficient indicia of a conference should be categorized as a conference.

Conference lead

The ACOM, organization, or activity the AASA or DAS designated as responsible for promulgating a single request and AAR for all Army attendance at a non-DoD-hosted event.

Conference sponsor/conference host

The organization hosting the conference by planning, funding, or executing the event.

Note. An event may have more than one sponsoring organization. If the Army sponsors an event in collaboration with another organization, the event is considered a co-sponsored event.

Co-sponsored conference

An event that an ACOM, organization, or activity sponsors in collaboration with another organization external to the Army by developing the substantive aspects of the event or providing substantial logistical support as defined by DoD 5500.7–R.

Note. If the Army provides 50 percent or more of the speakers or presenters on the agenda, the event is co-sponsored.

Cost-benefit analysis

Systematic process to compare the costs and benefits of a decision. Often used to determine if something is a sound decision, the analysis provides a basis for comparing options or alternatives.

Direct reporting units

- a. U.S. Army Medical Command.
- b. U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command.
- c. U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command.
- d. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- e. U.S. Army Military District of Washington.
- f. U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command.
- g. U.S. Army Installation Management Command United States Military Academy.
- h. U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center Arlington National Cemetery.
- i. U.S. Army Marketing and Engagement Brigade.
- j. U.S. Army War College.
- k. U.S. Army Civilian Human Resources Agency.
- l. U.S. Army Human Resources Command.
- m. U.S. Army Financial Management Command.

Director of Administration and Management

The OSD DA&M is responsible for conference oversight on behalf of the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense, including issuing and maintaining guidance and executing reporting requirements. The DA&M is authorized to act on behalf of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on all conference-related matters.

Discussion panel

Formal dialogue before an audience with the topic and speakers selected in advance.

DoD Executive Agent

The head of a DoD component to whom the Secretary of Defense or Deputy Secretary of Defense has assigned specific responsibilities, functions, and authorities to provide support for operational missions, administrative, or other designated activities that involve two or more DoD components.

DoD-hosted conference

A conference hosted or sponsored by a DoD organization external to the Army.

Estimated actuals

An approximate total cost based on the number of participants who attended the event, not those who were invited or planned to attend, to be submitted within 45 business days after the end of the conference. The estimate may use general averages for travel costs multiplied by the actual number of attendees. This requirement should never be construed as reporting the estimated or approved cost.

Exhibit

An object or a collection of objects set up in a public space for people to look at.

Exhibit fee

The sum of money the host of an event requires for the Army to purchase space, electricity, or other such requirements to display an exhibit, also called a booth or display, at an event.

Note. Encompasses all costs for the exhibit, including transportation.

Formal classroom training

Training or education imparted in a room where classes are taught, such as at a school, college, or university. The appearance or location of the setting may change to be conducive for learning the subject being taught. For example, administrative training will likely be taught in a room with desks and/or tables for students to take notes, while flight school may have components behind a desk as well as in a hangar or on a tarmac. Attendees earning a certificate or continuing education credits at the end of a course does not make an event formal classroom training and exempt from this policy. Training conducted in a hotel, unless conducted by a college or university, does not meet this definition.

Government or military facility

A venue that is owned or leased by a U.S. Federal, State, or local government or military entity or a foreign government or military. This includes Armed Forces recreation centers and other nonappropriated fund buildings on an installation. This definition does not include federally funded research and development centers.

Government-provided meals

The JTR considers these “deductible meals.” A deductible meal is a meal that is (i) made available pursuant to an agreement between the Army and any organization, (ii) included in a Government paid registration fee, (iii) furnished at no cost to the traveler by a school while attending a course of instruction if the Government ultimately pays the school for the meal cost, (iv) furnished by the Government at no cost to a traveler, (v) provided by a lodging establishment for which a charge is added in the lodging cost, or (vi) provided by a lodging establishment when meal(s) are included in the lodging cost under an agreement between the Government and the lodging establishment. “Light refreshments” (including a continental breakfast) constitute a deductible meal if otherwise qualified above and served at a mealtime. Meals accepted under the authority of 31 USC 1353 (either directly or when included in the registration fee and the registration fee has been waived) are considered government-provided meals; meals accepted under the widely attended gathering exception for gift acceptance (see 5 CFR 2635.204(g)(2)) are accepted in one’s personal capacity and are not treated as government-provided meals.

Host

Also called sponsor. The host is the organization that fully or partially funds the event; is responsible for developing the substantive aspects of the event, such as date, location, and attendees; provides substantial logistical support; or executes the event.

In conjunction with a non-federal entity

An Army-hosted event that is scheduled concurrently or sequentially, but separate from, another non-DoD-hosted event in the same location.

Indicia

Plural form of indicium; an indicator or characteristic.

Local attendee

Attendee residing, or whose permanent duty station is, within the local commuting area of the conference venue.

Note. Local attendees may not receive per diem.

Local conference

A conference occurring within the attendee’s or attendees’ local commuting area.

Local temporary duty

An official status in which personnel within their local commuting area receive per diem.

Logistical support

Assistance in planning, implementing, and coordinating details of an event. Includes providing DoD facilities and/or equipment (and the services of DoD personnel to ensure proper use of the equipment).

Meals and incidental expenses

The component of per diem reimbursed to attendees in a TDY status for subsistence. It is a fixed amount reimbursed to attendees regardless of actual expenses.

