

# ACRES 6: Training for the Job Training Project Officer



*October 3, 2019*

# Agenda

- ◆ **Introduction to ACRES**
- ◆ **Quality Assurance Process**
- ◆ **Getting into ACRES**
- ◆ **CA Home Screen**
- ◆ **Reviewing work packages**
- ◆ **Report Tools**

# What is ACRES?

## ◆ **Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES)**

- The system of record for calculating GPRA measures
- Electronic version of Job Training Form
- Continuously incorporates feedback received from each user group
- Team ACRES is working on making ACRES a beneficial tool for project management

# What is my role in ACRES as a Project Officer?

## **Project Officers:**

- ◆ **Review the data your grantee submits**
- ◆ **Ensure accuracy in reporting**
  - Data is consistent with the workplan
  - Data is accurate
  - Data is consistent with the quarterly reports
  
- ◆ **DISCUSSION:**
  - What do you see as your role in ACRES?
  - What are the challenges you encounter that keep you from having a successful PO review?

Once a grantee enters their data into ACRES, the work package comes to the Project Officer (PO) for review. As the PO, you are responsible for checking that accuracy and consistency of the data being reported. The data entered by the grantee should match what is being reported in the workplan and quarterly report.



# Why is my role important to ACRES?

## Whose job is it anyway?

- ◆ **Grantees: Responsible for entering the data**
  - Enhances credibility of the data
  - Streamlines the data collection and management processes
  - Reduces lag time in data appearing in reports and performance measure calculations
- ◆ **Project Officers (POs):** Responsibility and accountability for data quality are with the Regions. POs are responsible for ensuring that the data meets our data quality standards.
- ◆ **Headquarters:** Responsible for overall data quality and system maintenance, enhancements, and improvements.

Grantee entered data can be entered by the grantee themselves or contractors. Data entry done directly by the grantee (or grantee contractor) ensure the credibility of the data being entered, allows for better management of data, and the simplifies the review process.

As a project officer, it is your job to meet the quality standards of the Brownfields' program within your region. This can be done by overseeing grantees to ensure all data is timely and accurate.



# Why is my role so important for ACRES?

- ◆ Accurate & complete grantee data is very important
- ◆ Data is publically available via Cleanups in My Community
- ◆ Data entered into ACRES is available to any requesting party through FOIA
- ◆ Results are frequently reported to Congress
- ◆ Senior management relies on the data to measure the success of the program
- ◆ Incomplete or inaccurate data negatively skews the data set
- ◆ Critical PO review will improve data quality
- ◆ Audit trail

Your role as an EPA Project Officer is important because ACRES is the official system of record for the Brownfields' data. Any requested information or statistics for the Brownfields' comes directly from ACRES. This includes congressional inquiries, FOIA requests, and Data quality metrics. ACRES data is also available publically on Cleanups in My Community at [www.epa.gov/CIMC](http://www.epa.gov/CIMC).



# Definitions

## ◆ **Work Package**

- Any set of related data that need to be entered, edited and/or approved together. For example, all data from the PPF constitute a single work package

## ◆ **Workflow**

- The series of actions and states that a work package must pass through before being completed/approved

