



United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Resources, Community, and
Economic Development Division

B-271957

September 27, 1996

The Honorable Robert S. Walker
Chairman, Committee on Science
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As requested, this report provides information on fiscal year 1995 expenditures associated with external and internal public affairs activities in the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Specifically, you asked us to identify each agency's expenditures in fiscal year 1995 for (1) activities related to disseminating information to the public, (2) providing public affairs information internally to agency and contractor employees, (3) sponsoring nontechnical conferences, (4) awarding national prizes to businesses and scientists, (5) publicizing opportunities for businesses to obtain laboratory technology, and (6) informing local communities about efforts to clean up nuclear and/or hazardous waste at agency facilities. You also asked that we provide more detailed data showing expenditures by headquarters and field organizations for DOE and NASA, which receive substantially more funding and have more research laboratories and operating facilities than NSF and NIST. In addition, you asked us to provide workforce data, measured in full-time equivalents (FTE),¹ associated with external and internal public affairs activities for all four agencies.

In summary, DOE, NASA, NSF, and NIST spent a total of \$72.7 million for activities related to the dissemination of information to the public and an additional \$34.6 million for the five other selected activities in fiscal year 1995. DOE and NASA accounted for \$100.1 million, or 93 percent, of the \$107.3 million in total expenditures. Further analysis of DOE's fiscal year 1995 expenditures of

¹Full-time equivalents is the number of hours worked divided by the number of compensable hours in a fiscal year.

\$59.2 million shows that (1) its headquarters and field offices accounted for \$16.2 million, or 27 percent, and (2) 35 laboratories, nuclear weapons production facilities, and nuclear waste storage sites accounted for \$43 million, or 73 percent, of the expenditures. NASA's headquarters spent \$20.8 million, and its 10 field centers, which include its laboratories, spent \$20.1 million for a total of \$40.9 million in fiscal year 1995. The four agencies used 637 FTEs to provide external and internal public affairs activities. Tables I.1 through I.6 in enclosure I provide detailed information about the four agencies' expenditures. Table I.7 shows the FTEs associated with each agency's external and internal public affairs activities. Tables II.1 and II.2 in enclosure II show each agency's appropriation and total workforce in fiscal year 1995 to provide perspective on the public affairs expenditures and FTEs. For example, DOE used 423 FTEs for external and internal public affairs activities; DOE's total employment was about 135,000 government and contractor employees in fiscal year 1995.

AGENCY COMMENTS

A draft of this report was sent to the Departments of Commerce and Energy, NASA, and NSF for comment. In general, each agency regarded the data in the report as accurate. DOE and NASA also provided some additional information about their public affairs activities. In addition, the agencies suggested certain changes, primarily to clarify information in the tables. For example, DOE suggested presenting detailed data about its fiscal year 1995 expenditures for disseminating information to the public and for other selected activities in separate tables. We have incorporated this change (see tables I.3 and I.4) and others proposed by the agencies, as appropriate. The agencies' comments are included in enclosures III through VI.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

We met with Office of Public Affairs officials in each of the four agencies to identify categories of activities associated with the dissemination of information to the public, agency employees, and the employees at contractor-operated facilities to be included in the scope of this review. We then requested that each agency provide fiscal year 1995 expenditures and workforce data for each of these activities and certain other selected activities. As agreed with your office, we excluded certain activities from our review because they did not involve disseminating information to the general public and/or the agencies were directed to perform the activity by a specific legal requirement. Among the excluded activities were (1) disseminating research results in scientific journals; (2) attending scientific conferences and seminars; (3) developing educational materials; (4) collecting and disseminating certain statistical data; (5) responding

B-271957

to specific legal requirements, such as the Freedom of Information Act and environmental laws; and (6) responding to congressional requests for information.

