

**Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress**  
July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

**Date:** September 22, 2010  
**Organization:** Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
**Prepared by:** Jonathan Scull, DEP Quality Assurance Coordinator  
**Reviewed By:** Amey Marrella, Commissioner;  
Anne Gobin, Chief, Bureau of Air Management;  
Yvonne Bolton, Chief, Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance;  
Betsey Wingfield, Chief, Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse;  
Steve Fish, Director, Office of Information Management

*Note: the basic format of this report follows the report template developed by the participants of the EPA New England QA Roundtable.*

## **Executive Summary**

The *Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection 2008 Quality Management Plan for Environmental Programs Funded by The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* (2008 QMP) was approved by EPA New England in December of 2008. This report represents the second annual Quality System Status Report associated with the 2008 QMP.

A digital version of the 2008 QMP is available online. A link to the plan can be found at [http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2701&q=323452&depNav\\_GID=1651](http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2701&q=323452&depNav_GID=1651).

The 2008 QMP introduced the concept of identifying a set of annual "Quality System [QS] objectives" to be acted on each year during the anticipated five-year span of the current QMP. The major component of this report is a Status Report on the progress made in meeting each of the eight QS objectives agreed upon for this past year (State Fiscal Year 2010, same reporting period as this report). The QS Objectives Status Report starts on Page 5. Work on a number of the objectives is still in the process of being completed. As called for in the QMP, the Director of the Office of Information Management has reviewed the information in the Status Report and has determined that it is accurate.

Planning has begun for identifying the QS objectives to be worked on in FY11. In addition to proposing the continuation of four process-oriented objectives first identified in previous years, Section 2 of Part A of this report, beginning on Page 3, introduces two larger topics that the DEP Quality Assurance Coordinator is recommending be reviewed and acted on in FY11. Those topics are:

- Complete an assessment tracking system for assessments conducted in conjunction with projects covered by QAPPs.
- Document the roles played by DEP and EPA in preparing, reviewing and approving different categories of Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs).

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### Part A: Status/Progress Report

#### 1. Quality System Assessments

##### A. Quality System Assessments of Your Organization

No external assessments of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's overall Quality System were performed during the reporting period. This report serves as an internal assessment of the progress made in meeting the annual QS objectives that DEP uses as part of its Quality Improvement process.

##### B. Quality System Assessments of Other Organizations

None to report.

##### C. Technical Assessments

See discussion below.

##### D. Project and Data Reports Assessed

Work remains to be done to establish a practical set of procedures and tools to be used by QA Bureau Contacts and perhaps other agency staff to track and report on program and project-level assessments, both for the purposes of this specific report and to improve general communications regarding assessments. One QS objective for this past year was the development of an assessment tracking system, but work on this objective has yet to be completed. As referenced elsewhere in this report, and discussed in the following section, the agency QA Coordinator is recommending this task be a priority for the QA Bureau Contacts in the coming months.

It should be stressed that program-level audits and other assessments have been and continue to be performed within DEP.

For example, the QA Bureau Contact for the Planning & Standards Division of the Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse has recently taken the initiative to start collecting and organizing information about past assessments within that particular division, and has begun compiling details regarding a number of recent assessments. The QA Coordinator is recommending that this division information be used as a pilot for completing an agency-wide assessment tracking system.

In addition, the Air Bureau Data Quality Assurance/Quality Control Group tracks all QA requirements related to criteria air pollutant data through quarterly QA reports that assess quarterly performance data as compared to the Data Quality Objectives (DQOs). This assessment is also conducted as part of the annual certification of air quality data. Currently, the Data QA/QC Group is implementing this ongoing assessment tracking for all other non-criteria data streams in which there is currently an EPA-approved QAPP on file.

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### 2. Areas for Improvement/Recommendations to Senior Staff

#### A. Areas for Improvement:

As DEP's Quality Assurance Coordinator, I am recommending that the agency address areas for improvement for our Quality System for FY11 in two different ways.

First, I propose that we continue to use a set of annual Quality System (QS) objectives as a way to define, track and measure a series of tasks that are primarily discrete and process oriented.

