UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 31 1985

OFFICE OF WATER

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Permit Compliance System (PCS) Policy Statement

FROM: Lawrence J. Jensen
Assistant Administrator for Water (WH-556)

TO: Regional Water Management Division Directors
Regions I - X

I am pleased to issue the attached policy statement on the Permit Compliance System (PCS). This policy statement represents an important step in the continuing effort to support a reliable and effective automated information system for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program.

PCS is the national data base for the NPDES program. It serves as the primary source of NPDES information for EPA, NPDES States, Congress, and the public. The use and support of PCS by EPA Regions and NPDES States are crucial to the effectiveness and proper oversight of the NPDES program. This policy statement establishes for EPA and NPDES States the key management practices and responsibilities central to PCS' ability to contribute to the overall integrity of the NPDES program and the achievement of our long-term environmental goals. One of the requirements is to have Regions and States enter all required data into PCS by September 30, 1986 (see Attachment 1 of the PCS Policy Statement). While the aim of the policy is a consistent approach across Regional and State NPDES programs, it retains flexibility for Regions and States to tailor agreements to the unique conditions of each State.

The PCS Policy Statement is effective immediately. The Office of Water Enforcement and Permits will monitor implementation of the policy statement and issue special instructions as necessary. Regional Water Management Division Directors and their State counterparts are responsible for ensuring that their staffs receive sufficient support to apply the principles of the policy to their PCS activities.

I look forward to a strong commitment to this policy statement by EPA and State NPDES programs. You can be assured of my full support as EPA and the States move forward with its implementation.

Attachments

cc: Administrator
Deputy Administrator
State Directors
PCS Steering Committee
PCS Users Group

PERMIT COMPLIANCE SYSTEM POLICY STATEMENT
UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is EPA policy that the Permit Compliance System (PCS) shall be the national data base for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. All EPA Regions must use PCS directly, and all NPDES States must either use PCS directly or develop and maintain an interface.

As our primary data source, PCS will promote national consistency and uniformity in permit and compliance evaluation. To achieve national consistency and uniformity in the NPDES program, the required data in PCS must be complete and accurate. Facility, permits (i.e., events and limits), measurement, inspection, compliance schedule, and enforcement action data are required. These required data elements are further defined in Attachments 1 and 2. They comprise the Water Enforcement National Data Base (WENDB) which has been redefined as the core of information necessary to enable PCS to function as a useful operational and management tool and so that PCS can be used to conduct oversight of the effectiveness of the NPDES program.

All required data for NPDES and non-NPDES States must be entered into PCS by September 30, 1986 and maintained regularly thereafter. This will require Regions and States to start entering data as early as possible, and not wait until late FY 1986.

By the end of FY 1986, direct users of PCS shall establish, with Office of Water Enforcement and Permits (OWEP) assistance, a Quality Assurance program for data in PCS. The program shall define:

- monthly measurement of the level of data entered;
- appropriate time frames to ensure that data are entered in PCS in a timely manner; and
- nationally consistent standards of known data quality based on proven statistical methods of quality assurance. PCS Quality Assurance shall address the completeness (for assurance of full data entry) and accuracy of the data entered into PCS.

Adoption of PCS by States should be formalized in each State's §106 Program Plan, State/EPA Agreement, or in a separate agreement. Each plan should clearly define EPA's and the NPDES State's responsibilities regarding PCS. The Key Management Practices in this Policy Statement should be incorporated into the §106 Program Plan.

BACKGROUND

When the PCS Steering Committee met in March 1985, EPA Regional representatives stressed the essential need for a positive statement from EPA Headquarters management to Regional and State management specifically requiring the support and use of PCS. Lack of such support may result in an incomplete and unreliable data base. With sufficient EPA Headquarters, Regional, and State support, however, PCS will come to serve several major purposes for the NPDES program:

- PCS will provide the overall inventory for the NPDES program.
- PCS will provide data for responding to Congress and the public on the overall status of the NPDES program. As such, it will serve as a valuable tool for evaluating the effectiveness of the program and the need for any major policy changes.
- PCS will encourage a proper EPA/State oversight role by identifying all major permittee violators.
- PCS will offer all levels of government an operational and management tool for tracking permit issuance, compliance, and enforcement actions.

