

National Aeronautics and Space Administration



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September 11, 2023

Reply to Attn of: 30/Office of General Counsel

TO: Distribution

FROM: Chief Counsel

SUBJECT: Ethics Determination Regarding NASA Employee Attendance at the Hampton Roads Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (HR AUVSI) Symposium, September 26-28, 2023, and the HR AUVSI and Virginia Aerospace Business Association (VASBA) Unmanned Systems Symposium and Aerospace Gala, September 28, 2023.

On September 27-28, 2023, the Hampton Roads Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (HR AUVSI), will host an Advanced Air Mobility & Space Symposium and Exposition. The symposium will be at the Marriott City Center at Newport News.

Additionally, on September 28th, 2023, the HR AUVSI and the Virginia Aerospace Business Association (VASBA), will host a gala at the Marriott City Center, in Newport News, VA.

At both of these events, the organizers expect approximately 150-200 people to attend, including invited NASA employees, military and civilian employees of other agencies, aerospace companies, government support contractors, educators, state and local community leaders, and state elected officials.

The symposium events will include speakers, panel discussions and exhibitions, and will include a networking reception at the Marriott City Center prior to the Gala, as well as sponsored breaks and lunches, at a general admission price and of an approximate value of \$175 per person. The gala will consist of drinks, dinner, and musical entertainment at a general admission price and of an approximate value of \$75 per person.

In addition to the hosts of these events, the sponsors of one or both events will likely include Adaptive Aerospace Group, Inc., Analytical Mechanics Associates, Analytical Services & Materials, Inc., Booz Allen Hamilton, Jacobs Technology, KBR, SAIC, Inc., Sierra Lobo, Science Systems and Applications, Inc., Old Dominion University, Psionic, ADNET Systems, Inc., Science & Technology Corp., and LS Technologies, and others.

In accordance with 5 C.F.R. §2635.204(g) and 14 C.F.R. §1207.103, I find that both of these events meet the definition of a “widely attended gathering.” I also find that there is an Agency

interest in having invited NASA personnel attend these events, as it will further agency programs and interests. NASA invitees will have the opportunity to discuss the Administration's activities, and exchange information on NASA programs. I further conclude that NASA's interest in its employees attending this event outweighs any concern that attendance may appear to improperly influence NASA personnel in the performance of their official duties.

At the Gala, others in attendance will generally be accompanied by a spouse or other guest. Accordingly, NASA employees who have been invited to attend may accept free attendance at the reception for themselves and any invited guest.

NASA employees who have a significant role in any pending sensitive matter that will substantially affect the interests of the host and sponsors, and NASA employees who have non-career political appointments, are not covered by this determination and should seek a determination from their ethics counselor regarding their participation in this event.

Questions about this determination may be addressed to the undersigned at 757-864-7686.

Andrea Z. Warmbier
Chief Counsel (Acting)