Secondly, I propose that we use this upcoming year, which takes us through the half-way point of the five-year period covered by the current QMP (the half-way point would be the start of 2011), to review two larger, interconnected topics related to DEP's Quality Assurance program.

The following are four initial recommendations for FY11 QS objectives. Note that the final set of objectives for FY11 may differ from this initial list. This set of objectives is essentially a continuation of objectives first identified in FY08 or FY09.

- Continue to prepare and publish digital QAPPs in the "Quality Assurance" section of "Inside DEP" (DEP's intranet website). I believe we should keep working toward the goal of publishing all active QAPPs that have been prepared by DEP, submitted to EPA, and approved by EPA.
- Continue to prepare and publish digital SOPs on "Inside DEP."
- Continue to report any significant organizational changes within DEP to EPA in a timely manner.
- Continue to use and refine the internal QAPP Table as a tool for maintaining up-to-date information on DEP's QAPP inventory. Use the table as the basis for publishing timely QAPP updates on DEP's public website and providing updates to EPA NE QA in a timely manner. (See separate discussion of QAPPs below.)

The following are two larger topics related to DEP's Quality Assurance program that I am recommending we review and act on in FY11.

- Development of an assessment tracking system for assessments conducted in conjunction with projects covered by QAPPs was a QS objective for this past year, but we have yet to fully develop such a tool, which would allow staff to consistently document assessments that have been carried out. I'm proposing that the QA Bureau Contacts work with other staff to complete a useful framework and set of processes that the agency could use to capture and organize this information, perhaps in conjunction with a revamped QAPP table format.
- The second larger topic relates to how DEP (and EPA) track and report on QAPPs related to projects in Connecticut, and what QAPPs DEP (and EPA) track and report on. Briefly, beyond a core set of QAPPs that are prepared by DEP and submitted to EPA for approval, there are other categories of QAPPs that relate in different ways to environmental projects in Connecticut. For example, QAPPs for state Brownfields projects are prepared by grantees and submitted directly to EPA for approval, with an option for DEP to review and comment. In a case such as this I am not proposing that the process be changed in any way, but I believe it would be beneficial to more systematically and thoroughly document the approved processes that are in place to develop and approve these different categories of QAPPs, and publish the information online. This should help to communicate to all interested parties (DEP staff, EPA staff, and others) the roles DEP and EPA play in the various processes.

I propose, as a next step and a pilot, producing and publishing such documentation for applicable projects within WPLR's Remediation Division, a task that staff of the division have already started.

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### B. QA System Challenges/Vulnerabilities:

Staffing levels at DEP continue to challenge the agency in different ways, and this includes the agency's ability to focus the necessary staff resources on its Quality Assurance efforts.

Due to continuing state fiscal challenges, additional requirements have been introduced into various aspects of state procurement, with the intent of assuring that only emergency and essential purchases are allowed. I expect these additional requirements will lengthen the time it takes to complete some purchases (including purchases related to projects covered by QAPPs), and may serve to prohibit other purchases outright.

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### *Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report*

The Quality System objectives for the 2009-2010 period (the second year of the 2008 DEP Quality Management Plan-QMP) are as follows:

1. Continue to prepare and publish digital QAPPs on "Inside DEP." Continue to consider including some QAPPs for completed projects where it's determined that the QAPP may be particularly helpful to those planning similar new projects.
2. Continue to prepare and publish digital SOPs on "Inside DEP."
3. Report any changes to the organizational structure of the Bureaus of Air Management, Materials Management and Compliance Assurance, or Water Protection and Land Reuse to EPA NE QA as soon as new organizational charts are published.
4. Continue to use and refine the internal QAPP Table as a tool for maintaining up-to-date information on DEP's QAPP inventory. Use the table as the basis for publishing timely QAPP updates on DEP's public website.
5. Establish a simple "assessment tracking system" for the EQ bureaus as a whole that allows agency staff to document data quality assessment work carried out in conjunction with programs subject to the QMP. Consider sponsoring some form of assessment training in conjunction with the introduction of such a system.
6. Develop a Data Quality and Application Quality Review Strategy for SIMS (Site Information Management System), DEP's primary enterprise information system.
7. Digitally publish annual additions to the online 2008 QMP, including additional QS Objectives, the revised QA Policy Directive, the most recently published public DEP organizational chart, the two financial tables included on pages 12 and 13 of the QMP, and the most recently published QAPP Table.
8. Update the two financial tables included on pages 12 and 13 of the original 2008 QMP to reflect current funding levels. The Tables are titled "EPA program grants to CT DEP combined under the Performance Partnership Grant (PPG)" and "Additional EPA program grants to CT DEP that contain specific language related to Quality Assurance."

