

# U.S. Department of Energy



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Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

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Monitoring Plan for the Research, Development,  
Demonstration, and Deployment Activities

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**Updated September 2011**



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## Version History

Date	Revision No.	Summary of Changes
Sep-10	Original Document	Original Document
Sep-11	1	Language was updated to reflect changes in the titles of roles/positions and the names of organizational units; to indicate the current location of electronic resources; to move existing language between sections to improve readability; and to clarify previously generalized statements.

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**Monitoring Plan for the Research, Development,  
Demonstration and Deployment Activities**

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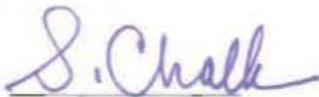
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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a consistent set of guidelines for the implementation of oversight monitoring for the Research, Development, Demonstration and Deployment (RDD&D) activities of the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE).

This document sets forth the goals, expectations, and guiding principles for a common and consistent structure of oversight monitoring to be implemented by EERE Program Management and Field Operations (FO) management. In conjunction with this plan, other tools and guidance documents may be issued to support oversight monitoring of Recovery Act and base RDD&D program funds.

## 2. Background

In February 2009, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (“Recovery Act”). This legislation provided \$787 billion in new investments to stimulate the economy, create and support hundreds of thousands of living wage jobs, and invest in hundreds of government programs identified as successful public partnerships with States, communities, Tribal entities, industry, and academia. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) received nearly \$40 billion earmarked for a variety of ongoing or new projects in the DOE portfolio. EERE was apportioned approximately \$16.8 billion for investment in a variety of technology programs.

The magnitude and requirements of the Recovery Act precipitated a review of monitoring procedures. The Recovery Act called for transparency and accountability as well as for additional reporting requirements, performance measurement tracking, and other stipulations to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse. EERE programs were funded at substantially higher levels and placed under accelerated timeframes by the Recovery Act. As a result of this expanded activity, current approaches and procedures needed to be augmented with new monitoring tools, processes, and recordkeeping to ensure that these funds would be executed in a manner consistent with EERE program objectives and the Recovery Act’s original intent. These improved procedures are predicated on project management principles and the latest “best practices” for financial assistance award management. They are intended to be kept in place beyond the life of the Recovery Act funds at levels appropriate for the management of the base programs.

Of the Recovery Act funds appropriated for EERE projects, \$11.3 billion was allocated for grant programs to support States, Territories, Tribal Governments and local communities to accelerate their use of clean and efficient energy technologies through the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), State Energy Program (SEP) and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG). Given the extraordinary level of investment in these areas and rigorous implementation schedule, a Monitoring Plan for these programs was released in August 2009<sup>1</sup>.

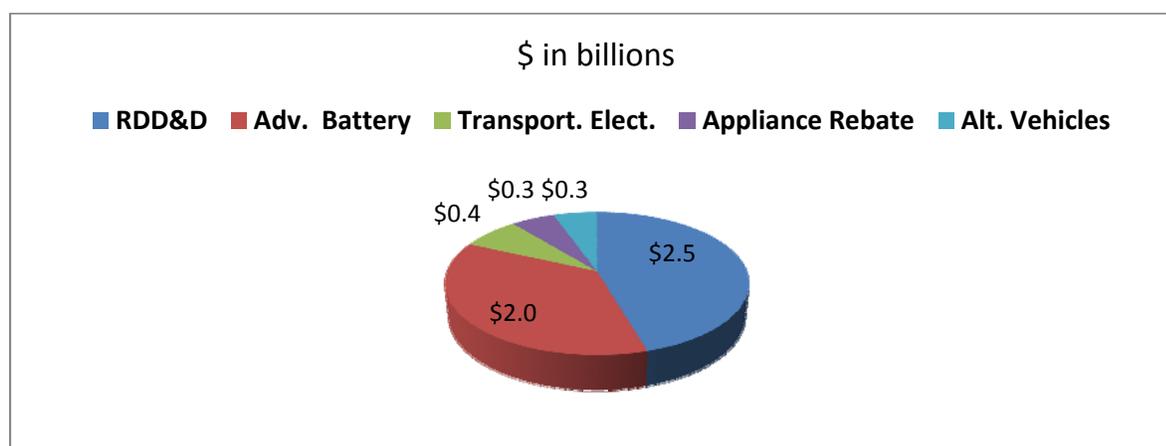
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<sup>1</sup> Monitoring Plan for the Weatherization Assistance Program, State Energy Program and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants, August 14, 2009, Revised March 3, 2010

