



EPA's Regional Laboratory Response Preparedness Project

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Regional Drinking Water Laboratory Response Preparedness Project

Purpose:

Assist EPA Regions with improving intra-regional laboratory preparedness for response to actual or suspected drinking water contamination incidents.

Develop and evaluate region-specific laboratory response plans.

Establish the foundation for the Water Laboratory Alliance (WLA).





Project Overview

The Drinking Water Laboratory Response Preparedness Project consists of four phases:

- Develop a response plan template
- Facilitate meetings in each region to refine/customize plan template to meet the needs and challenges of labs in each region
- Table top exercises in each region to practice what the laboratories have agreed to in their customized plan
- Functional exercises to practice what the laboratories have agreed to in their customized plan

The EPA Water Security Division (WSD) has agreed to support each stage through contractor support and travel reimbursement for plan participants.



RLRP Project Status Update

- This project started in August 2006
- Phase 1: Develop a response plan template
 - Status: Completed Oct 2006
- Phase 2: Customize plans for each Region
 - Status: Meetings completed in all Regions (Oct 2006- Mar 2007) and Draft Plans completed for 8 Regions



RLRP Project Update (contd.)

- Phase 4: Functional Exercises in each Region
 - Options Paper being Reviewed by EPA
 - To be conducted in all Regions in FY 2008
 - Will involve Regional Laboratories, state and local partners



About the RLRPs

- Utilize existing capabilities and capacity
 - Laboratories already belong to numerous networks
 - Relies on existing capabilities and procedures already established in the laboratories
- Focus of Regional Plans
 - Drinking water events only
 - Fixed laboratories only
 - May or may not be limited to emergency response



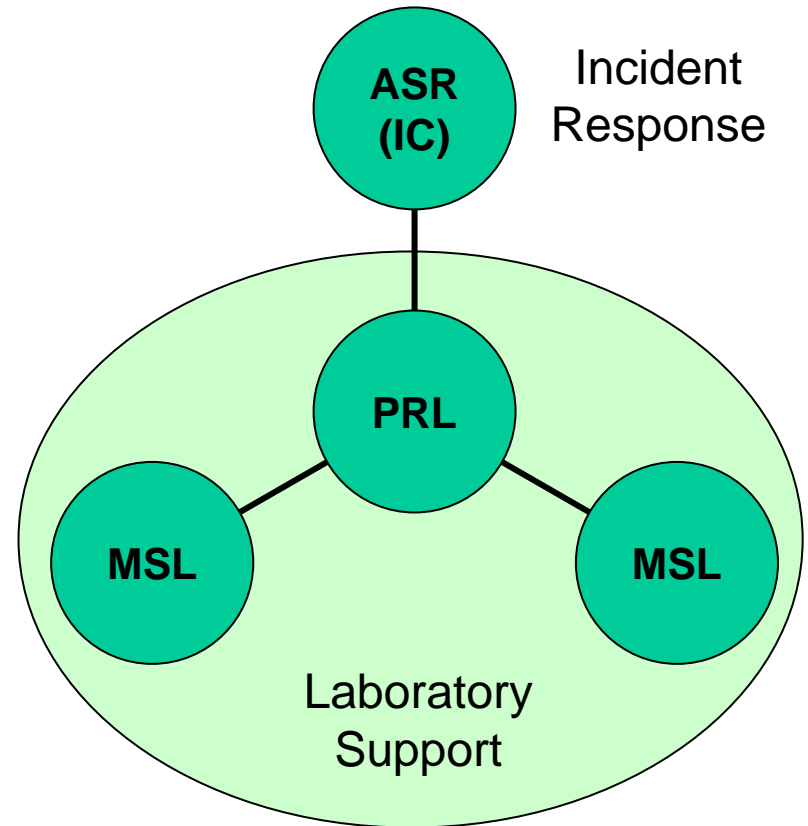
RLRP Support

- Types of support laboratories could provide as part of the RLRP
 - Analytical support
 - Loaning of reagents and disposables
 - Loaning of staff
 - Data review
 - Sample storage
 - Consulting
- Laboratories Flexibility
 - Accept or not accept analytical requests



RLRP Operations

- Concept of operations
 - Will use a Primary Responding Laboratory (PRL)/ Mutual Support Laboratory (MSL) structure initiated by an Analytical Services Requester (ASR) (usually the Incident Commander (IC))
 - In some states, a state drinking water program will be inserted between the ASR and the PRL





Participants & Plan Commitment

- Plan participants
 - Primarily include EPA Regional Laboratory and state laboratories (environmental, public health, agriculture, natural resources, etc.)
 - Include major drinking water utility laboratories (through state laboratories)
- Participants will use the EPA Environmental Laboratory Compendium to track capabilities
- Participants in Regions are taking different approaches to formalize the plans (MOU, LOA, direct signature, etc.)
- Across regions, participants agree that having the plan in place was a good first step



Challenges and Issues

- Funding
- Keeping Plans up to date
- Training
- Equipment
- Data Management and Exchange



Contact Information

- For more information on the RLRP Project, please contact:

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