

Environmental Protection Agency

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to state his or her position on any relevant issue;

(9) To take depositions or cause depositions to be taken in accordance with § 209.22.

(10) To render judgments upon issues of law during the course of the hearing.

(11) To issue subpoenas authorized by law.

(b) *Assignment of administrative law judge.* When an answer which contains a written demand for a hearing is filed, the administrator shall refer the proceeding to the chief administrative law judge, who shall conduct the proceeding, or assign another administrative law judge to conduct the proceeding.

(Sec. 16, Noise Control Act (42 U.S.C. 4915))

§ 209.19 Informal settlement and consent agreement.

(a) *Settlement policy.* The Agency encourages settlement of the proceeding at any time after the issuance of a complaint if settlement is consistent with the provisions and the objectives of the act and the regulations. Whether or not respondent requests a hearing, he or she may confer with complainant concerning the facts stated in the complaint or concerning the appropriateness of the proposed remedial order. The terms of any settlement agreement shall be expressed in a written consent agreement. Conferences with complainant concerning possible settlement shall not affect the 20 day time limit for filing an answer under § 209.6.

(b) *Consent agreement.* A written consent agreement signed by the complainant and respondent shall be prepared by the complainant and forwarded to the Environmental Appeals Board whenever settlement or compromise is proposed. A copy shall be served on all other parties to the proceeding, no later than the date the consent agreement is forwarded to the Environmental Appeals Board. The consent agreement shall state that, for the purpose of this proceeding, respondent (1) admits the jurisdictional allegations of the complaint; (2) admits the facts as stipulated in the consent agreement or neither admits nor denies specific factual allegations contained in the complaint; and (3) consents to the issuance of a given remedial order.

The consent agreement shall include (i) the terms of the agreement; (ii) any appropriate conclusions regarding material issues of law, fact and/or discretion as well as reasons therefor; and (iii) the Environmental Appeals Board's proposed final order. The administrative law judge does not have jurisdiction over a consent agreement.

(c) *Final order.* No settlement or consent agreement shall be dispositive of any action pending under section 11(d) of the act without a final order of the Environmental Appeals Board. In preparing a final order, the Environmental Appeals Board may require that any or all of the parties to the settlement or other parties appear before it to answer inquiries relating to the proposed consent agreement. The hearing is terminated without further proceedings upon the filing of the final order with the hearing clerk.

[43 FR 34132, Aug. 3, 1978, as amended at 57 FR 5344, Feb. 13, 1992]

§ 209.20 Conferences.

(a) At the discretion of the administrative law judge, conferences may be held prior to or during any hearing. The administrative law judge shall direct the hearing clerk to notify all parties of the time and location of any such conferences. At the discretion of the administrative law judge, persons other than parties may attend. At a conference the administrative law judge may:

(1) Obtain stipulations and admissions, receive requests and order depositions to be taken, identify disputed issues of fact and law, and require or allow the submission of written testimony from any witness or party.

(2) Set a hearing schedule for as many of the following as are deemed necessary by the administrative law judge:

- (i) Oral and written statements;
 - (ii) Submission of written testimony as required or authorized by the administrative law judge;
 - (iii) Oral direct and cross-examination of a witness;
 - (iv) Oral argument, if appropriate;
- (3) Identify matters of which official notice may be taken;
- (4) Consider limitation of the number of expert and other witnesses;

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(5) Consider the procedure to be followed at the hearing; and

(6) Consider any other matter that may expedite the hearing or aid in the disposition of the issue.

(b) The results of any conference including all stipulations shall, if not transcribed, be summarized in writing by the administrative law judge and made part of the record.

(c) The administrative law judge, on motion or sua sponte, may request correspondence from the parties for any of the objectives set forth in this section. Copies of the administrative law judge's request and the parties' correspondence shall be served upon all parties. The administrative law judge shall include such correspondence in the record and a written summary of any stipulation or agreement reached by means of such correspondence as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

§ 209.21 Primary discovery (exchange of witness lists and documents).

(a) At a prehearing conference or within some reasonable time set by the administrative law judge prior to the hearing, each party shall make available to the other parties the names of the expert and other witnesses the party expects to call, together with a brief summary of their expected testimony and copies of all documents and exhibits which the party expects to introduce into evidence. Thereafter, witnesses, documents, or exhibits may be added and summaries of expected testimony amended upon motion by a party.

(b) The administrative law judge, may, upon motion by a party or other person, and for good cause shown, by order (1) restrict or defer disclosure by a party of the name of a witness or a narrative summary of the expected testimony of a witness, and (2) prescribe other appropriate measures to protect a witness. Any party affected by any such action shall have an adequate opportunity, once he or she learns the name of a witness and obtains the narrative summary of the witness' expected testimony, to prepare for the presentation of his or her case.

§ 209.22 Other discovery.

(a) Further discovery under this section shall be undertaken only upon order of the administrative law judge or upon agreement of the parties, except as provided in § 209.21. The administrative law judge shall order further discovery only after determining:

(1) That such discovery will not delay the proceeding unreasonably;

(2) That the information to be obtained is not obtainable voluntarily; and

(3) That such information is relevant to the subject matter of the hearing.

(b) The administrative law judge shall order depositions upon oral questions only upon a showing of good cause and a finding that:

(1) The information sought cannot be obtained by alternative methods; or

(2) There is a substantial reason to believe that relevant and probative evidence may otherwise not be preserved for presentation by a witness at the hearing.

(c) Any party to the proceeding may make a motion or motions for an order of discovery. The motion shall set forth:

(1) The circumstances which require the discovery;

(2) The nature of the information expected to be discovered; and

(3) The proposed time and place where it will be taken. If the administrative law judge determines the motion should be granted, he or she shall issue an order for the taking of such discovery together with the conditions and terms thereof.

(d) A person's or party's failure to comply with a discovery order may lead to the inference that the information to be discovered is adverse to the person or party who failed to provide it.

§ 209.23 Trade secrets and privileged information.

In the presentation, admission, disposition, and use of evidence, the administrative law judge shall preserve the confidentiality of trade secrets and other privileged commercial and financial information. The confidential or trade secret status of any information shall not, however, preclude its being