Meetings to consider internal agency business matters

Recurring events geared toward Army-specific topics with attendance mostly restricted to Army personnel (not spouses, contractors, or external personnel). Topics are directly related to the organization's mission. These events have mostly local attendance and are often conducted at the place of duty. Examples include quarterly in-progress reviews, strategy and planning sessions, and budget meetings. These differ from conferences to consider internal agency business in that these events usually do not exceed more than three days (excluding travel days).

No-cost conference

Participation in the event incurs no cost to the Army.

Note. A conference is no cost only if it has absolutely no reimbursable costs, including incidental or travel expenses.

Nonappropriated funds

Cash and other assets received by a nonappropriated fund instrumentality from sources other than monies appropriated by the Congress of the United States. Nonappropriated funds are Government funds used for the collective benefit of those who generate them: military personnel, their Family members, and authorized civilians. These funds are separate from funds recorded in the books of the Treasurer of the United States.

Non-Department of Defense-hosted conference

Conference hosted or sponsored by an organization external to DoD. These organizations could be other Federal agencies, such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, or NFEs, such as NATO.

Non-federal entity

An organization external to the U.S. Federal Government. Includes foreign, State, and local governments; multinational organizations, such as NATO; federally funded research and development centers; and private organizations.

Official representation funds

Funds the Army uses to maintain the standing and prestige of the United States by extending official courtesies to various dignitaries, officials, and prominent citizens.

Operational activities/operational exercises

Events often focused on military, not civilian, personnel. These events usually will be held in government or military facilities and focus on troop deployment, movement, or training. The majority of attendees should be military personnel.

Per diem

A specific amount of money, based on locale, the Government gives an individual on TDY orders to cover expenses when traveling in an official capacity. Per diem consists of lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Lodging reimbursement is listed as the maximum amount but will be reimbursed at the actual cost if obtained below the per diem rate.

Permissive temporary duty

A TDY status that does not grant per diem.

Precontract decision documents

Documents that are used to make contract-related decisions. Examples include quotes, estimates, and letters of intent.

Pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment activities

Events or activities that facilitate the planning, resourcing, training, and executing actions necessary to deploy and redeploy forces. Includes Family programs activities in support of troop deployment.

Proffered funds

An offer of money, typically from an NFE. This differs from "in kind" travel benefits in that proffered funds are given to the Army instead of the payment of goods or services.

Proportional meal rate

PMR is an amount based on the locality meal rate. It is used when a traveler receives one or two meals at Government expense (for example, included in a registration fee).

Registration fee

Also called conference fee. The sum of money the host of an event requires for attendees to be granted permission to participate in the event. This does not include exhibit fees.

Note. For Army-hosted events, the fee is considered revenue when collected from non-DoD attendees.

Registration process

Provision of attendee's name, at a minimum, to the conference host as a condition of attending the event. Other information commonly provided includes phone number, organization, duty title, and address. A fee is often, but not always, required. This differs from an RSVP list in that an individual is not granted access to the event without registering.

Reimbursable costs

Monies the Army pays to personnel for travel-related expenses, such as per diem, transportation costs, conference registration fees, or other expenses that are included on an official travel voucher.

Requester

The command, organization, or activity seeking to sponsor or send personnel assigned or attached to the command, organization, or activity to an event.

Service-endorsed training

Events that the AASA has designated as Service-endorsed training. These are the only conferences for which spouses are eligible to receive per diem for attendance.

Special Programs Directorate

The Army organization responsible for drafting Armywide conference policy; developing processes to analyze, track, and report conference activities; ensuring compliance with OSD and Office of Management and Budget requirements; and preparing packages for SECARMY and AASA review.

Spouse travel

An event where one or more spouses of Army personnel is/are attending with the Army funding all or part of the costs incurred as a result of the spouse's (spouses') participation.

Statutory command and staff oversight functions

These are events or functions controlled, determined, or mandated by Federal statute, law, or Governmentwide or DoD regulation. Events or functions mandated within Army policies do not constitute statutory functions. These events or functions would include audits, inspections, counterintelligence measures, and nonconference planning site visits.

Statutory volunteer

A limited category of volunteers authorized by Federal statute (10 USC 1588), approved through the secretarial process, to provide services in certain DoD activities, such as morale, welfare, and recreation functions; Family programs; museums; chaplain programs; and childcare. The following are required for an individual to be accepted into a statutory volunteer status: DD Form 2793 (Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities), DA Form 4162 (Volunteer Service Record), DA Form 4713 (Volunteer Daily Time Record), DA Form 5671 (Parental Permission) (if the volunteer is unmarried and under age 18), and a position description.

Temporary duty

Official duty at a location other than the permanent duty station.

Venue

The actual building, campus, or physical setting of the event, not the city and State.

Virtual conference

An event that is conducted or may be viewed on a computer, or other electronic source, where no attendee travel is required to participate in the event.

Widely attended gathering

A gathering is widely attended if it is expected that a large number of persons will attend and that persons with a diversity of views or interests will be present. For example, it is open to members from throughout the interested industry or profession or if those in attendance represent a range of persons interested in a given matter. See 5 CFR 2635.204(g)(2).

1353 Travel

Travel benefits or expenses paid by an entity external to the Army. Often called "gifted" travel.

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