

<b>Region 4</b> <b>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</b> <b>Laboratory Services and Applied Science Division</b> <b>Athens, Georgia</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	
Title: Quality Policy	ID: LSASDPLCY-1000-R1
Issuing Authority: Deputy Director, R4 LSASD	
Effective Date: January 15, 2020	Review Due Date: January 15, 2024

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to outline the Quality Policy established for the USEPA Region 4 Laboratory Services and Applied Science Division (LSASD). The Quality Policy ensures that LSASD is committed to sound science and quality assurance (QA) practices which will produce environmental data of appropriate quality to be used by its customers for decision making.

### **Scope/Application**

This document addresses the Quality Policy for LSASD's quality management system, and managers and personnel directly or indirectly involved in data gathering to maintain conformance to technical and quality system requirements. The Quality Policy of the LSASD is aligned with the mission of the Agency.

## Table of Contents

1. Policy.....	3
1.1 Mission Statement.....	3
1.2 Ethics Statement.....	3
1.3 Quality Policy Statement.....	3
1.4 Quality Goals.....	4
2. Definitions.....	4
3. Related Documents and Forms .....	5
4. References .....	5
5. Revision History.....	5

## **1. Policy**

---

### **1.1 Mission Statement**

The overall mission of LSASD is to provide sound science to customers through superior environmental evaluation. To this end, LSASD provides scientific support of known and appropriate quality for congressional mandates and initiatives, and partnerships with academia, state, local, and tribal governments.

### **1.2 Ethics Statement**

It is LSASD's policy that all business be conducted with integrity and in an ethical manner. It is the responsibility of each staff member and manager to hold to the highest ethical standard of professional conduct in the performance of all duties and to adhere to EPA's Principles of Scientific Integrity Policy (see References).

### **1.3 Quality Policy Statement**

LSASD is committed to sound science and QA practices that will produce environmental data and evaluations of known and appropriate quality to be used by its customers for decision making. The LSASD quality management system supports this commitment and is consistent with the requirements of EPA Order CIO 2105.0: Policy and Program Requirements for the Mandatory Agency-wide Quality System, and the requirements of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)17025 standard.

It is the policy of LSASD that all decisions made to protect human health and safeguard the environment shall be based on data of sufficiently known and appropriate quality to support the impact and sensitivity level of decisions required. LSASD's Quality Policy also includes a commitment by management that the quality system supporting the generation of data of known and appropriate quality and effective environmental technology will be implemented as described in this policy. The adherence to the LSASD's Quality Policy is achieved by ensuring that adequate and acceptable assessment, planning, and implementation procedures are utilized throughout all phases of projects, studies, and/or tasks that require the generation of environmental data and/or use of environmental technology.

Management and staff of LSASD shall assure that sufficient QA efforts are conducted by the data gathering components of the division to produce records that are scientifically valid and legally defensible, and that all work products are provided in a timely manner as agreed upon with the customer. Environmental data of known and appropriate quality is the responsibility of all LSASD staff who are directly or indirectly involved in the generation of data. The managers of LSASD are responsible

for assuring that adequate resources, including personnel, and travel and extramural funds are available to implement the QA system of the division.

## 1.4 Quality Goals

The following are the goals of LSASD that serve to support the Divisional Quality Policy:

- The EPA data quality objectives (DQO) selection process, or a similar systematic planning process, shall be used to delineate the goals and objectives of projects and/or studies, as they relate to programmatic or regulatory requirements, and needed environmental data quality, prior to the initiation of data collection activities. DQOs, or similar outputs, from a systematic planning process, shall be documented in a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), or equivalent project-level planning document.
- Managers and staff of LSASD shall receive QA training appropriate for their responsibilities related to data collection, measurement, conduction of a procedure, or environmental technology. Managers and staff are required to be familiar with the quality system documentation and control of records of LSASD and implement its QA policies and procedures in their work activities.
- Communication on QA issues and activities shall be maintained among the LSASD Management, Regional Quality Assurance Manager, LSASD's Quality Assurance Coordinator, and Staff.
- Internal and external assessments shall be performed to determine the effectiveness of the LSASD quality system, including a Management Review (LSASD-PROC-013, see References), at least once per calendar year (ISO 17025).
- QA processes will be designed in the most cost-effective manner without compromising data quality. Continuous improvement is a core value within the quality management system and will be pursued, evaluated and embraced on an ongoing basis. All staff are encouraged to identify areas for improvement within the quality system.

## 2. Definitions

---

None

### 3. Related Documents and Forms

---

None

### 4. References

---

International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission, Standard 17025: General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2017-11.

International Organization for Standardization, ISO 9000: Quality Management Systems-Fundamentals and Vocabulary, Switzerland, 2015.

U.S.EPA, EPA's Principles of Scientific Integrity,  
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-11/documents/epa-principles-of-scientific-integrity.pdf>.

U.S. EPA, Region 4, LSASD, LSB Laboratory Operations and Quality Assurance Manual, Athens, GA, most recent version.

U.S. EPA, Region 4, LSASD, Operating Procedure for Management Review, LSASD-PROC-1007, Athens, GA, most recent version.

U.S. EPA, Region 4, LSASD, Applied Science Branch (ASB), Operating Procedure for Project Planning, LSASBPROC-016, Athens, GA, most recent version.

Guidance on Systematic Planning Using the Data Quality Objectives Process, EPA/240/B-06/001, Feb 2006

### 5. Revision History

---

This table shows changes to this controlled document over time. The most recent version is presented in the top row of the table. Previous versions of the document are maintained by the LSASD Quality Assurance Coordinator.

History	Effective Date
SESDPLCY-1000-R0, Quality Policy, Original Issue	October 1, 2017

<p>LSASDPLCY-1000-R1, Quality Policy- Updated Division and Branch names due to Agency re-alignment. Updated document naming conventions. Replaced references to SHEM with Region 4 Laboratory Safety and Chemical Hygiene Plan. Replaced references to FQM/LQM with Divisional Quality Assurance Coordinator. Updated Section 1.1 with the current LSASD Mission Statement.</p>	<p>January 15, 2020</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------