This PCS Policy Statement is a result of the Steering Committee meeting. It is a clear message to Regional and State management that PCS is the primary source of NPDES information, and as such, it is to be supported wholeheartedly by all users of PCS.

The PCS Steering Committee meeting also resulted in a redefinition of WENDB and ratification thereof. WENDB is the minimum standard of data entry which will allow PCS to function as a useful operational and management tool (see Attachments 1 and 2). EPA Regions agreed that all WENDB elements will be entered into PCS by September 30, 1986, and maintained regularly thereafter.

Once the required data are entered into and regularly maintained in PCS, PCS will assist permits and compliance personnel in many of their operational and management responsibilities. PCS will greatly reduce reporting burdens for such activities as the Strategic Planning and Management System (SPMS), and it will reduce efforts needed for effective compliance tracking at both Regional and State levels. Also, substantial automation of the Quarterly Noncompliance Report (QNCR) will save time and resources.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Key Management Practices

To effectively implement and uphold this PCS Policy Statement and enhance PCS' capabilities, there are certain key management practices that must be implemented:

- The following milestones have been established to facilitate the entry of all required data by the end of FY 1986:

  - All required National Municipal Policy (NMP) data must be entered into PCS by October 31, 1985 (See Attachment 1).

  - All required data for non-NPDES States must be entered into PCS by March 31, 1986.

- NPDES permits shall be enforceable and tracked for compliance using PCS. The Office of Water Enforcement and Permits (OWEP) recognizes there may be situations where permit limits and monitoring conditions are not initially compatible with PCS data entry and tracking. In these cases, Regions should ensure that appropriate steps are taken by the permit writer to identify difficult permits to the PCS coder, and to mutually resolve any coding issues. The Regions should work closely with their NPDES States using PCS, to address similar data entry problems with State-issued NPDES permits.

- WENDB is the minimum standard of data entry for PCS (see the attached lists of data requirements). If States and Regions wish to enter NPDES data beyond what has been required, they may do so. For example, if States want to enter Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) data for minor facilities, the option is available in PCS and the States' may use it as their resources allow. EPA will ensure that sufficient computer space is available for the currently projected use of PCS.

- All DMRs submitted to EPA Regional Offices (including DMRs submitted by NPDES States for EPA entry into PCS) must be preprinted using the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved DMR form. NPDES States directly using PCS are not required to use the OMB-approved form; however, its use is strongly encouraged. With the continuing demand for more complete information and with stable, if not diminishing, data entry resources, it is to EPA's and NPDES States' benefit to preprint DMRs. The use of preprinted DMRs will greatly reduce PCS' data entry burden, making available resources to be used in other areas (e.g., PCS quality assurance, data entry for other PCS records, etc.).

- The frequency with which DMRs are submitted to the EPA or NPDES State is important for ensuring timely entry of data into PCS and timely review of permittee's compliance status. Quarterly, semi-annual, or annual submission of DMRs creates a major data entry burden and impedes the compliance evaluation process. As a result, the usefulness of DMR data for compliance evaluation decreases substantially. Monthly submittal of DMRs alleviates this problem and enhances PCS' effectiveness significantly. It is recommended that monthly submittal of DMRs be incorporated into major permits as they are reissued. With approximately 20 percent of the permits reissued each year, it will take five years to complete the transition to monthly submittal for all major permittees.

