

APPENDIX G

Detailed Recommendations

This section of the report presents detailed recommendations identified by the NARPM Co-Chairs, moderators for sessions, attendees from the closing plenary session, and Tetra Tech.

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Recommendations from the NARPM Co-Chair “Hot Wash” Session

Recommendations from the training conference Co-Chairs were identified during a “hot wash” session held on Friday, May 25. The session, which included Mr. Gary Turner, EPA OSRTI, and Tetra Tech, was used to solicit immediate feedback, impressions, and recommendations. The Co-Chairs offered feedback on the successes and lessons learned from the week-long program during the “hot wash” session. The following recommendations were made:

About plenary sessions and working luncheons

- RPM appreciated Betsy Southerland’s presentation on Wednesday morning.
- The Co-Chairs liked the 2-hour plenary session followed by paper, panel, and information sessions on Monday morning.

About networking

- The Co-Chairs recommended going back to the 30 minutes of networking in the morning.

Comments about courses and sessions

Name of Course or Session	Comments
<i>Training Courses</i>	
Remedial Investigation/ Feasibility Study (RI/FS) Scoping: Taking A.I.M. (Anticipate, Identify, and Manage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A different title for the course may have been more appropriate, such as “Emerging Issues Related to Site Characterization, Remedy Selection and Community Acceptance of an RI/FS.” The emerging issues that have the potential to occur at a RI/FS site appeared to dominate the training course. • For future offerings, revise the course format to include a group exercise to provide hands-on training and encourage class participation.
Remedy Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The course was more of a question and answer session than a training course. • Next time, have an introductory training course, like <i>How to Write a Record of Decision</i>, and an advanced training course or a panel session to facilitate questions and answers.
<i>Panel Sessions</i>	
DoD’s Perspective on Recent Advances in the Management and Remediation of DNAPL Source Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Moderator for the panel was effective because he knew where to draw the line. • Impressed by RPMs who took a “stand-up” approach and questioned what DoD said.
DoD's Perspective on Development of Innovative Approaches for Treatment of Emerging Contaminants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impressed by RPMs who took a “stand-up” approach and questioned what DoD said.

- Have training teams start earlier with development of new training courses to prevent a last minute rush with preparing and reviewing materials.
- Ask participants if an electronic version of presentation materials is acceptable or if they would like a hard copy when they register for courses and sessions.
- The Co-Chairs should follow-up on comments received from the training course and session evaluation forms.
- Provide a forum on QuickPlace to continue discussions started during courses and sessions at the training conference.

About field trips

- Water taxi field trip was successful.

About conference planning and communication

- Have more “lead time” for planning and organizing the 2008 NARPM Conference.
- Start a QuickPlace site to assist in planning the 2008 NARPM Conference.
- Allocate more time to discuss the training conference during the January face-to-face planning meeting.
- Hold a conference planning meeting in July with both incoming and outgoing Co-Chairs.
- Early communication between the NARPM and TSP Co-Chairs worked well.
- Encourage better communication between the HQ liaisons, TSP Forums, Co-Chairs, the Council, and regions before finalizing the conference agenda to curb inaccurate rumors regarding the conference.
- Communicate better before and during the training conference.

General comments

- The Co-Chairs liked the overall organization of the training conference.
- The Co-Chairs liked the scavenger hunt because it encouraged attendees to visit the Resource Area.
- The Co-Chairs were disappointed with the lack of attendance in the plenary sessions and field trips at the end of the training conference.
- The Co-Chairs thought the interaction between the Analytical Services Branch during the 2007 training conference was beneficial.
- The Co-Chairs should report the accomplishments of the 2007 training conference (i.e., we learned about QuickPlace and are implementing it, in the evaluation report, QuickPlace, or a Web portal).
- Announce nominations of Co-Chairs earlier in the week.

Recommendations Collected During the Moderator Debrief Session

The moderators held a debriefing session Thursday, May 24. The session, which included moderators, was used to solicit feedback and recommendations on the moderator's role. Moderators offered feedback on successes and lessons learned. The following recommendations were captured during the session:

- Send moderator tips by e-mail after the moderator tip call.
- Add “encourage participants to move forward in the class instead of sitting in the back of the room” to the moderators’ tip sheet.
- Include more tips on how to handle presenters who go over their time limit.
- Notify moderators of the received presentation titles posted on the planning Web site so they know what presentations they do and do not have.
- Clarify if moderators should take notes on a speaker’s presentation skills.
- Instate a file naming system.
- Send a reminder to all presenters notifying them of the session type (i.e., paper, panel, or information) and asking them to bring a backup copy of their presentations to the course.

