

**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)?***

STAPPA/ALAPCO's training needs assessment is one of many assessment tools used by WESTAR's Training Advisory Committee to identify member states' air quality staff's near-future and future training needs. WESTAR's Training Advisory Committee meetings are open to staff from: (1) member states, 2) local air agencies, 3) WESTAR, 4) EPA, 5) CalPoly, and 6) FLMs. The committee meets annually to determine the upcoming year's training schedule, to coordinate training schedules with other training providers, and to review the performance of the training program.

Prior to Training Advisory Committee meetings, members are requested to review the results of STAPPA/ALAPCO's training needs assessment, being attentive to the results from air agencies located in the western United States. Additionally, members bring the results of their "intra-agency" assessments that were conducted in the months leading up to the meeting. The goal of this "intra-agency" assessment is to bring currentness to the overall assessment process since forecasting is an inexact activity due to the time sensitivity of the material.

In addition to these two very important assessment processes, WESTAR incorporates three other assessment tools; we use multiple and continuous assessments to make sure that we are "plugged" into the voices of staff at various levels, and to make sure trainings are needed and timely. First, at WESTAR's Spring and Fall Air Directors' Business meetings, time is scheduled on the agenda for the Training Program Manager to discuss the training program, and present and future educational opportunities. These open discussions provide WESTAR a different assessment perspective, frequently discussing long-term air pollution issues and the training support needed. Second, we talk with our Planning, Technical and Sources committees about training needs, available educational opportunities and the incorporation of their work into our trainings. Third, WESTAR conducts course evaluations, asking attendees to list their near-future and future training needs. Course evaluations ask various closed and open-ended questions, including: "What topics should WESTAR provide training courses on in the future?" The timing of this assessment is valuable as attendees are immersed in learning, and are in a perfect position to provide insight on future training that they will need to build on their new knowledge and skill-base in order to be successful.



**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.**

In FY2001 WESTAR received \$255,000 in “off-the-top” funds.

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

WESTAR’s is requesting an 2% increase (\$5,000) for FY2002, or \$260,000. This 2% increase is a reflection of the increase in prices from inflation. WESTAR’s 2% requested increase means that WESTAR’s FY2002 purchasing power remains constant as compared to its FY2001 purchasing power. Stable purchasing power means that WESTAR can provide services on a level that are consistent with past years both in terms of the number of educational opportunities offered and the quality of services provided. During CY2001, WESTAR noticed that the cost related to the design, development and delivery of educational opportunities had increased. In addition, WESTAR received correspondence from various entities indicating that their “cost of doing business” had increased and that they will be passing along these “cost of doing business” increases to consumers.

WESTAR used a combination of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Deflator and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) – All Urban Consumers to calculate inflation. The GDP Deflator is an inflation calculator for adjusting costs from one year to another using the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Deflator inflation index. This inflation calculator is based on the inflation rate during the US Government Fiscal Year, which begins on October 1 and ends on September 30, while the CPI is a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services.

**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?**

The first step that WESTAR takes when searching for a presenter(s) is to compile a list of all subject matter experts (SME) with the skills, knowledge and expertise necessary to teach the subject matter; WESTAR has utilized SMEs from federal, state, local and tribal air quality bureaus, as well as, professional consulting firms to teach our courses.

Once compiled WESTAR determines the best course of action. If hiring a consultant is the best course of action, then WESTAR institutes a process to identify a provider that most closely matches WESTAR’s overall goals of designing, developing and delivery of needed, cost-effective, responsive, and



western-states-focused training opportunities; and delivering quality educational opportunities, in-line with the needs and expectations of WESTAR’s Board, to state and local air agency staff.

The first step WESTAR takes to assess potential contractors and to assure “cost-effectiveness” is to seek “word of mouth” recommendations from RPOs, state, local, federal and tribal agencies (e.g., LADCO’s “word of mouth” recommendation for an AERMOD contractor). A positive or negative comment is valuable in assessing a provider’s qualification and preparedness, the course’s usefulness, and the attendees’ satisfaction and preparedness in handling future job responsibilities. If positive comments are made, WESTAR asks for suggestions on how to improve the course. In addition, WESTAR: 1) reviews the contractor’s work experience, background, educational history and the number of courses offered in the past; 2) scrutinizes past agendas and compares these to the agenda topic recommendations/suggestions offered by our member states’ staff; 3) queries potential consultants about their willingness to alter the agenda to fit our needs, if necessary; 4) compares the budgets; 5) identifies a contractor’s availability; and 6) evaluates a contractor’s “angle” (government/industry) on the subject matter.

These measures and those in WESTAR’s “Contracting and Procurement” policy assure WESTAR’s stakeholders that WESTAR applies cost-effectiveness steps not only to those educational opportunities that we hire external consultants but to all of our training activities. WESTAR’s training program is committed to providing training that is economical in terms of the goods or services received for the money spent, and to providing quality educational opportunities.

