

(b) The board's notice of the time and place of hearing shall be sent by the Flood Insurance Docket Clerk by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to all appellants. Such notice shall include a statement indicating the nature of the proceedings and their purpose and all appellants' entitlement to counsel. Notice of the hearing shall be sent no later than 30 days before the date of hearing unless such period is waived by all appellants.

[47 FR 23449, May 29, 1982, as amended at 49 FR 33879, Aug. 27, 1984]

#### § 68.7 Conduct of hearings.

(a) The Judge shall be responsible for the fair and expeditious conduct of proceedings.

(b) The Federal Insurance Administrator shall be represented by the Chief Counsel or his/her designee.

(c) One administrative hearing shall be held for any one community unless the Federal Insurance Administrator for good cause shown grants a separate hearing or hearings.

(d) The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the community or his/her designee shall represent all appellants from that community; *Provided*, That any appellant may petition the board to allow such appellant to make an appearance on his/her own behalf. Such a petition shall be granted only upon a showing of good cause.

(e) Hearings shall be open to the public.

(f) A verbatim transcript will be made of the hearing. An appellant may order copies of the transcribed verbatim record directly from the reporter and will be responsible for payments.

[47 FR 23449, May 29, 1982, as amended at 49 FR 33879, Aug. 27, 1984]

#### § 68.8 Scope of review.

Review at administrative hearings shall be limited to: An examination of any information presented by each appellant within the 90 day appeal period indicating that elevations proposed by the Federal Insurance Administrator are scientifically or technically incorrect; the FIRM; the flood insurance study; its backup data and the references used in development of the flood insurance study; and responses by

FEMA to the issues raised by the appellant(s).

[47 FR 23449, May 29, 1982, as amended at 49 FR 33879, Aug. 27, 1984]

#### § 68.9 Admissible evidence.

(a) Legal rules of evidence shall not be in effect at administrative hearings. However, *only* evidence relevant to issues within the scope of review under § 68.8 shall be admissible.

(b) Documentary and oral evidence shall be admissible.

(c) Admissibility of non-expert testimony shall be within the discretion of the board.

(d) All testimony shall be under oath.

(e) *Res judicata*/ collateral estoppel. Where there has been a previous determination, decision or finding of fact by the Director, one of his delegees, an administrative law judge, hearing officer, or hearing board regarding the base flood elevations of any other community, such determination, decision, or finding of fact shall not be binding on the board and may only be admissible into evidence if relevant.

#### § 68.10 Burden of proof.

The burden shall be on appellant(s) to prove that the flood elevation determination is not scientifically or technically correct.

#### § 68.11 Determination.

The board shall render its written decision within 45 days after the conclusion of the hearing. The entire record of the hearing including the board's decision will be sent to the Administrator for review and approval. The Administrator shall make the final base flood elevation determination by accepting in whole or in part or by rejecting the board's decision.

#### § 68.12 Relief.

The final determination may be appealed by the appellant(s) to the United States district court as provided in section 1363(f) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 4104).

**PART 69 [RESERVED]**