



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER NAVY RESERVE FORCE
1915 FORRESTAL DRIVE
NORFOLK VA 23551-4615

COMNAVRESFORINST 5050.1A
N00J
15 Oct 24

COMNAVRESFOR INSTRUCTION 5050.1A

Subj: NAVY RESERVE CONFERENCE GUIDANCE

Ref: (a) DoD Conference Guidance 4.0 of June 26, 2016
(b) SECNAVINST 5050.6A
(c) 5 C.F.R. § 410.404
(d) Joint Ethics Regulation of May 15, 2024
(e) Joint Travel Regulations

Encl: (1) Conference Request Template
(2) Legal Review Template
(3) Conference Exemption Determination Template

1. Purpose. To publish guidance and procedures for conference requests, conference approval, and conference exemption determinations for Navy Reserve activities and personnel in accordance with references (a) through (e). This instruction revision should be read in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. COMNAVRESFORINST 5050.1.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to Commander, Navy Reserve Force (COMNAVRESFOR), and all subordinate commands, including Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (COMNAVRESFORCOM), Commander, Naval Air Forces Reserve (COMNAVAIRFORES), and Commander, Naval Information Force Reserve (COMNAVIFORES).

4. Definition. Per reference (a), a “conference” is defined as a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or event that involves attendee travel. Other common terms used include conventions, expositions, symposiums, seminars, workshops, and exhibitions. Indications of a formal conference often include, but are not limited to, registration, registration fees, a published substantive agenda, and scheduled speakers or discussion panels. Individual events may qualify as conferences without meeting all of the criteria listed above, but will generally meet some of them. Training events may qualify as conferences, particularly if they take place in a hotel or conference center. Events within the local duty location that do not require travel authorization may also qualify as a conference. Reference (a) provides examples of activities that are not considered “conferences.”

5. Policy. In accordance with references (a) through (e), this instruction establishes processes and procedures for the administration and oversight of conferences being hosted or administered

by Navy Reserve organizations as well as those conferences not hosted by a Navy Reserve organization but attended by Navy Reserve personnel. Commanders will ensure all conference-related events comply with law, regulation, and policy per references (a) through (e).

a. As part of planning a matter which may be subject to conference-related requirements, Navy Reserve organizations and/or Navy Reserve communities/programs shall initially determine the cognizant Conference Approval Authority. Enclosure (2) of reference (b) is used to generally determine the Conference Approval Authority. Multiple approval authorities, with both the Active Component and the Reserve Component, may exist. Consistent with references (a) and (b), conference planners shall consult with the cognizant judge advocate in determining the most appropriate Conference Approval Authority based upon the type of conference request (e.g., Department of Defense(DoD)-hosted or non-DoD sponsored), the total costs to DoD and other relevant circumstances (e.g., whether only Navy Reserve members are planning to attend the matter).

b. Once the appropriate Conference Approval Authority is determined, Navy Reserve host organizations and/or Navy Reserve communities/program seeking conference approval must submit a request, using the template set forth in enclosure (1), to the identified authority for review. A legal review, as detailed in Paragraph 9 below, shall accompany that approval request. Navy Reserve host organizations that attain a Conference Approval from a non-Navy Reserve Approval Authority shall report the approval to the Force Judge Advocate for Commander, Navy Reserve Force, no more than 15 calendar days after such approval.

(1) Conference Requests from Echelon IV and below Commands. The Navy Reserve sponsoring command, organization, or activity will submit a complete and fully coordinated conference request, using enclosure (1), to their cognizant Echelon IV Commander. The request shall include an initial legal review, using enclosure (2), from the existing (if any) Echelon IV cognizant Staff Judge Advocate. Conference requests, along with any initial legal review, shall then be forwarded to the cognizant Echelon III Office of Legal Counsel no later than 60 days before the event for final review and approval by the applicable approval authority. For conferences with costs greater than \$100,000.00, the Echelon III organization shall forward the conference request to COMNAVRESFOR for approval and/or further coordination. For conferences with costs of \$100,000.00 or less, Echelon III commanders may take approval action only if COMNAVRESFOR has expressly delegated authority to those Echelon III Commanders.

(2) Conference Requests from Echelon III Commands. If COMNAVRESFORCOM, COMNAVAIRFORES or COMNAVIFORES is the sponsoring organization for a conference request requiring Tier 2 Approval Authority, then the cognizant Staff Judge Advocate for the applicable Echelon III organization will conduct a legal review prior to forwarding the conference request to COMNAVRESFOR for approval. All Echelon III conference requests with costs greater than \$100,000.00 shall be forwarded to the Office of the Force Judge Advocate for COMNAVRESFOR no later than 60 days before the event. COMNAVRESFOR may expressly designate Echelon III commanders as approving officials to host conferences with costs of \$100,000.00 or less.

