



At a Glance

Why We Did This Review

We conducted this review to determine whether the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) effectively incorporates products developed to meet its priority settings, toxicity testing and risk assessment needs. Our scope focused on the computer analysis programs (also called "products") included in the EPA Office of Research and Development's (ORD's) Chemical Safety for Sustainability (CSS) Plan.

More than 80,000 chemicals are currently registered for use under the EPA's authorities. OCSPP is making progress in identifying the risks these chemicals pose, but tens of thousands of these chemicals have yet to be evaluated. To support OCSPP, ORD is working to develop new CSS products to improve this risk assessment process.

This report addresses the following EPA goal or cross-agency strategy:

- *Ensuring the safety of chemicals and preventing pollution.*

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EPA Should Assess Needs and Implement Management Controls to Ensure Effective Incorporation of Chemical Safety Research Products

What We Found

As part of its chemical safety research effort, ORD works with OCSPP to design research products that meet OCSPP's priority settings, toxicity testing and risk assessment needs. These products are designed to rapidly and accurately support risk analyses, search for chemical testing data across multiple databases, and compare previous research results to current risk assessments. ORD's CSS development process enables OCSPP staff to be actively involved in customizing the products as they are developed.

With management controls that ensure the collaborative development of research products and prioritize chemical safety research needs, the EPA would be better able to conduct faster chemical risk assessments.

A 2014–2016 collaboration between OCSPP and ORD successfully produced the Endocrine Disrupter Screening Program for the 21st Century. However, OCSPP does not have management controls to ensure continued, effective collaboration with ORD to develop and customize other CSS products. Further, OCSPP has not conducted an officewide needs assessment to identify CSS product development priorities, determine training and resource needs, and detect challenges. Without management controls that ensure consistent interoffice collaboration and assess CSS product needs, OCSPP is at risk of not effectively incorporating products in a way that could rapidly improve how the EPA assesses chemical risks to human health and the environment.

Recommendations and Planned Agency Corrective Actions

We recommend that the Assistant Administrator for Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention conduct a needs assessment that identifies and addresses the challenges, timeframes, training and resources necessary to effectively incorporate ORD products into OCSPP programs. In addition, we recommend that the Assistant Administrator for Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention develop and implement management controls that formalize OCSPP's processes for collaborating with ORD to maintain current products and for developing future products. The agency agreed with our recommendations and provided acceptable corrective actions. All recommendations are resolved.