

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Goddard Space Flight Center
Greenbelt, MD 20771



July 10, 2014

Reply to Attn of: 140

TO: Distribution

FROM: 140/Chief Counsel

SUBJECT: Widely Attended Gathering Determination Regarding Attendance at the American Institute of Physics Dinner

On the evening of July 15, 2014, the American Institute of Physics (AIP) is hosting a dinner at the College Park Aviation Museum in College Park, Maryland. The purpose of this event is to recognize this year's Society of Physics Students interns.

Approximately 60 individuals have been invited to this event, including the interns, employees from NIST, NASA, AIP, and the American Physical Society, local scientists, and Congresswoman Donna Edwards. The estimated cost per person for the dinner is \$22. No gift items will be distributed.

Attendance at the dinner will allow NASA employees an opportunity to discuss NASA's science missions and STEM activities with the other attendees. I therefore conclude that NASA's interest in its employees attending this event outweighs any concern that free attendance may, or may appear to, improperly influence NASA employees in the performance of their official duties.

Based on the above, I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 CFR 2635.204(g). Accordingly, NASA employees whose duties do not substantially affect AIP may accept an invitation for free attendance to the dinner for themselves and their spouses or guests. However, NASA employees who are in non-career positions for which Executive Order 13490 requires signing an ethics pledge may only attend if they reimburse AIP the cost of refreshments consumed by themselves and their accompanying guests. Moreover, NASA employees whose duties substantially affect AIP, for instance by way of procurement duties, should seek an individual determination regarding participation in this event from their local ethics counselor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Andrew Falcon".

R. Andrew Falcon
Chief Counsel