(3) Echelon II Conference Requests and Requests Exceeding \$500k. COMNAVRESFOR shall serve as the Tier 2 approval official for all conferences less than \$500,000.00, including COMNAVRESFOR sponsored or hosted conferences. Any requests for conferences exceeding \$500,000.00 shall be forwarded to Tier 1 approving officials as identified in reference (b) (i.e., Secretary of the Navy or Under Secretary of the Navy) via the Chief of Naval Operations and the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration.

6. Reporting Requirements. Per reference (a) and enclosure (4) of reference (b), a Navy Reserve conference with total conference expenses in excess of \$20,000.00 must be entered into the DoD Conference Tool within 15 days of holding the conference. Instructions for accessing the DoD Conference Tool are in reference (a) and enclosure (4) of reference (b). Navy Reserve organizations must upload the conference approval memorandum in the DoD Conference Tool for Navy Reserve-hosted conferences with costs exceeding \$100,000.00.

7. Exemptions. Per reference (a), certain events are exempt from full processing and approval as “conferences.”

a. Reference (a) provides the full criteria needed to determine whether an event is exempt from this guidance. These events include meetings necessary to carry out statutory command and staff oversight functions such as investigations, inspections, and audits; meetings to consider internal agency business matters; meetings necessary to carry out planning or execution of operational or operational exercise activities or pre-deployment, deployment, or post-deployment activities; bilateral and multi-lateral international cooperation engagements; formal classroom training; change of command, official military award, funeral, or other such ceremonies; and events where the primary purpose is DoD recruiting and/or recruitment advertising and meetings of certain advisory committees.

b. Should an event appear to meet an exemption pursuant to reference (a), commands will complete enclosures (1) and (2) and continue to apply strict scrutiny to ensure the best use of government funds and adherence with not only all applicable laws and policy, but in accordance with the underlying spirit and principles pertaining to conference planning and use of government resources. Navy Reserve host organizations should use the “Formal Classroom Training” exemption judiciously, restrictively, and sparingly in application.

c. Exemptions should be granted sparingly. Navy Reserve host organizations must receive a written conference exemption determination from Navy Reserve Echelon III Commanders (i.e., COMNAVRESFORCOM, COMNAVAIRFORES, or COMNAVIFORES) or non-Navy Reserve Echelon III Commanders (i.e., a Flag Officer/General Officer/Senior Executive Service), so long as the cognizant commander provides written approval with the advice of their cognizant Staff Judge Advocate. Navy Reserve host organizations that attain an exemption approval from a non-Navy Reserve Echelon III Commander must report the exemption approval to Office of the Force Judge Advocate for COMNAVRESFOR within 15 calendar days of such approval. If the event meets the criteria of an exemption, the request, legal reviews, endorsements, and approval shall be maintained on file by both the requesting command and the approving command.

8. Conference Planning

15 Oct 24

a. Navy Reserve host organizations, specifically those personnel involved in the planning and execution of a conference will do the following:

- (1) Plan and execute the conference in the most cost-effective way possible,
- (2) Invite the minimum number of personnel to accomplish the mission and whose participation is appropriately related to official duties and whose attendance benefits the Navy,
- (3) Consider government or military facilities first to hold the event,
- (4) Not make any commitments to vendors and/or obligate any funds before obtaining written conference approval from the appropriate approval authority,
- (5) Comply with all command, organization, or activity conference policies and command conference manager directions,
- (6) Obtain legal advice early and throughout the planning process and submit a thorough, timely, and complete Conference Request package.

b. Particular attention will be paid to expenses related to hosting a conference. Specifically, host organizations should consider all factors concerning the event site, including, but not limited to, prudently using fiscal resources and judiciously incurring travel expenses, including use of government lodging, availability of lodging at or below the established per diem rate, rental vehicles, airport shuttles, per diem expenses, distance from most attendees, distance to the nearest major airport, peak season or off-season rates, use of commercial facilities, and availability of government or military facilities. Additional scrutiny is required for potential expenses for food, refreshments, speaker fees, gifts and awards, the potential requirement of conference fees, and the potential for co-sponsored events. Navy Reserve host organizations are encouraged to consult legal counsel during the planning phase to evaluate fiscal, ethics, contract, and other legal concerns early in the process.

c. Prohibited conference expenses include, entertainment-related expenses, such as hiring musicians or other entertainers, procuring extraneous promotional items, decorations, or other goods and services for participants that are unrelated to the conference's purpose, procuring tickets to recreational activities outside of the conference setting, or using funds to produce non-substantive audio/visual materials. Good judgment and common sense must be exercised throughout the conference planning process. Questions concerning the appropriateness of certain expenses should be directed to legal counsel and other appropriate officials.

