

2014

OCFO's Technical Guidance on the FY 2014 National Program Manager Guidance and Annual Commitment Process



Office of the Chief Financial Officer
U.S. EPA
November 2, 2012

Publication #190R13001

**OCFO'S TECHNICAL GUIDANCE ON THE EPA FY 2014 NATIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER
(NPM) GUIDANCES AND ANNUAL COMMITMENT PROCESS**

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I.	INTRODUCTION TO THE NPM GUIDANCE PROCESS.....	1
II.	DEVELOPMENT OF THE FY 2014 NATIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER GUIDANCES	1
	OCFO'S OVERVIEW	1
	NPM AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION	1
	ENGAGEMENT WITH STATES AND TRIBES.....	2
	KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEVELOPING NPM NATIONAL AREAS OF FOCUS AND PROGRAM-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE	2
	TECHNICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEVELOPING FY 2014 OPERATIONAL MEASURES	5
	FORMAT REQUIREMENTS AND TEMPLATES (AVAILABLE VIA THE INTERNET)	5
III.	ANNUAL COMMITMENT PROCESS	7
	REPORTING FY 2013 RESULTS.....	7
	ESTABLISHING FY 2014 COMMITMENTS	7
IV.	KEY MILESTONES FOR THE FY 2014 NPM GUIDANCE PROCESS.....	10
V.	NPM GUIDANCE KEY CONTACTS	12

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE NPM GUIDANCE PROCESS

OCFO's *Technical Guidance* addresses three areas: 1) developing FY 2014 NPM national areas of focus, program-specific guidance and associated operational measures; 2) reporting and analyzing results for FY 2013 performance commitments; and 3) negotiating agreements for FY 2014 performance commitments. OCFO's *Technical Guidance* supports improved agency program management and decision making by:

- Ensuring consistency and clarity across NPM Guidances so that regions, states and tribes can easily identify national areas of focus and program-specific guidance for implementing EPA programs;
- Identifying cross-program topics for FY 2014 and encouraging early communication on joint efforts to advance these initiatives;
- Requesting identification of the smallest, most meaningful set of measures to assess performance results;
- Establishing processes to improve the quality, consistency and reliability of performance measures and data reporting in the EPA's Annual Commitment System (ACS); and
- Maintaining consistent deadlines and milestones for NPM Guidance development and reporting.

The FY 2014 NPM Guidance process will be the first to incorporate the results of the agency's NPM Guidance [Lean](#) effort, including the following key changes for the FY 2014 NPM Guidances:

- A common format to increase consistency, standardization and provide more concise narratives;
- A new OCFO Overview communicates the purpose of the NPM Guidances and includes the 11 FY 2014 cross-program topics selected as a result of a new centralized process. The Overview will be separate from and posted online with the NPM Guidances;
- An internal agency review period of draft NPM Guidances in January 2013 to enhance agency-wide collaboration;
- Earlier initiation of consultation and collaboration with federally-recognized tribes and the development of new outreach materials to clarify NPM Guidance linkages to other agency processes; and
- A flexible, NPM-specific approach to early engagement with states to help inform the development of the draft NPM Guidances.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE FY 2014 NATIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER GUIDANCES

1. OCFO'S OVERVIEW

OCFO's Overview to the FY 2014 NPM Guidances will communicate the documents' purpose, scope and new design; provide linkages to the Administrator's priorities and the *EPA's FY 2011-2015 Strategic Plan*; and highlight the selected FY 2014 cross-program topics. This brief stand-alone document will be linked to each of the NPM Guidances as well as posted separately on OCFO's FY 2014 Planning and Budgeting internet website.

2. NPM AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

NPMs and regions are encouraged to collaborate throughout the development of the NPM Guidances. NPMs should work with their regional counterparts to develop draft NPM Guidances and with their lead region, as appropriate, to facilitate the dissemination of information and engagement efforts. In addition, the agency is taking the following steps to facilitate collaboration:

- a. **Internal Agency Review:** A new internal agency review period in January 2013 will allow earlier input from regions and other offices on the draft NPM Guidances prior to the public comment period. The review period will be **January 11 - January 28, 2013**. NPMs should consider and incorporate agency comments, as appropriate.