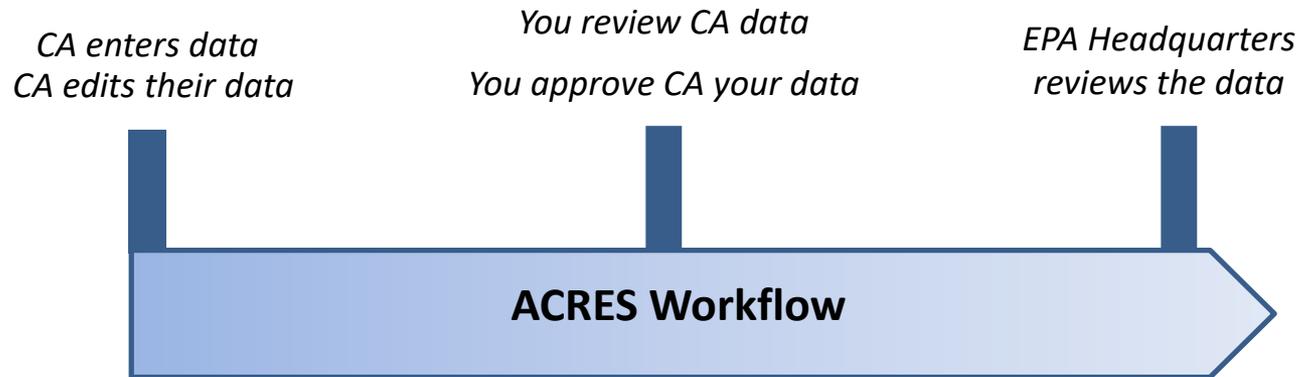
## ◆ **Status**

- The condition of the work package at a given point within the workflow
- Indicates where the work package is in the process of being entered, reviewed, edited, and/or approved

These are definition that will be useful to you when using the ACRES system. An easier way to look at this is like a letter being delivered through the post office. The letter represents the performance measures and the envelop represents the work package. The work package moves from one location to another, in what we call the workflow. The status represents where the envelop is as it travels to its final destination. The letter itself is permanent as the envelop it's being housed is temporary. Just like the performance measures and work package, respectively.

# What is the Q/A process?

- ◆ The ACRES workflow is a series of actions and states that a work package must pass through before being completed
- ◆ The status of a work package indicates where it is in the workflow



The ACRES workflow is the term for linear process of entering, reviewing, and approving data in a work package. The CAR starts a work package for their performance measures. The work package comes to you as the Project Officer for review. The PO approves the work package and it goes to EPA Headquarters for review. When a work package is approved by Headquarters, the performance measures are updated and the work package is discarded.

# What is the PO role in the Q/A process?

- ◆ The PO reviews CAR data for accuracy and completeness.
- ◆ Any data that is inadequate or incorrect should be updated.
- ◆ Once all data is verified as correct, accept the work package & send it to HQ for final review.

ACRES

Work Packages Quarterly Reports Find Property/Cooperative Agreement/TBA: Search by Name, ID.

Welcome, ACRES Test EPA

### Work Packages

1 Work Packages to Review

0 packages in the same status for 90 days

Review Work Packages

### Quarterly Reports

Quarterly Reports to Review

Due 10/30/2019 (26 days)

Summary of Activity

Review Quarterly Reports View Past Quarterly Reports

When should I submit a Quarterly Report?

### Targeted Brownfields Areas (TBAs)

0 Open TBA Work Packages

My Open TBA Work Packages Manage TBA Property

### Reports Center

- Program Accomplishment Report (PAR) Coming Soon
- Regional Status Report
- Regional Performance Report on Cooperative Agreements
- Section 128(a) State/Tribal Program Activity Levels (PALs)

### Accomplishments

Region: 10 Fiscal Year (FY): FY20

Type	Pending (current)	Pending (all FYs)	Approved (all FYs)
Assessments	14	22	103
Cleanups	1	1	14
Leveraged \$	\$17,202,966.00	\$44,256,576.00	\$97,706,661.00
Jobs (Cleanup)	6	16	182
Jobs (Redev)	16	22	1088
Acres RAU	24.93	648.04	993.3

For a full list, run a Program Accomplishment Report

### My Account

Email: acres\_help@epa.gov  
Notifications: weekly summary  
My email preferences

10 Cooperative Agreements where you are Primary Contact or Data Reviewer  
My Regional Cooperative Agreements (CAs)

17 Projects associated with your account  
My Projects

### Message Center

**New Releases**

- Version 6.01 of ACRES was released 12/31/2018. View a summary of changes in the [Release Notes](#)
- Learn more about ACRES

**Learn the Lingo**

- References to "Grant" have been changed to "Cooperative Agreement" in ACRES
- Learn more in our [glossary](#)

### Knowledge Center

**Quick Reference Guides and Forms**

- Multi-property form for 10+ properties (XLS) (2pp, June 2015)
- Instructions for completing a Property Profile Form
- ACRES Bulletins

**Training**

- Trainings for EPA Project Officers

When a work package comes to your queue for review, Project Officers should be looking for accurate and complete data. If you review data that needs to be updated, a PO has two options. The first option is to send the work package back to the CAR for updates. The second option is for you is to update the information yourself. Once the work package is accepted in Regional Review, it is sent to Headquarters for National Program Review.

