

	<b>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT</b>  <b>DIRECTIVES SYSTEM</b>	<b>Subject Code:</b> TSR – 4
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<b>Subject:</b> Technical Studies		
<b>Approval:</b> Brent Wahlquist		<b>Title:</b> Director

1. **Purpose.** This directive establishes the procedures for the conduct and administration of technical studies that are funded in whole or in part by the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM). The technical studies are performed by parties other than OSM and include applied science projects, underground mine map projects, and technical investigations. These activities are conducted in support of the abandoned mine land and regulatory programs of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA).

2. **Summary of Changes.** This is a new directive.

3. **Definitions.** All terms used in this directive are used consistently with those in SMCRA and 30 CFR Chapter VII, except for those new terms defined below. The following is a list of the three types of studies and projects covered by this document.

a. **Applied Science Project.** An investigation that is selected through an annual solicitation process to develop and demonstrate the use of improved technologies, consistent with SMCRA, to address environmental and/or public safety issues related to regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation of abandoned mines.

b. **Technical Investigation.** An investigation or study of special topics, concerns or issues in association with SMCRA applications. The technical investigations/studies are conducted in partnership with states, tribes, researchers and/or others, and funded by OSM from sources other than the Applied Science Program budget.

c. **Underground Mine Map Project.** A project selected through an annual solicitation process that funds efforts by states or tribes to preserve, and archive mine maps and/or to provide a means for the public/private sector to acquire information from underground mine maps.

4. **Policy.** OSM is committed to the use of sound science in both its abandoned mine land and regulatory programs. In order to advance the use of sound science in its programs, OSM will provide funding and support for appropriate technical studies that:

- resolve technical questions or issues related to the purposes of SMCRA;
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the SMCRA state, tribal, and Federal regulatory and reclamation programs;

- improve protection of the public and environment by promoting technology development and transfer related to surface coal mining and reclamation;
- capture, preserve, and improve the public availability of historical information such as underground mine maps and geological records that will improve the safety of the public and of mine workers;
- build and/or enhance state and Federal working relationships with academic institutions in the coal fields;
- communicate good science and technology to the mining and reclamation community; and
- stretch the limited OSM funds through promoting outside participation such that OSM funds are utilized to design, monitor and conduct studies while mine operators or others conduct the earthwork or cover other expenses involved in construction/implementation.

All scientific information generated or disseminated by OSM will comply with basic standards of quality to ensure and maximize its objectivity, utility, and integrity. OSM will ensure that information disseminated will be developed from reliable methods and ensure information quality at each stage of information development. OSM's guidelines for this topic can be found on its website at <http://www.osmre.gov/pdf/fr111302.pdf>. Department of the Interior's guidance can be found on its website at [www.doi.gov/ocio/guidelines/515Guides.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/ocio/guidelines/515Guides.pdf).

## 5. **Responsibilities.**

a. OSM Senior Management responsible for technical studies consists of the Director, Deputy Director, Regional Directors, and Assistant Director Program Support. The OSM Senior Management determines applied science and underground mine map policy, selects applied science project priority topics, determines annual funding strategy, and selects projects.

b. OSM Senior Management Sponsor is an OSM senior executive who provides management direction and oversight to the National Technology Transfer Team.

c. National Technology Transfer Team (NTTT) is an OSM sponsored team with members from the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC), Western Interstate Energy Board (WIEB), and National Association of Abandoned Mined Land Programs that promotes technology development, transfer and distribution initiatives, products, and services for surface coal mining and reclamation. The NTTT identifies potential applied science priority topics; develops the annual solicitation for applied science project proposals; develops dissemination strategies for the annual solicitation; ranks project proposals for use by OSM Senior Management in annual project selections; ensures that funded projects meet intended goals; and disseminates applied science project results via seminars, forums, workshops, publications, newsletters, fact sheets, and websites.

d. Underground Mine Map (UGMM) Steering Committee is a joint OSM, IMCC, and WIEB committee that was formed to promote the acquisition, digitization, preservation, and distribution of underground mine maps. The UGMM Steering Committee develops the annual solicitation for underground mine map project proposals; develops dissemination strategies for the annual solicitation; ranks project proposals for use by OSM Senior Management in annual project selections; ensures that funded projects meet intended goals; and disseminates project results to interested parties as appropriate.

e. Directorate National Technology Transfer Team Representative – for applied science and underground mine map projects only – is the Directorate’s representative to the NTTT. The Representative responsibilities include:

- (1) Provides timely feedback to the Project Technical Representative and the Grants Financial Specialist (or contracting officer if appropriate) on the quality and adequacy of the recipient product submissions;
- (2) Ensures that internal tracking reports are updated in a timely manner;
- (3) Updates the Technology Transfer Website in a timely manner; and
- (4) Distributes final reports to the National and Regional Technology Transfer teams.

f. Grants Financial Specialist prepares the cooperative agreements, obtains the appropriate approvals, and maintains the financial files and reports. The Grants Financial Specialist responsibilities include:

- (1) Assures OSM’s compliance with OSM Directive GMT-10 (FAM) and the Federal regulations;
- (2) Acts as the primary contact with the recipient on fiscal, administrative, and financial matters;
- (3) Provides copies of quarterly financial and performance reports to the Project Technical Representative; and
- (4) Works with the Project Technical Representative to resolve issues with the recipient.

g. Project Technical Representative serves as the primary technical contact between OSM and the recipient by carrying out the following:

- (1) Assists the Grants Financial Specialist in developing and administering each agreement;

(2) Carries out the Technical Representative roles identified in the cooperative agreement and in FAM;

(3) Ensures that, in accordance with the Department of Interior Manual 505 DM2, OSM provides the “Substantial Federal Involvement” necessary and appropriate to achieve agreements goals;

(4) Reviews products, reports, and deliverables and advises the Grants Financial Specialist on needed actions;

(5) Identifies issues or barriers encountered that can interfere with attaining the project’s goals and objectives and immediately brings these to the attention of the Grants Financial Specialist and the Directorate Technology Transfer Team Representative;

(6) Works with recipient to ensure that reports are received in a timely manner;

(7) Sends recipient’s products to the appropriate technology transfer team representative for quality review and for processing by the NTTTT;

(8) Prepares a summary analysis of reports and product deliverables in standard formats within 30 days of receipt and submits one copy each to the Grants Financial Specialist and the Directorate Technology Transfer Team Representative;

(9) Assists the appropriate OSM management and NTTTT members with the resolution of any technical problems found with product submissions by the grantee; and

(10) Develops a two page fact sheet that summarizes the results of the project for use in technology transfer.

## 6. **Procedures.**

a. **Applied Science Project Procedure.** The following procedure and approximate timelines will be followed:

(1) On an annual basis, OSM announces the solicitation of proposals for eligible projects during the first quarter of each fiscal year that funding is available for the Applied Science Program;

(2) OSM allows at least 60 days for interested parties to submit proposals;

(3) The NTTTT, or a subgroup thereof, reviews, ranks the proposals, and develops a summary of the highest ranked proposals for consideration by OSM Senior Management;

(4) The Directorate from which the highest ranked proposals originate conducts additional reviews as necessary to ensure each project meets all Federal assistance, legal, and technical requirements, and provides the NTTT comments regarding the appropriateness of each proposed project and its budget within two weeks of receipt;

(5) NTTT provides OSM Senior Management the summary listing of top rated projects along with any concerns generated by the financial and technical review;

(6) OSM Senior Management makes a final decision on which proposals to fund considering funding availability and the consensus ranking of the NTTT and other agency factors;

(7) OSM notifies successful applicants; and

(8) As soon as required applications are received from the successful applicants and funding becomes available, OSM begins awarding funds. The successful recipient or grantee will submit financial reports and technical reports as outlined in the FAM and in the funding agreement.

b. Underground Mine Map Project Procedure. The following procedure and approximate timelines will be followed:

(1) On an annual basis, OSM announces the solicitation of proposals for eligible projects during the first quarter of each fiscal year that funding is available. In addition, OSM notifies the individuals responsible for SMCRA abandoned mine land and regulatory programs, and the State Geologist for each state where coal mining has occurred;

(2) OSM allows at least 60 days for interested parties to submit proposals;

(3) Members of the UGMM Steering Committee review and rank all of the proposals;

(4) The Directorates from which the highest ranked proposals originated conduct additional reviews as necessary to ensure each project meets all Federal assistance, legal and technical requirements, and provide the UGMM Steering Committee comments regarding the appropriateness of each proposed project and its budget within two weeks of receipt;

(5) UGMM Steering Committee provides OSM Senior Management a complete listing of the consensus ranking results along with any concerns generated by the financial and technical review;

(6) The OSM Senior Management makes a final decision on which proposals to fund considering funding availability, the consensus ranking by the UGMM Steering Committee and other factors;

(7) OSM notifies successful applicants; and

(8) As soon as the required applications are received from the successful applicants and funding becomes available, OSM begins awarding funds. The successful recipient or grantee will submit financial reports and technical reports as outlined in the FAM and in the funding agreement.

c. Technical Investigation Procedure. OSM offices may initiate technical investigations to resolve technical questions or issues related to the purposes of SMCRA. OSM offices may enter into partnerships, contracts, or cooperative agreements with state, tribal, Federal, university and other organizations to accomplish these purposes. Funding will come from sources other than the OSM Applied Science Program budget.

7. **Reporting Requirements.**

a. Report Distribution Within OSM. The project technical representative will provide summaries of the interim technical reports and both a summary and the complete final project report, along with any technology transfer products, to the Directorate Technology Transfer Team Representative who will distribute as appropriate to OSM, tribal, and state program managers.

b. Report Distribution to SMCRA States and Tribes. For Applied Science Projects, the Directorate Technology Transfer Team Representative will provide paper and/or electronic copies of the final report and any supporting materials to all NTTTT members, the region's OSM, state and tribal technology team representatives and other potentially interested parties. Where document or file sizes are large, the Directorate may send notifications to the organizations named above announcing completion of such a project and providing information on how to acquire project results.

c. Making Project Results Available to the Public. For Applied Science Projects and others as appropriate, OSM will further announce availability of project results by various means including the OSM website and through technology transfer events. The appropriate Directorate will ensure that the technology transfer website is updated to include project status reports, final technical reports and other project information that may contribute to meeting the purposes of SMCRA. The technology transfer website will contain instructions for the public to acquire copies of project results.

8. **Effect on Other Documents.** None

9. **References.** Section 201(c) (5) of SMCRA

10. **Effective Date.** Upon Issuance

11. **Distribution.** By electronic format

12. **Appendices.** None

**Contact:** Mid-Continent Regional Director