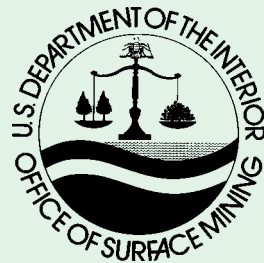


**OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING
RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT
CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT**

AUGUST 1996



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Executive Order 12862, *Setting Customer Service Standards*, requires agencies to conduct and report on customer service. In conjunction with this executive requirement and in support of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's (OSM) continuing effort to be more responsive to our customers opinions and needs, the following report has been prepared.

The report addresses the following:

Section 1 provides an overview of the agency including its mission, vision, customers and services offered.

Section 2 summarizes how well we did in accomplishing the standards that have been in place over the past two years.

Section 3 lists OSM's revised FY 1997 Customer Performance Standards. These new standards reflect OSM's efforts to integrate its planning, budgeting and customer standards into one comprehensive package aligned with its business line structure and the way it does business.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement relies on you and values your opinions and suggestions for continual improvement of the Agency. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your suggestions.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Section 1

MISSION

The mission of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) is to carry out the requirements of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) in cooperation with States and Tribes. Our primary objectives are to ensure that coal mines are operated in a manner that protects citizens and the environment during mining and assures that the land is restored to beneficial use following mining, and to mitigate the effects of past mining by aggressively pursuing reclamation of abandoned coal mines.

VISION

In regulating active coal mining, we will maintain compliance at high levels and ensure that all mines are properly operated and promptly reclaimed to the standards established under the Act. We will emphasize prevention and ensure that long-term environmental problems do not occur. We will ensure that the premining productivity of the land is restored.

In reclaiming abandoned mine lands, we will aggressively pursue reclamation with a primary emphasis on correcting the most serious problems related to public health, safety, and the general welfare in accordance with priorities established in SMCRA. We will ensure maximum public benefit through the prompt and fair distribution of appropriated AML funds.

In cooperating with State regulatory authorities, the primary enforcers of SMCRA, and with Tribes, we will promote a shared commitment to the goals of the Act. We will develop comprehensive understandings about the fairness, effectiveness, and efficiency of SMCRA programs. We will provide constructive program reviews, oversight monitoring, and technical assistance that focus on results. We will act independently to protect the public interest in situations of imminent harm or when a State does not implement an approved regulatory program.

In dealing with those who are affected by mining and reclamation, we will ensure the protection of citizens from abusive mining practices, be responsive to their concerns, and allow them full access to information needed to evaluate the effect of mining on their health, safety, general welfare, and property.

In our relations with the coal industry, we will have clear, fair, and consistently applied policies and will respect the importance of coal production as a source of our Nation's energy supply.

In all communications, we will maintain open, courteous, constructive, and timely dialogue and will use information to understand and improve our programs and those of our State and Tribal partners.

In demonstrating leadership in mining and reclamation, we will promote the development of the highest quality technical information and research and will seek the transfer of technology to those who would benefit.

In meeting our responsibilities, we will be a diverse, competent, innovative, and highly-trained work force. We will serve with integrity, and demonstrate technical, legal, administrative, and professional excellence at all times. We will constantly strive to create a more responsive, efficient, and effective process for achieving SMCRA's objectives.

OUR CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS

Our customers and partners include coalfield residents, environmental and citizen groups, the coal industry who operate under and are affected by SMCRA, and the states who are the primary regulators of SMCRA.

SERVICES OFFERED

OSM has identified four major lines of business and eighteen program activities which are outlined in the following table.

Business Line	Program Activity
Environmental Restoration	State Funding State Performance Evaluation Federal/Indian Lands Emergencies Program Development and Maintenance
Environmental Protection	State Funding State Performance Evaluation Federal Programs Federal Lands Indian Lands Program Development and Maintenance Applicant Violator System
Technology Development and Transfer	Technical Training Technical Assistance Technology Transfer
Financial Management	Revenue Management Fee Compliance Financial Management

FY 1996 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Section 2

As OSM employees, we will put our best efforts forward in striving to provide customers with the best possible service by addressing their needs in a courteous, accurate and timely manner to ensure complete customer satisfaction. To measure our progress in achieving this goal, OSM has tracked and measured the following customer service standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION

For abandoned mine land emergency complaints:

The initial site visit and determination of emergency will be addressed within 48 hours of complaint.

Accomplishments: A sampling showed a mean elapsed time of 1.2 days for a site visit to be made.

The method to be used to abate the emergency will be determined within 30 days after the initial complaint.

Accomplishments: A sampling showed a mean of 4.4 days for a determination to be made.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

For State program amendments, the availability of State program amendments will be announced in the Federal Register within 20 business days after receipt.