DOE provided financial and workforce data for its headquarters and field offices and for 17 laboratories and 18 current or former nuclear weapons production, nuclear waste storage, and uranium enrichment facilities operated by management and operating contractors. NASA's financial and workforce data include activities at its headquarters and 10 field centers. NSF's data cover its headquarters and five federally funded research and development centers it supports with grants. NIST provided data for both of its laboratory locations. We did not verify the accuracy or completeness of the data that each agency provided. We also did not evaluate the efficiency or effectiveness of each agency's public affairs operations, nor did we ask the agencies to project fiscal year 1996 expenditures because the fiscal year was not completed. We conducted our work from April through August 1996 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

As arranged with your office, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days after its date. At that time, we will send copies of the report to the Secretary of Energy; the Secretary of Commerce; the Administrator, NASA; the Director, NSF; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. We will also make copies available to others on request.

Major contributors to this report are James Hunt, Richard Cheston, Richard Iager, and Jacqueline Bell. Please contact me at (202) 512-3841 if you or your staff have any questions.

Sincerely yours,



Allen Li
Associate Director, Energy,
Resources, and Science Issues

Enclosures - 2

RESOURCES THAT FOUR AGENCIES USED TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION
TO THE PUBLIC AND FOR CERTAIN OTHER ACTIVITIES IN FISCAL YEAR 1995

Table I.1: Agencies' Expenditures for Activities Related to Disseminating Information to the Public in Fiscal Year 1995

Dollars in thousands

Activity	DOE^a	NASA	NSF	NIST	All agencies
Printed media	\$3,143	\$4,261	\$741	\$43	\$8,188
Television and radio	49 ^b	4,815 ^c	0	0	4,864
Audio, video, and compact disks	971	3,746	290	0	5,007
Visitor centers and facility tours	6,918	2,019 ^d	0	1	8,938
Exhibits	1,015	3,157	0	6	4,178
Ceremonies/Dedications	119	736 ^e	9	20	884
Salaries and expenses associated with public affairs activities	26,382 ^f	11,551	782	435	39,150
Other	0	1,420 ^g	37	0	1,457
Total	\$38,597	\$31,705	\$1,859	\$505	\$72,666

Note: NASA and NSF provided obligations, rather than expenditures, because these data were more readily available.

^aWe estimated expenditures for subcategories of information dissemination activities, except visitor centers and facility tours and salaries and support service contractors, on the basis of expenditures data provided by the DOE units and management and operating contractors that had the greatest expenditures. DOE expenditures include Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management expenditures of \$2.4 million paid through a special statutorily established fund, but exclude expenditures by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Bonneville Power Administration.

^bPublic service announcements.

^cPrimarily involves real-time coverage of Space Shuttle missions; live, unscripted interviews by media outlets; and raw source material for use by television news operations.

^dNo NASA funds were used to operate visitor centers and tours at Johnson Space Center, Kennedy Space Center, and Marshall Space Flight Center because NASA uses concessionaires at these

centers that recoup their costs through Imax movie receipts and by selling tours, souvenirs, and refreshments.

^eMore than 75 percent of this amount is for public viewing of Space Shuttle launches and landings.

^fIncludes salaries and support service contracts.

^gContractor support that NASA could not readily allocate to specific activities.

Source: DOE, NASA, NSF, and NIST.

Table I.2: Agencies' Expenditures for Other Selected Activities in Fiscal Year 1995

Dollars in thousands

Activity	DOE ^a	NASA	NSF	NIST	All agencies
Internal public affairs activities ^b	\$12,219	\$905	\$23	\$38	\$13,185
Agency-sponsored conferences ^c	762	45	1,780	0	2,587
National awards	796	15	95	2,912 ^d	3,818
Outreach to U.S. businesses ^e	2,357	8,200 ^f	0	0	10,557
Outreach to local communities about environmental cleanup	4,488	0	0	0	4,488
Total	\$20,622	\$9,165	\$1,898	\$2,950	\$34,635

Note: NASA and NSF provided obligations, rather than expenditures, because these data were more readily available.

^aIncludes Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management expenditures of \$0.9 million paid through a special statutorily established fund, but excludes expenditures by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Bonneville Power Administration.

^bIncludes internal newsletters, clipping services, and associated salaries and support service contractor expenses associated with internal support provided by each agency's headquarters, field organizations, and contractor-operated facilities.

^cExcludes scientific conferences and conferences whose costs are primarily recovered through participant fees.

^dPredominantly includes NIST's management costs for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program, which involves substantial sharing of information with industry.

^eIncludes generic technology transfer activities.

