

September 12, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO: Office Directors and Regional Administrators

FROM: Mark A. Satorius */RA/*
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: REACTIVATING THE COMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL

I am seeking your help in reactivating the NRC's Communications Council and requesting that you either re-appoint your existing member or nominate a new member. The NRC must have effective communications to accomplish its mission; both with the public and within the agency. In light of this importance, we need a Communications Council that is vibrant, focused, innovative, and responsive to the Commission and senior agency leadership.

The Council was originally formed as a recommendation for improvement after the June 2002 Office of Inspector General (OIG) Safety Culture and Climate Survey. In June 2003, the Safety Culture and Climate Task Group issued a report that contained four recommendations for improvement, including the establishment of a Communications Council to improve internal communications (see William D. Travers, EDO, memorandum to Office Directors and Regional Administrators dated September 25, 2003, ML032650780). Even before the formal establishment of the Council, representatives from across the agency worked together in the 1990s to enhance NRC's communications and outreach with the public and external stakeholders. This reflected the consistent recognition by agency senior managers of the importance of internal and external communications.

The Council operated successfully for years and survey results involving internal communications continued to be strong. Participation in Council activities began to wane during the last several years due to staff turnover and re-direction to higher priority work. However, the need for a community of practice for agency communication professionals continues.

Per the attached draft Charter (Enclosure 1), the main objectives of the Communications Council should include:

1. To enhance agency communications both internally and externally.
2. To engage staff from around the agency to facilitate and coordinate communication projects that need multiple office input, coordination and agreement.
3. To act as a center of excellence for internal and external communication at the agency - a resource to assist staff and management when they are challenged with a communication activity.

Once reactivated, I expect that finalizing the charter will be a first order of business for the Council. Council members should primarily be at the senior staff level (GG-14 and 15), so they can work independently while keeping line management fully and effectively informed, and interact with senior staff leadership (Deputy Office Directors and above). Members should have

an interest and proficiency in communications and sufficient availability to devote at least a portion of their time (approximately 10%) towards enhancing communications following the guidelines provided in Enclosure 2. Serving on the Council will be a collateral duty.

Council members' roles will be to:

- Participate in Council meetings and provide agenda items
- Assist in the development and implementation of agency communication initiatives, and promote initiatives within their home Office/Region
- Improve infrastructure and methods for communicating
- Participate in agency communication working groups and/or special projects
- Assist in facilitating projects that need multiple office input, coordination, and agreement
- Share best practices, lessons learned, and resources on various internal/external communication activities
- Provide feedback to Office/Region management and staff on Council activities, meeting discussion topics and action items

I expect that the Council will be chaired by a member of the Senior Executive Service at the Deputy Division Director level, which will rotate to a new chair every other year.

Please provide the name of your office representative and a potential SES Deputy Division Director who could serve as Chair to Lance Rakovan, OEDO, by September 27, 2013. A kick-off meeting for the revived Council will be scheduled in October.

If you have any questions, please contact Lance Rakovan at (301) 415-2589, lance.rakovan@nrc.gov.

Enclosures:

DRAFT Communications Council Charter
NRC Communications Council - Guidelines for Office/Region Representatives

cc: Chairman Macfarlane
Commissioner Svinicki
Commissioner Apostolakis
Commissioner Magwood, IV
Commissioner Ostendorff
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