9. Legal Review. Approval Authorities must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies before approving a Conference Request. All Conference Requests require legal review that utilizes enclosure (2). The legal review will, at minimum, address all fiscal, ethics, contract, and travel issues, and include a comprehensive assessment of whether the conference complies with applicable regulations and policy. Each legal review will consider the purpose and justification of the conference request, cost-benefit analysis, attendance information and justification, funding and contracts, registration fees, refreshments, honoraria or speaker fees, per

15 Oct 24

diem, provided meals, security, estimated costs, use of rental vehicles, local Temporary Duty (TDY) and requests for Official Representation Funds (ORF).

10. Resources. Enclosures, references, and additional information can be found on the COMNAVRESFORCOM NS webpage at <https://private.navyreserve.navy.mil/CNRFC/N-Codes/NS/Pages/default.aspx> including:

- a. Conference Brief Sheet (template),
- b. Conference Agenda Example,
- c. Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Example,
- d. Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) Example.

11. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, COMNAVRESFOR will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy and Navy policy, and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.



M.J. STEFFEN
Deputy Commander

Distribution:

Electronic via Navy Reserve Homeport <https://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/>

15 Oct 24

Conference Request Template

COMMAND LETTERHEAD

5050

Ser XX/

DD MMM YY

From: (Official Title of Submitting Command, Department Chief of Staff, etc.)
To: Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command or Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve or Commander, Naval Information Forces Reserve
Via: (1) Cognizant Echelon IV Command
(2) Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (N00J) or Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve (N00J) or Commander, Naval Information Forces Reserve (N00J)

Subj: REQUEST FOR (NAME OF YOUR COMMAND/CODE) TO HOST (COMPLETE NAME OF CONFERENCE AND ASSOCIATED CONFERENCE DATES)

Ref: (a) Joint Ethics Regulation of May 15, 2024
(b) DoD Conference Guidance 4.0 of June 26, 2016
(c) SECNAVINST 5050.6A
(d) COMNAVRESFORINST 5050.1A

Encl: (1) SECNAV 5050/2 (Conference Request Form (Must complete and include)
(2) Conference Agenda [Must Include]
(3) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) w/ Co-Sponsor (If applicable)
(4) Cost Assessment & Program Evaluation (CAPE) Costing Summary [Must Include]
(5) Memorandum for the Record (MFR) – Cognizant Staff Judge Advocate Review, including Conference Exemption Determination Recommendation [if applicable] [Must Include]

1. Per references (a) through (d), request you endorse [*name of command*] to host [*name and date(s) of conference*]. [*Include a general summation sentence for the event. Include cost per person for this event, and cost per person per day. Calculate these values based only upon the length of the conference, do not include travel days. If \$3,000 per person and/or \$600 per person per day are exceeded, include a detailed explanation of the costs and a request to approve in lieu of. If spouse travel and/or Invitational Travel Orders (ITOs) will be requested, annotate here with total number of spouses and total cost for ITOs.*]

2. “Execution of this event is mission critical.” [*Sentence must appear exactly as written.*]
[*Additionally, state reason for essential status, citing any applicable references, statutes, and/or stating licensure or accreditation requirements.*] “Execution of this event can neither be delayed nor accomplished via any other means.” [*Sentence must appear exactly as written.*]
[*Additionally, state reason(s) event cannot be delayed and reasons electronic or other medium are not an acceptable substitute.*]

3. This event is co-sponsored by [*full name and abbreviation of co-sponsor, if applicable*].

Enclosure (1)

15 Oct 24

Subj: REQUEST FOR (NAME OF YOUR COMMAND/CODE) TO HOST (COMPLETE NAME OF CONFERENCE AND ASSOCIATED CONFERENCE DATES)

[Describe relationship and purpose of co-sponsorship. Co-sponsorships with a non-federal entity are limited to recognized scientific, technical, educational, or professional organizations and must be approved by the Assistant General Counsel (ethics) who is the Department of the Navy (DON) Designated Agency Ethics Official.] “MOA to co-sponsor event is included as enclosure (3).” *[Sentence must appear exactly as written or]* “There are no co-sponsors for this event.” *[Sentence must appear exactly as written if the event has co-sponsors.]*