^fPredominantly includes funding for the National Technology Transfer Center, which is the focal point for information about the research and development performed by all federal laboratories.

Source: DOE, NASA, NSF, and NIST.

Table I.3: DOE's Expenditures for Disseminating Information to the Public in Fiscal Year 1995

Dollars in thousands

Activity	Headquarters	Field offices	Contractor-operated laboratories	Contractor-operated production and waste facilities ^a	Total
Printed media	\$791	\$107	\$1,502	\$743	\$3,143
Television and radio	44	0	5	0	49
Audio, video, and compact disks	125	19	664	163	971
Visitors centers and facility tours	0	783	2,970	3,165	6,918 ^b
Exhibits	475	71	212	257	1,015
Special events	21	3	86	9	119
Salaries and support service contracts	4,402	3,775	8,377	9,828	26,382
Total	\$5,858	\$4,758	\$13,816	\$14,165	\$38,597

Note: Expenditures for subcategories of information dissemination activities, except visitor centers and facility tours and salaries and support service contractors, were estimated on the basis of expenditures data provided by the DOE units and management and operating contractors that had the greatest expenditures. DOE expenditures include Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management expenditures of \$2.4 million paid through a special statutorily established fund, but exclude expenditures by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Bonneville Power Administration.

^aPrimarily includes current and former nuclear weapons production facilities and nuclear waste storage, treatment, and remediation facilities.

^bIncludes \$6,867,000 for salaries and support service contracts and \$51,000 for materials.

Source: DOE.

Table I.4: DOE's Expenditures for Other Selected Activities in Fiscal Year 1995

Dollars in thousands

Activity	Headquarters	Field offices	Contractor-operated laboratories	Contractor-operated production and waste facilities ^a	Total
Internal public affairs activities					
Materials	\$3	\$129	\$1,032	\$643	\$1,807
Salaries and support service contracts	646	1,418	5,120	3,228	10,412
Subtotal	649	1,547	6,152	3,871	12,219
Agency-sponsored conferences	547	65	116	34	762
National awards	791	0	5	0	796
Technology transfer activities	764	91	893	609	2,357
Outreach to local communities about environmental cleanup	10	1,164	628	2,686	4,488
Total	\$2,761	\$2,867	\$7,794	\$7,200	\$20,622

Note: DOE expenditures include Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management expenditures of \$0.9 million paid through a special statutorily established fund, but exclude expenditures by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Bonneville Power Administration.

^aPrimarily includes current and former nuclear weapons production facilities and nuclear waste storage, treatment, and remediation facilities.

Source: DOE.

Table I.5: NASA's Expenditures for Disseminating Information to the Public in Fiscal Year 1995

Dollars in thousands

Activity	Headquarters	Field centers	Total
Printed media	\$2,110	\$2,151	\$4,261
Television and radio programming	1,865	2,950	4,815 ^a
Audio, video, and compact disks	2,590	1,156	3,746
Visitors centers and facility tours	0	2,019 ^b	2,019
Exhibits	1,918	1,239	3,157
Special events	18	718	736 ^c
Salaries, benefits, and travel	3,744	7,807	11,551
Contractor support	300	1,120	1,420
Total	\$12,545	\$19,160	\$31,705

^aPrimarily involves real-time coverage of Space Shuttle missions; live, unscripted interviews by media outlets; and raw source material for use by television news operations.

^bNo NASA funds were used to operate visitor centers and tours at Johnson Space Center, Kennedy Space Center, and Marshall Space Flight Center because NASA uses concessionaires at these centers that recoup their costs through Imax movie receipts and by selling tours, souvenirs, and refreshments.

^cMore than 75 percent of expense is for public viewing of Space Shuttle launches and landings.

Source: NASA.

Table I.6: NASA's Expenditures for Other Selected Activities in Fiscal Year 1995

Dollars in thousands

Activity	Headquarters	Field centers	Total
Internal public affairs activities			
Daily clippings	0	\$106	\$106
Employee newsletter	\$14	785	799
Subtotal	14	891	905
Agency-sponsored conferences	25	20	45
National awards	15	0	15
Technology transfer activities	8,200 ^a	0	8,200
Outreach to local communities about environmental cleanup	0	0	0
Total	\$8,254	\$911	\$9,165

^aPredominantly includes funding for the National Technology Transfer Center, which is the focal point for information about the research and development performed by all federal laboratories.

