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

JUN 22 2011

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Consultation on Proposed Updates and Changes to the Multi-Agency Radiation Survey and Site Investigation Manual (MARSSIM)

FROM: Michael P. Flynn, Director
Office of Radiation and Indoor Air

TO: Vanessa Vu, Director
Science Advisory Board

On behalf of the four participating Federal agencies, EPA's Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA) is requesting that the Science Advisory Board's augmented Radiation Advisory Committee hold a consultation to discuss proposed and additional needed changes to The Multi-Agency Radiation Survey and Site Investigation Manual (MARSSIM). The MARSSIM Workgroup would like to issue Revision 2 to MARSSIM, to incorporate recent improvements in science and technology as well as lessons learned from fourteen years of use.

Background

The MARSSIM document (http://epa.gov/radiation/marssim) provides information on planning, conducting, evaluating, and documenting building surface and surface soil final status radiological surveys for demonstrating compliance with dose or risk-based regulations or standards. The MARSSIM document is a multi-agency consensus document that was developed collaboratively by four Federal agencies having authority and control over radioactive materials: Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Energy (DOE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The MARSSIM document's objective is to describe a consistent approach for planning, performing, and assessing building surface and surface soil final status surveys to meet established dose or risk-based release criteria, while at the same time encouraging an effective use of resources.

The original MARSSIM document was published in 1997, with errata and addenda pages published in 1998 and 1999. Revision 1 to MARSSIM was published in 2000, and additional errata and addenda pages were published in 2001 (Attachment A). None of the changes made from 1998 to 2001 reflect significant departures from the science and technology of the original MARSSIM document; instead, they provide additional clarification and correct errors in the original published document. No additional changes to the document itself have been made since 2001.

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The SAB conducted the scientific peer reviews of the 1997 version of MARSSIM (EPA-SAB-RAC-97-008, dated 9/30/1997), companion document MARLAP, (EPA-SAB-RAC-03-009, dated 6/10/2003) and MARSSIM Supplement MARSAME (EPA-SAB-08-010, dated 8/7/2008).

The MARSSIM Workgroup developed and provided a three-day in-person technical training course on the document more than twenty times over a twelve-year timeframe to hundreds of radiation professionals seeking to learn more about final status surveys for surface soils and building surfaces. In addition, the MARSSIM Workgroup developed a four-hour in-person general training course aimed at managers and a five-half-days webinar technical training course to those individuals without the ability or inclination to attend the full in-person technical course.

The MARSSIM Workgroup conducted a thorough request for public input for the MARSSIM revisions from November 2010 to June 2011. The comments received as a part of this process were also considered. The MARSSIM Workgroup received comments from State regulators, federal employee users, and private citizen users (Attachment B).

Previous scientific peer reviews have helped to shape the science behind the MAR- series of documents into its current configuration, and the four federal agencies involved in the MARSSIM Workgroup agreed that input from the SAB should be sought for any significant changes in the future. Therefore, on behalf of the four participating Federal agencies, the EPA's Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA) is requesting that the SAB hold a consultation to discuss proposed and additional needed changes to MARSSIM identified by the Workgroup in Attachment C.

Specific Request

At this time, EPA is seeking comments from the RAC on updates and any needed changes to the MARSSIM. Specifically, EPA requests that the RAC provide comments on the following:

1) The MARSSIM Workgroup has proposed a number of significant changes to MARSSIM, which if implemented, will result in Revision 2 of the document. Please comment on the applicability and appropriateness of the proposed changes.
2) Do you have any recommendations for additional changes or improvements? Please comment on why you believe that these additional changes are warranted.
3) The list of changes proposed by the MARSSIM Workgroup represents the Workgroup's best judgment as to the highest priority changes, given limited resources for implementation. Please comment on the relative priorities of the seven proposed changes versus other identified or recommended changes.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Mary E. Clark of my staff at (202) 343-9348.

Attachments

cc: Carl Mazza, OAR