# Getting into ACRES

- ◆ EPA users request ACRES access by adding ACRES to 'My Communities' via the EPA Portal.
- ◆ Each EPA user should login into ACRES using their EPA LAN credentials (<https://cfext.epa.gov/acres/index.cfm>).

The screenshot shows the EPA Portal interface. At the top, the EPA logo and 'United States Environmental Protection Agency' are visible. Below the logo is a grid of images. A navigation bar contains several tabs: 'My Community Applications' (highlighted with a red box), 'Collaboration', 'Community Access', 'User Profile', 'Help', and 'Logoff'. Below the navigation bar, a 'Request Web Community Access' section is displayed. It includes instructions for joining and leaving communities, and a list of communities with checkboxes. The 'ACRES' checkbox is highlighted with a red box.

To register for ACRES, go to [portal.epa.gov](http://portal.epa.gov) and login with your EPA LAN credentials. Once you are logged into the EPA Portal, click the My Community Applications tab and click the ACRES checkbox. Once you have added ACRES to your community, the ACRES Help Desk will receive your request. You will receive an email once your request has been accepted. To login to ACRES, go to <https://cfext.epa.gov/acres/> and enter your EPA LAN credentials.

# ACRES Home Screen – My Projects Tab

Welcome, ACRES Test EPA

**Work Packages**  
 1 Work Packages to Review  
 0 packages in the same status for 90 days  
 Review Work Packages

**Quarterly Reports**  
 1 Quarterly Reports to Review  
 Due 10/30/2019 (26 days)  
 Summary of Activity  
 Review Quarterly Reports View Past Quarterly Reports  
 When should I submit a Quarterly Report?

**Targeted Brownfields Areas (TBAs)**  
 0 Open TBA Work Packages  
 My Open TBA Work Packages Manage TBA Property

**Reports Center**  
 Program Accomplishment Report (PAR)  
 Coming Soon  
 Regional Status Report  
 Regional Performance Report on Cooperative Agreements  
 Section 128(a) State/Tribal Program Activity Levels (PALs)

**Accomplishments**  
 Fiscal Year (FY): FY20  

Type	Pending (current)	Pending (all FYs)	Approved (all FYs)
Assessments	14	22	103
Cleanups	1	1	14
Leveraged \$	\$17,202,996.00	\$44,259,576.00	\$97,700,891.00
Jobs (Cleanup)	6	16	182
Jobs (Redev)	16	22	1068
Acres RAU	24.93	848.04	993.3

 For a full list, run a Program Accomplishment Report

**My Account**  
 Email: acres\_help@epa.gov  
 Notifications: weekly summary  
 My email preferences  
 10 Cooperative Agreements where you are Primary Contact or Data Reviewer  
 My Regional Cooperative Agreements (CAs)  
 17 Projects associated with your account  
 My Projects

**Message Center**  
 New Releases  
 Version 6.01 of ACRES was released 12/31/2018. View a summary of changes in the Release Notes  
 Learn more about ACRES  
 Learn the Lingo  
 References to "Grant" have been changed to "Cooperative Agreement" in ACRES  
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**Knowledge Center**  
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 Instructions for completing a Property Profile Form  
 ACRES Bulletins  
 Training  
 Trainings for EPA Project Officers

Once logged into ACRES, your ACRES home screen will have an overview of all your important ACRES data including work packages needing your review, a list of all your Cooperative Agreements, Regional accomplishments, and News, Alerts, and Notifications. Quick links includes links for ACRES training and updating your email preferences. News, Alerts & Notifications is where you can learn about the latest things we are enhancing in ACRES for you. The Accomplishments Summary gives you a summary of 11 pending and approved accomplishments for you region.

# Job Training Home Screen



## Cooperative Agreement (CA) Detail for Boise Workforce TST

**PLEASE NOTE:** Information shown is the most current in ACRES and may include draft and approved data

### Basic Info

ACRES CA ID: BF 00TST121  
 State: ID  
 CA Type: Job Training  
 Announcement Year: FY09

### Dates & Statuses

Award Date: 07/22/2009  
 Initial Project Period: 10/01/2010 to 03/29/2020  
 Current POP End Date:  
 Status: ● Open

### Funding

Funding Source: Regionally Funded  
 Total Funded: \$0.00

### CA Contact

Primary Reviewer/Contact: Test EPA, ACRES  
 EPA Regional Brownfields Team  
 acres\_help@epa.gov 7032843200

