

**METHANE HYDRATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**U.S. Department of Energy**

**Advisory Committee Charter**

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** Methane Hydrate Advisory Committee (MHAC)
2. **Authority:** This charter establishes the Methane Hydrate Advisory Committee (Committee) pursuant to Title IX, Subtitle F, Section 968, Methane Hydrate Research of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT), Public Law 109-58. This charter establishes the MHAC under the authority of the Department of Energy (DOE). The MHAC is being renewed in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., App. 2.
3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities.** The Committee provides advice to the Secretary of Energy by developing recommendations and broad programmatic priorities for the methane hydrate research and development program; provides scientific oversight for the methane hydrates program, including assessing progress toward program goals, evaluating program balance, and providing recommendations to enhance the quality of the program over time; and submit to Congress assessments of the methane hydrate research program and the five-year research plan of the Department of Energy.
4. **Description of Duties.** The duties of the Committee are solely advisory in nature.
5. **Official(s) to Whom this Committee Reports.** The Committee will report to the Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy (or his designee).
6. **Agency Responsible for Providing Necessary Support.** The DOE will provide financial and administrative support for this Committee. Within the Department, primary support shall be furnished by the Office of Fossil Energy.
7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff-years.** The estimated annual operating cost of direct support to the committee and its subcommittees is \$35,000; one-eighth person per year.
8. **Designated Federal Officer (DFO).** A full-time or permanent part-time DOE employee, appointed in accordance with agency procedures, will serve as the DFO (or designee). The DFO (or designee) will approve or call all of the advisory committee's and subcommittee's meetings, and prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all committee and subcommittee meetings, and adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest.
9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The Committee expects to meet approximately once per year. Meetings may occur as frequently as needed and approved by the DFO.
10. **Duration.** Continuing in nature.
11. **Termination.** The Committee terminates two years from the Charter filing date, and may not meet if the Charter is not renewed biennially.

**12. Membership and Designation.** The Committee will be comprised of approximately 15 Committee members with knowledge and expertise in the natural gas hydrate field. Members shall be appointed by the Secretary (or designee), representing industrial enterprises, institutions of higher education, oceanographic institutions, State agencies, and environmental organizations. The members shall be experts in their respective fields and appointed as special Government employees, or representatives of entities, including, among others, the national laboratories, State governments, and environmental groups, should the Committee's tasks require such representation. The Committee shall designate a chairperson from among the members of the Committee. Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary.

Members of the Committee serve without compensation. However, each appointed member may be reimbursed for authorized travel and per diem expenses incurred while attending Committee meetings in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations.

**13. Subcommittees.** The Department of Energy has the authority to form subcommittees. With DOE approval, the Committee's chair may form subcommittees or working groups with the committee to review specific issues consistent with this charter. The objectives of the subcommittees are to make recommendations to the parent Board with respect to particular matters related to the responsibilities of the parent Board. Such subcommittees or workgroups may not work independently of the chartered Board and must report their recommendations and advice to the full Board for full deliberation and discussion. Subcommittees and workgroups have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the chartered Board, nor can they report directly to the Department of Energy. Subcommittee members appointed with DOE approval.

**14. Recordkeeping.** The records of the Committee and any subcommittees shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26, Item 2 and DOE Administrative Records, Schedule 16, Item 8b (1.1) and approved agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

**15. Filing Date.**

Date filed with Congress: **OCT 21 2013**



Carol A. Matthews  
Committee Management Officer