This Monitoring Plan has been developed to work in concert with the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program (WIP) monitoring plan, and specifically to guide the oversight monitoring of the remaining \$5.5 billion of Recovery Act funds administered by EERE, as well as inform the base RDD&D program oversight. However, this plan also recognizes the distinct features of the RDD&D projects (i.e., cost-share and project diversity) from WIP, and it makes appropriate adjustments to this set of oversight monitoring and tracking procedures and tools.

The Recovery Act funds have been allocated to the following Research, Development, Demonstration and Deployment (RDD&D) programs (see Figure 1 below).

**Figure 1: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy  
Recovery Act RDD&D Funding (\$5.5 billion)**



The Recovery Act established fund distribution and expenditure timeframes, and mandated that Federal agencies provide the highest levels of transparency and accountability.

This Monitoring Plan identifies the goals and requirements of the EERE monitoring framework for all Recovery Act-funded RDD&D activities as well as the base program. The plan is the result of collaboration among EERE's Office of Field Operations (Field Operations), the Golden Field Office (GFO) and the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), as well as the relevant program offices. The plan has been updated to reflect current understandings of the roles and responsibilities as a result of the transition of resources between the field and DOE headquarters.

## 2.1. Program Overview

Research, development, demonstration and deployment of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies have long been the cornerstone of EERE's mission. As a result, there is an

extensive operational history, as well as established networks of stakeholders and technology partners. The program offices responsible for these funds are as follows<sup>2</sup>:

- Biomass Program
- Geothermal Technologies Program
- Building Technologies Program
- Federal Energy Management Program
- Industrial Technologies Program
- Solar Energy Technologies Program
- Vehicle Technologies Program
- Fuel Cells Technologies Program
- Wind and Water Power Program.

Increased investments in these programs under the Recovery Act called for enhanced and consolidated monitoring and management procedures that will establish the standard for base program monitoring.

Furthermore, realignment and transition of resources to better integrate technical and project management roles and responsibilities, increase accountability, and improve EERE's performance have also fostered the need for expanded awareness of standardized oversight and monitoring practices. As direct responsibility for full "life cycle" project management shifts to the programs, it is paramount that standardized documentation, reporting, and communication be available to all involved in project and program implementation.

## **2.2. Monitoring Objectives**

The overall objective of this plan is to outline the monitoring practices that are to be implemented for the RDD&D programs, and to provide the tools and templates to support that system. In doing so, this plan provides specific objectives and expectations; delineates the monitoring roles and responsibilities within EERE; describes general processes and procedures; and helps to ensure that common, consistent reporting practices are implemented across these programs. These practices are also to be put in place to establish transparency and accountability; to ensure that projects are progressing in accordance within established scope, schedule and budget; as well as to detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

It is DOE's responsibility to administer these activities with the highest level of program integrity, responsiveness, efficiency, accountability, and accessibility. Given these

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<sup>2</sup> Funding was also allocated to meet infrastructure requirements at several National Laboratory facilities as well as for other projects not readily identified with an EERE program office.

responsibilities, DOE has planned a robust oversight monitoring program to assure quality management controls and procedures are in place and are used by Funding Recipients (Recipients) to minimize and eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse of these Federal funds. This oversight program is also intended to ensure successful use of Federal funds by facilitating communications of best practices, training, and technical assistance, where applicable. This Monitoring Plan has been developed in accordance with the following objectives:

- To ensure that Recipients perform in accordance with the requirements identified in their award documents and to achieve—to the extent possible—the objectives of the program and funding announcement under which they were selected;
- To provide a structure for oversight monitoring that checks Recipient compliance with the terms and conditions of the award and the relevant statutes and regulations;
- To verify that Recipients are using current project management plans, procedures, controls and processes;
- To promote consistent application of program and reporting standards as promulgated by DOE for data collection and documentation of accomplishments across all Recovery Act and base programs; and
- To recognize continual process improvement, best practices, and self-monitoring techniques that result in successful project performance.