Source: NASA.

Table I.7: Personnel Involved in External and Internal Public Affairs Activities in Fiscal Year 1995

Full-time equivalents

Agency	Public affairs personnel		Program personnel	Total
	External activities	Internal activities		
DOE				
Headquarters	30.5	11.5	6.9	48.9 ^a
Field offices	41.1	11.7	2.8	55.6 ^b
Laboratories	93.4	62.3	15.6	171.3 ^c
Production facilities	<u>86.9</u>	<u>38.2</u>	<u>21.9</u>	<u>147.0</u>
Subtotal	251.9	123.7	47.2	422.8
NASA				
Headquarters	55.0	1.0	0	56.0
Field centers	<u>125.7</u>	<u>7.0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>132.7</u>
Subtotal	180.7	8.0	0	188.7
NSF				
Headquarters	7.0	7.0	0	14.0
Laboratories ^d	<u>2.5</u>	<u>2.5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5.0</u>
Subtotal	9.5	9.5	0	19.0
NIST	6.6	0	0	6.6
Total	448.7	141.2	47.2	637.1

Note: Full-time equivalents is the number of hours worked divided by the number of compensable hours in a fiscal year.

^aIncludes 0.9 FTEs for the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management.

^bIncludes 2 FTEs for Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management activities at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

^cIncludes 14 FTEs for Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management activities at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

^dIncludes five federally funded research and development centers supported by NSF grants.

Source: DOE, NASA, NSF, and NIST.

AGENCIES' APPROPRIATION AND WORKFORCE IN FISCAL YEAR 1995Table II.1: Agencies' Appropriation in Fiscal Year 1995

Dollars in millions

Agency	Appropriation
DOE	\$17,200
NASA	\$14,000
NSF	\$3,300
NIST	\$700

Note: Excludes funding provided by other sources, including other federal agencies.

Table II.2: Workforce of Each Agency and Its Contractor-Operated Facilities in Fiscal Year 1995

Agency	Government employee FTEs	Employee FTEs at contractor-operated facilities ^a	Total FTEs
DOE	13,250 ^b	121,925 ^c	135,175
NASA	22,164	5,697 ^d	27,861
NSF	1,245	2,116 ^e	3,361
NIST	2,389	0	2,389

^aExcludes employees of grantees, contractors, and subcontractors that do not operate a facility for the agency under a long-term agreement.

^bIncludes employees of the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, which is funded through a special statutorily established fund, but excludes employees of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and DOE's Power Marketing Administrations.

^cTotal number of employees working for DOE's management and operating contractors at the end of fiscal year 1995.

^dIncludes only employees at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, a federally funded research and development center.

^eIncludes only employees at the five federally funded research and development centers supported by NSF grants.

Source: DOE, NASA, NSF, and NIST.

COMMENTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE**

Washington, D.C. 20230

SEP 20 1996

Mr. Allen Li
Associate Director, Energy, Resources
and Science Issues
Resources, Community, and Economic
Development Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Li:

Thank you for your letter requesting the Department's comments on the draft General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report entitled, "Public Affairs Expenditures."

The report is consistent with information provided to GAO by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). We do note that there is a new category of information on Table 1.2, "Technology transfer activities" which was not requested by GAO during its initial information gathering. A footnote to this effect should be included for NIST. As previously reported to you by NIST, the agency's outreach efforts to industry are an integral part of the agency's planning, conduct and evaluation of its research and services and cannot be separately accounted out of the Institute's R&D accounts.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on the draft report. If your staff requires additional information about the Department's response to your report, they may contact NIST's Chief of Public and Business Affairs, Mat Heyman, at (301) 975-2758.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Kantor", written in a cursive style.

Michael Kantor

COMMENTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Department of Energy**

Washington, DC 20585

September 23, 1996

Mr. Alan Li
Associate Director, Energy, Resources
and Science Issues
Resources, Community, and
Economic Development Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Li:

This letter responds to your September 12, 1996 letter to Secretary O'Leary requesting the Department's comments on the General Accounting Office's (GAO) draft report on public affairs expenditures by this Department, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for FY 1995. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the draft report. Also enclosed is the Department of Energy's final data submission.

