

(1) Monitor these processes to ensure that the agency procedures are achieving their purposes;

(2) Advise line management and inform NASA employees of technical and management requirements of environmental analysis, of appropriate expertise available in and out of NASA, and—with the assistance of the NASA General Counsel—of relevant legal developments; and

(3) Consolidate and transmit to the appropriate parties NASA comments on environmental impact statements and other environmental reports prepared by other agencies.

(b) Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices (hereafter termed "Headquarters officials") are responsible for implementing the procedures established by these regulations for the consideration and documentation of the environmental aspects of the decision processes in their respective areas of responsibility.

(c) The Assistant Administrator for Legislative Affairs is responsible for ensuring that the legislative environmental impact statements accompany NASA recommendations or reports on proposals for legislation submitted to Congress. The Associate Administrator for Management, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO)/Comptroller and the General Counsel will provide guidance as required.

[44 FR 44485, July 30, 1979, as amended at 53 FR 9761, Mar. 25, 1988; 56 FR 50507, Oct. 7, 1991]

AGENCY PROCEDURES

§ 1216.304 Major decision points.

The possible environmental effects of a proposed action must be considered, along with technical, economic, and other factors, in the earliest planning. At that stage, the responsible Headquarters official shall begin the necessary steps to comply with all the requirements of section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Major NASA activities, particularly R&D (or SFCDC) and facility projects, generally have four distinct phases: The conceptual study phase; the detailed planning/definition phase; the development/construction phase; and the operation phase. (Other NASA

activities have fewer, less well-defined phases, but can still be characterized by phases representing general or feasibility study, detailed planning or definition, and implementation.) Environmental documentation shall be linked to major decision points as follows:

(a) Completion of an environmental assessment and the determination as to whether an environmental impact statement is required must be made prior to the decision to proceed from the conceptual study phase to the detailed planning/definition phase of the proposed action. For example, this determination must be concurrent with:

(1) Proposal of an R&D (or SFCDC) project for detailed planning and project definition;

(2) Proposal of a major Construction of Facilities project for detailed planning and project definition;

(3) Proposal of an institutional action (other than a facility project) for detailed planning and definition; and

(4) Proposal of a plan to define changes in an approved project.

(b) The final environmental impact statement (EIS) should be completed and circulated prior to the decision to proceed from the detailed planning/definition phase to the development/construction (or implementation) phase of the proposed action. For example, the EIS should be completed by, and incorporated with:

(1) Proposal of an R&D (or SFCDC) project for development/construction;

(2) Proposal of a major Construction of Facilities project for development/construction;

(3) Proposal to undertake a significant institutional action (other than a facility project); and

(4) Proposal to implement a program change.

[44 FR 44485, July 30, 1979, as amended at 53 FR 9761, Mar. 25, 1988]

§ 1216.305 Criteria for actions requiring environmental assessments.

(a) Whether a proposed NASA action within the meaning of the CEQ Regulations (43 FR 55978) requires the preparation of an environmental assessment, an environmental impact statement, both, or neither, will depend upon the scope of the action and the context and intensity of any environmental effects