### Actions

- ▶ View CA Fact Sheet
- ▶ View CA Submission Archive
- ▶ Manage This Cooperative Agreement - Coming Soon
- ▶ View financial information in the EPA Financial Warehouse

## Performance Measure Information

Performance Measure	Cumulative Value
Number of Participants Entered in Training	0
Number Participants Completing Training	68
Number Participants Obtaining Employment	42
Average Hourly Wage of Participants Obtaining Employment	\$17.57
Number of Veterans Entering Training	0
Number of Individuals that did not Obtain Employment but are Pursuing Education (e.g., GED, college courses, etc.)	0

## Funds Leveraged

Funding Source Name	Activity Funded	Amount
City of Boise	Recruitment, screening applicants	\$147,800.00
City of Boise	Program Management	\$166,980.00
City of Boise	Lead Abatement Worker Training Costs	\$17,760.00
City of Boise	Outreach	\$7,400.00

The Job training home screen gives an overview of cooperative agreement including recipient name, CA#, award date, funding, and performance measure data associated to the CA. As a PO, helpful links on this page include the links to the Compass Financial data warehouse and the Grant Fact Sheet tool.



# Work packages To Review- Regional Review

- ◆ Any work packages to review will appear under the ‘Work Packages to Review’ card on you Home Screen.



Work Packages Quarterly Reports

Find Property/Cooperative Agreement/TBA: Search by Name, ID...

Welcome, ACRES Test EPA

**Work Packages to Review**  
0 packages in the same status for 90 days  
[Review Work Packages](#)

**Quarterly Reports to Review**  
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**Targeted Brownfields Areas (TBAs)**  
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Regional Status Report  
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When on the ACRES home screen, any work packages you need to review will be under your ‘Open Work Packages’ tab. The name of the recipient, cooperative agreement number, who submitted the work package, and other information will be listed. To review a work package, click the ‘Review data’ link; You will be directed to the performance measures.

# Updating JT data during Regional Review

- Once the 'Edit' link is opened, the Job training form will appear to allow for any JT performance measure updates.

The screenshot displays the ACRES web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Work Packages' and 'Quarterly Reports' links, and a search bar for 'Find Property/Cooperative Agreement/TBA:'. Below this, the 'Cooperative Agreement (CA) Information' section shows details for 'Boise Workforce TST' with fields for CA ID, State, Announcement Year, Initial Project Period, and Current POP End Date. A 'Notes' section contains information about the EPA Form. A yellow warning box states: 'Please review the changes highlighted in yellow and then SUBMIT. Data listed under "(in ACRES)" column is the current information that is stored in ACRES. Data listed under the "(for review)" column is only that data that has been modified and is to be examined by a Quality Assurance reviewer. (Property is not submitted until the "Approve" button is clicked: Jump to Approve Button)'. Below this is a 'Submission Notes' field. The 'Performance Measure Information' section features a table with columns for quarters (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) and cumulative totals, with 'for review' columns highlighted in yellow. An 'Edit' button is visible in the top right of this section, indicated by a red arrow.

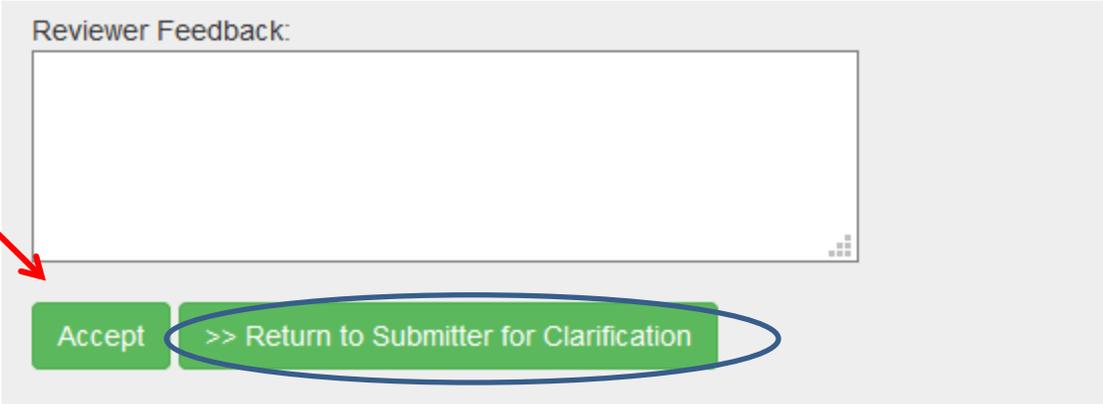
Number Participants Entering Training	Q1 (in ACRES)	Q1 (for review)	Q2 (in ACRES)	Q2 (for review)	Q3 (in ACRES)	Q3 (for review)	Q4 (in ACRES)	Q4 (for review)	Cumulative (in ACRES)	Cumulative (for review)
FY 2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY 2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY 2018	0	0	0	30	0	10	0	0	0	40
FY 2017	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY 2016	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