- b. **Collaboration Tools:** OCFO recommends NPMs consider incorporating existing widely used collaborative tools (e.g., Quickr, wikis and Adobe Connect) and any available My Workplace collaboration tools for the FY 2014 NPM Guidance process, as appropriate.

3. **ENGAGEMENT WITH STATES AND TRIBES**

As in past years, OCFO will post the draft and final FY 2014 NPM Guidances on OCFO's Planning and Budgeting internet website to facilitate comments from external partners and stakeholders. States, tribes and other partners and stakeholders may submit comments from **February 15 - March 15, 2013** to the EPA using the [External Comments and Response to Comments Summary template](#). During this external comment period, NPMs will also engage with partners and stakeholders to discuss key changes from the prior year NPM Guidance. NPMs will have from **March 15, 2013 - April 15, 2013** to respond to the comments and incorporate changes, as warranted, into the final NPM Guidances. In addition to the external comment period, the EPA is undertaking the following initiatives to increase engagement with state and tribal partners:

- a. **State Engagement:** NPMs and regions are encouraged to solicit earlier input from states to maximize collaboration and engagement. NPMs have flexibility in determining the appropriate mechanism for conducting state engagement throughout 2012 to help inform the development of the FY 2014 NPM Guidances. Examples of state engagement mechanisms include: relying on existing EPA/state partnership groups; releasing a memorandum to state associations requesting earlier input; and/or discussions at EPA/state meetings. The EPA will also continue to hold joint conference calls with state associations to discuss key changes to the NPM Guidances and other associated questions. OCFO will convene these meetings during the external comment period.
- b. **Consultation and Coordination Process with Federally-Recognized Tribes:** In October 2012, OCFO sent consultation notification letters to all federally-recognized tribes to provide both an opportunity for early input from tribes on draft FY 2014 NPM Guidance development and consultation on the draft NPM Guidances in **February 2013**. New outreach materials were also provided to communicate the linkage between the NPM Guidance and other agency processes. The materials are available on the agency's Tribal Consultation Opportunities website: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/oita/TConsultation.nsf/TC?OpenView>. National teleconferences for tribes will also be held on **March 6** and **March 12, 2013** to provide an overview of the process for commenting on the draft FY 2014 NPM Guidances and discuss key changes to the NPM Guidances that may affect tribes.

4. **KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEVELOPING NPM NATIONAL AREAS OF FOCUS AND PROGRAM-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE**

When developing national areas of focus, strategies, and operational measures for the FY 2014 NPM Guidances, NPMs should consider the [FY 2011-2015 Strategic Plan](#) which sets forth the agency's long term vision, five strategic goals (along with objectives, measures and strategies) and five cross-cutting fundamental strategies (XCFS) for advancing the Administrator's priorities. NPMs should also translate decisions made in the *FY 2014 Annual Plan and Budget*, issued in February 2013, into operational strategies to guide regional implementation with states and tribes. NPMs should also incorporate applicable tasks and action items from: the *FY 2013 XCFS Action Plans* (available in December 2012 at <http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/annualplan/fy2013.html>); and the five *FY 2012-2013 Agency Priority Goals (APGs) and Action Plans*, as appropriate (APGs information is available on [Performance.gov](http://www.epa.gov/performance)).

NPMs should also consider the following **FY 2014 cross-program topics** when developing national areas of focus, program-specific guidance and measures for regional implementation. NPMs have discretion to include these topics in NPM Guidances, as appropriate.

- a. **Children's Health Focus:** NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that ensure regional implementation of policies, programs, activities, and standards addresses disproportionate risks to

children, as appropriate. The *FY 2013 Environmental Justice/Children's Health XCFS Action Plan* and the *Office of Children's Health Strategic Plan* should be used as resources to identify relevant children's health efforts for regional implementation. Regions will be expected to report semi-annually, as a part of the existing review process, at Deputy Administrator Performance Progress meetings on the status of efforts to protect children's health.

