

NASA Internet Publishing Content Guidelines

November 15, 2001

1.0 Purpose and Scope

The National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended, (Space Act) requires NASA to "provide for the widest practicable and appropriate dissemination of information concerning its activities and the results thereof." The Agency has aggressively met this requirement since its inception through a variety of publication media. NASA shall disseminate "information concerning its activities and the results thereof" in a manner consistent with U.S. laws and regulations, Federal information policy, intellectual property rights, and technology transfer protection requirements. With NASA's increasing reliance on computer technology and the Internet, the Agency faces new challenges in balancing our Space Act mandate with the requirement to protect certain classes of information which are not suitable for dissemination to the public in any form, including the Internet.

This document is intended to provide guidance for NASA civil servants, contractors, and industry and academic partners for the dissemination to the public-at-large of NASA-related information and data via the Internet and the World Wide Web. This document does not replace or circumvent existing NASA publication guidelines or processes. Rather, it provides an overview of current NASA information publication practices, and highlights new challenges and opportunities brought about by the Internet as a publication medium, as well as recognizing the importance of protecting NASA's personnel, critical systems, facilities, stockpiles, and personnel from security breaches and harm.

2.0 Definition

For the purposes of this document, "publication via the Internet" means making information available to the public-at-large via the Transport Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) network protocol. This includes HTTP (World Wide Web) and File Transfer Protocol (FTP) traffic, as well as any other application (e.g., bulletin boards, chat groups) that makes NASA information accessible to the public-at-large via IP. Information that should not be available to the public-at-large may be made available to an appropriate audience (e.g., selected NASA civil service personnel) via the Internet, but appropriate security mechanisms (e.g., restrictions by Public Key Infrastructure authentication) must be put in place to protect the information from access by anyone other than its intended audience. For example, security mechanisms may preclude certain classes of information from being made available to foreign nationals who work on-site at a NASA Center.

3.0 Information Management and the Internet

In a fundamental sense, the challenges related to effective and prudent dissemination of NASA information to the public-at-large via the Internet are no different than the challenges inherent in the usage of any modern media. Therefore, it remains incumbent

on NASA personnel and management to: 1) understand the existing laws and policies that restrict the distribution of information; 2) remember the basic charter from the Space Act; and, 3) follow and build upon existing regulations and practices that have evolved over the 40 plus year NASA history.

Despite its similarity to other modern media, the power of the Internet does uniquely enable more powerful techniques for efficient provision of NASA information to the public and creates situations that could undermine information dissemination regulations.

The following Internet attributes have the potential to impact NASA publication processes both positively and negatively:

- The Internet has a vast audience that continues to grow at an exponential rate.
- Because of its power and novelty, information hosted on the Internet is highly visible to the media and to the public-at-large.
- Powerful Internet search tools make information easy and quick to find.
- The underlying technologies enable information to be posted and modified easily and quickly with a minimal audit trail.
- Information posted via the Internet is often easier and faster to access than other forms of media.
- Internet-published information is available without regard to geographic/national boundaries.
- Individuals likely to be interested in NASA information are likely to have Internet access.

For these reasons, the Agency is issuing this policy guidance on types of information that may and may not be posted on the Internet.

4.0 Current NASA Information Publication Governing Documents

This section identifies NASA policies, procedures, guidelines, and standards that may be applicable to publication or re-distribution of specific types of information.

- a. NPG 1000.2, NASA Strategic Management Handbook
- b. NPD 1382.17E, Privacy Act - Internal NASA Direction in Furtherance of NASA Regulations
- c. NPD 1400.1, NASA Directives System
- d. NPG 1400.1, NASA Directives System Procedure and Guidelines
- e. NPD 1440.6E, NASA Records Management
- f. NPG 1441.1C, Records Retention Schedules

- g. NPG 1620.1, Security Procedures and Guidelines
 - h. NPD 2110.1D, Foreign Access to NASA Technology Transfer Materials
 - i. NPD 2190.x, NASA Export Control Program
 - j. NPG 2190.x, NASA Export Control Program
 - k. NPG 2200.2, Guidelines for Documentation, Approval, and Dissemination of NASA Scientific and Technical Information
 - l. NPD 2210.1, External Release of NASA Software
 - m. NPG 2210.1, External Release of NASA Software
 - n. NPD 2220.5E, Management of NASA Scientific and Technical Information (STI)
-
- o. NPD 2800.1, Managing Information Technology
 - p. NPG 2800.1, Managing Information Technology
 - q. NPD 2810.1, Security of Information Technology
 - r. NPG 2810.1, Security of Information Technology
 - s. NPD 2820.1, NASA Software Policies
 - t. NPD 7120.4B, Program/Project Management
 - u. NPG 7120.5A, NASA Program and Project Management Processes and Requirements
 - v. NASA Technical Standards, Series 2800, Computer Systems, Software, Information Systems
 - w. NASA's E-FOIA Regulations, 64 Federal Register 39,401-39,414 (1999) (codified at 14 CFR Part 1206)
 - x. Attorney General Policy Memorandum of October 12, 2001 on the Freedom of Information Act

All information and data available to the public-at-large via the Internet (i.e., without appropriate access controls) is considered published and subject to the preceding policies, procedures, and regulations, and is regulated by the appropriate Agency entities.