As a PO, you can update the job training performance measures while the work package is in regional review.

# Approving Job Training Performance Measures

- ◆ To approve the work package and send to National Program Review, click the Accept button.
- ◆ To send the work package back to the grantee for clarification, click the 'Return to Submitter for Clarification' button.

**\*\*Reviewer Feedback is required when a work package is sent back for clarification.**

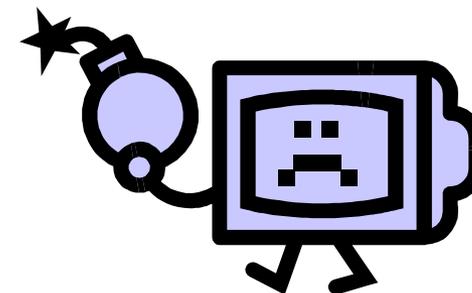


The screenshot shows a 'Reviewer Feedback' section with a large text input area. Below the text area are two green buttons: 'Accept' and '>> Return to Submitter for Clarification'. A red arrow points to the bottom-left corner of the text area, and a blue oval highlights the '>> Return to Submitter for Clarification' button.

If you have any questions for the CAR before you submit the data as final, enter the questions under 'Reviewer Feedback' and click the 'Return to Submitter for Clarification' button to return the performance measures to the CAR to revise. If you have updated any information, it is VERY important that the data is accurate. You are the only one reviewing it! It is ok to seek clarification from the CAR if you are unsure about any information entered. If all the data is accurate and complete, accept the information and this work package is complete!

# Common Data Quality Issues

- ✓ Importance of dollars leveraged
- ✓ Reporting the same leveraging information under multiple grants can result in double-reporting of funding information



Here is a list of common data quality issues you will come across as a JT Project Officer. When reviewing work packages, please check for these issues.

# Report Tools (Program Accomplishment Report)

The PAR report allows users to create reports in order to view GPRA accomplishments. Users can sort by accomplishment type, grant type, cooperative agreement, etc.

The screenshot shows the ACRES Program Accomplishment Report (PAR) interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Work Packages' and 'Quarterly Reports'. The main content area is titled 'Program Accomplishment Report (PAR)' and includes instructions: 'To view instructions, click [?] Note that selecting 'ALL' options in all 3 columns will result in a high volume of database retrieval and a slower response time.'

The interface is divided into four main sections for filtering:

- 1. Select Accomplishment Type:** Includes checkboxes for 'All', 'Assessments Completed', 'Cleanups Completed', 'Dollars Leveraged', 'Jobs Leveraged', and 'Acres and Properties Ready for Anticipated Use (RAU)'.
- 2. Select Year(s) to report:** A dropdown menu labeled 'Select Year(s)'.
- 3. Select by Region and/or State:** Includes dropdown menus for 'Select Region(s)' and 'Select State(s)', with a note '(Not needed for TBAs)'.
- 4. Optional Selections:** Includes checkboxes for 'Include Pilot Accomplishments OR Draft Data Only (awaiting approval) (not included on PAT report/GPRA totals)', 'ARRA Cooperative Agreements (awarded in FY09 only) Note: this grant type is not included in annual GPRA targets', 'ARRA grants ONLY', and 'Include ARRA grants with other Accomplishment Grant Types selected'.

Additional options include 'OR Select an Alternate Cooperative Agreement Type' (with a note that these are not included in annual GPRA targets) and 'OR Enter a Cooperative Agreement Number' (with a note 'No prefix - 8 digits only'). At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Run Report', 'Reset Filters', and 'Cancel'.

