UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
RISK ASSESSMENT FORUM CHARTER
November 09, 2016

1. MISSION

The mission of the EPA Risk Assessment Forum (RAF; Forum) is to address risk assessment issues and develop Agencywide risk assessment guidelines, guidance and methods in support of Agency decision making in its mission to protect human health and the environment.

2. PURPOSE

Risk assessment informs the actions EPA takes in fulfilling its mission. The purpose of the RAF is to facilitate the sharing of risk assessment knowledge and approaches while harmonizing Agency risk assessment practices. The Forum brings together experts from across EPA to study and report on risk assessment issues from an Agencywide scientific perspective, thus continually enhancing the Agency's approach to risk assessment. The RAF provides the means for the Agency to consistently address key aspects of risk assessments and to achieve clarity and transparency in the risk assessment findings that inform Agency decisions.

3. SCOPE OF ACTIVITY

To address the Agency's science priorities and needs for decision making, the Forum focuses on topics fundamental to risk assessment and related science policy issues. The Forum reports to the Science and Technology Policy Council (STPC), which is chaired by the Science Advisor. Forum projects, charges, and products are approved by the STPC including final Forum products for public release and Agency implementation.

Forum activities include:

- developing risk assessment white papers, guidelines, frameworks and methodologies for use by the Agency;
- establishing and supporting technical workgroups of scientific experts to undertake relevant analyses;
- providing oversight to RAF technical workgroups;
- identifying and prioritizing risk assessment issues for the STPC to consider;
- conducting scientific and technical analyses to inform risk assessment;
- promoting Agencywide consensus on risk assessment issues; and
- advancing EPA's practice of risk assessment through a variety of mechanisms, including sponsoring colloquia, workshops, and training that explore scientific and risk assessment issues.

The Forum does not provide peer review and quality assurance for risk assessments developed by EPA programs, offices and regions or review risk management issues.

4. FORUM MEMBERS

Forum members are senior scientists from Agency programs, offices and regions. Members are nominated by senior Agency managers and selected based on experience and expertise in risk assessment and underlying disciplines such as toxicology, chemistry, ecology, microbiology,

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epidemiology, exposure science, and statistics. The overall composition of the Forum reflects a balance of scientific disciplines and Agency experience to meet the Forum's needs. The STPC and the SA will establish a process for nominating and selecting members of the Forum that will include a solicitation across all programs, offices, and regions. Forum members are appointed to four-year terms, with half of the membership rotating off the Forum every two years.

Responsibilities of Forum members include:

- providing objective scientific expertise;
- identifying issues ripe for Forum consideration;
- developing technical workgroup charges;
- participating in the development, oversight, review, and approval of Forum products;
- contributing to Forum activities including technical workgroups;
- sharing program, office and regional perspectives with the Forum;
- disseminating information about Forum activities within their program, office or region;
- approving of the Forum plan of work and annual report; and
- representing the Forum in appropriate settings.

The **Forum Chair** and **Vice Chair** are nominated by the Science Advisor and approved by the STPC. The Forum Chair and Vice Chair serve four-year concurrent terms. After the Forum Chair's four years have expired, the Science Advisor may choose to elevate the Vice Chair to the Forum Chair, with STPC approval, for another four-year term.

Responsibilities of the Forum Chair include:

- overseeing the Forum and the development of its products;
- reporting RAF activities to the STPC;
- working with the Executive Director/Coordinator to establish the RAF member nomination and selection process;
- chairing Forum meetings;
- representing the Forum in appropriate settings;
- working with Forum members to resolve significant issues and differences of opinion within the Forum; and
- developing and granting final RAF approval of the annual report and plan of work before submitting for STPC review.

Responsibilities of the Forum Vice Chair include:

- assisting the Forum Chair in overseeing the Forum and the development of its products;
- assisting in the development of the Forum's plan of work and annual report; and
- representing the Forum in appropriate settings in the absence of the chair.