4. “All cost reduction measures have been implemented.” *[Sentence must appear exactly as written.]* *[Cite all examples of cost reduction efforts, (i.e. “Costs were reduced by hosting this event at location X instead of location Y, saving \$20 per room per night and co-locating the conference with the hotel).]* “Enclosure (4) is the CAPE estimate detailing all associated costs and fees.” *[Sentence must appear exactly as written.]* Complete CAPE estimate at <https://www.cape.osd.mil> and attach as enclosure (4). *[Must provide a complete copy of the actual document from the CAPE website.]*

5. “I certify that participation in this conference will significantly advance the DONs mission, and that the associated expenses and activities comply with all applicable travel, conference, and acquisition regulations.” *[Sentence must appear exactly as written.]*

6. For any questions, please contact *[Provide your command point of contact with phone number and email]*.

I. M. SAILOR

15 Oct 24

Legal Review Template

DD MMM YY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: REQUEST FOR (NAME OF YOUR COMMAND/CODE) TO HOST (COMPLETE NAME OF CONFERENCE AND ASSOCIATED CONFERENCE DATES)

1. [*Who*] Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC), is proposing a [*What*] training event (i.e., 2014 Full-Time Support Medical Department Representative (MDR) East Symposium) to be held in [*Where*] Norfolk, Virginia. [*Where Specifically*] The location of the event is on board NSA Hampton Roads, Virginia. [*When*] The dates of the event are [].

2. The request submitted by CNRFC substantially complies with Department of Defense (DoD) Conference Guidance 4.0 of June 26 2016, SECNAVINST 5050.6A, direction from Director, Navy Staff, and COMNAVRESFORINST 5050.1A.

3. Current Navy policy generally calls for [*SECNAV or DON/AA*] approval for conferences of this size, approximately \$XXXXXX. Exemptions from the conference approval process are outlined in DoD Conference Guidance 4.0.

4. [*If an exemption applies.*] It is my position that Exemption “b” from the DoD Conference Guidance applies, as the event is directly related to internal agency business matters. [*If applicable, discuss cost saving efforts.*] Additionally, cost reductions have been used as the event will be held in a military facility. [*As applicable, summarize the purpose.*] Permitting the onsite collaboration of the CNRFC Medical Department leadership directly with the MDRs to discuss changes to instructions and policies is in concert with this provision.

5. [*If an exemption applies.*] Accordingly, further processing this request for “conference” approval is not required. CNRFC (Echelon III Commander) may approve this event as ordinary travel, which requires only that the first Flag Officer in the chain of command determine that it is mission essential.

4. [*If no exemption applies.*] I have reviewed the conference request and associated documents and find the request legally sufficient in that it complies with applicable regulations and policy. Specifically, [*Provide analysis of justification of the conference request and attendance information and justification.*] [*Comment on cost-benefit analysis and address fiscal and contract issues, including registration fees, refreshments, honoraria or speaker fees, and requests for Official Representation Funds (ORF).*] [*Provide legal analysis on security and travel issues, including per diem, provided meals, estimated travel cost, use of rental vehicles, local Temporary Duty (TDY).*] [*Provide ethics analysis.*]

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xxxxxx.x.xxxxxx.mil@us.navy.mil

15 Oct 24

Conference Exemption Determination Template

COMMAND LETTERHEAD

5050
Ser XX/
DD MMM YY

From: Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command
or Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve
or Commander, Naval Information Force Reserve

To: (Official Title of Requesting Command)

Subj: CONFERENCE EXEMPTION DETERMINATION ICO (COMPLETE NAME OF
CONFERENCE)

Ref: (a) (Requesting Command memo of Date)
(b) Department of Defense Conference Guidance, Version 4.0 of June 26, 2016
(c) SECNAVINST 5050.6A
(d) 5 C.F.R. § 410.404
(e) Joint Ethics Regulation of May 15, 2024
(f) Joint Travel Regulations
(g) COMNAVRESFORINST 5050.1A
(h) SECNAV M-5210.1

1. As detailed in reference (a), [*name of command*] is hosting the [*name and date(s) of conference*] between in [*location, including city, state, and name of installation, if applicable*].

2. Upon review of reference (a), and in accordance with references (b) – (g), I have determined that the [*name of conference*] is exempt from conference requirements. [*Provide brief analysis, e.g., "The event constitutes a hybrid blend of formal classroom training and a meeting designed to plan and/or to execute operational activities and execution of the symposium is well-considered and exhibits prudent use of government resources."*]

3. This conference exempt determination shall be maintained pursuant to the requirements set forth in references (g) and (h).

F. MI. LAST
RANK USN

Copy to:
Force Judge Advocate for CNR/CNRF