In reviewing the draft report, we noted several areas that we believe deserve consideration. First and foremost, the scope of the GAO review does not address the importance of building effective communications and trust. The Department depends on open communications with the public around three dozen major facilities in twenty one states, numerous individual remedial action sites, and four power marketing administrations, in order to ensure that our work -- much of it highly sensitive -- can proceed in a timely and efficient way. In times past, when communications were poor and the public was not informed of the Department's work, a culture of public mistrust and hostility pervaded many of our sites. This culture led to frequent complaints, legal challenges and delays -- all of which ultimately added costs to the taxpayer. We are recommend that the report include brief summaries of agencies' programs, goals and objectives in pursuing their respective public affairs initiatives covered by the report.

Simply put, investments in openness and communications to build public understanding -- especially regarding the maintenance and dismantlement of nuclear weapons as well as the clean-up of the weapons complex -- pays big dividends to the taxpayer. The public sensitivities associated with the operation and clean-up of the nuclear weapons complex, and the management of the civilian nuclear waste program, are among the highest of any governmental mission. Were the Department's public affairs activities to be significantly diminished in these areas, we would expect a corresponding cost associated with poor public communication and understanding of these missions.

While recognizing that GAO was responding to direction from congressional requesters, additional comments concern the difficulty of comparing the Department's public affairs expenditures to those of NASA, NIST, and NSF. As a cabinet-level agency, the Department

engages in a very broad range of activities that reach far beyond the research and development missions that are most appropriate for comparison with the other listed agencies. In addition to research and development of energy and environmental technologies, the Department's work ranges from nuclear weapons stewardship to maintenance of strategic petroleum reserves to environmental restoration and remediation to power marketing. Although a few specific agency activities were excluded from this review -- the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Energy Information Administration, and the Bonneville Power Administration -- the vast majority of the Department's activities were included. As such, many of the reported expenditures are unrelated to the types of research, development, and demonstration activities reported by the other agencies. For example, more than one third of all Department expenditures reported were incurred by management-and-operating (M&O) contractors of the weapons complex to support public information initiatives related to a site's defense mission, safety and health programs, and environmental initiatives.

Consequently, the expenses incurred by the Department are not directly comparable to limited-purpose R&D agencies or sub-agencies, such as NIST, included in the GAO review. While GAO did not make any qualitative comparisons in this regard, quantitative comparisons are made notably with NASA. We believe the report should be revised to note the difficulty in comparing public affairs programs because of the wide differences in each agency's mission and organization.

GAO also separately reports public affairs expenditures for disseminating information to the public (Table I.1) and other selected activities (Table I.2). Although we recognize that GAO was responding to requesters in obtaining the "other selected activity" expenditures, many of these "other" activities are clearly not intended or conducted for external public relations purposes. For example, we reported internal support expenditures incurred by federal and contractor public affairs offices for internal newsletters, internal graphics and presentation support, and news clipping services. While GAO generally distinguishes these two types of expenditures in the report, it does combine them in its individual agency data tables and discusses the combined amounts in the report narrative. In the Department's case, the "other" activities constitute more than one third of the total reported expenditures.

The Department is concerned that the distinctions between the public affairs expenditures for dissemination of information to the general public and these specialized "other" activities will be lost and that the casual reader will conclude that all reported costs are public relations costs when this is not the case. We therefore believe the report should be revised to consistently distinguish between the two types of activities -- both in the data tables and the narrative portions of the report.

GAO includes, without discussion, a final table containing agency appropriations and FTE levels for FY 1995 -- Table II.1. To the extent that GAO intends to include this information to provide context for the reported public affairs expenditures, we concur. The Department's reported expenditures represent less than less than one half of 1% of the Department's total budget. Reported expenditures similarly represent very small percentages of the budgets and FTE levels of the individual reporting organizations, such as laboratories, included in the Department's data. It would be beneficial if GAO revised the report to explain the relevance of Table II.1 and

indicated that reported expenditures are, in fact, very small compared to the budgets and FTE levels of the Department and all reporting agencies.