- b. **Climate Change Adaptation:** NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that advance climate adaptation planning into its programs, policies, rules, and operations to ensure they are effective even as the climate changes. Specifically, NPMs should develop tasks or measures based on: the *2012 EPA Climate Change Adaptation Plan*, which identifies specific vulnerabilities of the EPA's national environmental programs to climate change and agency-wide priorities to address the vulnerabilities; the three strategic measures on climate adaptation contained in the *FY 2011-2015 EPA Strategic Plan (Goal 1)*; the *2013 Climate Change Adaptation Implementation Plans* developed by every regional and national environmental program office, which identify office-specific priority actions for integrating adaptation planning into programs, policies, rules, and operations; and existing agency policies, plans and guidance.
- c. **Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 40 CFR Parts 5 and 7:** NPMs should coordinate with the Office of Administration and Resources Management, the Office of Civil Rights and the Office of General Counsel to include, as appropriate, tasks that regions should undertake to ensure that applicants for and recipients of EPA financial assistance are in compliance with Title VI. These specific tasks may include: a more detailed review of EPA's Form 4700-4 (Non discrimination form); requests for additional information from applicants or recipients to support assurances made on Form 4700; demonstration of compliance with the provisions of 40 CFR Parts 5 and 7; and/or demonstration of the extent of their limited English proficiency compliance efforts.
- d. **Continue to Better Serve Communities:** NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that enhance the regions' ability to serve communities in a manner that makes resources more accessible, effective and sustainable. Specifically, NPMs should consider activities related to: using community-based grants and technical assistance awards to leverage EPA's and other federal agencies' prior investments in sustainable community outcomes; better reflecting community-based technical assistance efforts in agency GeoPlatform and GeoGrants mapping; strengthening involvement in and increasing coordination among programs that comprise the Community-Based Coordination Network; working with members of the public to document and externally communicate the benefits and value of agency work in communities; and institutionalizing recommendations and lessons learned from FY 2012 and FY 2013 efforts on community-based work and implementation of the regional pilots.
- e. **Coordination of EPA Tribal Programs:** NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that the regions and/or tribes should implement and/or report on regarding environmental programs which ensure protection of human health and the environment for federally-recognized tribes. This includes: direct implementation of EPA's environmental programs; federal program delegation to tribes; and tribal capacity development and technical assistance. In addition, NPMs and regions should ensure that the Executive Order 13175 and the EPA *Policy on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribes* (May 2011) are appropriately applied to EPA actions or decisions.
- f. **e-Enterprise:** NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that monitor and/or report on regional progress toward meeting regulatory burden reduction goals and improving customer service, as appropriate. Specifically, each NPM should coordinate with the Office of Policy (OP) to apply burden reduction principles in new rulemakings and retrospective reviews of existing regulations. For rules that incorporate information collection burdens (e.g., reporting) or transactional requirements (e.g., permit applications), NPMs should coordinate with OP and the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) to establish baseline tracking and monitor progress toward a transition to electronic reporting under the umbrella of e-Enterprise. Coordination will

also be required for grant administration for states and tribes. As the agency updates internal policies for open data, information exchange, advanced monitoring, enterprise architecture, and the system development lifecycle, NPMs should promote adherence to these standards.