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### ***Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report***

Objective (1 of 8): Continue to prepare and publish digital QAPPs on “Inside DEP.” Continue to consider including some QAPPs for completed projects where it’s determined that the QAPP may be particularly helpful to those planning similar new projects.

[Note that this objective is an extension of a similar objective from the previous year.]

Strategy for meeting objective: Continue to request copies of active QAPPs from QA Bureau Contacts. Convert all received QAPPs to PDF format as required.

Publish additional QAPPs and supporting documentation on “Inside DEP.”

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that additional QAPPs have been published on “Inside DEP.”

Status: *All Bureau of Air Management’s EPA-approved QAPPs and associated SOPs are being readied for publication in the “Quality Assurance” section of “Inside DEP” at this time. Air Management has taken the initiative to see that all of their active QAPPs and associated SOPs (see next Objective) are published in the near future. Estimated time frame for publishing the next set of QAPPs: by end of September, 2010.*

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### **Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report**

Objective (2 of 8): Continue to prepare and publish digital SOPs on “Inside DEP.”

[Note that this objective is an extension of a similar objective from the previous year.]

Strategy for meeting objective: Request copies of active SOPs from QA Bureau Contacts. Convert all received SOPs to PDF format as required.

Publish additional SOPs and supporting documentation on “Inside DEP.”

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that additional SOPs have been published on “Inside DEP.”

Status: *A set of additional SOPs are being readied for publication in the “Quality Assurance” section of “Inside DEP” at this time. As with QAPPs (see previous Objective), the Bureau of Air Management has taken the initiative to get all of the bureau’s SOPs associated with active QAPPs published in the near future. Estimated time frame for publishing the next set of SOPs: by end of September, 2010.*

*In addition, the Industrial Permitting Program within the Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance published an extensive set of SOPs related to the Industrial NPDES Permit Application Review process, an outcome of a recent DEP Lean project to improve the consistency and processing of NPDES renewal permits. These SOPs are currently in the “Permit Desk Reference” section of “Inside DEP,” and will be linked to from the “Quality Assurance” page.*

*Also, work has begun to update and republish the Long Island Sound Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Program SOP currently published in the “Quality Assurance” section of “Inside DEP,” with an estimated time frame of Fall, 2010. Using this SOP as a pilot, the agency QA Coordinator is revisiting the best methods for publishing SOPs online in a professional manner while at the same time making it as easy as possible for SOP authors to update the documents as needed.*

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### **Connecticut DEP FY09 Quality System Objectives Status Report**

Objective (3 of 8): Report any changes to the organizational structure of the Bureaus of Air Management, Materials Management and Compliance Assurance, or Water Protection and Land Reuse to EPA NE QA as soon as new organizational charts are published.

[Note that this objective remains unchanged from the previous year.]

Strategy for meeting objective: In a timely manner, forward or provide a summary of any official announcements of DEP organizational changes that impact the three DEP Bureaus listed above, plus the Commissioner's Office and the Bureau of Financial and Support Services, to the EPA NE QA Unit liaison for Connecticut. Such changes would include any announced branch, bureau, division, or program restructuring, and any personnel changes at or above the Division Director level.

When any of the above such changes are reflected in revised published DEP organizational charts, electronic copies of the charts will be sent to the EPA QA liaison. These updated charts will serve as the equivalent of a continually updated Appendix D. in 2008 DEP QMP.

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that EPA has been notified of all DEP organizational changes as described above. OIM Director will be copied on all relevant emails sent to EPA.

The EPA QA Liaison will be encouraged to ask DEP for clarification or additional documentation at any time to resolve any questions about DEP's organizational structure as it relates to programs covered by the QMP.

