

***The Research and Information Collection Partnership***  
**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**April 15, 2010**

**Draft Meeting Summary**

**Meeting Objectives/Desired Outcomes:**

- *Acceptance of the draft final Research and Information Collection Priorities of the Distribution System Research and Information Collection Partnership (Priorities Document);*
- *Discuss how the Priorities Document will be used;*
- *Discuss communication and coordination efforts going forward and milestones; and*
- *Discuss the future role of the Partners and Steering Committee.*

**I. Welcome, Introduction, Meeting Objectives and Agenda**

Kathy Grant, the facilitator, opened the meeting of the Research and Information Collection Partnership (RICP) Steering Committee and welcomed the participants. She briefly reviewed the meeting materials, objectives, and the agenda.

Chris Rayburn of the Water Research Foundation (WaterRF) thanked members of the Steering Committee for their participation throughout the process. He expressed the hope that at the end of the meeting, the Steering Committee will sign off on the Priorities Document. He acknowledged that the process has been long and difficult, involving a lot of hard work on everyone's part. He assured the Committee that the partners want the Priorities Document to be used, and noted that the emphasis of the meeting will be future steps for outreach and maintenance of the document.

Pam Barr, US EPA, echoed Mr. Rayburn's comments. She acknowledged how far the group has come, noting that the identification of areas of research and information collection needs, and then of the ten high priority areas, were huge accomplishments. She thanked the Committee members for helping the RICP get this far.

**II. High Priorities of the Distribution System Research and Information Collection Partnership**

Karl Anderson, US EPA, provided an overview of the changes made to the Priorities Document since the March 9<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee conference call. He detailed how the changes requested by Committee members during and after the conference call were incorporated into the document.

Members of the RICP Steering Committee reviewed and discussed the revised Priorities Document, made final edits, and then formally accepted and signed the document.

The following is a summary of the edits requested by the Committee:

- In section E.S. 2 of the Executive Summary, add the following sentence to the end of the second paragraph: “The objective of the RICP is to stimulate distribution system research and information collection from all interested parties.”
- In table E.S.1 in the Executive Summary and Table 2 in section 3:
  - Delete the bullets in the “Goals” column for CC1 and Stor1.
  - In CC1 and Stor1, change “Compile” to “Identify.”
  - In Con3 and Con4, change “provide” to “compile.”
- Make the appropriate edits to the project descriptions for CC1, Stor1, Con3, and Con4 to be consistent with the table edits in the bullet above.
- In section 1.1.1, add the following sentence to the end of the second paragraph: “The objective of the RICP is to stimulate distribution system research and information collection from all interested parties.”
- In section 1.2.1, edit the first sentence of the cross connections and backflow subsection to read, “A cross connection is any interconnection between a potable water supply and a non-potable source where it is possible for a contaminant to enter the drinking water supply.”
- In section 2.2.1, add the following to the end of the third to last sentence in the first paragraph: “..., considering what is learned from other projects or research and information collection conducted by the partners and other entities.”
- In section 2.2.1, edit the second to last sentence in the second to last paragraph to read: “Since much of the ongoing work related to these project needs may be conducted by the RICP partners, it will be necessary for the partners to share, and encourage researchers to disseminate results as soon as practicable.”
- In the Hea1 project description, more clearly differentiate between Phase 1 and 2 and better explain Phase 2. The members requested the following:
  - Add the following as a third paragraph in the Suggested Approach section: “Phase 2 – Using additional research and information collection to fill gaps, run QMRA models to inform robust risk mitigation decision making. Phase 2 may require iterative model runs to identify and fill data gaps.”
  - Add the following to the end of the first sentence of the following paragraph to read: “...with a goal towards iteratively reducing data and model uncertainty”.
  - Add the following as the first paragraph in the Project Area Constraints and Timing section: “The quality and robustness of the final risk assessment in any topic area will be constrained by the quality and uncertainty of the input data and model constructed to use that data. The strength and limitations of the QMRA should be explicitly delineated to appropriately inform both research and information collection priorities and risk management decisions.”
- In the Hea2 project description:
  - Deleted the phrase “and customers of those systems” from the last bullet of the Phase 1 description.
  - Add the following sentence to the end of the first bullet of the Phase 2 description: “It will be necessary to resolve the details of the baseline

assessment and system monitoring with the individual utilities recruited to participate in the study.

- In the Sur1 project description in the paragraph describing Phase 2, delete the sentence “The surveys will be designed and administered to facilitate the compilation and assessment of needed data by at least 273 utility participants.” Replace that sentence with “The survey should be developed with a statistical design to yield meaningful results.”

**The RICP Steering Committee formally accepted the Priorities Document with the above changes.**

The partners will incorporate the listed revisions in the final version of the document.

### **III. Bringing the Priorities Document to Life**

The partners gave an overview of how the EPA and the WaterRF plan on using the Priorities Document.

Ms. Barr explained that the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water has already started working with the EPA Office Research and Development (ORD) to develop ORD’s research priorities. Several current research projects can be linked to one or more of the RICP’s high priority research areas. The EPA also is working with the WaterRF to coordinate research efforts. Ms. Barr noted that there may be opportunities for RICP work under the cooperative agreement between EPA/ORD on aging water infrastructure.

