

**ATTACHMENT 9.6.1 (12509-SPD EIS SOP)**  
**General Recommendations and Checklist**  
**for**  
**Public Meetings and Hearings**

Public Meeting/Hearing General Recommendations

- ✓ If the district engineer (DE) will preside over the meeting or hearing, check the DE's calendar to identify several available dates for the DE's participation in the public meeting/hearing. This should be done approximately two months prior to the actual hearing date. Coordinate potential dates with Public Affairs Office (PAO), the applicant, third-party contractor and Chief, Regulatory Division.
- ✓ Visit and/or investigate potential sites with the assistance of the third-party contractor to scope out the location for an appropriately sized facility and amenities. Ask the on-site manager for a floor plan of the area, locating bathrooms and all exits. This will aid in devising floor plan arrangements. Inquire about security for projects that are highly controversial and when there is a strong likelihood for a large turnout and/or disorderly conduct by meeting/hearing participants.
- ✓ Upon Corps approval of the date and location, the third-party contractor should secure the site for the public meeting/hearing.
- ✓ Notify the DE, Executive Office and PAO of the selected date(s) and reserve these dates on the DE's calendar.
- ✓ For formal public hearings, request the third-party hire a stenographer/court reporter, and ensure a preliminary confirmation with the company and/or individual is made. It is recommended that the hired stenographer/court reporter have public hearing experience. Even for some types of public meetings, it is advised to hire a court reporter to document public input. Depending on the demographics of the project location, consider whether an interpreter is necessary for certain groups of attendees.
  - When appropriate, provide a list of terms for the stenographer/court reporter to review. This includes a list of hearing participants, state and Federal agencies, regulations, and scientific terms.
- ✓ Work with the third-party contractor to create nametags for the public meeting/hearing support staff or other means to identify the Corps officials. Nameplates for the Corps and other personnel who may be seated at a panel table should be prepared in advance by the

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third-party contractor.

- ✓ Determine the appropriate personnel attending the meeting/hearing. Depending on the level of controversy, this number will vary. If special expertise or experience is needed, the assistance from other Corps personnel can be requested from other district business lines.
- ✓ If the meeting/hearing is to be held during non-duty hours (evening), personnel should complete any necessary time requests in accordance with district policies and procedures.
  - If the hearing site is greater than 50 miles from the duty site, then ensure travel orders are prepared for personnel. Set up lodging arrangements if necessary. Provide tax-exempt forms for lodging facilities.
- ✓ Prepare a public notice (PN) and issue the PN at least thirty (30) days prior to the hearing/meeting date(s), preferably concurrent with the publication of the NOI or NOA in the *Federal Register*.
  - Provide copies of the PN to the court reporter/stenographer, applicant, third-party contractor, Office of Counsel, PAO and the Executive Office.
- ✓ Coordinate a press release with PAO, if one is deemed necessary.
- ✓ Determine what equipment is necessary for the public hearing.
  - Determine what equipment can be provided by the hearing site management, and at what cost. Be sure these items, if not free, are itemized and paid for by the applicant or third-party contractor.
  - Determine what the applicant needs for his/her presentation. Ask for a copy of their remarks prior to the meeting/hearing. Inquire as to the identity of the presenter(s), so her/his name can be included correctly in the presiding officer's opening remarks and introductions.
- ✓ Equipment and supplies provided by Corps include:
  - flags and standing base;
  - Corps emblem for podium;
  - meeting/hearing signs and directional arrows; and
  - any special audio/visual equipment
- ✓ Devise floor plan for meeting/hearing site, locating the head table, stenographer/court

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reporter seating, audience seating, media seating, registration tables, and audio-visual equipment.

- ✓ Work with the third-party contractor to ensure the public hearing speaker sheets are accurate and an adequate number have been reproduced for the meeting/hearing.
- ✓ Schedule and arrange for a "dry-run" or pre-brief in advance of the meeting/hearing. Discuss meeting/hearing procedures with the presiding officer (usually the Regulatory Division Chief or Branch Chief, but it may be the DE) and other district business lines, as appropriate (e.g., PAO). Distribute a map and driving directions to the meeting/hearing site.
- ✓ Assign district personnel to meeting/hearing duties. Hearing personnel should include: Hearing officer, Regulatory Division and/or Branch Chief, PAO and the Regulatory Division PM in charge of the EIS. All entrances to hearing room should have a registration table with personnel there to sign-in participants.
- ✓ All Corps personnel should arrive at meeting/hearing site approximately two (2) hours prior to start of the first session. This will allow time for setup, arrangement of equipment, and last minute instructions.
- ✓ Prior to the opening of the meeting/hearing, the first set of registration cards should be given to the presiding officer or individual assigned (e.g., facilitator or Regulatory Division Chief) to establish the order of public speakers who want to offer testimony. Any additional registration cards filled out during the course of the meeting/hearing, should be delivered to the assigned individual and assimilated into the speaker order.
- ✓ During the course of the meeting/hearing, the Regulatory Division PM in charge of the EIS (or other individual assigned) should be noting the speaker comments on prepared speaker sheets, which summarizes possible issues, one sheet per speaker. This individual will also accept any written remarks prepared by speakers for inclusion in the official administrative record.
- ✓ The Corps presiding officer is the individual that runs the public meeting/hearing. The opening and closing remarks are prepared by Regulatory Division (usually the Regulatory Division PM in charge of the EIS) and PAO. The presiding officer will call on speakers based on the order of the comment cards/request to speak. The presiding officer will normally announce the name of the speaker, and the speakers that will follow next, (usually 2 or 3 individuals) so that speakers are prepared when called upon.
- ✓ A Corps district staff member should be assigned to time keeping duties. This individual monitors the amount of time a speaker has for oral presentation (usually 3 to 5 minutes, but it

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may depend on the number of attendees and the degree of public controversy). They also post a visual or verbal warning sign when a speaker is down to a final minute of presentation/testimony.

