



MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING ADMINISTRATOR



This email message is being sent to EPA employees.

Dear Colleagues,

EPA laboratories provide cutting-edge scientific support in the most efficient and effective manner to meet the scientific demands associated with achieving our agency's critical mission. Recognizing the need to further enhance collaboration and coordination, I am pleased to announce a plan to designate EPA's Office of Research and Development as the National Program Manager (NPM) for the agency's regional Laboratories in FY2020. This change is responsive to the EPA Reform Plan released in response to President Trump's March 2017 Executive Order, *Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch*, and to recommendations from external evaluators prior to this Administration for EPA to manage its laboratories as an enterprise. Most recently, the General Accountability Office and the National Academies of Science (NAS) made similar findings. NAS concluded that "EPA does not have a comprehensive justification or organizing vision for its current laboratory enterprise."

This change will build upon effective partnerships already in place while increasing EPA-wide consistencies in laboratory resources and capabilities in the operational management of EPA's laboratory enterprise. Beginning in FY 2020, ORD will coordinate EPA's regional laboratory operations, in addition to those of EPA's research laboratories, and help to ensure that the laboratory support needs of other NPMs continue to be met. This NPM designation will not change organizational reporting structure, and regional laboratories will still report to regional leadership. In addition, to ensure that laboratory operations improvements extend across the enterprise, ORD, as NPM for research and regional laboratory operations, will work closely with NPMs that manage the EPA program laboratories.

Measuring Success

Consistent with the operations of EPA's other NPMs, ORD will work with the agency's regional labs to set strategic operational direction for core laboratory operations. I expect ORD to begin work with the research, regional, and, where appropriate, program laboratories to establish performance metrics for EPA's laboratory enterprise. Improvements in the agency's laboratory enterprise will be realized by identifying and implementing consistent operational policies and processes to increase the efficiency of all laboratories.

Leadership

ORD has designated Dr. Fred Hauchman to lead this effort. Fred has worked at EPA for over 30 years in a variety of scientific, programmatic, and management positions, most recently directing ORD's Office of Science Policy. In that role, Fred coordinated ORD's engagement with the regions, working closely with the Regional Science Liaisons and Superfund and Technology Liaisons to implement ORD's Regional Applied Research Effort, the Regional Sustainability and Environmental Sciences research program, and other regional science program activities. Fred will assume this role in the near term and begin working with the laboratory community, as much work is needed prior to the launch in FY 2020.

In Closing

I ask all relevant regional and program offices to be as responsive as possible to any requests for information or participation in these important activities.

Thank you for your efforts in ensuring a smooth transition for our regional laboratory operations.

Andrew Wheeler
Acting Administrator