The PAR has been redesigned to better meet the reporting needs of Project Officers. This report is a very useful tool in tracking GPRA accomplishments for your region. This feature allows EPA users to export this data to Excel, sort the data, and view detailed accomplishment information.



# New ACRES Features/Enhancements

## ◆ Quarterly Reporting utility

- ACRES now allows CARs to use ACRES data to help build quarterly reports that can be electronically filed. The utility contains space to add paragraphs of text as well as display auto-calculated financial data including costs incurred to date and total remaining funding.
- This feature is now available for cleanup and assessment grants.

## ◆ ACRES Web Services

- ACRES allows for interaction with the Brownfields Inventory Tool (BIT), an external system. Web services provides the ability to programmatically submit and receive data from ACRES

Along with all the new features, the ACRES team is constantly working on new enhancements. Some of the future enhancements include the quarterly report utility for all grant types. Web services will allow ACRES to interact with other external systems so that CARs do not have to enter their information into multiple systems.

# Common Acronyms

- ◆ **ACRES** – Assessment, Cleanup, Redevelopment Exchange System
- ◆ **AWP**- Area-wide planning
- ◆ **BF** – Brownfields
- ◆ **CA** – Cooperative Agreement
- ◆ **CIMC** – Cleanups in my Community
- ◆ **CAR** – Cooperative Agreement Recipient
- ◆ **IGMS**- Integrated Grant Management System
- ◆ **JT** – Job Training
- ◆ **OBLR** – Office of Brownfields Land Revitalization
- ◆ **OSWER**- Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response
- ◆ **PAR** – Program Accomplishment Report
- ◆ **PAT** – Program Accomplishment Tool
- ◆ **PO**- Project Officer
- ◆ **POP** – Period of Performance
- ◆ **RFR** – Ready for Reuse
- ◆ **RLF** – Revolving Loan Fund
- ◆ **TBA** – Targeted Brownfields Assessment
- ◆ **WAM** – Web Application Management

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Answers to some frequently asked questions:

### **Q: My grantee asks me how to submit a work package. What instructions do I give?**

A: After the grantee has completed entering data, scroll to the bottom of the form and click the 'Go to Review & Submit' button. ACRES will display the work package information for review (they can correct data at this time) and prompt the grantee to confirm the information by clicking the 'Submit Data Now' button at the bottom of the page. The grantee will be able to reopen the work package and edit the package until their Project Officer reviews the work package, at which point it is Locked for Review.

### **Q: What resources are available to help my grantee?**

A: There are online training courses monthly (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month) and training materials available on the ACRES Information web page. <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

### **Q: How can I see if a grantee is entering data on a grant/performance measures?**

A: You can use the reports discussed in this presentation. You can also use the Find Property/CA/TBA search to locate a specific performance measures or CA, click the link for the performance measures or CA, and review the information that has been entered for the JT cooperative agreement to date.

### **Q: Can I enter data on Closed grants?**

A: Yes, but there are reporting limitations for pre-2003 grants. Some information you want to report such as jobs leveraged may not become available until after the grant is closed.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Answers to some frequently asked questions:

**Q: How do I make myself the primary contact/data reviewer for a cooperative agreement?**

A: Contact your data coordinator or contact the Help Desk and you can be made the primary contact/reviewer.

**Q: I have received a work package to review and I need the grantee to make additional edits. How do I inform the grantee of the requested changes?**

A: At the bottom of the QA page, enter the note to the grantee in the Reviewer Feedback box and click the Return to Submitter for Clarification button. This sends the work package back to the CAR with your feedback.

**Q: I would like to update the information for a JT grant and I cannot contact the grantee, how do I update JT information?**

A: POs do not have access to initiate data entry. To update JT information, contact the ACRES Help Desk to have the work package moved to regional review so the performance measures can be updated.

# What if I Have Questions?

## ◆ ACRES Help Desk

[acres\\_help@usepa.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:acres_help@usepa.onmicrosoft.com) or (703)-284-8212

## ◆ ACRES Information web page:

<https://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

Training Materials

- Copies of Presentation
- Quick Reference Guides
- Release Notes
- A link to this page is available at the bottom of every ACRES page including the Log In page.



# Questions?



*Columbia, MO - Cleanup*



*Providence, RI – Job Training*



*Anaheim, CA – RLF*



*South Bend, IN – RLF*



*Brewer, ME - Assessment*