OCT 2 8 2015

Dear State Environmental Commissioner:

Today I am announcing the kick-off of the FY 2015 annual compliance and enforcement Data Verification Process. We are entering our seventh year of the collaborative partnership between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) to improve quality assurance efforts for compliance and enforcement information prior to that data being utilized in performance reviews or frozen for public use. This process is referenced in ECOS Resolution No. 11-2, Respectful Use of Data, as a model for ensuring high quality data. I am requesting that you work with us to ensure that the FY 2015 data set is of the highest quality and integrity possible. Key dates and information for the FY 2015 Data Verification Process are discussed below.

Beginning November 4, 2015, please visit the Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) website at http://echo.epa.gov and log in with your EPA portal ID and password. Then, click the "Oversight" box and the "State Review Framework" link (or the direct link is https://echo.epa.gov/oversight/state-review-framework). To start reviewing your data, click the "Data Verification" tab and submit a search for your state or local agency. Information about using the tool is posted at https://echo.epa.gov/help/state-review-framework/data-verification-tool-help. State/local government users who can't access the tool can click the "Log In" link on the ECHO home page and then the Register tab for information on obtaining an ID or adding ECHO Gov access to an existing account.

The Data Verification process for Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and Clean Water Act (CWA) data is largely the same as previous years. For Clean Air Act (CAA) data, if agencies will not be able to complete the development of their Electronic Data Transfer (EDT) by January 1, they should consider manually entering the data in the Integrated Compliance Information System-Air (ICIS-Air) that will not be transmitted electronically. EPA will be providing further instructions to CAA Data Stewards. If assistance is needed to support manual data entry, please contact your ICIS-Air System Administrator. This is important because the enhanced manual CAA data verification tool that was available for FY2014 will **not** be available for FY2015 data.

Data in ECHO continues to be refreshed on a weekly schedule and you can view the most recent refresh dates here https://echo.epa.gov/resources/echo-data/about-the-data#sources. This means corrections made to data in ICIS and RCRAInfo can typically be seen in ECHO the following week.

The Data Verification Process is designed to ensure that states, EPA regions, and local agencies get credit for all of the activities performed during the fiscal year, that the State Review Framework rests on a solid foundation of quality data, and that the public receives accurate information through ECHO, associated state dashboards, comparative maps, and related websites. The data reviewed and verified in the Data Verification Process are frozen, and used as the foundation for the State Review Framework metrics. The ongoing assistance and commitment of the states and EPA regions to provide accurate information in the national databases are important to ensuring quality data availability to the public and accurate assessment of each state's performance under the State Review Framework.
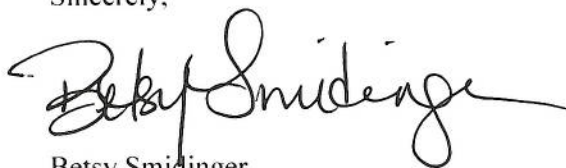
Please review the attachment for more detailed instructions for completing the process. The key milestones are:

November 4, 2015	States can preview FY 2015 RCRA, CAA and CWA data and make corrections as appropriate with weekly ECHO refreshes.
February 5, 2016	**Midnight Eastern Time deadline to enter RCRA, CAA and CWA data into the national data systems. This is also the deadline to submit caveats to EPA for information that will be released on ECHO. (Note: Reviewers should send the official completion notice/caveats from the ECHO Data Verification tool by clicking "Submit Verification").**
February 9, 2016	Verified frozen FY 2015 RCRA, CAA and CWA data released on ECHO. States may email additional comments on the data to: dataverification@epa.gov

We are ready to assist you as you move through the Data Verification Process. Please feel free to email dataverification@epa.gov with any questions or you may contact Scott Fontenot (Fontenot.scott@epa.gov).

Thank you in advance for your support in implementing the FY 2015 Data Verification Process.

Sincerely,

Betsy Smidinger
Acting Director
Office of Compliance

cc: John Dombrowski
        Chris Knopes
        Regional Enforcement Directors
        Regional Enforcement Coordinators

Attachment: Data Verification Guide
            List of ICIA-Air System Administrators

Data Verification Guide

The annual data verification process helps ensure that the SRF rests on a solid foundation of quality data, that states get credit for their activities, and that the public receives accurate information via Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) and other public websites. After the data verification period is complete, a set of verified data will be frozen and used for various purposes, including annual data metric analyses and scheduled SRF reviews. See the SRF documentation page on ECHO Gov (at https://echo.epa.gov/state_review_framework) for details on conducting reviews.

Data Verification Process

The SRF area of the ECHO Gov website includes a data verification tab. This tab includes current data and will be available at all times. Please note that a state may begin reviewing and correcting data as part of the verification process prior to the reporting.

To begin verifying data, a state (or direct implementation EPA region) should:

1. Go to the ECHO Gov SRF Data Verification tab, and run the search for the state and program.

    a. Review the data metrics displayed on the search results screen to ensure the metrics accurately reflect reportable activities performed by the state.

    b. If a particular data metric raises concerns, click on the metric to drill down to the list of facilities/activities behind the number.

2. Make any necessary corrections in the national data system of record. Corrections will automatically be reflected after the next weekly data refresh.

    a. EPA regions should work with their states to ensure data are correct in the national data systems.

    b. EPA regions should verify data for programs they implement directly.

    c. States can consult with EPA regional data stewards (at https://echo.epa.gov/resources/echo-data/data-stewards) if they need assistance with any necessary data correction.

    d. It is important that any necessary data corrections be made in the national data systems before the data is extracted for the final ECHO Gov data refresh before the freeze. Specific deadlines for review are posted to the right of the Data Verification tab.

3. Use the Submit Verification form available from the top or bottom of the results page to report completion of the data verification process.

a. EPA expects data to be correct in the national data systems. States may report problems with the data in the national data system that cannot be corrected via the Submit Verification form. These caveats will be posted on ECHO.

Frozen Data Set

The final deadline for any corrections to be made to the national data systems will typically be early February. Specific dates will be posted to the right of the Data Verification tab in ECHO Gov. EPA headquarters will freeze the final set of annual data for each state and regional program after the first February data refresh.

The timing of freezing the annual data set allows for all required data to be entered, uploaded, and translated to the national data systems after the end of the federal fiscal year, and for states to review the data online. The frozen verified annual data set will be used for annual data metric analyses and SRF reviews, will be published on ECHO, and will be used in ECHO state dashboards and comparative maps.

Optional Site Tools

Progress Tracking: Users have the option to utilize progress tracking flags. This optional tool allows users to click on flags next to the data metrics and/or the specific facilities/activities to indicate whether they have been verified, are incorrect, or under review. Flags are saved so that work can be done over multiple sessions. (Flags are for reviewer use only and do not affect the actual data).

Downloads: Users can download data for use in spreadsheets.

ICIS-AIR System Administrators

Region/State	ICIS-Air System Administrator
Region 1 (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)	Joan Serra (Lead) 617-918-1881 serra.joan@epa.gov
	Darren Fortescue (Backup) 617-918-1162 Fortescue.darren@epa.gov
Region 2 (NJ, NY, PR, VI)	Nancy Rutherford 212-637-4003 rutherford.nancy@epa.gov
Region 3 (DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV)	Kurt Elsner 215-814-2082 elsner.kurt@epa.gov
Region 4 (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)	Ahmed Amanulah (Lead) 404-562-9209 amanulah.ahmed@epa.gov
	Phillip Barnett (Backup) 404-562-9616 barnett.phillip@epa.gov
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