This plan will be supported by tools such as templates, standard performance reporting questions, and other aids to be developed as needed, to assist Technical Project Officers (TPOs) in their reviews. The Monitoring Plan and the accompanying Appendix (containing standard performance reporting questions and other templates) will also be made available online to all funded Recipients as a reference and to ensure that they are aware of the overall vision for oversight monitoring at the Federal level. The plan will also be available to all stakeholders who desire information on the oversight monitoring of the EERE RDD&D Recovery Act and base-funded activities.

### **2.3. Roles and Responsibilities**

This section provides a general overview of the roles and responsibilities of the EERE offices and their respective staffs in monitoring financial assistance Recipients and promoting the achievement of projects' respective scopes, schedules, and budgets. While the names of roles described herein may sometimes correspond to job titles, this is not always the case. Programs may use different job titles to describe similar roles, or may distribute and delegate responsibilities according to program-specific requirements. Moreover, roles and titles may have changed as a result of the realignment and transition. More specific detail is given in each subsection on how the responsibilities cascade. Where appropriate, staff may refer to DOE's Acquisition Career Management Handbook for more details.

**Table 1: Summary of Selected Roles**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibilities and Relationships</b>	<b>Other Titles/Roles<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Formal Certification Required?</b>
<b>Program Managers</b>	Responsible for implementing management oversight and control over EERE RDD&D portfolio within their technology program	-	No
<b>Technology Managers</b>	Ensure that program goals and requirements are met	Technology Development Manager, Physical Scientist, Management and Program Analyst, Energy Technology Program Specialist, Account Manager, FOA Coordinator	No
<b>Technical Project Officers</b>	Serve as technical representatives of the Contracting Officers (COs); have primary responsibility for performance monitoring of financial assistance award Recipients	General Engineer, Physical Scientist, Management Analyst, Energy Technology Program Specialist, Project Officer (PO)	Yes
<b>Contracting Officers</b>	Have the primary authority for entering into financial assistance awards, obligating Federal funds, and making related determinations and findings; only the CO has the specific authority to establish binding legal relationships that obligate DOE financially	-	Yes
<b>Technical Experts</b>	Provide special expertise to Program Managers and their staff in support of projects	General Engineer, Physical Scientist	No

### **2.3.1. Leadership: EERE Executive Leadership, Program Managers, Technology Managers and Field Operations Management**

A description of the roles and responsibilities of the primary EERE leadership units involved in the oversight monitoring of the RDD&D programs is provided below.

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<sup>3</sup> *Other Titles/Roles* describe examples of job titles sometimes associated with the role. Some roles may include Federal or contractor personnel, and specific responsibilities may be delegated as appropriate.

***The EERE Executive Leadership***—has responsibility for the overall administration of the financial award program in meeting statutory requirements and providing the management direction for the relevant parts of the organization to meet specific goals and objectives. As in all Federal financial assistance programs, the reduction of fraud, waste, and abuse is primary, and under the Recovery Act, heightened transparency and accountability are also paramount along with additional reporting requirements.

It is also the role of Executive Leadership to communicate to both personnel and awardees that the organization takes its stewardship role seriously and will put adequate resources toward the administration and monitoring of these programs.

***Program Managers***—have the ultimate responsibility for implementing management oversight and control over that portion of the EERE RDD&D portfolio assigned to their technology program.

Each program office has responsibility for:

- Planning and budgeting programmatic requirements and resources, including publication and dissemination of program and sub-program goals, objectives, and expectations that provide the basis for performance metrics;
- Meeting their program goals through the implementation of RDD&D projects that are successful in achieving cost, scope, and performance parameters;
- Providing program evaluation expertise in reviewing and analyzing performance measures stipulated in Recipient plans and other control documents to ensure consistency with program objectives and metrics;
- Offering appropriate technical and program management expertise; and
- Ensuring close coordination with the appropriate level of FO staff at all junctures that involve Recipient communications, directions, guidance, and requests for information.

