

# NASA ADVISORY COUNCIL

## HELIOPHYSICS SUBCOMMITTEE

December 7, 2015

Teleconference

MEETING MINUTES

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Jill Dahlburg, Chair

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Ramona Kessel, Executive Secretary

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*Prepared by Elizabeth Sheley  
Zantech IT*

Monday, December 7, 2015

Welcome

Dr. Ramona Kessel, Executive Secretary of the NASA Advisory Committee (NAC) Heliophysics Subcommittee (HPS), opened the conference call by calling roll of Subcommittee attendees. Speakers for the teleconference were Dr. Max Bernstein, Science Mission Directorate (SMD) Lead for Research, and Dr. Jill Dahlburg, HPS Chair.

Salary Redaction in Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Science (ROSES)

Dr. Bernstein explained that, starting in 2016, SMD will be redacting salary numbers in ROSES proposals. This change stems from a discussion with all four SMD division directors, in which they determined that in response to some difficulties and on the principle of equal treatment, it would be best to change how peer reviewers see budgets. This affects all SMD divisions, not just the Heliophysics Division (HPD).

A previous SMD Associate Administrator had made an agreement with the union to redact the salaries and overhead for NASA civil servant proposers, so this information was hidden from peer reviewers but was seen by program scientists. This is unique to ROSES. The result is that the salaries and overhead of non-civil servant proposers and co-investigators has been available to the peer reviewers, and at times the disparity of the rules has caused a lot of confusion. For Cooperative Agreement Notices (CANs), NASA redacts salaries and overhead for all proposers. SMD plans to do this with ROSES 2016.

Problems with the current arrangement include the fact that the proposers are not all treated alike. In addition, information is withheld from the peer reviewers. A complication has been the lack of a uniform approach, which has led to a need for civil servants to upload their budgets in a separate, additional process. That, in turn, resulted in information becoming lost on occasion. Dr. Bernstein gave an example of a situation in which a civil servant's salary was overlooked. The impact can be considerable and result in delayed starts.

While peer reviewers will no longer see any salary or overhead information, they will still have level-of-effort information. The change will ensure that all proposals are treated equally, and it will remove the risk of salaries and overhead data being missed. Salaries for everyone will be automatically redacted by the NSpires software, and the cover pages will be complete. The NASA program managers will see the correct totals when making selections. Dr. Bernstein described an example in which he compared what the peer reviewers and NASA personnel will see.

Dr. Bernstein noted that a private sector proposer to HPD withdrew a proposal because of concern that their commercial competitors might see the salary and overhead information. That NASA did not get to see a potentially excellent proposal is a huge negative. Redaction of salaries will preclude such scenarios.

When asked about the need to redact the total cumulative budget line, Dr. Bernstein said that it seemed unlikely that it would be dissected, but the agreement with the union specified that NASA would hide the salaries, overhead, and totals so that the salaries and overhead could not be calculated. The ROSES instructions will change to reflect the redaction. In addition, there will be a new section added to the summary of solicitation regarding what happens when the guidebook for proposers differs from instructions. The instructions take precedence over the guidebook. Finally, some proposers apply to more than one SMD division, which is another reason why this change reflects a consensus in the Directorate.

NAC Science Committee Summary

Dr. Dahlburg provided an update on her presentation at the most recent meeting of the NAC Science Committee (SC). She told the SC about the results of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Modernization Act (GPRAMA) assessment of HPD activities over the last year, providing examples of each subgoal. She also recapped the five briefings presented at the HPS fall meeting and reviewed the findings from the Geospace/Management Operations Working Group (G/MOWG) Report.

Dr. Dahlburg then updated the SC on HPS's activities regarding payload adapter fittings (PAFs) in competed missions. She noted that HPS will address risk intolerance at its spring meeting, and that HPD Director Steven Clark had offered to have his staff look at the issue.

Adjournment

HPS agreed that there was no immediate need for a follow-up teleconference, and therefore they would set a time in March 2016 for an in-person meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

## Appendix A Participants

### *Heliophysics Subcommittee members*

**Jill P. Dahlburg, Chair, Naval Research Lab**

Vassilis Angelopoulos, UCLA

Bart W. De Pontieu, Lockheed Martin

Heather A. Elliott, Southwest Research Institute

Michael W. Liemohn, University of Michigan

James Russell III, Hampton University

Roger W. Smith, University of Alaska

William Kent Tobiska, Space Environment Technologies

Ramona Kessel, NASA HQ, Executive Secretary

### *NASA Participants*

Max Bernstein

Steve Clarke, HPD Director

Aaluk Edwardson

Peg Luce

### *Other Participants*

Sarah Barber

Dan Leone

Elizabeth Sheley, Zantech IT

## Appendix B Subcommittee Membership

**Jill P. Dahlburg, Chair**

Naval Research laboratory

**Ramona Kessel, Executive Secretary**

NASA HQ

Dr. Vassilis Angelopoulos  
UCLA

Dr. Spiro Antiochos  
NASA GSFC

Dr. Bart W. De Pontieu  
Lockheed Martin

Dr. Mihir I. Desai  
Science and Engineering Division  
Southwest Research Institute

Dr. Heather Elliott  
Southwest Research Institute

Dr. Maura Hagan  
National Center for Atmospheric Research

Dr. Michael W. Liemohn  
University of Michigan

Dr. Ralph L. McNutt, Jr.  
Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Neil Murphy  
Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Dr. James Russell III  
Hampton University

Dr. Roger Wilford Smith  
University of Alaska - Fairbanks

Dr. William Kent Tobiska  
Space Environment Technologies

## Appendix C Presentations

1. Update on Redaction in SMD's Omnibus NASA Research Announcement (NRA) Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Science (ROSES), *Max Bernstein*
2. Heliophysics Subcommittee Report for NAC Science Committee, *Jill Dahlburg*