Status: *In September 2009, Acting Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Amey Marrella was nominated by Governor M. Jodi Rell to serve as permanent Commissioner. Her nomination was confirmed by the Connecticut General Assembly. This information was shared with the EPA QA liaison. No plans have been announced to fill the vacant Deputy Commissioner position formerly held by Commissioner Marrella. The next Connecticut gubernatorial election is this November.*

*There has been no major organizational restructuring during the past year within the three DEP EQ bureaus listed in this objective, with one exception, and there have been no personnel changes within the EQ bureaus at or above the Division Director level. The Bureau of Air Management did carry out a significant restructuring within its Planning & Standards Division. A summary of the reorganization has been supplied by the bureau and is included on the following page.*

*Currently published DEP organizational charts do reflect that some program restructuring has occurred within certain individual EQ divisions over the past year. EQ division charts that reflect program restructuring since the last Quality System Annual Report was prepared are:*

- *Water Protection & Land Reuse: Inland Water Resources Division, Office of Long Island Sound Programs*
- *Air Management: Planning & Standards Division (see summary on following page), Radiation Division, Engineering & Enforcement Division*
- *Material Management & Compliance Assurance: (Water) Permitting & Enforcement Division. Also, the "Regulation Coordination" organizational function within MMCA, which appeared in previous charts, but without any assigned staff, has been removed.*

*Some additional, relatively minor DEP program restructuring has taken place within the Commissioner's Office and the Bureau of Financial and Support Services over the last year.*

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

*A set of DEP's current organizational charts are attached. Charts published through September 1, 2010 are included. [See separate attachment to the digital copy of the report.]*

*July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009, marked the end-date of a retirement incentive program for state employees. A total of 68 DEP employees retired as part of this program. In September of 2009 DEP received permission to start the process of refilling 25 of those positions. Some of these positions remained in the same location within DEP's organizational structure, while others were shifted. The current organizational charts reflect both the fact that a certain amount of organizational contraction has taken place as a result of the significant number of permanently eliminated positions, and the fact that the agency is still working to refill some of the vacant positions approved to be refilled.*

### *Summary of reorganization within the Bureau of Air Management's Planning & Standards Division:*

A detailed analysis of the core functions and organizational structure of the Air Bureau's air quality monitoring operations was initiated in conjunction with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). This in-depth effort identified the need to reduce the span of operational control at the lab and by splitting the current structure into two groups: Field Operations and Data Quality Assurance/Quality Control. A new supervisory position was created to oversee the Bureau's Data Quality Assurance efforts and to coordinate with the other related data functions in the Bureau and in the agency. Data quality assurance is part of a broader Department-wide requirement that all programs receiving federal funding implement a "quality system". This framework is outlined in the Department's Quality Management Plan (QMP), and is further defined for the clean air programs in several Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs). The Bureau's monitoring operation is committed to adhering to well-defined EPA procedures, data quality objectives and quality control requirements as outlined in program specific QAPPs. The recent organizational change is evidence of the commitment to sustainable organizational framework to ensure the success of the air data collection and reporting.

By establishing the Data Quality Assurance/Quality Control Group, internal communications related to QA activities were enhanced by implementing more-automated, less-redundant processes resulting in the generation of higher quality data. All QA improvements have been made with EPA Region I oversight, through QAPP annual update letters as well as ongoing communications with EPA. Further improvements were made by cross-training personnel in the Attainment Planning Group, the primary users of the data, by getting hands-on experience on all levels of the QA process. The QA infrastructure will be strengthened even more in the near future, as we are currently in the hiring process for an Environmental Analyst Intern. This addition to the staffing will make available personnel for higher-level tasking, while training a new hire on the recently established, streamlined QA processes.

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### **Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report**

Objective (4 of 8): Continue to use and refine the internal QAPP Table as a tool for maintaining up-to-date information on DEP's QAPP inventory. Use the table as the basis for publishing timely QAPP updates on DEP's public website.

[Note that this objective is an extension of a similar objective from the previous year.]

Strategy for meeting objective: Continue to use the existing QAPP Excel spreadsheet as the basis for the status matrix.

