

THE METEORITICAL SOCIETY

COMMITTEE ON METEORITE NOMENCLATURE (NOMCOM)

PROCEDURES

OCTOBER 1980

REVISED FEBRUARY 2010

REVISED MARCH 2011

REVISED MARCH 2013

The procedures described below were approved by the Council of the Meteoritical Society at the meeting held March 17, 2013 in The Woodlands, Texas.

A. Duties and responsibilities.

- 1) The principal duty of the NomCom is to approve new meteorite names and, when necessary, change or abolish existing meteorite names. This includes voting on proposed pairs or separations, as well as creation of synonyms and abbreviations.
- 2) The NomCom creates and manages a system of provisional names for specimens found in areas of dense concentrations of meteorites.
- 3) The NomCom oversees the publication of the *Meteoritical Bulletin (MetBull)*.
- 4) The NomCom creates rules for carrying out items 1 and 2 above, "*Guidelines for Meteorite Nomenclature*," and publishes them on the Society website and, from time to time, in the *MetBull*.
- 5) The NomCom oversees the online *Meteoritical Bulletin Database (MBDB)*.
- 6) The Editors of the *Met Bull* and the *MBDB* should endeavor to keep the meteorite classification terms used in the *Met Bull* and *MBDB* consistent and up-to-date.
- 7) The NomCom may also deal with other matters referred to it by the President or Council of the Society.
- 8) The Committee shall be responsible to the Council of the Society, to whom the Chair will report annually.
- 9) The bylaws require the Chair of NomCom to consult with the President of the Society to help fill vacancies on the committee. The chair should provide the president with at least one nomination for each vacancy. Under normal circumstances, members of NomCom who have served two consecutive terms should not be nominated to a third term unless three years have elapsed since the end of their last term.

B. Procedures for approval and publication of new meteorite names.

- 1) The Editor of the *MetBull* shall receive and circulate all proposals to members within a reasonable amount of time following receipt. However, where information is clearly insufficient, the Editor shall have the option of seeking further details before circulating proposals.
- 2) The Editor, in consultation with the Chair, may unilaterally reject a proposal that is clearly nonresponsive to the *Guidelines for Meteorite Nomenclature* or when a request for further required information is not satisfied. However, the submitter is entitled to protest such a decision in writing to the Editor in order to refer the

matter to the full NomCom.

- 3) Voting on meteorite names shall normally be done using an online voting system, or alternatively, by email. The voting period shall not be less than two weeks unless the Editor and Chair agree that an emergency vote is warranted. At the end of the declared voting period, a vote is considered valid if at least 8 of the 15 voting members (12 regular members plus the Editors of the *MetBull* and *Catalogue of Meteorites* and the VP of the Society) have either voted or abstained. Approval of a proposal shall require a two-thirds majority of all votes cast, not including abstentions.
- 4) No member of the NomCom should obtain or appear to obtain special advantages for themselves, their relatives, their employer or their close associates as a result of their services on the Committee. Possible conflicts of interest arise when NomCom members have a financial, professional, or personal interest in a submitted meteorite or work at the same institution as a person who played a significant role in preparing a submission.
The *MetBull* Editor shall make an initial evaluation of possible conflicts of interest and decide whether the conflict is of sufficient magnitude to require the member to refrain from voting, from participating in the discussion of that meteorite, or should be entirely excluded from reviewing and assessing the information about the submitted meteorite. Members who subsequently identify possible conflicts of interest shall notify the Chair. The Chair shall have the final authority to rule on possible conflicts and their appropriate resolution. If the Chair has a possible conflict of interest, the *MetBull* Editor will have this authority. If the *MetBull* Editor has a possible conflict of interest, the Chair or the *MBDB* Editor shall act in his/her stead and assume all Editorial duties for the vote on that meteorite. Members who are excluded from voting shall not count toward the establishment of a quorum or majority.
- 5) The Editor of the *MetBull* may suspend a vote and/or call for a revote at any time prior to the end of the voting period on the basis of new information received or on the basis of comments from committee members.
- 6) All discussion by the NomCom during voting is considered confidential. Only the *MetBull* Editor or NomCom Chair may communicate with a submitter about their submission during voting.
- 7) A vote by the NomCom constitutes a recommendation to the *MetBull* Editor on whether a meteorite should be accepted for publication in *MetBull*. No meteorite shall be accepted without this recommendation. However, if in the *MetBull* Editor's opinion comments made by the NomCom raise significant issues, the *MetBull* Editor may seek revision of the information from the submitter and, if the *MetBull* Editor deems it necessary, send the meteorite back to the NomCom for a second vote.
- 8) The Editor of the *MetBull* shall inform the proposer and the NomCom of the result as soon as possible. The Editor of the *MetBull* will provide a summary of comments made by the NomCom during voting, as provisions for publication. All names or identifying comments will be redacted to preserve confidentiality.
- 9) Proposals to name equilibrated ordinary chondrites may be unilaterally approved by the Editor of the *MetBull* without a NomCom vote if the following conditions are met:
 - a. The meteorites have provisional names. Such meteorites, therefore, all

- extend existing numbering systems in dense collection areas.
- b. The meteorites have routine classifications that do not include designations such as *anomalous*, intermediate classifications (e.g., H/L or L/LL), unusual petrologic types (e.g., type 7), or other unusual properties.
- c. Type specimen requirements are met or exceeded.
- d. Classifications were made by widely accepted methods.
- e. Fayalite content of olivine or magnetic susceptibility is within the typical range for the reported group.
- f. The person who classified the meteorites has a proven track record in doing such analyses.