Each Forum member serves on an Oversight Committee, based upon special expertise and interest in risk assessment areas, such as human exposure, ecology, and human health effects. One member is selected to serve as Oversight Committee chair. The Oversight Committees are responsible for the Forums' scientific quality by organizing and leading the Forum's oversight of technical workgroups including the Forum's review and approval of project charges, workplans, and products. The Forum Chair will assign each project to one Oversight Committee based on the project's scope. Forum

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members from other Oversight Committees, who wish to participate in the development or review of a project with the assigned Oversight Committee, are encouraged to do so. The Forum Chair may establish new oversight committees as deemed necessary. In an effort to improve productivity, the Forum Chair may explore alternative approaches for managing projects.

5. OFFICE OF THE SCIENCE ADVISOR

The Forum's logistical and operational needs are met by **Science Coordinators** and a **Forum Executive Director/Coordinator** from the Office of the Science Advisor (OSA). The Science Coordinators support the Forum's activities and workgroups, as scientifically and technically experienced staff, facilitating the work of the Forum. The Executive Director/Coordinator supports the Chair and Vice Chair, and functions as the Chief Operating Officer, coordinating OSA support to ensure that all logistical and operational needs of the Forum are met.

The responsibilities of the Science Coordinators include:

- supporting forum activities including development of Forum products, and organizing workgroup meetings, colloquia, teleconferences, and workshops;
- coordinating internal and external reviews of Forum documents;
- providing Forum members with status reports, including descriptions of on-going projects and schedules;
- identify and coordinate resource and process issues with OSA management;
- representing the Forum in appropriate settings; and
- providing scientific input and expertise to the Forum, workgroups, and the Executive Director/Coordinator.

The responsibilities of the Executive Director/Coordinator include:

- organizing Forum meetings and distributing pre-meeting materials;
- coordinating OSA activities that support the Forum;
- securing support and resources for Forum projects;
- resolving administrative obstacles;
- notifying in writing the supervisor of a new member indicating the new member's Forum status and attendant responsibilities, including time and resources that are expected to be dedicated to Forum activities;
- facilitating the nomination and selection process for Forum membership;
- together with the Forum Chair and Vice Chair, serving as liaison between the Forum and senior Agency officials and with other EPA and non-EPA organizations/agencies;
- working with the Chair and Vice Chair to develop the planning process, including to develop a plan of work; and
- developing the draft annual report, with input from the Chair and Vice Chair, to be approved by Forum membership.

6. PLANNING, PRIORITIZING AND REPORTING

The Forum establishes the planning process for identifying new high priority projects for recommendation to the STPC. The planning process should include criteria and methods for identifying priority proposals and is conducted on a regular basis (e.g., every two or three years). The Forum submits its plan of work to the STPC for approval. The Forum Executive Director, with input from the

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Chair and Vice Chair, will develop an annual report for approval by the RAF membership. The report will be submitted to the STPC following the end of each fiscal year.

7. WORKGROUPS

For each activity, the Forum establishes a technical workgroup, often called a technical panel, of scientific experts to conduct scientific review and analysis, and develop a draft RAF product. Workgroup members are chosen to ensure that necessary scientific and technical expertise is represented. Scientific experts from interested and affected EPA offices, programs and regions will be invited to participate. A workgroup chair is selected by the RAF Chair, in consultation with the Forum members and the Executive Director/Coordinator. The workgroup chair, with the assistance of the project's Science Coordinator, is responsible for developing the work plan, meeting established deadlines, identifying obstacles, and keeping the RAF informed of progress.

Authorship of RAF products should be consistent with the EPA's *Scientific Integrity: Best Practices for Designating Authorship.*

8. RAF REVIEW

The detailed plan for all levels of review will be included in the project's work plan. Upon the recommendation of the technical workgroup chair, the workgroup product is submitted to the assigned Oversight Committee which conducts the Forum's review. The review focuses upon the quality and accuracy of the product, and the utility for EPA programs and regions. At the Oversight Committee review meeting, the Oversight Committee chair will strive to reach consensus on the document, or any additional revisions recommended to it, before it is approved by the RAF for the STPC's consideration. If a significant difference of opinion exists between the review recommendations and the RAF workgroup, the RAF Chair and/or Vice Chair shall review the issue and develop a path forward in coordination with the Oversight Committee chair and Technical Workgroup chair prior to elevating the issue to the STPC.

This charter may be amended by the STPC.

This charter, effective immediately, supersedes the previous EPA Risk Assessment Forum Charter.

Personal Email / Ex. 6

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Date