

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ORD)  
VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (VHA)**

**FAQ Topic:** Authority of the ACOS/R&D Relative to the R&D Committee

**Date:** May 12, 2015

**Question:** Does the ACOS/R&D have authority to set policy on how the R&D Committee will function, require that the R&D Committee report to the ACOS/R&D, and serve as supervisor of the R&D Committee members and Chair?

**Answer:** The following is based on ORD's interpretation of VHA Handbook 1200.01 and other applicable policies such as VA Handbook 5005.

- The R&D Committee is responsible through the COS to the facility Director. The R&D Committee advises and assists the Director.
- The ACOS/R&D and the AO/R&D assist the R&D Committee.
- The R&D Chair and the R&D Committee members are appointed by the facility Director. They are not chosen by the ACOS/R&D or AO/R&D.
- The R&D Chair may be a researcher, an administrator, or a clinician.
- The Chair is a voting member of the R&D Committee and must be a full time or permanent part-time Federal employee.
- The Chair of the R&D Committee reports to the facility Director through the COS when the Chair is fulfilling his/her responsibilities as Chair.
- When the R&DC Chair functions in his/her non-R&DC capacity, the reporting/supervisory lines will be determined by HRM policies and the employee's specific role within the institution (e.g., as a researcher, administrator, or clinician).
- The R&D Committee is not an extension of the ACOS/R&D position. The R&D Committee is independent of, and does not report to, the ACOS/R&D or the AO/R&D.
- The ACOS/R&D is a non-voting member of the R&D Committee and serves as its Executive Secretary. As Executive Secretary,

the ACOS/R&D's duties may include ensuring that agendas and minutes are developed, notifying investigators of when research can start, and conducting or ensuring that QA activities are conducted.

- The ACOS/R&D does NOT have authority over the R&D Committee and cannot require the R&D Committee to use specific procedures for reviewing research or specific procedures in performing other activities of the Committee. The ACOS/R&D may make suggestions as a member of the R&D Committee, but cannot use his or her role to dictate the Committee's functions.

**Reference:** VHA Handbook 1200.05  
VA Handbook 5005