***Technology Managers***— have responsibility for ensuring that the goals and requirements of the program are met. Technology managers, who may be referred to by other titles (see Table 1), usually work in specific technology areas and support the Program Manager in the implementation of management oversight and control over specific projects or a set of projects in the EERE RDD&D portfolio. They play an integral role in ensuring projects are meeting their stated objectives. When issues and concerns arise, they also facilitate information exchange and decision-making on possible actions and resolutions.

***Office of Field Operations (Field Operations)***—works to ensure along with Program Managers and Technology Managers that standardized monitoring policies, procedures, and tools exist for executing the oversight of Recipient performance. In collaboration with the programs and the Field, Field Operations works to put in place a monitoring structure that meets all statutory and regulatory requirements—reducing fraud, waste, and abuse as well as meeting transparency, accountability, and reporting requirements. To that end, two teams under FO’s Field Performance Management unit— *Performance Management* and *Field Performance Risk Management* – focus on assisting in the oversight of the RDD&D financial assistance programs. Performance Management is responsible for the development of plans, tools, and independent

verification reviews (for a sample of projects) of project activities associated with monitoring these programs. The Field Performance Risk Management team is a focal point for the facilitation of audit resolution. In that role they serve as a resource to TPOs in their management of financial assistance awards.

### **2.3.2. Project Management: Technical Project Officers, Contracting Officers, and Technical Experts**

The project management staff is primarily responsible for the monitoring of all awards under the RDD&D programs. The roles of the project management staff are described below.

**Technical Project Officers (TPOs)**—serve as the technical representatives of the Contracting Officers (COs) and maintain the primary responsibility for the performance monitoring of Recipients of financial assistance awards. TPOs, who may be referred to by other titles (see Table 1), are the primary contacts with organizations external to EERE on specific awards, and ensure that work is being done in accordance with the scope, schedule, budget, and other requirements in the award documents. They regularly check to see if work is progressing toward the achievement of program goals and objectives.

While the TPO maintains a working knowledge of financial assistance rules and regulations and may review some financial data submissions such as invoicing, the aim is to work together with procurement personnel such as the CO and Contracting Specialists (CSs) to determine the overall performance of the Recipient. Effective oversight monitoring often requires joint discussions and decision-making between TPOs, Program and Technology Managers, and procurement staff on identifying issues and obtaining the expertise to resolve technical, legal, cost, or other concerns.

As such, TPO responsibilities for oversight monitoring include:

- Establishing effective communication channels, both formal and informal, with the Recipient, program and procurement personnel;
- Reviewing and assessing Recipients' progress reports (formal and informal) relative to planned technical scope achievement, schedule/milestones, and budget;
- Reviewing and commenting on Recipient data submitted in accordance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance;
- Organizing, conducting, and documenting periodic project reviews as identified in the award document;
- Organizing, conducting, and documenting periodic onsite visits;
- Participating in project or program reviews conducted by the program offices;
- Compiling and submitting data on a regular basis used for senior leadership reporting and for external stakeholder reporting;
- Maintaining working files on individual awards and ensure that proper internal information/documents exchanges occur between all relevant parties; and
- As appropriate, reviewing and approving Recipient invoices.

TPOs are typically assigned multiple awards to track and will perform progress monitoring reviews such as desktop and onsite monitoring of Recipient submissions as described in upcoming sections in this plan.

**Contracting Officers (COs)**—have the primary authority for entering into financial assistance awards, obligating Federal funds, and for making related determinations and findings.<sup>4</sup> Only the CO has the specific authority to establish binding legal relationships that obligate DOE financially. The CO is responsible for the business management of the financial assistance award and is typically supported by CSs. The CO relies on the TPO and other project/program management staff to advise him/her on the technical and programmatic aspects of the financial assistance award. COs rely on the expertise of the CSs for monitoring compliance with financial assistance terms and conditions and reviewing records to ensure accuracy and timely fiscal record keeping. The CO usually relies on the CSs to review financial reporting such as invoicing (but as stated above, he/she may also include TPOs to review part of this data) to identify discrepancies or concerns.

The contracting staff maintains the official award files and works with the TPO and others to amend financial assistance awards, when circumstances require such actions. Project changes may be generated from the Recipient, DOE or both. As a result, effective communication and information sharing between the TPO and contracting staff are essential for oversight monitoring.