Audrey Levine, USEPA/ORD, stated that the combined EPA research activities related to drinking water will address most of the high priority research areas. She noted that the ORD Cincinnati office and the STAR grant program are both avenues for distribution system research. The infrastructure program is already doing work on quantitative microbial risk assessment (QMRA). The STAR program is funding epidemiological studies and will fund more in the future. Dr. Levine also mentioned that some of the work at ORD’s National Homeland Security Research Center is relevant to the high priority research area of contaminant entry into the distribution system. Lastly, Dr. Levine suggested that ORD’s research fellowship program could select fellows who propose to work on priority issues.

Mr. Rayburn explained that the WaterRF Research Management office has started to and will continue to incorporate the Priorities Document into the research plan for consideration by the Research Advisory Council (RAC). The WaterRF’s research agenda follows an annual cycle, and the Foundation is currently planning its 2011 research agenda. Mr. Rayburn stated that while he cannot guarantee that anything specifically identified in the Priorities Document will be selected as a WaterRF priority for 2011, he believes that will be the case. He noted that three of this year’s requests for proposals (RFPs) from the RAC were directly relevant to the RICP activities. Mr. Rayburn pointed out that three RICP Steering Committee members are involved with WaterRF’s research activities either serving on the RAC or on an Expert Panel. Mr. Rayburn also acknowledged others who

have attended the RICP Steering Committee meetings, who will bring the ideas in the Priorities Document to their respective planning processes for research priorities.

A Committee member stressed that that the research community needs to know there is an avenue for funding before it will develop projects and ideas related to the RICP priorities. Mr. Rayburn offered that in addition to efforts described above, the WaterRF could highlight its interest in RICP priorities in its unsolicited process. Dr. Levine suggested that future solicitations for the STAR program could be crafted to align with the RICP priorities.

#### **IV. Outreach and Communication Plan**

Frank Blaha, WaterRF, gave a brief presentation on the plan to roll-out, publicize, and maintain the Priorities Document. He reviewed the language from the Agreement in Principle (AIP) related to the continued role of the RICP Steering Committee and the implementation for the Priorities Document. He listed the partners' planned coordination efforts:

- The EPA will post RICP documents, including the Priorities Document, onto the TCRDSAC website;
- The WaterRF will develop an RICP webpage that includes background information on the RICP, a reference to the National Research Council report on distribution system risks, links to relevant Foundation projects, and a press release;
- The WaterRF website will provide a link to the Priorities Document posted on EPA's website; and
- Both partners will promote follow-up activities.

Additionally, the partners and other stakeholders who have been involved with the RICP or TCRDSAC process will publicize the Priorities Document with their own organizations and at meetings and conferences. Mr. Blaha noted upcoming meetings and conference which one or more RICP representative will be attending. He then reviewed the avenues the partners could and will use to solicit projects in the high priority areas.

EPA reminded the Committee of the Agency's limitations in linking to outside projects on their website because of intellectual property concerns.

Other Committee members made the following additional points for the partners to consider:

- Consider making the basic presentation slides on the RICP Priorities Document available on the website for general use.
- Explore the possibility of an EPA press release, rather than just the planned desk statement, to go out in tandem with the WaterRF release.
- Include an item in the "What's New" section of the EPA website.

During the discussion, participants suggested several organizations that partners should consider include on their list when distributing information on the RICP priorities.

#### **IV. The Future Role of the Partners and Steering Committee**

Mr. Rayburn reminded the group that the AIP lays out the baseline for ongoing Steering Committee involvement. He noted that there will be a level of ongoing maintenance of the research plan, and that the Steering Committee will be involved in that process.

During its discussion of its ongoing involvement, the Committee requested the following:

- Conference calls at least every six months, if necessary, to review what research is being done, what is being learned, what issues are not being addressed. A planned call can be cancelled if there is nothing or little to report. .
- Development of a table to track the progress of filling research and information collection gaps for the high priority areas.

***U.S. Environmental Protection Agency***  
**RESEARCH AND INFORMATION COLLECTION PARTNERSHIP**  
**STEERING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL**

April 15, 2010

**Meeting Participants**

**Karl Anderson**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Ali Arvanaghi**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Nick Ashbolt**, US EPA, ORD, National Exposure Research Laboratory \*  
**Pam Barr**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Frank Blaha**, Water Research Foundation  
**Jeanne Briskin**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Erica Brown**, Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies  
**Joan Brunkard**, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention\*  
**Gary Burlingame**, Philadelphia Water Department\*  
**Steve Estes-Smargiassi**, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority\*  
**Cindy Forbes**, Southern California Section Drinking Water Field Operations Branch,  
California Department of Public Health\*  
**David Gute**, Tufts University\*  
**Kathy Grant**, RESOLVE  
**Kerry Hamilton**, USEPA, ORD  
**Mark LeChevallier**, American Water\*  
**Debbie Lee**, RESOLVE  
**Audrey Levine**, US EPA, ORD, Drinking Water Research Program\*  
**Adrienne Menniti**, CH2M Hill  
**Chris Rayburn**, Water Research Foundation  
**Stig Regli**, US EPA, OGWDW\*  
**Alan Roberson**, American Water Works Association  
**Crystal Rodgers-Jenkins**, US EPA, OGWDW  
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