- EPA Regions should coordinate with their respective States to develop strategies that describe each State's plans to either use PCS directly or develop an interface. These strategies should include the rationale for selecting one of these methods of data entry into PCS, an outline of all requirements necessary for implementing the selected method, the mechanisms to be used to supply sufficient resources, and a schedule for attainment not to exceed September 30, 1986. If a State is a current user of PCS via one of these methods, the strategy should describe its needs for enhancing its PCS usage or improving its PCS interface, the mechanisms to be used to supply sufficient resources, and a schedule for attainment not to exceed September 30, 1986.

- When writing or revising a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the Region and State should specify the State's intent to use or interface with PCS. The MOA should address the rationale for selecting one of these selected methods of data entry into PCS, an outline of all requirements necessary for implementing the selected method, the mechanisms to be used to supply sufficient resources, and a schedule for attainment.

Responsibilities

Office of Water Enforcement and Permits: It is OWEP's full responsibility to maintain the structure (i.e., the computer software) of PCS and to operate the system. OWEP will continue to support time-sharing funds needs, training, and the necessary resources to continue the operation of PCS. OWEP will work with the EPA Regions and NPDES States to continually evaluate and improve, where feasible, the system's software, time-share funding, operation, and maintenance. OWEP will maintain a Steering Committee and User Group, organize the national meetings, and work closely with the Regional and State representatives on major decisions related to PCS.

OWEP will oversee the Regions' and States' progress in fulfilling this policy statement by assessing the quantity of data entered each quarter.

EPA Regions and NPDES States: It is the EPA Regions' and NPDES States' full responsibility to maintain the infrastructure of PCS by accurately entering data in a timely manner. Also, EPA Regions and NPDES States are responsible for participating in PCS Workgroups and contributing to improvements to PCS.

Three National PCS meetings are held each year, one for the Steering Committee and two for the PCS Users Group. EPA Regions are expected to attend all three meetings. NPDES States directly using PCS are invited to attend the State portions of these meetings. More meetings may be scheduled during the year if necessary.

Since consistent and objective compliance tracking is a central component of an effective and credible enforcement program, NPDES States are strongly urged to use PCS directly. We realize, however, that there may be some cases where NPDES States cannot use PCS directly. In these instances, in accordance with §123.41 of the regulations, EPA requests from the States all required information (as indicated in the attachments) for entry into PCS. This can be achieved one of two ways:

- A State Automated Data Processing (ADP) interface can be developed. It is the EPA Region's responsibility to work with the NPDES State to develop an effective State ADP interface. The State, however, should take the lead in developing the interface and work closely with the Region to ensure the interface is effective. It should be realized that system interfaces are often troublesome and unwieldy; they are often ineffective and limit the States' flexibility to change their systems quickly to meet management needs. In the event a State ADP interface is developed, there must be formal agreement that the State will operate the interface, maintain the interface software, and be fully responsible for making any changes to the interface based on changes made to its automated data base. This will ensure that the NPDES State will be held responsible for system compatibility. If the State does not accept full responsibility with system compatibility, then changes must not be made to the State system without the prior knowledge of EPA. The State is responsible for ensuring that the data are transferred to PCS in a timely manner, accurately, and completely. Interfaces must be developed and maintained so that they operate with maximum efficiency all of the time.

- OWEP recognizes that FY 1986 will be a transition year for PCS. NPDES States will begin using PCS or will develop interfaces. In the event that neither of these alternatives is accomplished by the end of FY 1986, in accordance with the FY 1986 Guidance for the Oversight of NPDES Programs, the State will be responsible for submitting all required information (as indicated in the attachments) in hard copy format. The data must be submitted either already

coded onto PCS coding sheets or in a format that can be readily transferred onto PCS coding sheets. Also, the data must be submitted at regular intervals to ensure timely entry into PCS. Once the data are received by EPA, it is the EPA Region's responsibility to enter the data into PCS in a timely manner.

Funding

- §106 grant funds may be used for interface software development. However, they cannot be used for maintenance of the interface software for State-initiated changes to a State ADP system or for the operation and maintenance of a separate State ADP system.