**Technical Experts**—provide special expertise to projects. During project execution, Program Managers and their staff in collaboration with project management staff may require special expertise and general support services to effectively monitor and report on individual or groups of projects. Given the diversity of technological innovation, project types, and organizational entities that comprise the EERE portfolio, EERE plans to engage personnel from the National Laboratories, support contractors, and other specialty contractors to assist in supporting workload generated by the current level of financial assistance awards. It is anticipated that support will be needed to assist with site monitoring visits, to provide technical expertise for complex projects, and to assess the Recipient's project documentation to determine the reasonableness of technical approaches, performance results, and budget/cost implications.

### **3. Monitoring Procedures and Tools**

This chapter describes EERE RDD&D monitoring activity procedures and tools. TPOs are expected to use these tools as part of their documentation of the monitoring record over the life of the award. Any exceptions to these procedures should be documented in the working file of the award.

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<sup>4</sup> Authority and designation for COs are set forth in DOE Order 541.1A, "Appointment of Contracting Officers and Contracting Officers' Representatives".

### 3.1 Progress Reviews

Progress reviews for the RDD&D programs encompass a variety of methods by which TPOs acquire and exchange information with the Recipient about the status of project performance throughout the term of the award. Communication is the key to effective oversight monitoring of a project. Throughout the project an ongoing dialog occurs among the Recipient, DOE, and external stakeholders. The frequency and methods of these communications are dependent on the complexity, value, and program priority of the work being done under the award. These communications occur through various means such as:

- Informal telephone and e-mail exchanges;
- Regularly scheduled project teleconferences/webinars;
- Desktop, onsite and plan reviews on the status of reporting;
- Periodic project and program reviews; and
- Periodic face-to-face meetings.

The main objective of these reviews is for the TPO to gain insight into the progress of the project and identify areas that may need special attention. Risk monitoring is an integral and ongoing process in oversight monitoring. The status of risk and the possibility of a risk event are routinely assessed by the TPO. Each program has its own guidelines that take into account program-specific factors. These may include size of award, type of Recipient and its experience, nature of the technical challenge, overall complexity of the project, and other factors.

The primary methods of progress monitoring are desktop reviews, project and program reviews, onsite reviews, and project plan management reviews. During these progress reviews, the Recipient will be expected to demonstrate that it is making continued progress in fiscal performance (e.g., costing of funds), complying with all reporting requirements, and achieving project objectives. If progress reviews reveal deficiencies such as significant delays in achieving mutually agreed upon milestones, performance shortfalls or failure to meet reporting requirements or other deliverables, the Recipient may be subject to risk mitigation strategies such as a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

#### 3.1.1. Desktop Reviews

Desktop Reviews generally refer to examinations of progress reporting submitted by the award Recipient on a regular basis – monthly, quarterly or at some other interval—that can be conducted at the TPO’s desk. Desktop monitoring for the EERE RDD&D program activities will examine Recipient reports to assess progress and determine compliance with Federal rules and regulations, goals and objectives of the funding action as stipulated in the award document or schedule, and the reporting and financial tracking of resources expended by the Recipient. In general, (unless otherwise specified) Desktop Reviews will be conducted on a quarterly basis (see Appendix for a table on the Review Frequency by Type). The aim of quarterly reviews is to assess project progress against planned schedule and cost. However, TPOs also will review information as it comes in to ensure there are no major variances or issues arising between quarterly reviews.

Recipients receiving Recovery Act funding will comply with all reporting requirements mandated by the Recovery Act as opposed to projects funded out of the base program. Desktop monitoring will adjust for any revised statutes and regulations, such as Recovery Act, that may cause new guidance to come from OMB and/or DOE. Each Recipient will submit periodic reports on activities and costs in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements for that funding.

