National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001

January 13, 2014

Reply to Attn of: General Law Practice Group

TO: Distribution

FROM: Alternate Designated Agency Ethics Official

SUBJECT: Determination Regarding Attendance by NASA Attendees at the SciTech Conference hosted by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics on January 13-17, 2014

On January 13-17, 2014, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, will host the SciTech Conference at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center (Gaylord), 201 Waterfront Street, National Harbor, Maryland, 20745. The purpose of the conference is to provide insight into some of the most pressing issues that face the industry (R&D policy, affordability and education) and to provide access to a wide range of state of the art thinking in aerospace research, development and technology.

This event is a five-day technical conference and the registration fee for the five days is approximately $800-$1,200 depending on the time of registration and membership in AIAA. Approximately 3,000 people are expected to attend the conference with some meals and refreshments included. The conference will be attended by congressmen and staffers, other federal agency personnel, industry executives, and academia leaders.

There will also be an additional Executive Dinner held on Tuesday, January 14, 6:30 p.m., in the River Room at the Old Hickory Restaurant at the Gaylord that is not part of the registration. The estimated cost of the dinner including all food and beverages is approximately $100.00 per person. The event will be hosted by AIAA and will be attended by the speakers, AIAA staff and other VIPs. I find that the SciTech Conference and the Executive Dinner meet the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 C.F.R. § 2635.204(g).

I further determine that there is an Agency interest in having NASA personnel attend the conference because it will further Agency programs or operations. Attendance at the conference will allow NASA attendees to exchange information regarding various NASA programs. Accordingly, NASA employees whose duties do not substantially affect the sponsor, including NASA employees in non-career positions who are required to sign the ethics pledge under Executive Order 13490, may accept an invitation for themselves for free attendance to the conference.

However, NASA employees whose duties may substantially affect the event sponsor such as by way of procurement duties, or who receive an invitation from an organization other than AIAA, should seek an individual determination pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.205(g)(3)(i) regarding participation in this event from their local ethics counselor.

The host plans to give the high level guest speakers a gift of an AIAA coin (each is valued at less than $20.00). NASA guest speakers may accept so long as the gift does not exceed $20.

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