Accomplishments: A sample showed 100% of the amendments were announced in the allotted time frame.

For the OSM Applicant Violator System, we will provide permit recommendation evaluations to the States within 72 hours of request.

Accomplishments: Permit recommendations were made within 72 hours of request in 3,421 out of 3,422 occurrences.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

For abandoned mine land fee collections:

OSM-1 forms will be mailed out 30 days prior to the due date.

Accomplishments: 98% of forms mailed within standards.

Fee Collections correspondence will be responded to within seven days.

Accomplishments: 99% of correspondence were responded to within seven days.

Telephone calls will be responded to within one day.

Accomplishments: 96% of telephone inquiries were responded to within one day.

Refunds will be processed within one month after receipt.

Accomplishments: 87% of refunds were made within one month of receipt.

**FY 1997 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS
Section 3**

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) has revised its *Customer Performance Standards* to more closely align them with the way it does business. Over the past two years, OSM has developed a strategic planning process with a mission and vision statement and strategic goals. In addition, the Agency has developed the concept of "Business Lines" as a way of explaining, supporting and achieving its mission and goals along with a new budget structure which reflects the business line concept. It is OSM's intent to integrate all of its planning, budget and customer related requirements into one comprehensive package. This is one chapter in that effort.

The following *Customer Performance Standards* reflect a representation of the organization's strategic goals. Each goal is customer or stakeholder oriented, and therefore is reflective of those efforts. In addition there are more detailed customer performance standards that are indicative of OSM's business lines and program activities that cascade down into many of the products and/or services that the Agency provides.

There are five major standards; one for each strategic goal that is stated in OSM's strategic plan. Following those are Customer Performance Standards, in more detailed form, that reflect how customers will be treated at the Business Line and Program Activity level.

Following are OSM's five strategic goals and the Customer Performance Standards for each.

GOAL	CUSTOMER PERFORMANCE STANDARD
In cooperation with the States and Tribes, we will prevent environmental problems in the coal fields	In cooperation with our partners, the States and Tribes, we have established a shared commitment to protect the coal field citizenry and environment from the adverse affects of surface coal mining.
We will aggressively pursue the reclamation of Abandoned Mine Lands (AML)	In cooperation with our partners, the States and Tribes, we have established a shared commitment to restore abandoned mine lands to safe, healthy and productive use, and to respond to abandoned mine land emergencies situations as soon as possible.
We will resolve the major management, communication, and organizational problems that have hampered our performance in the past	We will empower our employees and delegate them more responsibility and authority to make decisions in order that requirements of SMCRA can be carried out more effectively and efficiently. This will make OSM a more responsive organization and thus protect the people and environment from adverse affects of surface mining.
We will develop and maintain a sound relationship with States and Tribes	We will continue to strengthen and build upon the shared commitment with our partners, the States and Tribes, in order to carry out the requirements and intent of SMCRA.
We will improve relationships with citizens and the industry	We will treat our customers and stakeholders with respect and respond to their concerns in a fair, equitable and timely manner. We will provide them the opportunity for input into our planning process and will provide them feedback on our decisions.

The following are more specific *Customer Performance Standards* as they relate to OSM's business lines and the products and services that the Agency provides.

Environmental Restoration

In order to achieve continued improvement of the State AML program in achieving the goals of SMCRA, we will accurately evaluate the State's implementation of its AML program by measuring hazard abatement and restoration of disturbed lands.

For emergencies in Federal program states and states without emergency programs an initial site visit and determination of emergency will be made within 48 hours of the complaint.

We will eliminate, as rapidly as practicable, suddenly occurring hazards to human health and safety resulting from pre-1977 coal mining activity.

We will minimize exposure of the public to the suddenly occurring hazards (time from emergency report to start of actual work).

We will abate high priority hazards to human health and safety resulting from abandoned coal mining operations.

We will restore disturbed lands and abate environmental damages resulting from abandoned coal mining operations.

We will provide for continued Federal, State and Tribal capability, authority and responsibility to implement the provisions of Title IV of SMCRA.

In order to ensure continued State/Tribe responsibility and authority to implement approved AML programs: we will encourage the timely resolution of outstanding 30 CFR Part 884 letters; and review, in a timely manner, State reclamation plan amendments.

For emergencies in Federal program states and states without emergency programs the abatement method will be determined within 30 days after the initial complaint, unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond the Agency's control.

For emergencies in states which administer their own program state emergency declarations will be finalized by us within eight hours of receipt of the State submittal.

We will work with the States and Tribes to increase the acres of land made available for productive use in each state with sites in the AML inventory.

We will work with the States and Tribes to increase the number of successful cooperative acid mine drainage (AMD) clean-up efforts.

We will process each submitted complete grant application within 60 days of receipt.

