

Quality Assurance Workgroup: Introduction and Updates

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Presentation Agenda

- Introductions
 - Ryan Marshall, Tribal Lead
 - Audrey L Johnson, EPA Co-Lead
 - Lisa Gover, R9 RTOC Policy Advisor & E-Enterprise QA Workgroup Participant
- Developing a Mission Statement
- Updates on US EPA's Quality Assurance Activities

QA Workgroup Mission Statement

How do we want to describe our workgroup's purpose, goals and why Quality Assurance is important to Region 9 RTOC?

- **Example Mission Statement:**
 - To ensure Quality Assurance principles for producing data of known quality are easily accessed and applied through available training, timely reviews and the clear communication of EPA's requirements.
- **Does the statement above include the goals we wish to achieve?**
 - QA Applied Daily
 - Available Training and Tools
 - Timeliness in QA Document Reviews
 - Clear Communication about EPA's QA Grant Terms and Conditions
 - Ensuring Data Produced and Utilized is of Known Quality
- **What did we miss? Are there additional goals we want to include?**



US EPA QA Updates

QA Directives

E-Enterprise
Project

Region 9 Tracking
Measures



US EPA's DRAFT Quality Directives

Agency Comment Period
Closed October 2020 &
Tribal Consultation
Completed November 2020



Environmental Information Quality Policy

Directive No: CIO 2105.1

Issued by the EPA Chief Information Officer,
Pursuant to Delegation 1-19, dated 07/07/2005

Environmental Information Quality Policy

1. PURPOSE

This Policy:

- establishes policy and program requirements for the preparation and implementation of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Quality Program;
- is consistent with the principles in the American Society for Quality (ASQ)/American National Standards Institute (ANSI) E4-2014, *Quality management systems for environmental information and technology programs—Requirements with guidance for use*;
- recognizes existing quality policies, procedures, standards, and guidance as the foundation of the EPA Quality Program; and
- provides a structure to ensure and enhance the effectiveness of the Quality Program and its application to environmental information and technology programs.

This Policy affirms:

- EPA's commitment to applying quality principles and practices to environmental information and technology programs;
- EPA's commitment to utilizing environmental information that is of known and documented quality and is scientifically and legally defensible;
- the Office of Mission Support (OMS), Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA) for Environmental Information (EI) and Chief Information Officer's (CIO) responsibility, as the designated federal official for quality at EPA, to lead, coordinate, and maintain an effective Quality Program throughout EPA;
- the DAA/CIO and the CIO Strategic Advisory Committee's (SAC) leadership of EPA's Quality Program in assuring the quality of environmental information and technology programs; and
- the roles of other key Agency managers and organizations that are implementing quality policies and practices for collection, production, evaluation, or use of environmental information across Agency programs.

2. SCOPE

This Policy defines the minimum requirements for the Quality Program supporting EPA environmental programs that encompass the collection, production, evaluation, or use of environmental information by or for EPA and the design, construction, and operation of environmental technology. Collectively these activities are referred to as environmental information operations.



Environmental Information Quality Procedure

Directive No: CIO 2105-P-01.1

Issued by the EPA Chief Information Officer,
Pursuant to Delegation 1-19, dated 07/07/2005

Environmental Information Quality Procedure

1. PURPOSE

This Procedure supports the implementation of EPA's *Environmental Information Quality Policy* (CIO 2105.1). This Procedure establishes management principles and responsibilities for ensuring that EPA environmental information and technology products and operations meet Agency quality-related requirements, are of sufficient quality for their intended use, and support EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment.

This Procedure describes Policy Implementation and the governance of EPA's Quality Program. It is intended to provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach for consistent implementation of the Quality Policy to ensure the continual improvement in the quality of EPA's environmental information and technology programs.

The quality tools and processes described in this Procedure are based on national and international consensus standards. They will assist the Office of Mission Support (OMS), Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA) for Environmental Information (EI) and Chief Information Officer (CIO) in overseeing the Agency's Quality Program.

2. SCOPE

This Procedure defines the minimum requirements for the Quality Program supporting EPA environmental programs that encompass the collection, production, evaluation, or use of environmental information by or for EPA and the design, construction, and operation of environmental technology. Collectively these activities are referred to as environmental information operations.

3. AUDIENCE

The audience for this Procedure is all Agency employees responsible for environmental information operations that support the EPA mission. This includes Headquarters and Program Offices, Regions, and their sub-organizations. When cited in extramural agreements, this Procedure also applies to non-EPA organizations (e.g., states, tribes, localities, regulated parties, volunteer organizations, contractors, cooperative agreement holders, grantees, other federal governmental agencies, intergovernmental organizations, educational institutions, and other environmental information providers) performing work in support of EPA's mission or national program priorities as defined by and in accordance with federal laws, regulations, extramural agreements, or performing work on a voluntary basis under agreement with EPA.