- g. **Grants Policy Issuance 12-06, "Timely Obligation, Expenditure, and Award of EPA Grant Funds"**: NPMs are expected to modify sections of their state grant guidance so they comply with the Office of Grants and Debarment's (OGD) Grants Policy Issuance (GPI) 12-06. OGD will provide NPMs with quarterly reports measuring the agency's progress in meeting this goal to obligate appropriated grant funds in the first year of availability. Also, NPMs will need to implement the grant process streamlining principles for State Continuing Environmental Programs. To view the GPI, please go to: http://intranet.epa.gov/ogd/policy/gpi_12_06_timely_obligation.pdf.
- h. **National Environmental Information Exchange Network (EN)**: NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that advance the following Exchange Network (EN) principles and priorities into program grant work plans: the EN is the preferred way to exchange data; transition to and/or continue to use the EN for sending data to or receiving data from the EPA; use program grant funds for on-going operations and maintenance of data reporting using the EN; work in partnership with other programs in their organization, with other entities, and/or with the EPA to develop applications that use EN technology to make data available to program staff and managers and provide capabilities to analyze these data and provide the basis for better environmental decisions.
- i. **Plan EJ 2014**: NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that advance integrating environmental justice (EJ) into the agency's programs, policies and activities, as appropriate. Specifically, NPMs should consider regional actions related to: implementing transition plans and user guidelines, common and program-specific, for EJSCREEN; identifying, communicating and monitoring priority program areas for use of EJ legal tools; identifying examples where EJ legal tools have been used, successfully used or potentially can be used; enhancing EJ analysis and public participation in development and implementation of rules; identifying and implementing program priorities in *Regional Implementation Plans* to enhance public participation in permits; enhancing EJ analysis in permits; enhancing intra- and interagency collaborations to support community-based work in overburdened communities; and training to support implementation of *Plan EJ 2014* tools. Documenting the regional work and accompanying results is critical in order to be able to assess progress in achieving the goals of *Plan EJ 2014*.
- j. **Quality Policy**: NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that ensure and/or report on regarding the quality of environmental data being used in regulatory and enforcement programs, grants and technical assistance, and partnerships with states and tribes, as appropriate. Specific activities may include the documented Quality Assurance (QA) oversight of environmental data being generated by state, local and tribal governments; and submission of the *2014/2015 QA Annual Report and Work Plan* to OEI.
- k. **Sustainability**: NPMs should consider including tasks or measures that will indicate and monitor how regions should incorporate principles of sustainability into their regulatory and enforcement programs, grants and technical assistance, and partnerships with states, tribes, local authorities, businesses and citizen groups, as appropriate. Specific activities could include (but are not limited to): advancing principles of sustainability through partnership programs, permits, rule writing, and supplemental environmental projects; and incorporating specific approaches, such as community engagement, life cycle analyses tools, green infrastructure, pollution prevention, zero waste, sustainable materials management, and product sustainability (e.g., Energy Star, Design for Environment) into regional operations.

5. TECHNICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEVELOPING FY 2014 OPERATIONAL MEASURES

NPM Guidances govern the establishment of regional commitments for annual budget measures and additional operational measures. The NPM Guidances should focus on identifying the smallest, most meaningful set of measures to assess performance results. The agency achieved a three percent reduction in the number of FY 2014 annual budget measures and encourages programs to continue this trend in FY 2014 NPM Guidance operational measures. In addition to the agency's continuing efforts to streamline performance measures, NPMs should adhere to the following guidelines when developing FY 2014 operational measures:

- a. **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**: The agency will continue to develop quarterly reports. NPMs are only required to report on measures where work is still underway. NPMs should remove measures where regular reporting is no longer necessary and maintain measures where work remains. ARRA-specific measures should have national targets reflecting the expected incremental performance contributions of ARRA funds. ARRA measures are not required to have regional targets. As a reminder, because ARRA results must be tracked separately, a companion measure has been created in ACS to track only the ARRA performance increment. The pre-existing NPM Guidance measures will track total performance results (non-ARRA plus ARRA). A full list of ARRA measures where work remains is available [here](#).
- b. **Measures Guidelines**: NPMs should adhere to the [performance measures guidelines](#) and OCFO's Phase [I](#) and [II](#) supplemental guidance documents, which are designed to improve the quality and consistency of measures, data and supporting information in the ACS.
- c. **Documenting Changes to Measures**: Any measure changes should align with FY 2014 budget measures and strategic measures in the EPA's *FY 2011-2015 Strategic Plan*. Changes to operational measures should be documented using the [Explanation of Changes between FY 2013 and FY 2014 Template](#) and reflected in the [Measures Appendix](#).
- d. **Ambitiousness of Targets**: Planning targets for FY 2014 should not be less ambitious than the FY 2012 actual results or the final FY 2013 regional commitments, unless there is a compelling reason.

6. FORMAT REQUIREMENTS AND TEMPLATES (AVAILABLE VIA THE INTERNET)

When writing and preparing NPM Guidances for submission to OCFO, NPMs should consult and follow the EPA's [Grammar, Style and Usage Guide](#). NPMs should submit draft and final FY 2014 NPM Guidances to OCFO in both a Word and a PDF format compliant with §508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act (see: EPA Web Work Group, Accessibility/508 Standards at <http://intranet.epa.gov/webgroup/accessibility.html>). Both the draft and final FY 2014 NPM Guidances should include a National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP) number. NPMs can request a NSCEP number via the following website: http://cincinnati.epa.gov/services/nscep/nscep_form.asp. NPMs should also follow the specified requirements listed below:

- a. **Paginated Table of Contents**: NPM Guidances must contain a table of contents.
- b. **NPM Introduction**: Each NPM will prepare an introduction to provide NPM-specific context and an opportunity for the Assistant Administrator to highlight messages of national importance for the upcoming fiscal year. The guideline for the introduction is two pages.
- c. **National Areas of Focus Guidance**: NPMs should identify national areas of focus or priorities. The guideline is up to eight national areas of focus. However, Assistant Administrators can include additional national areas of focus if they determine doing so is essential in order to advance the EPA's mission. The guideline is no more than one and a half pages for each national area of focus or priority using the following format:

Short Title of the National Area of Focus
Description: Briefly describe the national area of focus or priority for the upcoming fiscal year.
Activities: List the tasks or action items supporting the national area of focus or priority for the upcoming fiscal year. Use bulleted format. Specify when states and/or tribes are responsible for the activities.
Measures: As appropriate, the NPM should describe the key measure(s) associated with the national area of focus and any clarification necessary. At a minimum, NPMs should cite where in the Measures Appendix the supporting measures are described [i.e., "See ACS measures with code numbers (insert #) in Appendix # on pages #."]

- d. **Program-Specific Guidance (Optional):** This is an optional section for NPMs to discuss programs not addressed in the previous section but where NPM direction is critical. The guideline is up to one page per program area using the following format:

Short Title of the Program
Description: Briefly describe the specific program for the upcoming fiscal year.
Activities: List the tasks or action items supporting the specific program for the upcoming fiscal year. Use bulleted format. Specify when states and/or tribes are responsible for the activities.
Measures: As appropriate, the NPM should describe the key measure(s) associated with the specific program and any clarification necessary. At a minimum, NPMs should cite where in the Measures Appendix the supporting measures are described [i.e., "See ACS measures with code numbers (insert #) in Appendix # on pages #."]

- e. **Appendices:** Required appendices to the draft and final FY 2014 NPM Guidances are identified below. NPMs can include additional attachments to provide supplemental information, as needed.
- i. **[FY 2014 Measures Appendix](#):** This appendix provides easy reference to and clearly identifies annual commitment measures and non-commitment indicators requiring reporting by the regions, states and tribes. NPMs should include national planning targets to guide the negotiation process for commitments developed from the aggregate contributions of headquarters, regions, states, and tribes. NPMs should also include the national targets from the *FY 2014 Annual Plan and Budget* for comparison, where applicable. NPMs may supplement information in OCFO's [Measures Appendix](#), as needed.
 - ii. **[Explanation of Changes between FY 2013 and FY 2014](#):** NPMs should provide the rationale, context and scope of changes, from the previous year's NPM Guidance to national areas of focus, program-specific guidance, activities, and measures.
 - iii. **[External Comments and Response to Comments Summary](#):** This [template](#) is required for submission with the final FY 2014 NPM Guidances and is used for two purposes: 1) for states, tribes, and other partners and stakeholders to submit comments on the draft FY 2014 NPM Guidances to the appropriate NPM and OCFO contacts; and 2) for NPMs to respond to all comments from states, tribes and other partners and stakeholders. NPMs should respond to major comments by providing a brief, but specific, explanation of how comments were addressed or incorporated into the final FY 2014 NPM Guidances.
- f. **Templates (Available via the Internet)**
- i. [Mid-Year Adjustments for FY 2013 Commitments](#)
 - ii. [FY 2014 Measures Appendix](#)
 - iii. [Explanation of Changes between FY 2013 and FY 2014](#)
 - iv. [Summary of Key Changes for States](#)
 - v. [Summary of Key Changes for Tribes](#)
 - vi. [External Comments and Response to Comments Summary](#)
 - vii. [Summary of Issues for Unresolved FY 2014 Commitments](#)

III. ANNUAL COMMITMENT PROCESS

The [Annual Commitment System \(ACS\)](#), a performance module located within the EPA's Budget Automation System (BAS), is used to track annual headquarters and regional performance commitment information and results. User manuals, training materials, data entry requirements, instructions for entering information from states and tribes into the system, and other information about ACS can be found on OCFO's intranet website at <http://intranet.epa.gov/ocfo/acs>. OCFO encourages agency managers and staff to use our [performance management dashboard](#) to analyze and evaluate performance information tracked in ACS and found at the following intranet website: http://intranet.epa.gov/ocfo/performance_dashboard.htm.