- §106 grant funds may be used for State data entry if and only if the State uses PCS directly or the State provides data to PCS via an interface that meets the standards of this policy.

- If requested by a State, EPA will agree to pay for its time-sharing costs to implement this policy, within given resources.

- Headquarters will continue to pursue alternative methods of reducing the data entry burden on Regions and States.

10/31/85
Date

Lawrence J. Jensen
Assistant Administrator for Water

ATTACHMENT 1

REQUIRED DATA TO BE ENTERED INTO PCS

Information Type[1]	Majors	Minor 92-500s	Other Minors
Permit Facility Data	X	X	X
Permit Event Data	X	X	X
Inspection Data	X	X	X
Parameter Limits and Pipe Schedule Data	X		
Compliance Schedule Data	X	X	
DMR Measurement Data	X		
Significant Noncompliance Flag		X	
Enforcement Action Data (Enforcement Action Data, Compliance Schedule Data, and Interim Limits Data from all active formal enforcement actions)	X		
Enforcement Action Data (Type Action, ENAC; Issue Date, ENDT; and Date Compliance Required, ERDT; from all active formal enforcement actions)		X	
Pretreatment Approval[2]	X	X	X
National Municipal Policy Data[3]	X	X	X

[1]For each of the categories listed in this chart, the Information Type is the set of core data elements listed in Attachment 2.

[2]Pretreatment Program Required Indicator, PRET; one data element.

[3]All required data as described in May 16, 1985 memorandum on National Municipal Policy Tracking in PCS. This includes Facility User Data Element 6 (RDF6), Compliance Schedule and Enforcement Action information.

ATTACHMENT 2

WATER ENFORCEMENT NATIONAL DATA BASE (WENDB) ELEMENTS

Data Element Name	Acronym
COMMON KEY	
NPDES Number	NPID
COMPLIANCE SCHEDULE RECORD	
Compliance Schedule Number	CSCH
Data Source Code	DSCD
Compliance Actual Date	DTAC
Compliance Report Received Date	DTRC
Compliance Schedule Date	DTSC
Compliance Schedule Event Code	EVNT
COMPLIANCE VIOLATION RECORD	
*Compliance Violation Date	CVDT
*Violation Compliance Event Code	CVEV
*Compliance Violation Code	CVIO
*Significant Non-Compliance Code (Compliance)	SNCC
*Significant Non-Compliance Date (Compliance)	SNDC
*Violation Compliance Schedule Number	VCSN
*Violation Data Source Code	VDCD
ENFORCEMENT ACTION RECORD	
Enforcement Action Response Achieved Date	EADR
Enforcement Action Comment Line 1	ECM1
Enforcement Action Comment Line 2	ECM2
Enforcement Action Comment Line 3	ECM3
Enforcement Action Comment Line 4	ECM4
Enforcement Action Comment Line 5	ECM5
Enforcement Action Compliance Violation Code	ECVC
Enforcement Action Compliance Violation Date	ECVD
Enforcement Action Modification Number	EMOD
Enforcement Action Code	ENAC
Enforcement Action Date	ENDT
Enforcement Action Status Code	ENST
Enforcement Action Response Due Date	ERDT
Enforcement Action Status Date	ESDT
Enforcement Action Season Number	ESEA
Enforcement Action Source Code	EVCD
Enforcement Action Discharge Number	EVDS

* Usually generated by PCS; can be manually entered.

