

SUMMARY NOTES FROM TRI-REGIONAL MEETING OF EXCHANGE NETWORK

April 10-11, 2013—Philadelphia, PA

Key Themes and Action Items of Discussion

1. Developments in the following areas, presented by EPA HQ managers & EN Coordinator:
 - eEnterprise, eReporting, relationship with Exchange Network
 - CROMERR-compliant web services and the Virtual Node
 - Phase 2 of Exchange Network, data publishing, & new governance structure
 - SDWIS NextGen
 - Exchange Network funding and grants for 2013 and 2014, including tips for successful applications
2. State success stories and case studies
3. Desire for continued communication among EPA & states
4. Desire to improve coordination between IT managers and programs at EPA & states
5. Opportunities for states to volunteer as pilot participants in several of the areas listed above

Action Steps and Discussion

1. Short-term Management & Technical Questions

- EPA HQ will follow up about knowing when signers are authorized by their employer (Lexis-Nexis)
- EPA HQ will provide update on fire wall rules and security of data
- Kurt sent links to info about CROMERR and Virtual Node
- EN Alerts expected on open conference call on RESTful web services

2. Sharing Success Stories

- Consider opportunities to showcase successes—EPA HQ would like ideas, suggestions, & needs.
- Short (4-line) descriptions of projects would be useful to EPA HQ.
- Short demos of projects also can be planned—periodic conf calls, virtual meetings, etc. This would allow other states to ask specific technical questions.
- Interest also in works in progress—projects don't need to be complete to be demonstrated or discussed.
- Use blogs to share info.
- Projects could be funded by EN or CDC, Homeland Security, or other partners.
- Developing a repository of success stories, demos, & collaborative projects would be useful. Possible locations: Regional EN Coordinators, EN website, ECOS, others.

3. Increasing Communications among Exchange Network Partners

- It's time to move current, relevant, and integrated data. The public expects it, and new technologies provide increased capabilities. Exchange Network Phase 2 is focused on making environmental and public health data more beneficial, efficient, and sustainable.
- Involve program staff & managers more in EN as we move into Phase 2. Focus on business needs of programs, less on IT side of EN. Become part of programmatic meetings (e.g., Air, Water, Waste, etc.) involving EPA & state managers with focus on "What's in it for [the programs]?"
- Methods of keeping states & other stakeholders informed about topics listed above:
 - Need for communication among those involved in Exchange Network and those involved in eEnterprise efforts. EN will have a Communications IPT to develop strategic plan. eEnterprise team should coordinate with IPT.
 - Continue with e-alerts from Exchange Network
 - RSS Newsfeeds?

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- Using Sharepoint and other MS Office 365 tools
- Provide info in usable amounts by topic area. Provide links for more background & contact info so partners can follow-up directly.
- Respect the line between sharing info & flooding with alerts.

4. Emerging Issues & Needs

- State partners would like to have access to one-on-one mentors (experts) to help establish or improve data flows.
- States may be willing to serve as volunteer pilots for eEnterprise, CROMERR, & Virtual Node but need more information:
 - What is the goal to accomplish?
 - How long is the pilot? When will it happen?
 - What's the anticipated state financial commitment?
 - What are the benefits?
- Tools under development:
 - Is there need for state input? How to gain such input?
 - What toolkits are under development? Other toolkits needed?
 - How will help desks work?
 - How will these tools & governance work in a world with 24/4 expectations? Cloud vs. warehouse
- Plans for policies for public access moving to an open network
- Addressing newer data needs—e.g., storm water, CAFOs, MS4, mining
- How will the above issues fit into the Exchange Network?
- Desire to be aware of funding for data integration

5. Funding of Exchange Network O&M

- EPA National Program guidances support using program grants to fund O&M of databases and data exchanges created thru EN.
- Gaining commitment from programs at EPA and state levels has been challenging. Programs often don't view EN work as part of the "real" program work. Important to continue the conversation about this & identify business needs of programs that the EN can address.
- Some states have success partnering with non-traditional agencies: CDC, HHS, Homeland Security, or state counterparts. Partner with willing agencies.
- Suggestion: EPA convene a conference of other possible funders to discuss partnering on projects that would be mutually beneficial. Perhaps as a session at National EN Conference in February 2014?
- One of 4 goals of Phase 2 is to find a permanent source of funding for EN work.

NEXT NATIONAL EXCHANGE NETWORK CONFERENCE: February 25-27, 2014 at Sheraton Society Hill, Philadelphia, PA