1. **REPORTING FY 2013 RESULTS**

NPMs and regions will report progress at mid-year and end-of-year and raise performance issues or explain differences between the commitment and actual performance (using the "Comments" field on the results screen in ACS).

- a. **Mid-Year FY 2013 Reporting:** NPMs and regions will enter actual FY 2013 mid-year results data in ACS from **April 2013 - May 2013**. More specific information for mid-year data entry will be released in OCFO's *FY 2013 Mid-Year Performance Reporting and Analysis Guidance* in **March 2013**.
- b. **Mid-Year FY 2013 Commitment Adjustments:** OCFO emphasizes that mid-year commitment adjustments are not a re-opening of the FY 2013 bidding process. Adjustments are warranted on an exception-only basis. There are many valid reasons for missing a commitment and mid-year adjustments should not be made to ensure a commitment is achieved.

OCFO will open ACS for a two-week period in **late spring 2013**. At that time, NPMs and regions can make mid-year adjustments, in those limited cases where both the NPM and region believe it is **significant and critical** to make the adjustment. Commitment adjustments for measures associated with the budget (i.e., targets in the budget) are not allowed.

NPMs will work with regions on the proposed commitment adjustments. Changes will be kept to a minimum and require NPMs to submit a description of the change and a rationale to OCFO by **June 13, 2013**. NPMs will also be responsible for entering the mid-year target adjustments in ACS ([Mid-Year Adjustments for FY 2013 Commitments Template](#)).

- c. **End-of-Year FY 2013 Reporting:** NPMs and regions will enter actual FY 2013 end-of-year data in ACS **starting in October 2013**. Similar to the bidding process, regions are required to enter end-of-year performance information for states and tribes in ACS for measures with specific results from states and tribes. More specific information for end-of-year data will be released with the *FY 2013 End-of-Year Performance Reporting and Analysis Guidance* in **September 2013**.

2. **ESTABLISHING FY 2014 COMMITMENTS**

When final NPM Guidances are posted to OCFO's FY 2014 Planning and Budgeting internet website, final operational measure language should be entered in ACS. NPMs and regions will then negotiate regional commitments using the bidding function in ACS over the summer 2013. Negotiations should be completed by **November 2013**.

- a. **Entering FY 2014 Annual Commitment Measures:** OCFO will copy FY 2013 annual commitment measure codes, text, and additional information in ACS to use as draft FY 2014 measures in **December 2012**. OCFO will also copy the same measure assignments for regions, states and tribes associated with each measure, but without FY 2013 final performance target information.

After OCFO copies FY 2013 annual commitment measures in ACS to use as draft FY 2014 measures, NPMs should adjust the draft FY 2014 measures (e.g., edit, delete or add measures) to reflect any changes to measures, consistent with EPA's *FY 2014 Annual Plan and Budget*. NPMs and regions

should follow [OCFO's Guidances on measures governance](#) to ensure accurate and high quality data for each measure. NPMs have until **April 26, 2013** to finalize measures inside ACS.

- b. **Draft FY 2014 Regional Commitments:** OCFO requires NPMs and regions to enter draft target information in ACS. NPMs initiate the commitment process in ACS by entering a value in the "Proposed Bid" field (including "0," if applicable) for each commitment measure. NPMs must initiate negotiation in ACS by **May 24, 2013**. NPMs and regions, with input from states and tribes, may begin negotiations on draft commitments as soon as measures are finalized in ACS. The negotiation should continue **through July 8, 2013**, when the draft FY 2014 NPM and regional performance commitments are due in ACS. NPMs and regions should carefully consider past performance, program priorities and budget realities as they set FY 2014 targets and enter initial bids.

Regions are required to identify contributions from states and tribes to FY 2014 draft and final commitments, as appropriate and to the extent possible, and enter this information in ACS. This creates additional transparency in the commitment process by presenting states and tribal contribution to achieving regional commitments and NPMs national targets. Regions should enter state and tribal contributions using the "Comments" field on the bidding screen in ACS or by assigning states and tribes as "shareholders" in the edit screen in ACS. For more information on entering information from states and tribes into the system, see the [Regional Users Manual](#) (internal). Draft FY 2014 regional commitments are due in ACS on **July 8, 2013**.

