

**Board of Scientific Counselors (BOSC) Charge Questions:  
Review of the Health and Environmental Risk Assessment (HERA)  
Strategic Research Action Plan (StRAP)**

**Introduction:** The mission of the EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD) is to provide the best available science and technology to inform and support public health environmental decision-making at the Federal, state, tribal, and local levels, addressing critical environmental challenges and anticipating future needs through leading-edge research. ORD prepares Strategic Research Action Plans (StRAPs) to guide its research planning over the ensuing four years, and beyond. The 2019-2022 StRAPs are the third such strategic planning exercise in this format (previous StRAPs covered 2012-2016 and 2016-2019). Five of the six StRAPs have previously been reviewed by the BOSC and are now final and [posted online](#). The sixth StRAP, Health and Environmental Risk Assessment (HERA), is now available for BOSC review.

The HERA National Research Program is designed to develop and apply state-of-the-science research to characterize the impacts on human and ecological systems from exposure to single, complex, or multiple physical, chemical, or biological stressors. The program provides science assessments and through technical support, translation of assessment-related information; both of which are supported by the research advancing the science and practice of risk assessment. The assessment priorities for HERA have been formally received from Congress (e.g., criteria air pollutants) and Agency programs and regions (e.g., IRIS and PPRTV priorities), and the resulting assessment documents are peer reviewed through other expert engagements, such as reviews by the Science Advisory Board (SAB), the SAB Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), and the SAB Chemical Assessment Advisory Committee (CAAC). Hence, the focus of this BOSC Subcommittee review is the StRAP document itself and the foundational research described in Research Areas 2 - 4, which underpin HERA's vision to advance the science and practice of risk assessment to support the EPA programs and regions, states, and tribes.

### **Charge Questions**

Q.1a: Please comment on the extent to which the research outlined for the 2019-2022 timeframe supports the relevant Agency priorities as described in the [EPA](#) and [ORD](#) Strategic Plans?

Q.1b: Each ORD research program undertook a rigorous engagement process to provide additional detail on specific EPA program and region, state, and tribal needs, the results of which are summarized in introductory sections, descriptions of specific research topics, and appendices. How well does the proposed foundational research program respond to these identified needs?

Q.1c: Does the StRAP, including the topics, research areas, and proposed outputs, clearly describe the strategic vision of the program? Please comment on the extent to which the StRAP provides a coherent structure toward making progress on the strategic vision in the 2019-2022 timeframe.

Q.1d: Recognizing ORD's focus on addressing identified Agency, state, and tribal research needs, are there any prioritization considerations, other critical emerging foundational research needs, or fields of expertise and/or new research methods, where this program should consider investing resources?