**5. Who may attend your training courses?**

Only Member Agencies

National Audience

WESTAR’s educational opportunities are open and available to all state, local, tribal and federal air quality staff, including air quality staff from the Federal Land Management (FLM) agencies. For those educational opportunities that WESTAR limits the number of attendees, staff from WESTAR’s member states/local receive registration preference.

The majority of attendees at WESTAR’s courses are from state and local air quality agencies located in the fifteen western states. Although the majority is from the west, WESTAR’s past educational opportunities have attracted state, local, federal and tribal staff from all corners of the United States.



Since WESTAR is an association of air quality bureau in the fifteen western states our goal is to judiciously spread the educational opportunities among our member states. The Training Advisory Committee members voice their opinions on which workshop should be held where, opinions and recommendations are taken into consideration when scheduling course locations. Our goal is to offer at least one course/workshop in each major city in the western United States, annually. If a course is offered more than once in the same year or in consecutive years, the ideal situation is to offer the course in a different EPA region.

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

WESTAR has a full-time Training Program Manager responsible for the: (1) design and development of needed, cost-effective, responsive, and western-states-focused educational opportunities; (2) delivery of quality educational opportunities that are in-line with the needs and expectations of WESTAR's Board, to state and local air agency staff within the fifteen-state WESTAR region; (3) distribution of information to state, local, federal, FLMs and tribal air quality agencies pertaining to upcoming training opportunities; (4) management of a fiscally responsible program; (5) exchange of training information between various air quality agencies; (6) coordination of instructors and speakers; (7) preparation of course materials; (8) administration of the program; (9) management of contracts between WESTAR and various service providers; and (10) development and implementation of assessment tools.

WESTAR employs an Executive Director, Technical Coordinator and Office Manager who are, to various degrees and levels, involved in the training program (e.g., WESTAR's Visibility Monitoring Data Analysis Workshop in Fort Collins, Colorado in August01, and WESTAR's Assessing Smoke Effects & the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) workshop in Boise, Idaho in February02).

The training program is deeply integrated into WESTAR's committees and workgroups including its three standing committees (Sources, Technical, and Planning), its Regional Haze SIP Working Group, and its Emissions, Modeling, and Monitoring subgroups. These committees and groups perform work in various aspects of the air pollution field. Each committee/group is responsible for: 1) promoting the exchange of information related to the control of air pollution for use in state and federal activities as authorized by air quality statutes and regulations; 2) developing processes and procedures for consideration by western states, federal land managers and EPA in order to meet air quality objectives and to protect the environmental resources; 3) discussing air quality issues of common concern; 4) reporting on the status of efforts undertaken to achieve air quality objectives; 5) investigating specific topics and to recommend a



course of action for Council members; and 6) adopting resolutions and policy statements for implementation by Council members or for their use during the development of local, state and federal programs, regulations and laws. These groups are comprised of staff from WESTAR's member states and staff from various FLMs.

Additionally, the training program has close ties with the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP). WRAP is a collaborative effort of tribal governments, state governments and various federal agencies to implement the recommendations of the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission (GCVTC) and to develop the technical and policy tools needed by western states and tribes to comply with the EPA's Regional Haze regulations. The activities of the WRAP are conducted by a network of committees and forums comprised of WRAP members and stakeholders who represent a wide range of viewpoints; public involvement is an integral part of the Partnership.

WESTAR's training program works with Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMs -- Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service and the US Forest Service) staff, utilizing their expertise, skills and knowledge to develop and deliver training courses and workshops.

In addition, WESTAR works with California Air Resources Board's (CARB) training program; the area training center at California Polytechnic State University – San Luis Obispo; and the Regional Modeling Center (RMC) at University of California – Riverside; EPA Regional Offices; and the National Tribal Environmental Council.

**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.***

WESTAR devotes about half of its resources to the design, development and delivery of pioneering educational opportunities, and about half to existing training courses and workshops.

WESTAR goes through a similar process, whether the course is “standardized” or “new,” to assure our stakeholders that the courses we offer are needed, and the material that we offer is fine-tuned to their needs. Early on in the development process, whether “standardized” or “new”, agenda topic recommendations and comments are solicited from a “core” group of staff from our member states. Once the draft agenda has been developed, it is forwarded to a broader audience of member states' staff for their comments and recommendations. Simultaneously, we begin the process of identifying SMEs and potential speakers.



The agenda development process is dynamic and WESTAR continues to make improvements to the agenda throughout the development process.

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.***

Yes, WESTAR tracks its past performance. WESTAR develops reports for the Education and Outreach Group (EOG) in EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standard (OAQPS) on an annual basis. Additionally, WESTAR creates quarterly and year-end reports for EPA Region IX (the regional office that handles our grants) and for WESTAR's member states' Air Directors.