Entering draft bids allows DRAs to look across all programs and ensure they are aware of their regions' draft bids for all measures for which they must report. Accordingly, regions must send an e-mail to OCFO confirming draft regional performance commitments have been entered in ACS and approved by their DRAs. Regions have discretion as to how to brief and obtain approval from their DRAs on draft regional performance commitments. Regions should send their confirmation e-mails by **July 11, 2013**.

- c. **Draft FY 2014 Commitments on the EPA's Commitments Quickr Website:** Draft bids also reduce burden and uncertainty by providing states and tribes with performance targets they can incorporate into their work plans, particularly when regions enter contributions from states and tribes in ACS. Accordingly, OCFO will post a report of draft FY 2014 regional performance commitments to the EPA's password-protected [Quickr website](#).

The report should only display draft commitments for operational measures that are relevant to states and tribes. NPMs can identify an operational measure relevant to states and tribes by clicking the "Public Access" box in the edit screen in ACS. Prior to posting to the [Quickr website](#), OCFO will send reports of the draft FY 2014 regional performance commitments to NPM and regional planning contacts to review for accuracy. OCFO will post the draft regional commitments on the EPA's [Quickr website](#) for review by states and tribes on **July 19, 2013**.

Regions should engage proactively with states and tribes and encourage them to provide comments on draft commitments before reaching agreement on the final performance commitments. The reports can serve as a useful tool to facilitate engagement.

- d. **Reaching Agreement on Final FY 2014 Commitments:** Reaching agreement in ACS is the final step of the FY 2014 commitment-setting process. Performance results will be reported against these mutually agreed upon NPM/regional targets during FY 2014. Regions should engage with states and tribes to obtain their comments on regional performance commitments throughout the summer until early September 2013. The last day for states and tribes to comment on FY 2014 draft regional commitments is **September 20, 2013**. Regions should ensure DRAs remain informed throughout the negotiation process and that final bids have fully considered cross-program impacts and comments from states and tribes. Regions should enter final bids in ACS no later than **October 25, 2013**.

After DRA-approved final regional performance commitments are entered into ACS, NPMs and regions should indicate agreement in the system as soon as commitments are finalized. **NPMs are required to consider and respond to all regional commitments within two weeks from the date in which they are entered into the system.** Once agreement has been reached, NPMs must close bidding by checking the “Parties in Agreement” box in ACS. NPMs and regions should reach agreement on final FY 2014 commitments in ACS by **November 8, 2013**.

On **November 15, 2013**, NPMs and regions should send OCFO an e-mail confirming the final performance commitments in ACS have been approved by their DAAs/DRAs and that outstanding commitments have been brought to the attention of their DAAs/DRAs. Additionally, NPMs and regions must notify OCFO of outstanding commitments using the [Summary of Unresolved FY 2014 Commitments Template](#).

IV. KEY MILESTONES FOR THE FY 2014 NPM GUIDANCE PROCESS

FY = Fiscal Year for which action item pertains to.

[FY 2013 Milestones](#) [FY 2014 Milestones](#)