As you are aware, the data provided by the Department and other agencies are a snapshot in time -- FY 1995. Since then, the management of the DOE complex -- including the budgets and staff in public affairs -- have been and are being reduced due to planned downsizing as well as declining budget requests and appropriations. For example, the Headquarters Office of Congressional, Public and Intergovernmental Affairs currently anticipates staff reductions of 37% in FY 1997 -- bringing it down 43% since FY 1995. Consequently, the data reported may not provide an accurate picture of current public affairs activity levels. We recommend that the report be revised to indicate that it may not reflect budget and staffing trends at the Department and the other agencies.

The Department also has several specific comments regarding the text and presentation of data (Enclosure I).

Also attached, as noted above, is the Department's final data submission (Enclosure II). This final package is the result of numerous consultations and discussions with your staff and represents a significant effort on the part of the Department and its major contractors to respond to GAO's requests. To fully meet these requests, we have attempted to identify and report all costs within the agreed upon definitions of public affairs-type expenditures, including those incurred by organizations outside of the federal and contractor public affairs organizations.

Very little of this information was previously compiled in the form or categories necessary to meet the requirements and definitions of this review. Nor are there statutory or internal requirements to compile such information. Outside of the Headquarters budget, most public affairs-type expenditures are funded from program or overhead accounts and, as such, are outside the direct purview of this office. Finally, collection of data has been hampered in some cases by changes in contractors or consolidation of contractors during or subsequent to FY 1995.

As previously agreed, the data in this submission are best estimates of our actual FY 1995 public affairs expenditures as defined in GAO's April 19, 1996 and subsequent communications. This submission covers data from the Department's Headquarters, federal field organizations, and M&O contractors. All data has been extensively reviewed by our office for accuracy and completeness, but the data has not been subject to independent Headquarters validation.

In the interest of complying fully with your request, we have reviewed and reported estimates of expenditures for more than four dozen field locations, including the Power Marketing Administrations, and more than 40 M&O contractors. (Per our discussions with your staff, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) was subsequently excluded from the final report since its expenditures are not within the Department's discretionary budget and are funded by BPA revenues.)

As agreed upon with GAO staff, we have excluded several categories of public affairs-type expenditures that are often carried out by departmental organizations and contractors, such as dissemination of technical and scientific information, intergovernmental relations, and responses

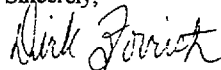
to congressional or intergovernmental requests and requirements. Also excluded are activities that are specifically required by statute and regulation, such as the distribution of draft environmental impact statements and associated public meetings pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Per your request, we are also reporting estimates of expenditures for six specific types of activities, such as internal services provided by public affairs organizations and the operation of visitor centers and tours.

In the interests of trying to fully comply with GAO's request and following discussion with your staff, we have also included public affairs expenses associated with the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM). Funding for this program is provided through a special statutorily established fund and is subject to specific statutory limitations and conditions under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. As such, the OCRWM Director has stated that these expenses should be subject to the general exemption previously negotiated with your staff for statutory requirements. Attached is a letter from the OCRWM Director certifying that all OCRWM expenses reported here are required by the Act (Enclosure III).

To help identify the actual source of funding for the reported activities, the detailed data tables also identify the specific activity supported by the public affairs expenditures. In most cases, this activity category will reflect the source of funds.

If you or your staff have any additional questions concerning this submission, please contact David Berick in the Office of Congressional, Public, and Intergovernmental Affairs at 586-3354.

Sincerely,



Dirk L. Forrister
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional, Public, and Intergovernmental Affairs

Enclosures

COMMENTS FROM THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



Reply to Attn of P

September 13, 1996

Mr. Allen Li
Associate Director
Energy, Resources, and Science Issues
Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

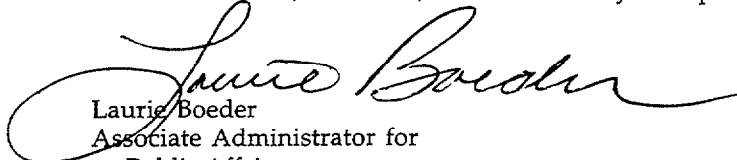
Dear Mr. Li:

NASA appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on your draft report concerning public affairs expenditures at this and other departments and agencies. We have reviewed the NASA data contained therein and concur in their accuracy. It should be noted, however, that this information was gathered from throughout the agency on relatively short notice; even greater fidelity could have been achieved had more time been available.