Have QA Bureau Contacts update the spreadsheet directly as needed to keep it current.

Periodically publish updated spreadsheet on DEP's public website.

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that one or more updated versions of the spreadsheet have been published on DEP's public website during FY10.

Status: *The QA Bureau Contact for WPLR Planning & Standards continues to use the QAPP Excel spreadsheet to update relevant bureau QAPP information. Because of the relatively small number of QAPPs and QAPP updates involved, the other QA Bureau Contacts have continued to submit change requests to the agency QA Coordinator, who then makes the edits in the spreadsheet. Two updated versions of the QAPP Table were published on DEP's public website during FY10. Another update will be published in conjunction with this annual report.*

*It should be noted that in 2009, EPA New England announced a new policy pertaining to QAPPs and SOPs developed by state agencies as part of the ambient air monitoring program. Annual reviews for all such QAPPs and associated SOPs are now required to be submitted to EPA by November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. In addition, EPA is no longer requiring complete QAPP revisions every five years for air monitoring QAPPs. The Bureau of Air Management believes these two changes in reporting requirements improve their ability to manage and track the QAPP/SOP review and revision process, and allows them to focus on making such documents as useful as possible.*

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### ***Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report***

Objective (5 of 8): Establish a simple “assessment tracking system” for the EQ bureaus as a whole that allows agency staff to document data quality assessment work carried out in conjunction with programs subject to the QMP. Consider sponsoring some form of assessment training in conjunction with the introduction of such a system.

Strategy for meeting objective: Work with QA Bureau Contacts to develop and document a simple spreadsheet/table that can be used to record basic information related to formal/informal project and program assessments.

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that a simple assessment tracking system has been developed and documented.

Status: *This objective remains to be to be completed. Based on discussions with QA Bureau Contacts and others, the agency QA Coordinator is recommending that the QA Bureau Contacts focus on completing this task by the end of November, 2010, working with other staff as necessary to introduce a practical template and a set of related processes that can be used throughout the EQ Bureaus to capture and organize relevant information pertaining to both internal and external assessments and similar program reviews.*

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### **Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report**

Objective (6 of 8): Develop a Data Quality and Application Quality Review Strategy for SIMS (Site Information Management System), DEP's primary enterprise information system.

Strategy for meeting objective: Prepare a written SIMS Quality Review Strategy. Present it to the Director of the Office of Information Management (OIM). Use it as the basis for taking additional steps to identify and document SIMS data and application quality issues, share the documentation with additional staff, and start to formulate a strategy for prioritizing work on documented issues.

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that a written SIMS Data Quality and Application Quality Review Strategy has been shared with the Director of OIM.

Status: *A written SIMS Quality Review Strategy was completed and shared with the Director of OIM in September, 2009. Since that time, the agency QA Coordinator's first priority has been to focus on researching, testing, and documenting a range of issues associated with SIMS data and application components. As part of this effort, the QA Coordinator has been participating in a Lean project titled "SIMS Enforcement Data Entry Standard Operating Procedures," which was initiated in the Fall of 2009. This project has led to the introduction of a set of new procedures designed to improve the quality and increase the quantity of enforcement action data entered into SIMS, and has resulted in the issuance of a new "SIMS Enforcement Data & Document Entry" directive.*

*At the present time, planning is underway for a pilot project to present a set of sample issues to a cross-section of DEP staff (working name for group: SIMS Strategy Board, or SSB), who will then work together to establish initial priorities for using agency resources to improve SIMS.*

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### ***Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report***

Objective (7 of 8): Digitally publish annual additions to the online 2008 QMP, including additional QS Objectives, the revised QA Policy Directive, the most recently published public DEP organizational chart, the two financial tables included on pages 12 and 13 of the QMP, and the most recently published QAPP Table.

Strategy for meeting objective: Prepare documents and related content for publication online. Publish annual additions to QMP on DEP's public website.

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that the annual additions to the online 2008 QMP have been published on DEP's public website, with links to updated information added to the QMP.

