



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR - 1 2013

OFFICE OF  
THE ADMINISTRATOR

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Consistent Field Operations at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**FROM:** Bob Perciasepe  
Acting Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Perciasepe".

**TO:** Assistant Administrators  
Regional Administrators

The ability to do high-quality scientific field work to assess environmental problems has been one of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's great strengths throughout its history. Seeking to build upon this success, I am asking all EPA organizations conducting field activities to implement a sustainable management system that incorporates all 10 of the Field Operations Group guidelines no later than February 15, 2016.

Each regional administrator and assistant administrator responsible for field activities must designate a point of contact for this effort by Tuesday, March 8, 2013. This colleague will convey information and training materials within each organization and will assist each unit conducting field activities with implementing the Field Operations Group guidelines.

As you likely know, members of the EPA's Field Operations Group highlighted in their December 2011 report opportunities for the EPA to strengthen ongoing field work and to follow a consistent set of guidelines. On June 14, 2012, I directed the formation of a Consistent Field Operations Workgroup to develop an agencywide implementation plan for establishing a uniform system for conducting our field work and to carry out the 10 group guidelines. At the December 5, 2012, Executive Management Council meeting, the Consistent Field Operations Workgroup's report and recommendations, which are attached, received my and the Executive Management Council's highest endorsement.

Governance for this entire process is highly important. I have asked Larry Starfield in the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance and Stan Meiburg in Region 4 to continue providing senior leadership during the implementation of this requirement, with day-to-day assistance from Mike Peyton in Region 4 and Carol Rushin in OECA. We are establishing an implementation team to develop and provide the necessary training and technical assistance, and I have asked Sam Becker in Region 6 and Craig Kubik in OECA to serve as co-leaders. The person you designate as your organization's point of contact will also be your implementation team member, and you should submit that name to Craig by the March 8 deadline.

The success of consistent implementation of the Field Operations Group guidelines within the next three years will depend on our ability to quickly provide high-quality training and technical assistance to

organizations as they initiate this work. I am allocating additional resources to accomplish this training. I also anticipate that we will need to draw upon EPA colleagues who have expertise with the guidelines. When we need help from these subject-matter experts, Larry, Stan, Mike and Carol will discuss with your organizations the best way to accomplish our goals while minimizing the impact on ongoing operations.

As we work to ensure that all of our activities proceed on the firmest possible scientific footing, I would remind you of a very important point I made in a recent memorandum on laboratory science at the EPA: Our ability to protect human health and the environment depends on the integrity of the underlying scientific and technical work. Therefore, I have asked Glenn Paulson, the EPA's science advisor, to stay actively engaged with Larry and Stan during the implementation of the Field Operations Group guidelines, in addition to Glenn's oversight efforts to enhance our laboratory competency. In the coming months, Larry, Stan and Glenn will make periodic reports on both of these efforts to the Executive Management Council.

In the meantime, I want to extend my appreciation to the members of the Consistent Field Operations Workgroup for their efforts to highlight how we can improve the way we conduct our field work, and I also thank each of you for your strong support as we move forward.

#### Attachment

cc: General Counsel  
Chief Financial Officer  
Chief of Staff  
Deputy Assistant Administrators  
Deputy Regional Administrators  
Glenn Paulson  
Carol Rushin  
Sam Becker  
Mike Peyton  
Craig Kubik