National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001

October 28, 2014

Reply to Attn of: General Law Practice Group

TO: Distribution

FROM: Alternate Designated Agency Ethics Official

SUBJECT: Determination Regarding Attendance by NASA employees at the Space Oktoberfest Dinner on November 8, 2014

On November 8, 2014, the German Aerospace Center and Arianespace Service and Solutions, will host a dinner at the Biergarten Haus, in Washington, DC, from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The dinner is part of the 14th Annual Space Oktoberfest.

Approximately 150 people have been invited to attend, including an official from the U.S. Embassy, representatives from Congress and executive branch agencies, and various sectors of the space exploration community. The estimated cost of the dinner, including all food and beverages, is approximately $23.00 per person. I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 C.F.R. § 2635.204(g)(2).

I further determine that there is an Agency interest in having NASA personnel attend the event because it will further Agency programs or operations. Attendance at the event will allow NASA attendees to exchange information in an international forum regarding various NASA programs. Accordingly, NASA employees (subject to the exceptions noted below) who have been invited to attend may accept free attendance to this event.

However, NASA employees whose duties may substantially affect the event sponsor, such as by way of contracting duties, should seek an individual determination pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.204(g)(3)(i) regarding participation in these events from their local ethics counselor to attend under the widely attended gathering exception. Moreover, NASA employees who are in non-career positions in which Executive Order 13490 requires signing an ethics pledge may only attend if they reimburse the sponsor the value of the food and refreshments they consume and any gift items accepted for themselves.

Adam F. Greenstone