Target Date	FY	Draft Milestones
October 15, 2012	14	OCFO begins consultation and coordination process with tribes on the FY 2014 NPM Guidance (CFO sent notification letter to tribal leaders).
October 24, 2012	13 14	OCFO's <i>Kick-Off of the FY 2014 NPM Guidance</i> memo by Barbara Bennett is released.
November 2, 2012	13 14	OCFO's <i>Technical Guidance on FY 2014 NPM Guidance and Annual Commitment Process</i> and Memo by Kathy O'Brien are released.
November 16, 2012	13	FY 2013 final commitments (for which agreement was reached) are posted on EPA Quickr website .
November 30, 2012	13	ACS is locked to prevent any adjustments to FY 2013 commitments.
December 2012	13 14	OCFO copies FY 2013 measures into ACS as draft FY 2014 measures.
January 10, 2013	14	Draft FY 2014 NPM Guidances (including: FY 2014 Measures Appendix , Explanation of Key Changes between FY 2013 and FY 2014) due to OCFO.
January 11, 2013	14	Draft FY 2014 NPM Guidances (including: FY 2014 Measures Appendix , Explanation of Key Changes between FY 2013 and FY 2014) posted to OCFO's intranet website.
January 11 - 28, 2013	14	Internal EPA review period on draft FY 2014 NPM Guidances.
January 28 - February 4, 2013	14	Internal EPA review period on OCFO's Overview.
February 11, 2013	14	Draft FY 2014 NPM Guidances (including: FY 2014 Measures Appendix , Explanation of Key Changes between FY 2013 and FY 2014 , and changes for states and tribes templates) due to OCFO.
February 15, 2013	14	Draft OCFO Overview and FY 2014 NPM Guidances (including: FY 2014 Measures Appendix , Explanation of Key Changes between FY 2013 and FY 2014) posted to OCFO's internet website.
February 15 - March 15, 2013	14	<p>External comment period on the draft OCFO Overview and FY 2014 NPM Guidances begins February 15.</p> <p>States/ECOS receive NPM templates that identify changes in FY 2014 NPM Guidances that impacts states; States/ECOS submit feedback on the NPM templates; States/ECOS/NPM conference calls held.</p> <p>Templates that identify changes for tribes in FY 2014 NPM Guidances made available on EPA's Tribal portal. Two national teleconferences with tribes will occur on March 6 and March 12, where the EPA will provide an overview of the key changes to the Guidances that affect tribes and will request their feedback on the Guidances.</p> <p>External partners provide comments on draft FY 2014 NPM Guidances to appropriate NPMs and OCFO contacts by March 15.</p>
March 2013	13	<i>Mid-Year Performance Reporting and Analysis Guidance</i> issued by OCFO. NPMs and regions enter actual FY 2013 mid-year performance results in ACS.
March - October, 2013	14	Regions engage NPMs, states and tribes in determining FY 2014 regional performance commitments.
April 15, 2013	14	Word versions of FY 2014 NPM Guidances provided to OCFO.
April 19, 2013	14	Suggested style and grammar edits sent to NPMs for approval.

Target Date	FY	Draft Milestones
April 24, 2013	14	Final FY 2014 NPM Guidances (including all appendices and response to comments) due to OCFO.
April 26, 2013	14	Final OCFO Overview and FY 2014 NPM Guidances posted on OCFO's internet webpage. Text of FY 2014 commitments finalized by NPMs in ACS; commitment measures opened for bidding.
May 24, 2013	14	NPMs must initiate the commitment process in the system by entering a value in the "Proposed Bid" field (including "0," if applicable) for each commitment measure.
May 28 - June 7, 2013	13	ACS is reopened to allow limited mid-year adjustments to FY 2013 commitments.
June 13, 2013	13	NPMs notify OCFO of any Mid-Year Adjustments to FY 2013 commitments
July 8, 2013	14	FY 2014 draft Regional performance commitments reflecting DRA approval due in ACS.
July 11, 2013	14	Regions send an e-mail to OCFO indicating that draft regional performance commitments have been entered in ACS and have been approved by DRAs.
July - October 21, 2013	14	Regions continue to engage NPMs, states and tribes in determining final FY 2014 regional performance commitments; agreements should be reached throughout July-October timeframe.
July 19, 2013	14	FY 2014 draft annual regional commitments are posted on EPA Quickr website .
September 2013	13	<i>FY 2013 End-of-Year Performance Reporting and Analysis Guidance</i> issued by OCFO. NPMs and regions enter actual FY 2013 end-of-year performance results in ACS.
September 20, 2013	14	Last day for states and tribes to comment on FY 2014 draft regional commitments.
October 25, 2013	14	FY 2014 regional final commitment information reflecting DRA approval due in ACS.
November 8, 2013	14	NPMs and regions reach agreement in ACS on FY 2014 performance commitments.
November 15, 2013	14	NPMs and regions notify OCFO of any outstanding issues for dispute resolution. NPMs and regions send an e-mail to OCFO indicating that final performance commitments entered in ACS have been approved by DRAs and DAAs, and that DRAs and DAAs are aware of unresolved FY 2014 commitments .
November 22, 2013	14	FY 2014 final commitments (for which agreement was reached) are posted on EPA Quickr website .
November 29, 2013	14	ACS is locked to prevent any adjustments to FY 2014 commitments.

V. **NPM GUIDANCE KEY CONTACTS**

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