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§ 7.3 Interpretations.

Except as specifically authorized by the Commission in writing, no interpretation of the meaning of the regulations in this part by an NRC officer or employee, other than a written interpretation by the General Counsel, shall be binding upon the Commission.

§ 7.4 Establishment of advisory committees.

(a) An NRC advisory committee may be established under this part only if its establishment—

(1) Is specifically directed or authorized by statute or by Executive Order of the President; or

(2) Has been determined by the Commission to be in the public interest and essential to the performance of the duties imposed on the Commission by law.

The determination required by paragraph (a)(2) of this section shall be a matter of formal record, and shall include a statement of a clearly defined purpose for the advisory committee.

§ 7.5 Consultation with Committee Management Secretariat on establishment of advisory committees; advisory committee charters.

(a) Before establishing a discretionary advisory committee, the NRC shall consult with the Committee Management Secretariat. With a full understanding of the background and purpose behind the proposed advisory committee, the Committee Management Secretariat may share its knowledge and experience with the NRC on how best to make use of the proposed committee, alternate methods of attaining the agency's purpose, or whether a preexisting advisory committee performs similar functions. Such consultation should include the transmittal of the proposed committee charter and the following information:

(1) A request for a review of the proposed charter;

(2) An explanation stating why the committee is essential to the conduct of NRC business and is in the public interest;

(3) An explanation stating why the committee's functions cannot be performed by the NRC, an existing NRC advisory committee, or other means (such as a public hearing); and

(4) A description of NRC's plan to attain balanced membership on the committee. The plan must ensure that, in the selection of members for the advisory committee, the NRC will consider a cross-section of those directly affected, interested, and qualified, as appropriate to the nature and functions of the committee. For purposes of attaining balance in an NRC advisory committee's membership, the Commission shall consider for membership interested persons and groups with professional, technical, or personal qualifications or experience that will contribute to the functions and tasks to be performed.

(b) Each proposed committee charter submitted for review pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section shall contain the following information:

(1) The committee's official designation;

(2) The committee's objectives and the scope of its activity;

(3) The period of time necessary for the committee to carry out its purposes;

(4) The NRC official to whom the committee will report;

(5) The NRC office responsible for providing support for the committee;

(6) A description of the duties that the committee will perform, and if such duties are not solely advisory, a specification of the authority for the functions that are not advisory;

(7) The estimated annual operating costs, in dollars and person years, for the committee;

(8) The estimated number and frequency of committee meetings; and

(9) The committee's termination date, if less than two years from the date of the committee's establishment.

(c) The requirements of this part, including the requirements of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, shall apply to any subcommittee that functions independently of the parent advisory committee (such as by making recommendations directly to the agency rather than to the parent advisory committee), regardless of whether the subcommittee's members are drawn in whole or in part from the parent advisory committee.

(d) After the Committee Management Secretariat has notified the Commission of the results of its review of a proposal to establish or utilize an NRC discretionary advisory committee, submitted pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, the Commission shall notify the Committee Management Secretariat whether the advisory committee is actually being established. Filing of the advisory committee charter pursuant to §7.8 shall be deemed to fulfill this notification requirement. If the advisory committee is not being established, the Commission shall so advise the Committee Management Secretariat, stating whether NRC intends to take any further action with respect to the proposed advisory committee.

(e) The date of filing of an advisory committee charter pursuant to §7.8 shall be added to the charter when such filing takes place, shall appear on the face of the charter, and shall constitute the date of establishment, renewal, or reestablishment of the committee.

[67 FR 79840, Dec. 31, 2002]

§ 7.6 Amendment to advisory committee charters.

(a) Final authority for amending the charter of an NRC advisory committee established or utilized by the NRC is vested in the Commission.

(b) Any proposed changes made to a current charter for an NRC advisory committee shall be coordinated with the General Counsel to ensure that they are consistent with applicable legal requirements. When a statute or Executive Order that directed or authorized the establishment of an advisory committee is amended, those sections of the advisory committee's charter affected by the amendments shall also be amended.

(c)(1) The charter of an NRC advisory committee established under general agency authority may be amended when the Commission determines that the existing charter no longer reflects the objectives or functions of the committee. Such changes may be minor (such as revising the name of the advisory committee or modifying the estimated number or frequency of meetings), or they may be major (such as revising the objectives or composition of the committee).

(2) The procedures in paragraph (b) of this section shall be used in the case of charter amendments involving minor changes. A proposed major amendment to the charter of an advisory committee established under general agency authority shall be submitted to the Committee Management Secretariat for review with an explanation of the purpose of the changes and why they are necessary.

(3) A committee charter that has been amended pursuant to this paragraph is subject to the filing requirements set forth in §7.8.

(4) Amendment of an existing advisory committee charter pursuant to this paragraph does not constitute renewal of the committee for purposes of §7.7.

[67 FR 79840, Dec. 31, 2002]

§ 7.7 Termination, renewal, and rechartering of advisory committees.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, each NRC advisory committee shall terminate two years after it is established, reestablished, or renewed, unless—

(1) It has been terminated sooner;

(2) It has been renewed or reestablished before the end of such period in accordance with the procedures set forth in paragraph (b) of this section; or

(3) Its duration has been otherwise designated by law. The NRC Committee Management Officer shall notify the Committee Management Secretariat of the effective date of termination of any advisory committee that has been terminated by the NRC.

(b)(1) An NRC advisory committee that is established by statute shall require rechartering by the filing of a new charter every 2 years after the date of enactment of the statute establishing the committee. If a new charter is not filed, the committee is not terminated, but it may not meet or take any actions.

(2) Any other NRC advisory committee may be renewed, provided that such renewal is carried out in compliance with the procedures set forth in §7.5, except that an advisory committee established by the President