Recommendations Collected During the Closing Plenary Session

During the closing plenary session on Friday, May 25, the NARPM Co-Chairs facilitated a group discussion to collect immediate feedback from participants about the training conference. The participants were asked to provide input on what went well, what would be good to change, and suggestions for courses to be offered at future training conferences. Comments captured were:

About what went well

- QuickPlace session – a useful tool that many did not know existed.
- Betsy Southerland’s presentation.
- Dr. Covello’s presentation.
- Contractor support – organized, phenomenal.
- Scavenger hunt.
- Networking – especially for long-term RPMs.
- FF – very informative, helpful to have Headquarters come.

About what would be good to change and/or courses wanted

- Distribute handouts because they provide the option to take notes during a presentation.
- Ensure handouts are double-sided or electronic.
- Allow more transition time. (*Two responses*)
- Allow time in schedule to see the extras – the TAGA bus, ERT Internet café, EPA ship. Avoids attendees having to skip courses and sessions to see these attractions.
- Clarify if RPMs should do independent government cost estimates.
- Use resources, such as systematic planning, that OSCs have.
- Include a site field trip in the Construction oversight course.
- Continue with contracting courses.
- Include more information on FF and continue investigations on munitions sites.
- Add:
 - Course on roles of different EPA offices, such as OSRTI and OSWER.
 - Hands-on session about tools available to RPMs and OSCs.

About how to prepare for the next conference

- Send presentations electronically prior to conference.
- Assure that course abstract is consistent with course material.
- Continue to use the NARPM newsletter.
- Simplify the NARPM intranet URL.
- Train instructors on how to be good speakers – use Dr. Covello’s three messages and encourage interactive activities.

General recommendations for the next conference

- Coordinate the opportunity for Headquarters representatives to meet RPMs face-to-face, such as a scavenger hunt.
- Hold field trips in the middle of the conference, like Wednesday.

- Hold field trips to remedial sites.
- Conduct a feedback session earlier in the week.
- Include a social event on Monday night to encourage mingling earlier.
- Change time in year to hold the training conference.

Recommendations from Tetra Tech

Tetra Tech developed recommendations for improving the training conference based on observations made during the week and discussions among members of the Tetra Tech team who supported preparations for the conference and provided on-site support.

About courses and sessions

- Ask for ideas, detailed abstracts, and potential instructors for training courses when the call for papers and panels is sent out for the 2008 training conference.
- Maintain the designated schedule for the call for papers and panels. A late call for papers and panels causes presenters to experience a time crunch.
- Consider adding higher level or more difficult courses for the more experienced RPMs. Clearly denote these courses on the agenda and in the registration process. A prerequisite may be needed, such as 5 or 10 years of experience, to assure spots are saved for experienced RPMs.
- Consider adding a discussion session where RPMs can meet their respective Headquarters representatives. This interaction would help RPMs establish a rapport with the Headquarters representative. Usually, the RPMs have little contact with Headquarters representatives because Headquarters representatives interact primarily with managers.
- Consider adding a discussion group for new RPMs. This would provide an opportunity for networking and troubleshooting problems specific to new RPMs.
- Continue to increase the involvement of RPMs as either instructors or members of the training teams. This helps assure the courses offered at the training conference are relevant to RPMs.
- Continue to have NARPM points of contact for individual courses or sessions to be responsible for reviewing training materials before they are final. Reviewers can be Co-Chairs, designated training team members, the training committee, or other training teams. These reviews help eliminate poorly formatted slides or handouts that are illegible or poorly written.
- Continue to make available on the training conference Web site a PowerPoint template and images for instructors and presenters to use when preparing their presentation materials.

General recommendations

- Encourage new RPMs, RPMs who have not attended past conferences, and RPMs who have not attended the training conference in several years to register for the training conference. This will ensure that a larger audience of RPMs is being trained.
- Continue to organize an activity for attendees who visit all the Resource Area exhibitors. This will encourage attendees to visit the exhibits and helped them become aware of the ERT Internet café.
- Consider adding a slide show during a plenary session that displays site work occurring at different sites in each region.