Environmental Protection:

In order to achieve continued improvement in State primacy programs, Federal Programs and Federal Lands Programs, in achieving the goals of SMCRA, we will accurately evaluate the success of State program implementation by measuring reclamation success and off-site damages.

We will provide timely and efficient access to public files.

We will provide reports to permittees within 15 business days.

We will provide the opportunity to meet and confer with citizens regarding problems and issues relating to environmental protection and surface coal mining operations.

We will work with the States, Tribes, industry and citizens to decrease the rate and extent of observed off-site impacts.

We will work with the States and Tribes to increase the rate of mined acres which meet the bond release criteria and are ultimately released.

We will ensure that timely and successful reclamation is completed on those lands affected by surface coal mining operations.

We will work with the states to increase the number of acres released from Phase III bond.

We will work with the states to increase the number of successful cooperative acid mine drainage (AMD) prevention/avoidance efforts.

We will protect the environment and the public from off-site impacts attendant to or resulting from surface coal mining and reclamation operations.

We will ensure that coal mining operations on Federal lands are regulated by either States under cooperative agreements or by OSM.

We will conduct program operations with due regard to Trust responsibility, and Government to Government relations.

We will draft statutory provisions, for presentation to the Department and the Congress, to allow Tribes to seek primacy in the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation on Indian lands.

Upon passage of legislation, we will assist Tribal governments in accordance with their desires to become the primary regulatory authority under SMCRA.

We will provide for continued Federal, State and Tribal capability, authority and responsibility to implement the provisions of Title V of SMCRA.

We will resolve all outstanding 732 and program exception issues within one evaluation year.

The availability of State program amendments will be announced in the Federal Register within 20 business days after receipt.

State program amendments will be processed within 6 months of receipt.

Our Applicant Violator System (AVS) office will provide permit recommendation evaluations to the States within 72 hours of request.

Our AVS office will provide abandoned mine land emergency and non-emergency contract award evaluations within 72 hours of request.

Our AVS office will respond to outside industry requests for information within 10 business days of request.

Our AVS office will respond to OSM, State and Industry requests for Ad Hoc computer reports within 15 business days of request.

Technology Development and Transfer:

We will provide technical assistance through timely and high quality technical training in areas related to SMCRA. The training will result in the increased ability of regulatory and reclamation personnel to meet their duties and responsibilities in a more informed, efficient and effective manner.

We will identify customer needs, and provide opportunities for customer input into program curriculum, and to participate directly in program implementation by serving on course design and presentation teams.

We will increase usage of the Technical Information Processing System (TIPS).

We will increase the number or percentage of students utilizing knowledge from courses as indicated on surveys.

Each office will document a public outreach effort and its impact on decision making in each state during the evaluation year.

We will make sound environmental decisions by applying engineering and scientific principles with computers in areas of data entry, analysis, validation, storage, transfer, and problem solving with accepted and appropriate software models or applications.

Trainees will be able to apply analytical tools gained in training to everyday regulatory workload – industry in preparing permits, and regulatory authorities (State, Federal and Tribal staff) in conducting review and analysis of electronic documents and files (text, data, maps and management systems).

We will provide computer enhanced analyses to improve efficiency of the permit process and design of reclamation plans for Abandoned Mine Land and bond forfeiture sites.

We will provide science-based computer applications to analyze environmental issues leading to successful reclamation and transition to postmining land use.

We will ensure that a framework exists between OSM and its customers within which existing technical problems can be raised, evaluated, and resolved by sharing through open discussion and evaluation in an atmosphere conducive to learning and applying the latest technical research and solutions available.

Through the Western Regional Technical Team meetings and monthly conference calls, feedback will be solicited and followed to ensure customer satisfaction. We will provide early identification of technical assistance needs and provide prompt response to requests for customer satisfaction.

We will conduct workshops and interactive technical forums to facilitate the sharing of experiences and raising issues for the resolution of specific Title IV and V environmental issues involving all

stakeholders (States, Tribal, industry representatives, citizens and OSM).

We will establish work groups to identify and recommend solutions to technical problems where potential environmental damage or non-achievement of SMCRA goals is in question. We will resolve long standing issues/problems leading to successful reclamation and full SMCRA compliance.

At OSM's mine map repository:

Each scheduled visitor will be provided prompt and courteous service.

Letter and telefax requests will be answered within one working day, except for a request requiring extensive research and mass reproduction of mine maps.

Requested site locations will be provided within 90 minutes of your inquiry.

Materials will be available to help you identify and easily locate the underground mine site.

Financial Management

OSM-1 forms will be mailed out 30 days prior to the due date.

Reclamation Fee correspondence will be responded to within seven days, and telephone calls answered within one day.

Refunds will be processed within one month of receipt.