4. BACKGROUND

GOALS

- **Improve communications** between grantees and EPA Quality Assurance (QA) personnel.
- **Pursue consistency** in grant terms and conditions (T&Cs) across all EPA regional offices.
- **Improve QAPP training** to better meet the needs of state and tribal grantees.
- Explore how to **track, report, and improve the timeliness** of QAPP processes.
- **Analyze** the extent to which **information technology solutions** could facilitate QAPP processes.
- **Analyze** how to develop **consistency in review** of documents across EPA regions.

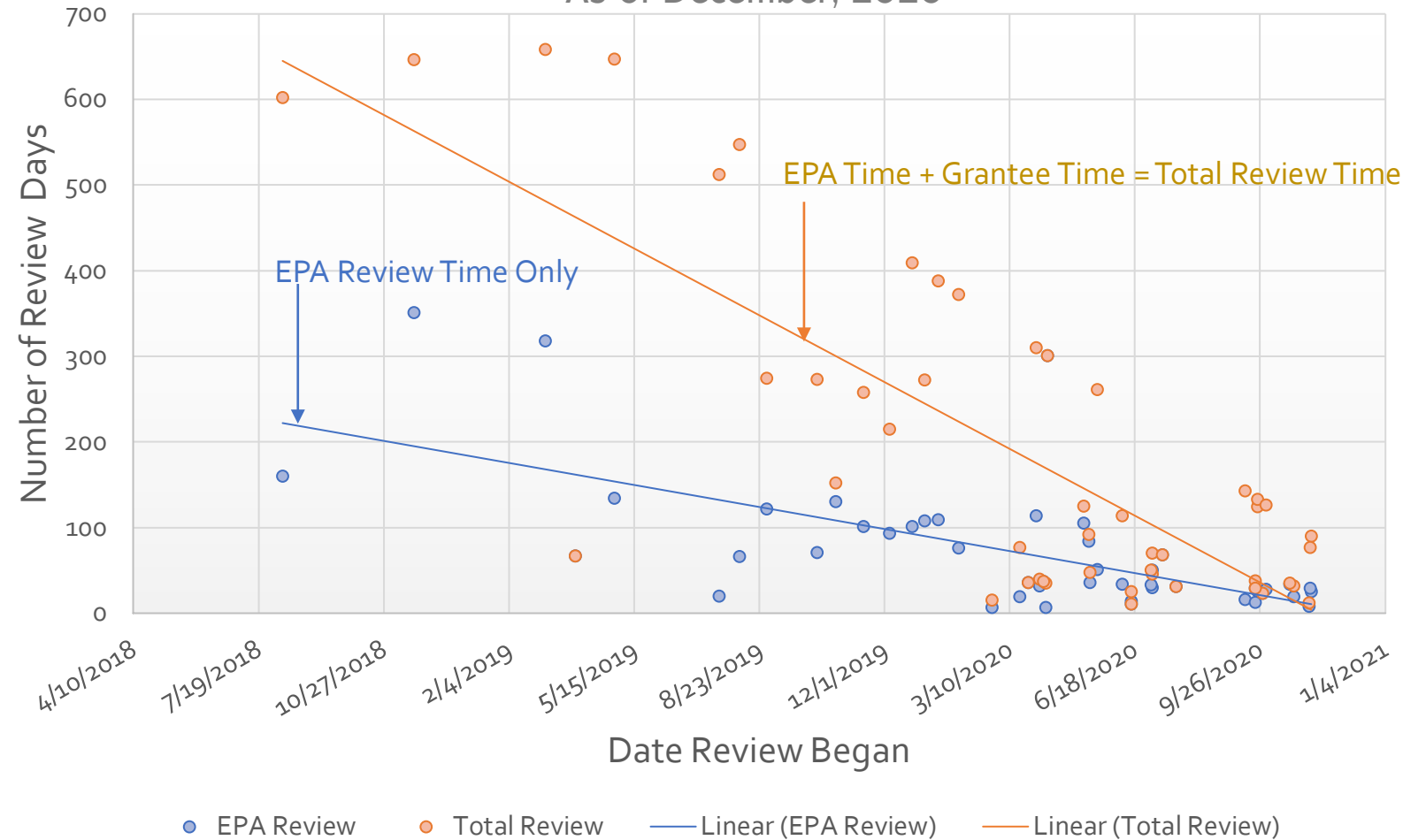
E-Enterprise QAPP Process Improvement Project

In 2018, under the direction of the E-Enterprise Leadership Council, a group of state, tribal, and EPA professionals conducted an improvement event to analyze QAPP business processes across the EPA regions.

Region 9 QA Review Process Improvements

Since April 2018, we have seen a 26% decrease in the time it takes to get a QAPP Approved.

R9 Decrease in State & Tribal QAPP Approval Times Due to Process Changes As of December, 2020



R9 QA Branch Document Review Workload

Program	2020	2019	2018	3-Yr Avg (%) *
Superfund	57	40	97	22.7%
Water	76	50	91	25.4%
Air	52	45	38	15.8%
Land	80	77	98	29.8%
Enforcement	5	3	2	1.2%
TIP	13	8	21	4.9%
Total	283	223	347	853



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ITEP QA Tools

QA Fun and Writing a QAPP



LINK to Melinda's Annual Conference Presentation: <https://youtu.be/qnt22GkoSfE>



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