- ✓ After closing remarks and the formal end to the public meeting/hearing, Corps personnel will be responsible for clean up and removal of materials from the meeting/hearing facility. The Regulatory Division PM in charge of the EIS should confer with the third-party contractor and the on-site facility manager (if present) as to what is contractually necessary in terms of clean-up.
- ✓ After the meeting/hearing, the Regulatory Division PM in charge of the EIS should review with the court reporter/stenographer any words or acronyms that she/he may not be familiar with or that were not included in the list of technical terms.
- ✓ Review public hearing submittals given to the Corps district personnel, and attach the hearing speaker sheets to related submittals. Send a copy of all submittals to the court/reporter stenographer, (even those submittals given at the registration table without oral presentation) to be included as attachments to the hearing/meeting transcript.
- ✓ Following the meeting/hearing the press or media may approach the Corps for comments. The designated spokespersons for the district are usually the presiding officer (e.g., district engineer), the Regulatory Division Chief or PAO. If approached by the press or media for comment Corps personnel should refer the individual(s) to the designated spokespersons for official comments.
- ✓ Some individuals may elect to submit written remarks in lieu of public (oral) testimony during the meeting/hearing. These submissions should be collected at the registration table for later remittance to the Regulatory Division PM in charge of the EIS.

Public Meeting/Hearing Checklist

Project \_\_\_\_\_  
Message \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Location \_\_\_\_\_

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**District and Other Participants**

Presiding Officer \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Office \_\_\_\_\_  
Construction-Operations \_\_\_\_\_  
Office of Counsel \_\_\_\_\_  
Planning Division \_\_\_\_\_  
Project Management \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Affairs \_\_\_\_\_  
Regulatory Division \_\_\_\_\_  
Congressional \_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant \_\_\_\_\_  
Third-party contractor(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Cooperating Agencies \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Other agency/organization participants

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Facility**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Ensure appropriate location; sufficient seating for public; head table(s);  
lectern for public comments; sign-in table and chairs.)

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Anticipated audience \_\_\_\_\_  
Facility staff \_\_\_\_\_  
Support personnel \_\_\_\_\_  
Security \_\_\_\_\_  
Stenographer \_\_\_\_\_  
Interpreter \_\_\_\_\_

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**Meeting/Hearing Preparation Activities**

**Responsible Person(s)**

- Confirm meeting requirement, location, date and time \_\_\_\_\_
- Ensure applicant concurrence \_\_\_\_\_
- Schedule appropriate meeting/hearing facility \_\_\_\_\_
- Notify appropriate officials (Federal, state, local) \_\_\_\_\_
- Notify area engineer/resident engineer (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine security requirements \_\_\_\_\_
- Schedule court reporter/stenographer \_\_\_\_\_
- Schedule interpreter (if needed) \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine display requirements \_\_\_\_\_
- Prepare and issue special public notice \_\_\_\_\_
- Provide draft speech/opening remarks to presiding officer \_\_\_\_\_
- Rehearse presentation with DE (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine need for paid advertisement in local newspapers \_\_\_\_\_
- Produce displays and other meeting/hearing materials \_\_\_\_\_
- Send notification to mailing list \_\_\_\_\_
- Distribute news release (two weeks prior) \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine/ensure microphones/speakers/PA system available \_\_\_\_\_
- Laptop (ensure supports presentation) \_\_\_\_\_
- Projection screen \_\_\_\_\_
- Projector (ensure compatible with laptop) \_\_\_\_\_
- Provide briefing book to presiding officer \_\_\_\_\_
- Provide comments to presiding officer \_\_\_\_\_
- Develop/produce handouts \_\_\_\_\_
- Develop/produce sign-in cards \_\_\_\_\_
- Develop/produce comment cards \_\_\_\_\_
- Distribute news release/media advisory (three days prior) \_\_\_\_\_
- Ensure all travel arrangements finalized \_\_\_\_\_

**Ensure the following items are available at the meeting/hearing:**

- Agenda \_\_\_\_\_
- Comment/mailling list cards \_\_\_\_\_
- Displays \_\_\_\_\_

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- Easels (#\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
- Flip chart paper \_\_\_\_\_
- Gavel \_\_\_\_\_
- Handouts \_\_\_\_\_
- Head table with required number of chairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Hearing officer book \_\_\_\_\_
- Laptop computer \_\_\_\_\_
- Laser pointer \_\_\_\_\_
- Lectern \_\_\_\_\_
- Magic markers \_\_\_\_\_
- Masking tape \_\_\_\_\_
- Microphones (including wireless) \_\_\_\_\_
- Name tags/table tents \_\_\_\_\_
- PA system \_\_\_\_\_
- Pencils (two boxes) \_\_\_\_\_
- Project fact sheets \_\_\_\_\_
- Projector \_\_\_\_\_
- Reception table with chairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Rubber bands \_\_\_\_\_
- Scissors \_\_\_\_\_
- Signage \_\_\_\_\_
- Screen \_\_\_\_\_
- Speakers \_\_\_\_\_
- Timer \_\_\_\_\_
- Video to record meeting \_\_\_\_\_

**After-meeting actions:**

- Follow-up correspondence, where appropriate \_\_\_\_\_
- After action review with team \_\_\_\_\_

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