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	U· S· DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR **OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING** **RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT** **DIRECTIVES SYSTEM**	**Subject Number:** SFP-2 **Transmittal Number:** 317 **Date:** 2/11/87

Subject: Planning and Management of Special Studies

Approval: Jed D. Christensen **Title:** Director

1. Purpose. This directive provides procedures for the planning and approval of special studies and the dissemination of the study results.

2. Definition.

Special Studies. Special studies are distinct planned investigations of specific components or subpopulations of an approved State program. They consist of a series of inspections and associated file reviews which are designed to answer the question for which the study was planned through reasonable conclusions based on sound analysis of the facts. Special studies may be conducted for those segments of the Annual Report format that require a series of inspections in order to make an evaluation, such as the national oversight objectives, bond releases, five-day inspections, etc. Special studies may also consist of inspections in addition to those required in the Annual Report format; however, other segments of the Annual Report format and its attendant charts which consist of routine administrative case reviews or record tabulations, and routine State action follow-up inspections are not special studies as defined in this directive.

3. Policy/Procedures.

a. Policy. Special studies shall be conducted where there is a need to evaluate those areas critical to effective program implementation, or to further investigate problems identified as a result of statistical sample inspections or other routine oversight activities. OSMRE shall conduct special studies in accordance with the procedures below. Information concerning the special study results will continue to be included in periodic and annual evaluation reports as well.

b. Procedures.

(1) Each Field Office Director shall:

(a) Develop and submit for approval by the appropriate Assistant Director for Field Operations, a special study proposal for each planned special study. The proposals shall be developed at the beginning of each evaluative year and prior to initiating any special study thereafter.

(b) Develop the special study proposal according to, the format in Appendix 1 of this Directive and address each topic therein so as to assure consistency in planning and reporting.

(c) Code each special study proposal according to the instructions in Appendix 1 of this Directive.

(d) As a part of the planning process and prior to obtaining approval of the special study proposals, allow the Assistant Director for Field Operations to provide the Assistant Director for Program Policy a two week-comment period for the special studies proposed.

(e) Upon approval by the Assistant Director for Field Operations, inform the appropriate State officials of the study and invite their participation as necessary.

(f) After the special study is completed, prepare a concise written Summary of Findings as outlined in Appendix 2 of this Directive, and address each topic therein.

(g) Submit and discuss the study results with the appropriate Assistant Director for Field Operations.

(h) Schedule a meeting with the State officials to discuss the study results and inform them of the measures necessary for the resolution of any problems identified.

(2) The Assistant Director for Field Operations shall:

(a) As a part of the planning and approval process, review each special study proposal and concurrently provide copies to the Assistant Director for Program Policy for his comments. The Assistant Director for Program Policy shall be allowed two weeks in which to comment on the special study proposals.

(b) Upon receiving the comments from the Assistant Director for Program Policy, approve or approve with modifications, or disapprove each special study proposal and notify the Assistant Director for Program Policy of the special studies to be conducted.

(c) Forward a copy of the special study results to the Assistant Director for Program Policy.

(3) The Assistant Director for Program Policy shall review each special study proposal and provide comments to the appropriate Assistant Director for Field Operations within two weeks of receiving the proposals.

Appendix 1

Proposal for a Special Study

Date:

Field Office: State:

|S| |S| | | | |

In addition to the MEIR SS code currently entered, each special study must be assigned a sequential number from 111 to 999 or a logical three letter acronym. Do not leave any blanks in the code blocks. The code must then be used as the "Type of Inspection" code for all inspections subject to the special study. The MEIR code BR, should no longer be used alone since all bond release inspections should be conducted as a special study. Example:

|S| |S| |I| |2| |3| or |S| |S| |O| |S| |M|.

I. Purpose of the special study (state as a question that the study is expected to answer):

II. Background (why is the question being asked; does the special study pertain to an OSMRE national oversight objective?)

A. Briefly describe the OSMRE reasons or findings that indicate the existence of the suspected problem:

B. Effects that the suspected problem has or may have on the State's approved program:

III. Methodology of the study (briefly discuss how the question will be answered):

A. Procedure to be used to collect the data:

B. Resources required to conduct the study:

4. Reporting Requirements.

At the beginning of each evaluative year and prior to initiating any special study thereafter, each field office director shall submit for approval by the appropriate Assistant Director for Field Operations, a special study proposal for each special study planned.

For each special study completed, each field office director shall submit to the appropriate Assistant Director for Field Operations, a written summary of findings.

5. References. None.

6. Effect on Other Documents.

a. Supersedes "Guidelines for Special Studies" memorandum dated June 16, 1983 from the Assistant Director, Program Operations and Inspection.

b. Supersedes "Planning and Management of Special Studies" memorandum dated June 24, 1986 from the Deputy Director, Operations and Technical Services.

7. Effective Date. Upon Issuance.

8. Contact. Chief, Branch of Inspection, (202) 343-5384.

Appendices

Appendix 2

Outline for the Written Summary of Findings

1. Purpose of the study (stated as the question to be answered):

2. Summary of data collected:

3. Brief analysis and discussion of data:

4. Summary and Conclusions (address the following):

   - answer to question(s) asked in the proposal for a special study
   - note any qualifications that need to be placed on the validity or accuracy of the answer
   - what should be done with the answer (resolution of the problem, are additional studies needed, etc.)

C. Estimated initiation and completion dates for the study and written Summary of Findings:

IV. Coordination with the State Regulatory Authority (briefly discuss the extent of the State's involvement with the special study and/or the manner in which the State will assist in conducting the study, as appropriate):

V. Approval:

Assistant Director for Field Operations

Date