WENDB ELEMENTS
(Continued)

Data Element Name	Acronym
Enforcement Action Event Code	EVEV
Enforcement Action Limit Type-Alphabetic	EVLM
Enforcement Action Monitoring Date	EVMD
Enforcement Action Monitoring Location	EVML
Enforcement Action STORET Parameter Code	EVPR
Enforcement Action Discharge Designator	EVRD
Enforcement Action Compliance Schedule	EVSN
Enforcement Action Violation Type	EVTP
EVIDENTIARY HEARING RECORD	
Evidentiary Hearing Event Date	EHDT
Evidentiary Hearing Event Code	EHEV
INSPECTION RECORD	
Inspection Date	DTIN
Inspector Code	INSP
Inspection Type	TYPI
MEASUREMENT VIOLATION RECORD	
Measurement Concentration Average	MCAV
Measurement Concentration Minimum	MCMN
Measurement Concentration Maximum	MCMX
Measurement Quantity Average	MQAV
Measurement Quantity Maximum	MQMX
Violation Date (Measurement)	MVDT
No Discharge Indicator	NODI
*Significant Non-Compliance Code (Measurement)	SNCE
*Significant Non-Compliance Date (Measurement)	SNDE
Violation Measurement Designator	VDRD
Measurement Discharge Number	VDSC
Violation Monitoring Location	VMLO
Violation STORET Parameter	VPRM
PARAMETER LIMITS RECORD	
Change of Limit Status	COLS
Contested Parameter Indicator	CONP
Modification Period End Date	ELED
Modification Period Start Date	ELSD
Concentration Average Limit	LCAV
Concentration Minimum Limit	LCMN
Concentration Maximum Limit	LCMX
Concentration Unit Code	LCUC
Quantity Average Limit	LQAV

WENDB ELEMENTS
(Continued)

Data Element Name	Acronym
Quantity Maximum Limit	LQMX
Quantity Unit Code	LQUC
Limit Type - Alphabetic	LTYP
Monitoring Location	MLOC
Modification Number	MODN
Limit Discharge Number	PLDS
Limit Report Designator	PLRD
STORET Parameter Code	PRAM
Season Number	SEAN
Statistical Base Code	STAT
PERMIT EVENT RECORD	
Permit Tracking Actual Date	PTAC
Permit Tracking Event Code	PTEV
PERMIT FACILITY RECORD	
River Basin	BAS6
City Code	CITY
County Code	CNTY
Type Permit Issued - EPA/State	EPST
Federal Grant Indicator	FDGR
Final Limits Indicator	FLIM
Average Design Flow	FLOW
Facility Name Long	FNML
Facility Inactive Code	IACC
Major Discharge Indicator (Entered by EPA Headquarters)	MADI
Pretreatment Program Required Indicator	PRET
SIC Code	SIC2
Type Ownership	TYPO
National Municipal Policy Tracking Indicator	RDF6
Significant Noncompliance Flag for P.L. 92-500 Minor Facilities	(To Be Created)
PIPE SCHEDULE RECORD	
Report Designator	DRID
Discharge Number	DSCH
Final Limits End Date	FLED
Final Limits Start Date	FLSD
Interim Limits End Date	MLED
Interim Limits Start Date	MLSD
Initial Limits End Date	ILED
Initial Limits Start Date	ILSD
Number of Units in Report Period	NRPU
Number of Units in Submission Period - EPA	NSUN
Number of Units in Submission Period - State	NSUS

WENDB ELEMENTS
(Continued)

Data Element Name	Acronym
Pipe Inactive Code	PIAC
Report Units	REUN
Initial Report Date	STRP
Initial Submission Date - State	STSS
Initial Submission Date - EPA	STSU
Submission Unit - EPA	SUUN
Submission Unit - State	SUUS

NOTE: Additional data elements subject to approval:

Frequency of Analysis	FRAN
Sample Type	SAMP
Compliance Schedule File Number	CSFN
Enforcement Action File Number	ERFN
Permit Limits File Number	LSFN
Inspection Comments (First Three Characters for the Number of Industrial Users Inspected)	ICOM
Facility Inactive Date	IADD
Reissuance Control Indicator	RCIN
Pipe Inactive Date	PIDT

Total:	111	WENDB elements
plus additional data elements:	+ 9	data elements
New total:	120	WENDB elements