#### CY2002

- Assessing Smoke Effects & the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – Boise, ID
- MOBILE6 – Phoenix, AZ
- Training Advisory Committee – San Diego, CA
- NSR/PSD & FLAG – Denver, CO
- Emission Inventory – TBA
- Advanced AERMOD Modeling – Denver, CO
- Advanced New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Coeur d' Alene, ID
- Effective Permit Writer's – Tucson, AZ
- Intermediate Permitting – Denver, CO
- Basic New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Reno, NV
- Control of Gaseous Emissions – Denver, CO
- Regional Haze SIP Development – TBA
- Introduction to Hazardous Air Pollutants – Santa Fe, NM
- Advanced Permitting – Salt Lake City, UT
- Air Enforcement – Portland, OR
- Smoke Management Program Development – Boise, ID

#### CY2001

- Training Advisory Committee – Portland, OR (12)
- MOBILE5/6 – Salt Lake City, UT (31)
- Air Toxics/MACT – San Antonio, TX (57)
- Compliance Assurance Monitoring (CAM) – Salt Lake City, UT (38)
- Advanced New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Tempe, AZ (45)



- Visibility Monitoring Data Analysis – Fort Collins, CO (43)
- Basic New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Denver, CO (36)
- Principles & Practices of Air Pollution Control – Santa Fe, NM (32)
- Air Enforcement – Denver, CO (33)

#### CY2000

- Training Advisory Committee – Santa Fe, NM (10)
- Advanced New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Denver, CO (36)
- Stack Testing/Test Observation – Santa Fe, NM (30)
- Stack Testing/Test Observation – Salt Lake City, UT (31)
- Advanced CALPUFF/ISC-Prime/AERMOD Modeling – San Luis Obispo, CA (25)
- Baseline/Advance Inspection Techniques – Portland, OR (25)
- Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) – Kansas City, MO (250)
- Eighth Annual Downlink Coordinator’s Meeting – Denver, CO (50)
- Stack Testing/Test Observation – Portland, OR (21)
- Basic New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Anchorage, AK (20)
- Effective Permit Writer’s – Anchorage, AK (20)

#### CY 1999

- Basic New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Reno, NV (25)
- Advanced New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Reno, NV (31)
- Advanced New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Santa Fe, NM (41)
- Advanced New Source Review/Prevention of Significant Deterioration – Boise, ID (38)
- PM Monitoring – Tucson, AZ (74)
- CALPUFF/CALMET Modeling – San Diego, CA (28)
- Training Advisory Committee – Coeur d’ Alene, ID (10)
- Small Business Assistance – Reno, NV (45)
- Advanced Permit Writer’s – Tucson, AZ (85)

#### CY1998

- Permitting Process for Stationary Sources – Honolulu, HI (23)
- Compliance Assurance Monitoring (CAM) – Phoenix, AZ (33)
- Control of Particulate Emissions – Phoenix, AZ (23)
- Smoke Management – Wildland & Prescribed Fire Policy – Boise, ID (41)
- Continuous Emission Monitoring – Phoenix, AZ (25)
- Advanced Permit Writer’s – Salt Lake City, UT (88)

- QA Meteorological & Air Quality Measurements – Honolulu, HI (38)
- Control of Gaseous Emissions – Phoenix, AZ (28)
- PM2.5 Emission Inventory – Reno, NV (44)
- PM2.5 Hands-On Monitoring: QA/QC – Sacramento, CA (49)
- Meteorological Modeling Version 5 (MM5) – Salt Lake City, UT (57)
- PM2.5 Hands-On Monitoring: QA/QC – Golden, CO (48)
- PM2.5 Hands-On Monitoring: QA/QC – Port Orchard, WA (37)
- Training Advisory Committee Meeting – Denver, CO (8)
- Stack Testing – Honolulu, HI (24)
- Enforcement & Compliance – Denver, CO (85)

#### CY1997

- PM2.5 Monitoring; May 13 - 15 in Las Vegas, Nevada (75).
- Western Region Training Center Advisory Committee; June 2 - 4, Pacific City, California (10).
- Advanced Operating Permits; June 24 - 26 in Denver, Colorado (69)
- Advance Modeling; August 26 - 28 in Salt Lake City, Utah (23)
- Source Testing for Field Inspectors, October 7 - 9 in Boise, Idaho (29)
- Fall Technical Conference; October 14 - 16 in Breckenridge, Colorado (36)
- Permit Writer's; October 27 - 29 in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho (103)
- Introduction to Hazardous Air Pollutants; November 17 - 18 in Honolulu, Hawaii (28)
- PM2.5 Monitoring, November 18 - 20 in Denver, Colorado (65)
- Air Toxics/Small Business Assistance Program; December 4 - 5 in Denver, Colorado (73)

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

Yes... Course evaluations are handed out in “course materials” packet at the beginning of all of our educational opportunities. During the “Welcome/Introduction” Session WESTAR’s Training Program Manager or on-site coordinator highlights the course evaluation and stresses its importance. At the beginning and end of the last day the message is reiterated.

Evaluations are reviewed and analyzed by WESTAR’s staff. Contractors are requested to review the evaluations and discussions are held between the contractors and WESTAR’s Training Program Manager to go over the results, if needed. Speakers from state, local, tribal and federal air quality agencies are given the opportunity to review evaluations.



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

WESTAR's training program receives high praise from the Air Directors, from other regional air quality agencies, and from individual attendees.