5.0 Fundamental Publication Guidelines

To supplement the guidance provided by the documents in Section 4, the following are more specific examples of categories of information that may and that may not, be published on the Internet.

5.1 Categories of Information That Must Not Be Published Via the Internet

Following are broad categories of information that must not be made available to the public-at-large via the Internet (i.e., posted to NASA's publicly accessible web pages). If this information is available at all via the Internet, security mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that the information is available only to its intended, limited audience. This list is not all-inclusive, but is intended to give examples of information inappropriate for publication.

| Information Category | Examples |
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| Information critical to protecting Agency assets and personnel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer passwords or pass phrases • Computer network configurations or designs • Identification of operating systems (vendor, product, and version) used on specific servers • Internet Protocol addresses • Telephone numbers for dial-up computer connections • IT System capabilities (e.g., staffing levels, hours of operation) or limitations • IT System security plans, risk analyses, system vulnerabilities, procedures, and controls methods • IT System compromise information, including evidence data • IT System security/auditing logs • Names/telephone numbers that uniquely identify system administrators • Physical security information such as key codes and cipher lock combinations, significant badging information, including pictures of NASA badges • Internal Center maps, including labeled aerial views • Technically detailed schematics or drawings of utilities, networks, airfields, aircraft, buildings • Facility information including detailed drawings, schematics, physical locations, staffing levels, hours of operation • Specific information on the composition, preparation, storage locations or optimal use of hazardous materials, explosives or biotoxins • Detailed disaster recovery plans • Details on emergency response procedures, evacuation routes, or officials responsible for these issues • Personnel locator information as contained in Center or Agency telephone books (e.g., mail stops, building numbers) • Internal Center policies and procedures that have not been analyzed re content publishing issues • Personnel locators (i.e., building and room numbers or other information which could be used to determine personnel |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whereabouts at a given point in time, e.g., calendar information) Information on internal NASA-only or Center-only activities or events (e.g., picnics, symposiums), especially which specifies exact locations Non-work-related personal information (including links to personal webpages or resumes) Date and time identification of security-sensitive events Video streaming or still images of locations where physical vulnerabilities might be exposed |
| Information protected by law | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National security information (classified information) Personal information prohibited from disclosure by the Privacy Act or FOIA Exemption 6. This information includes, but is not limited to, Social Security numbers, home telephone numbers, home addresses, and medical data Export controlled information Technical innovations prior to release approval by patent counsel Proprietary information of the Government or others such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information disclosing inventions and technical innovations, including software, protected under 35 U.S.C. 205 and FOIA Exemption 3, unless release is approved by Center Patent Counsel Trade secret information protected or prohibited from disclosure under the Trade Secrets Act (18 U.S.C 1905) or FOIA Exemption 4 Copyrighted materials unless approved for publication by the copyright owner Investigative information Commercially licensed software restricted in accordance with the license or agreement under which it was obtained Information protected by treaty or agreement Invention disclosures Source evaluation information Confidential financial data relating to contractors Other information determined non-releasable under FOIA Procurement sensitive information, such as vendor quotes (except vendor quotes as part of an electronic auction), attribution information or results, negotiating positions |
| Information protected by Government or Agency policy or regulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NASA developed software (unless authorized) Information characterized as "Administratively Controlled Information" (per recent NASA policy) or previously designated "For Official Use Only" Pre-decisional information such as the Agency budget prior to formal release |
| Embargoed scientific, technical, launch or other mission information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch-related information whose compromise may adversely impact safety or security |

5.2 Categories of Information That May Be (or Must be) Published Via the Internet

The following are broad categories of information that may be published (i.e., made available to the public-at-large) or in some instances, must be published via the Internet.

Use them as guidelines for what may be published. Note that all documents must be analyzed before publication against the categories listed in Section 5.1 to ensure that they do not contain information that is inappropriate for public dissemination.

| Information Category | Examples |
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| Documents Intended for General Dissemination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NASA Strategic Plan • Enterprise Strategic Plans and related documents • Personnel locator information not covered by section 5.1 (e.g., e-mail addresses, telephone numbers) • Organizational information (but, see section 5.1 for Privacy Act restrictions) • Directions to a Center, and related information that meet the legitimate needs of the public wishing to visit our Centers • Information intended by the Agency to assist the public in better understanding the Agency's history, organization, missions, programs, and projects • Work-related personal biographies that do not compromise any sensitive aspect of the project with which the individual is associated. |
| Official Agency web sites which provide Agency policy documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency policy documents via the NASA Online Directives Information System (NODIS) |
| Information released by the Agency and Center Public Affairs Offices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases and similar information • Public service messages such as anti-drug campaign information |
| Official Agency Information Approved for Release | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information that must be made available electronically to the public per the provisions of the Electronic Freedom of Information Act • Official Agency budget information to the level of detail approved for release by the Chief Financial Officer • Information developed by the Agency to assist industry in doing business with NASA, including electronic commerce information that does not contain proprietary data or content sensitive information as per this document (e.g., Requests for Proposals (RFP) may be published, but offeror responses to RFPs or source selection information may not be published) • Vendor quotes as part of an electronic reverse auction |
| Published Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science and engineering information and data that complies with NASA policy for publication (see NPG 2200.2) • NASA Standards Program information, including official Agency engineering and information technology standards |

In addition, links to appropriate related sites may also be published.