

**STAPPA/ALAPCO  
Training Committee  
Questionnaire  
Of  
State and Local Air Quality  
Training Providers**

August 8, 2001

The STAPPA/ALAPCO/EPA Joint Training Committee developed the following questions to be used in collecting commonly available information from state and local air quality training providers. The information collected will be used, as needed, to assess the training activities and performance of training providers. For example, the information can be used to assist the Committee in situations where total grant requests from air quality training providers exceed the total amount of “off-the-top” Section 105 grants allocated for national air quality training.

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1. How does your training plan (e.g., course offerings) address the air quality training needs identified in the most recent biannual STAPPA/ALAPCO training needs assessment (currently the FY 2002-2003 Assessment)?

As part of our training grant from USEPA, we have only provided a few, specialized technical classes related to air quality analyses (e.g., modeling, emissions inventories, monitoring, and data analysis). *(Note, additional training was provided pursuant to other program grants, including our Regional Planning Organization and air toxics grants. This training will not be addressed in this survey.)* These classes were identified based on the needs of our state technical workgroups. Given our new, increased role in supporting training for our states, however, we will consider the results of the “FY2002/2003 Training Needs Assessment Survey: Final Report” (April 2001). In addition, we recently surveyed our states to identify those issues that are regionally important and to determine appropriate training classes. We are currently preparing a training plan for CY2002-2003 based on the results of the STAPPA/ALAPCO survey and our own local survey.

2. What is your historical “off-the-top” Section 105 grant funding level? Do not include in this amount any base Section 105 grants provided by state and local agencies or other extraneous sources of funding that support your program.

FY99 =20,000; FY00 = \$35,000; FY01 = \$53,000 (Note, no grant funds provided prior to FY99)

3. Is your current request for “off-the-top” Section 105 grant funds:

  X   Greater than last year?  
       Less than last year?

Why?

Additional funds are needed to reflect the increased role of our multi-state organization in supporting training for our states. As noted above, our role initially consisted of providing only a few, specialized technical classes related to air quality analyses. Now, however, our Air Directors have asked us to do more; in particular, to sponsor “regional” classes in other program areas. It should be noted that these regional classes are intended to supplement the existing state and local training programs. Reasons for this increased role include other training needs, efficiencies in having one (or two) classes for multiple states rather than one class for each state, and additional funding needs (especially, for travel). Our states are facing severe travel restrictions and without additional funding (either

for us to hold more training classes locally or to send state personnel to an existing class elsewhere in the country), there will be a dramatic reduction in training opportunities. The estimate for 2003 will be \$100+K.

4. When you hire external training consultants to provide training, what process or criteria do you use to ensure the cost-effective use of those funds?

Given the specialized nature of our previous classes, we generally hired contractors on a sole-source basis to provide the training. Efforts to minimize costs included “piggy-backing” the training on another meeting (to reduce travel costs for the states and the contractor), limiting attendance to those most active in the particular subject or those most able to provide training to others within the state (i.e., “train the trainers”), and getting additional sponsors.

5. Who may attend your training courses?

Only member agencies

National audience

Generally describe who attends your courses and the area where your courses are offered.

Our training classes are usually attended by just our state and local agencies. Our state and local agencies have priority in registering for our training classes. Although the classes are open to other state and local agencies, travel restrictions usually preclude (or limit) their participation. In addition, please note that our classes are generally open to the private sector; in particular, those stakeholders who are members of our technical workgroups.

6. Describe your infrastructure (e.g., training staff, training facilities, training networks/consultants) for providing air quality training to state and local air agencies?

Our existing infrastructure is very sparse, with training classes arranged according to the needs of our technical workgroups. There were four such classes in FY2000 and nine in FY2001, most of which were held in our offices near Chicago. Training was provided by an outside contractor, who was responsible for preparing an agenda, training materials, and running the class. Our involvement was limited to hiring the contractor and assisting with scheduling the training classes.

7. Identify whether you primarily facilitate the delivery of existing training and/or develop training materials and courses, and your process for revising/improving training courses.

The training classes during FY2000 and FY2001 were arranged based on requests from our technical workgroups. For most of these classes, it was necessary to develop a new training class given the specialized nature of the subject matter. (In a few cases, we were able to rely on an existing class.) Training was provided by an outside contractor, who was responsible for preparing an agenda, training materials, and running the class.

8. Have you tracked your past performance in delivering training to state and local air agency staff? Please identify your previous reporting practices (e.g., to EPA) and summarize the number of state and local air agency staff trained per course/topic and the number of courses offered during the last calendar year. If you have statistics for earlier years, provide them too.

Quarterly progress reports, as well as a year-end report, are prepared and submitted to USEPA. As noted above, there were four technical training classes in FY2000 and nine in FY2001. The number of attendees per class ranged from about 5 to 30.

9. Do you request course evaluations from trainees and do you track the results?

No formal written evaluation is performed, but verbal feedback is generally provided. In the future, we will consider asking the training class attendees to complete a brief evaluation form.

10. How do the state and local air directors in your area, as well as your EPA regional manager(s), rate your training program?

As directed by our state Air Directors, we have only provided limited training support for our states. Consistent with this direction, we applied for and received a relatively small amount of training funds. The few specialized technical classes that we sponsored were well received. Recently, our Air Directors asked us to do more. Given this new increased role in training, we will be applying for additional training funds.