Status: *Work is underway to publish additions to the digital QMP, but they have not yet been posted online. Estimated time frame for publishing additions: by end of September, 2010. The two financial tables will be added as part of a separate update once they have been updated (see next objective).*

## Annual Reporting of Quality System Progress

### ***Connecticut DEP FY10 Quality System Objectives Status Report***

Objective (8 of 8): Update the two financial tables included on pages 12 and 13 of the original 2008 QMP to reflect current funding levels. The Tables are titled "EPA program grants to CT DEP combined under the Performance Partnership Grant (PPG)" and "Additional EPA program grants to CT DEP that contain specific language related to Quality Assurance."

Strategy for meeting objective: Request updated financial information and grant language details for DEP programs funded by EPA, from the DEP Bureau of Financial and Support Services (FSS), Financial Management Division.

Combine information with information from PPA (Performance Partnership Agreement), PPG, and other sources to produce tables similar in content and appearance to earlier versions. Have tables reviewed by representatives of the three EQ bureaus, The Financial Management Division of FSS, and the Office of Planning and Program Development.

Publish the final versions of the updated tables on DEP's public website, and integrated with other updated elements of the QMP.

Assessment Criteria: Confirmation that final versions of the updated financial tables have been published on DEP's public website, and integrated with other elements of the QMP.

Status: *Work has begun on updating the two financial tables using the latest available information provided by FSS, but they have not yet been published. Estimated time frame for completing update and publishing table: by end of October, 2010.*

### Part B: Annual Quality Management Plan Update

A review of the *Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection 2008 Quality Management Plan for Environmental Programs Funded by The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* was completed in August, 2010 by DEP's Quality Assurance Coordinator, and it was determined that no revisions to the core document are necessary at this time, with the qualifications discussed below.

All formal agency and state policies and procedures referenced in the above Quality Management Plan (QMP) are still in effect as referenced or documented.

Of note is the fact that DEP issued 19 new or revised directives in FY10, and roughly a dozen address agency planning, policies, and procedures related to various aspects of on-the-job health and safety, such as how do deal with medical emergencies, and the use of personal protective equipment. Some of the new directives are associated with more extensive planning or procedural documents. All DEP staff are notified of all new directives as they are published, and have access to electronic copies of all directives on "Inside DEP."

It is to be expected that many of these new health and safety related directives are of particular importance to agency personnel performing field data collection and related tasks, and therefore have a significant connection to projects and programs covered by the QMP. In some cases these new directives, along with associated documents, may prove useful to staff in the context of developing or revising written SOPs.

While it is not considered necessary to revise the digital 2008 QMP to make reference to these new policies, given the easy access staff have to them, their existence should be noted when the QMP is next rewritten, and it may be appropriate to identify a future QS objective that works to improve the integration of such existing agency protocols into SOPs.

In the Computer Hardware and Software section of the 2008 QMP, DEP's Information Management Strategy Board, or IMSB, is referenced. The IMSB reviews proposed agency Information Technology and Information Management projects, and makes recommendations to the Commissioner and senior staff as to how such projects should be prioritized. At the present time, regular meetings of the IMSB have been suspended, while the Director of the Office of Information Management (the IMSB Chair) and senior staff discuss restructuring the Board to make it more effective. Once the IMSB is restructured and resumes meeting, it may be appropriate to add an update to the digital QMP detailing the changes to the group.

Special agency initiatives are identified as one component of DEP's Quality System in the 2008 QMP. One specific initiative, the project to adopt Reasonable Confidence Protocols (RCPs), was highlighted as an example of a special project that had a direct connection to Quality Assurance. In addition, the Quality Improvement section of the 2008 QMP mentions DEP's Lean initiative (which at the time was fairly new).

As a communications tool it would be useful to develop new content for the digital QMP or link to new content that discusses the progress made with the RCP project, the ever-expanding components of the Lean initiative, and perhaps other new special agency initiatives with a connection to Quality Assurance. This would be a logical QS objective for the coming year.

As indicated in the Status section for QS Objective 7, a set of additions to the original QMP are being prepared for digital publication. One or more additional updates should be published at a later date in FY11 in conjunction with the QS objectives being developed for the current fiscal year (list of new QS objectives, this Annual Report, etc.).