Approvals made by the *MetBull* Editor shall be reviewed by the *MBDB* Editor, who shall verify that the above conditions were met.

- 10) All of the committee's decisions that result in new, changed, or abolished meteorite names shall be announced at least once per year in the *MetBull*. This publication shall also contain descriptions of important, newly named meteorites and tables containing information about other new meteorites. It may also contain significant new information about existing meteorites. The Editor of the *MetBull* is responsible for the content and format.
- 11) New meteorite names and changes to names should be made public in the *MBDB* within one week of approval, and preferably within 48 hours.

C. Procedures for Type Specimen Repositories

- 1) **Guiding Principle.** According to §7.1f of the *Guidelines for Meteorite Nomenclature*, type specimens of all new meteorites “must be deposited in institutions that have well-curated meteorite collections and long-standing commitments to such curation.”
- 2) **Requirements for type-specimen repositories.** An acceptable repository shall have the following characteristics:
 - a. A type specimen repository is defined as an institution such as a museum, university, government agency, research institution, or other similar organization, committed to housing permanent scientific collections.
 - b. The institution must have identified personnel responsible for the curation of the meteorite collection.
 - c. The meteorite collection must be owned by the institution or be in the permanent custody of the institution.
 - d. The institution must have a stated intent to make meteorite type specimens available to qualified scientific investigators.
 - e. The institution must demonstrate a long-term commitment toward maintaining or establishing a curated meteorite collection.
- 3) **Approval and rejection of type-specimen repositories.**
 - a. All repositories must provide information to the Nomenclature Committee (NomCom) of the Meteoritical Society describing the nature of the meteorite collection, ownership, contact information, and loan practices. The form of this information will be determined by the committee.
 - b. A subcommittee for repositories shall consist of the Editor, the Database Editor, and the Chair. In the event that one or more of the subcommittee members are conflicted, the chair shall select alternate members from the NomCom. The subcommittee shall review all submitted information about

new repositories for conformance to the requirements in section 2 and take one of four actions:

- i. Accept the new repository by a unanimous vote. At this point, the entire NomCom will be informed of the decision, and given a brief period to comment. If no objections are raised, the decision will be final. Otherwise, the Chair may open a discussion and the full committee will vote on the matter.
 - ii. Request further information from the institution.
 - iii. Refer the question of acceptance to the entire NomCom, with the discussion to be led by the Chair.
 - iv. Reject the new repository by a unanimous vote. In this case, the rejection will be reviewed by the Vice President of the Meteoritical Society, who may concur, refer the matter to the entire NomCom, request that the subcommittee reconsider, or forward the matter to the Executive Committee of the Meteoritical Society for a final decision.
- c. If an institution is rejected as a type specimen repository, the reasons for the rejection will be communicated to that institution. Any appeal for reconsideration shall be directed to the Vice President of the Meteoritical Society, who will then re-initiate the review procedures in section 3b(iv).
- d. At any time, the repositories subcommittee may reconsider the status of any approved repository using the procedure in section 3b.
- e. NomCom may, from time to time, request updates of information from approved repositories.
- 4) **List of type-specimen repositories.** The Database Editor shall maintain a publicly accessible list of approved repositories on the MetBull Database website.

D. Meteoritical Bulletin Database.

- 1) The *MBDB* Editor is responsible for maintaining and updating the *MBDB*.
- 2) The *MBDB* shall contain all of the information published in the *MetBull*, a complete listing of provisional meteorite names that have been assigned by the NomCom, and information about approved meteorites that have not yet been published in *MetBull*.
- 3) The *MBDB* may also contain other compiled information about meteorites at the discretion of the Editor.
- 4) New information about meteorites with approved names may be accepted for publication in the *MBDB*. This may include revisions, corrections, and amendments to data that have been published in the *MetBull* or entirely new information. All information published in the *MBDB* should be observational in nature, not interpretive. This might include new petrologic descriptions, new information about known masses, discovery of new masses, revised geographic coordinates. Reclassifications are acceptable if they are deemed likely to be noncontroversial. All such information must be reviewed and accepted by the *MBDB* and *MetBull* Editors prior to release. In some cases, the Editors may decide to present information to the NomCom for approval prior to release.