Desktop monitoring encompasses the following types of activities associated with reviewing each Recipient's performance:

- Desktop Reviews will be conducted by TPOs to identify cost, schedule, technical risk and/or programmatic issues. Where discrepancies exist between planned activities and actual accomplishments reported, the TPOs will conduct follow-up information exchange with the Recipient to determine cause and future actions to correct the discrepancy.
- Submission of desktop results by the TPOs will be placed in a centralized repository accessible to TPOs, COs, and CSs, Field Operations, Program Managers, Technology Managers and EERE Leadership.
- Most Recipients are required to submit quarterly reports. TPOs are expected to review these submissions as they come in. TPOs will confirm that this review has taken place by completing an online form. For most awards, this form will also be completed on a quarterly basis; however, at \$1 million and below this form is expected to be completed annually. It is at the TPO's discretion to determine if high risk or other factors warrant more frequent completion of the form for projects at those funding levels.

### **3.1.2. Periodic Project and Program Reviews**

Field Operations has instructed TPOs to perform periodic project reviews as part of their project management and monitoring function. TPOs must ensure that DOE participation in project reviews is planned and communicated to the Recipient. This is a commonly used risk mitigation strategy. All projects are expected to have at least one project review annually. Higher risk, or higher visibility, projects are considered candidates for more frequent reviews by DOE. These reviews are usually scheduled at major decision points or to resolve performance problems.

In support of the program's management and direction of its RDD&D activities, the TPO is responsible for communicating the results of program office reviews (e.g., peer review) to the contracting staff and the Recipient. An example of the importance of these communications by the TPO is exhibited in external peer reviews where the Recipient is expected to incorporate the suggested improvements which may impact schedule, cost, and/or scope.

### **3.1.3. Onsite Monitoring**

Onsite reviews are conducted to determine how well the Recipient is proceeding against project plans, objectives, schedule, and costs. Typically, onsite reviews allow for a deeper examination of the Recipient's costs, schedule, and technical progress.

Onsite reviews should be conducted on a regular basis; the frequency will be determined by project status and resource availability (see Appendix for table on Review Frequency by Type). TPOs will review the past monitoring findings of the Recipient's activities to determine if any deficiencies (performance, financial, schedule, or quality) previously identified are being resolved to bring the project into compliance. Actions and reports on follow-up procedures to improve project performance will be monitored during each successive visit to the Recipient.

Large, complex, or programmatically-critical awards may require the TPO to make several visits to the same project to determine progress towards goals and objectives or the achievement of major milestones. During the life of the award, teams comprised of the TPO, Laboratory and/or contracted specialists, and program staff may be sent out to conduct onsite monitoring, as appropriate.

Onsite monitoring visits may occur at the Recipient's site, but other relevant locations may occur depending on the project. DOE TPOs will conduct onsite reviews as required by the program to ensure compliance with DOE rules and consistency between reported activities and actual performance.

TPOs are expected to report results and enter observations into the automated onsite checklist. They are also expected to submit the online form with any supporting documentation into a centralized repository. Submission of a trip report is required following each site visit, and TPOs are strongly encouraged to use the standard Trip Report Template found in the Appendix and the central repository. TPOs should also follow the review frequencies outlined in the Appendix.

### **3.2. Project Management Plan Templates**

Recipients are expected to have a management plan that defines how the Recipient will execute, monitor, and control the project. Recipients are strongly encouraged to use the Project Management Plan (PMP) Template for developing their baseline project management plans (see attached Appendix).<sup>5</sup> The template was guided in its development by the principles of project management reflected in the Project Management Institute's *Project Management Body of Knowledge*. The template is a model of what a comprehensive plan should contain, but can be streamlined for less complex activities. These plans should be used for managing the project and are provided to the TPOs to be used as part of progress (including Desktop and onsite) reviews as a basis for comparison with actual periodic performance or to establish a baseline for a project. Consistent reporting of project management plans will aid TPOs in assessing progress, examining changes, and determining compliance with Federal rules and regulations, and the goals and objectives of the funding action as stipulated in the award document. It will also assist Executive Leadership in understanding how funding actions are performing across the

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<sup>5</sup> The Project Management Plan Template has been cross-walked to the Project Management Institute's Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) to ensure completeness and consistency with generally accepted project management practices and principles. Some components identified in the PMBOK are not included in the Template because they are included in other process and policy documentation. Procurement Management is covered by the applicable procurement regulations, as well as by the Cooperative Agreements themselves and Process Improvement is typically part of overall program policies.

program/s. It is the TPO's responsibility to ensure an appropriate project management plan or equivalent is created for each project.