As you requested, we took a very broad look at efforts related to the dissemination of information, including some categories we would not normally consider to be "public affairs." These include technology transfer activities, which represent fully 20 percent of the total expenditures ascribed to NASA in this report.

NASA's public affairs efforts are designed to meet the great demand from the public for information about our space and aeronautics initiatives. In anticipation of this, the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 identified as one of NASA's three functions "the widest practicable and appropriate dissemination of information concerning its activities and the results thereof." Historically, the American people have had intense interest in NASA, with many feeling a true sense of ownership and involvement in our programs. They have high expectations for access to these programs, including the results, sights and sounds of space exploration. NASA attempts to meet these expectations through open and credible public affairs programs, not through heavy-handed marketing or propaganda.

We disseminate information not only through the news media, but also through direct contact with the public, using such activities as: permanent and traveling exhibits; World Wide Web sites on the Internet; tours and visitors centers; guest operations at launches and landings; and public mail and FOIA. The costs of all of these activities, and more, are included in your report.



Laurie Boeder
Associate Administrator for
Public Affairs

COMMENTS FROM THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

SEP 17 1995

Mr. Allen Li
Associate Director, Energy Resources,
and Science Issues
Economic Development Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Li:

We appreciate very much the opportunity to review and comment on the draft report entitled, Public Affairs Expenditures. Our only comments concern Page 11 of the report, Table II.2 entitled "Agencies' Workforce in Fiscal Year 1995," which adds the total NSF S&E and OIG employees to the number of employees at the NSF-supported FFRDC's. The Table suggests that the employees at the FFRDCs are part of the NSF workforce, and that the sum of these two represents the total employees supported by NSF. This implication could be misleading to the reader.

NSF is prohibited, under the NSF Organic Act, from operating any pilot plants or laboratories. In addition, we provide less than 100% of the support acquired by NSF-supported FFRDC's. Table II.1 reflects the total agency appropriation and invites a comparison to Table II.2 which does not reflect the majority of grantees and contractors supported by NSF resources. Unlike the other agencies, this omission for NSF is not footnoted. We therefore would suggest revising the title of Table II.2 to read, "Agency and FFRDC Workforces in FY 1995"; the "Total FTEs" column be omitted; and footnote "d" be modified along the following lines: "Reflects only employees at the five federally funded research and development centers supported by NSF grants. Excludes all other NSF contractors and grantees."

We hope you will give consideration to our comments, as you move to finalize this report. We appreciate the opportunity to express our views on this matter.

Sincerely,


Joseph L. Kull
Chief Financial Officer

(307742)

Ordering Information

The first copy of each GAO report and testimony is free. Additional copies are \$2 each. Orders should be sent to the following address, accompanied by a check or money order made out to the Superintendent of Documents, when necessary. VISA and MasterCard credit cards are accepted, also. Orders for 100 or more copies to be mailed to a single address are discounted 25 percent.

Orders by mail:

**U.S. General Accounting Office
P.O. Box 6015
Gaithersburg, MD 20884-6015**

or visit:

**Room 1100
700 4th St. NW (corner of 4th and G Sts. NW)
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC**

**Orders may also be placed by calling (202) 512-6000
or by using fax number (301) 258-4066, or TDD (301) 413-0006.**

Each day, GAO issues a list of newly available reports and testimony. To receive facsimile copies of the daily list or any list from the past 30 days, please call (202) 512-6000 using a touchtone phone. A recorded menu will provide information on how to obtain these lists.

For information on how to access GAO reports on the INTERNET, send an e-mail message with "info" in the body to:

info@www.gao.gov

or visit GAO's World Wide Web Home Page at:

<http://www.gao.gov>

**United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548-0001**

**Bulk Rate
Postage & Fees Paid
GAO
Permit No. G100**

**Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300**

Address Correction Requested