The Project Management Plan Template allows for tailoring based upon the complexity of the project. A more-complex project is defined as a multi-year project performed in phases by a partnership of three or more organizations. It is recommended that the full Project Management Plan Template be utilized, including all components, for these projects. A less-complex project is defined as a project performed by a partnership of fewer than three organizations. In these cases, the project management plan should be tailored to the specific project. If there are reservations about whether to include a recommended section or not, Recipients should err on the side of inclusion.

The template is subject to change and version control of modifications to the recommended structure will be managed by Field Operations. Use of the template and its modifications are subject to TPO discretion.

Plan reviews should be conducted annually. Confirmation of these Annual Plan Reviews will be noted in the automated desktop process in the quarter that the review took place. The Performance Risk Management team will select projects for validation and verification of results and follow-up actions as part of EERE's overall risk management practices.

#### **4. Corrective Action Plans**

If a TPO determines through desktop or onsite monitoring that a Recipient has "significant findings," the TPO shall factually document those findings in writing and inform the CO. The CO is responsible for taking specific actions in accordance with the provisions of 10 CFR 600, which may require the Recipient to proceed under a CAP. Significant findings typically refer to non-compliance in the terms and conditions of the award; however, severe variances from baseline plans and/or costs may also trigger a CAP, if a factual and legal basis for noncompliance is determined. The CAP is not intended only to solve a current problem, but is a way for Recipients to permanently correct a deficiency within their project and perform at peak efficiency with the lowest level of risk. The TPO will perform specific oversight monitoring to establish that the actions or remedies implemented by the Recipient (as requested by the CO) have resolved the noncompliant situation.

#### **5. Collecting Best Practices**

Creation of a financial assistance environment where continual process improvement and self-sufficiency can thrive is facilitated by monitoring plans that guide project management officials to mine best practices. The objective of collecting best practices is to supply the financial assistance system with updated information on improved controls, procedures, and information on best practices that:

- Inform Recipients on how to meet and exceed standards for financial, administrative, and technical performance;
- Identify success factors for improved financial assistance management and oversight;

- Inform training, workshops and conferences to communicate best approaches for financial assistance management;
- Foster peer exchange; and
- Supply data and evidence of continual improvement such that it is measurable under the program evaluation process.

Best practices may be found at any transactional point along the monitoring continuum from risk assessment to desktop monitoring and eventual closeout review. EERE looks to foster the identification and exchange of best practices by allowing TPOs (as they complete Desktop Reviews) to describe on an optional basis any data they have found on best practices or success stories for that individual award. Input into the automated form allows this information to be stored in an EERE repository that can be mined at a later time for information on specific aspects of project management and oversight monitoring. In this vein, TPOs and COs are encouraged to identify best practices and also to encourage Recipients to report success stories. Awareness of best practices should occur at several levels—Recipients, TPO and, if possible, through peer-to-peer exchange, which fosters direct dialog between high-performance and lower-performance Recipients.

## **6. Training of TPOs**

Field Operations in collaboration with the project management staff will periodically assess and review training requirements and seek to identify any current gaps. Based on this review, Field Operations will make available training opportunities through webinars, self-instruction materials, and other approaches. It will allow for requirements to be met through commercially available outlets or other Federal training opportunities. Training opportunities will ensure that both new and existing staff has the knowledge and skills required to perform their jobs/roles, including current expertise in relevant laws and regulations, best practices in project management and oversight monitoring, and other training objectives.

Furthermore EERE is filling the role of Site Acquisition Career Manager (SACM) to coordinate these activities, support these objectives, and leverage resources. There will be a concerted effort to formalize and implement training and certification in project management knowledge and skills. This will include a suite of training to invest in job-specific skills and to support achievement of credentials, such as the Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM), the Project Management Institute's Project Management Professional (PMP), and/or related credentials. Additional details may be found in DOE's Acquisition Career Management Handbook.

## **Attachments**

The attachments to this document have been placed in a separate volume titled, *Appendix of Standard Performance Reporting Questions and Templates for the Research, Development, Demonstration and Deployment Activities*.