



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

October 17, 2003

ADMINISTRATOR
OFFICE OF
INFORMATION AND
REGULATORY AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT'S MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FROM: John D. Graham, Ph.D. *JPG*

SUBJECT: Guidance for the Information Quality Annual Agency Report to OMB

This memorandum provides guidance to assist you in preparing your Information Quality Agency Annual Report to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), as required by the Information Quality Law. The first agency reports are due to OMB by January 1, 2004. As stated in the Oct 4, 2002 PMC memorandum, "the descriptions you provide to OMB should be designed to help us (and the public) understand the substance of the issues the agency has resolved through the administrative correction processes and the effectiveness of the administrative correction processes in resolving the concerns of the complainants." The attached template should be used as you compile your reports. To provide further clarification of what we are seeking, I have also attached an example of a completed template. Should you have any further questions about the annual report, OMB will be happy to assist you.

I would also like to take this opportunity to applaud those agencies that have taken extra steps to ensure that the Information Quality Act is implemented in a transparent manner. The Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Transportation, and the Forest Service have been posting all their correction requests, responses, and subsequent appeals correspondence on web sites dedicated to Information Quality. These web sites provide examples of the types of best practices that we would like to see across the government.

As is often the case with new administrative processes or statutes, implementation of the Information Quality Law has been a learning experience. Many agencies have engaged OMB early in the process of responding to complaints. Experience has shown us that engaging OMB staff early helps to speed the pace at which agencies can respond to correction requests. For instance, OMB is accumulating a bank of knowledge regarding ways in which agencies have been responding to certain types of correction requests. Sharing this type of 'lessons learned' information has proven very useful.

The recently released OMB Proposed Bulletin on Peer Review and Information Quality requests that agencies that do not post complaints on the Web, share all 'non-frivolous'

correction requests with OMB within seven days of receipt. I encourage you to review the Bulletin to further understand the type of communication we are seeking. Additionally, I hope each of the agencies will provide OMB with comments on the Bulletin.

We are still in the early phases of implementation of the Information Quality Act, and we expect that the process will evolve and change as we look back and learn from our successes and mistakes. The annual reports will be extremely useful in helping us to understand how well the Federal Government has done during this first full year of implementing the Information Quality Act. The importance of information quality justifies a strong commitment by both OMB and the agencies, and we plan to continue our original stance of making this a priority. I look forward to your continued collaboration with us.

Attachment

Instructions:

Attached below is a template for you to use as you compile your agency reports. It includes a template for a cover page, as well as a template for individual correction requests you have received. Additionally, we have provided an example of a completed template.

Please send all completed IQ reports (they are due January 1, 2004) electronically to:
informationquality@omb.eop.gov

If you have further questions contact:

Nancy Beck
nbeck@omb.eop.gov
202-395-3258

or

Margo Schwab
mschwab@omb.eop.gov
202-395-5647

Year-End Information Quality Report Format

I. Cover Sheet: Requests for Correction Received FY 2003

Department Name:

Period Covered:

Agency Name [list agencies]	Number of Requests Received	Number Designated as Influential
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-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----
	Total	Total

II. Template: [Please copy and complete the template below for each request for correction received by your agency. Wherever possible, please use excerpts from the request. Note: If your agency received more than five requests for correction that are thematically similar (e.g., map corrections for flood insurance or accident report corrections or claims), please fill out only one template to summarize all similar requests].

- **Agency Receiving Correction Request:** [include Department, Agency, and Subagency, as applicable]
- **Requestor:** [name, affiliation, and type of organization (e.g., Law Firm, Trade Organization, Corporation, Public Interest Group, etc)]
- **Date Received:** [include the date on the letter head and the date it was logged in by the appropriate IQ officer. Also include how it was received (e.g. internet, mail, fax)]
- **Summary of Request:** [describe in a few sentences, using excerpts from the request where appropriate, the dissemination in question and the concerns stated about the information being disseminated. Identify the way in which the information in question is being disseminated or used – e.g., name of the proposed rule or report, or the method of dissemination of the information in question]
- **Description of Requested Correction:** [describe in a few sentences, using excerpts from the request where appropriate]
- **Influential:** ___ Yes ___ No ___ Undetermined [As determined by the agency based on your definition of influential, as provided in your Information Quality Guidelines. (“Undetermined” can be used either because a determination has not yet been made or because the agency feels a determination is unnecessary as the agency has treated the information as influential.)]
- **First Agency Response:** ___ in progress ___ completed [if completed, provide date of response]
- **Resolution:** [describe in a few sentences, quoting the response where appropriate; indicate whether the agency corrected the information in accordance with the request; or offered a different correction; or determined that the information was not amenable to correction; or determined that the agency’s interpretation of information differs from the petitioner’s; or other resolution. Additionally, indicate if the agency addressed the request as part of response to comment or during ongoing adjudication or other mechanism if appropriate]
- **Appeal Request:** ___ none ___ in progress ___ completed [date of response]
[provide: date of appeal request (both the date on the letterhead and the date it was logged in by the appropriate IQ officer)]

- **Summary of Request for Reconsideration:** [describe in a few sentences, using excerpts from the request where appropriate, why petitioner believes original response to be insufficient, and any substantial new information provided]
- **Type of Appeal Process Used:** [describe in a few sentences; identify the mechanism used to reach the decision, e.g., senior official review or oversight panel from within the same agency]
- **Appeal Resolution:** [describe in a few sentences, quoting the response where appropriate, how the agency resolved the appeal, and categorize the correction as: initial decision upheld; or information corrected per request; or offered a different correction; or other – describe]

(Below is a template that has been filled out to serve as an example.)

- **Agency Receiving Correction Request:** HHS/NIH/NIEHS/NTP
- **Requestor:**
Jerry Cook
Chemical Products Corporation
Independent corporation
- **Date Received:** November 15, 2002, received electronically
- **Summary of Request:** “The Anthraquinone sample tested in the long term NTP studies reported in Draft TR-494 contains a mutagenic contaminant which has rendered the Draft TR-494 report and the peer review of that Draft report invalid.” “CPC requests that the abstract of Draft Technical Report TR-494...be withdrawn from the NTP web site and all other locations where it is available to the public.”
- **Description of Requested Correction:** “CPC requests that the abstract of Draft Technical Report TR-494...be withdrawn from the NTP web site and all other locations where it is available to the public. We request that it be replaced with a statement explaining that a contaminant in the Anthraquinone sample tested by NTP confounded the results of the testing and that Draft TR-494 will be withdrawn, rewritten, and resubmitted for peer review.”
- **Influential:** ___ Yes ___ No X Undetermined
- **First Agency Response** ___ in progress X completed
NTP responded March 19, 2003
- **Resolution:** The following information was added to the NTP web site: “1)A statement that the anthraquinone sample used in our two-year study and in the Salmonella mutagenicity test giving positive results contained 0.1% contamination by 9-nitroanthracene. 2) A description of our follow-up mutagenicity and metabolism studies. The findings from those studies will be added to the web site after they are finalized.”
- **Appeal Request:** ___ none ___ in progress X completed
Appeal received March 27, 2003
NIEHS responded September 8, 2003
- **Summary of Request for Reconsideration:** “Anthraquinone, was itself not mutagenic, but instead was contaminated with a strong mutagen. Incorrect information concerning Anthraquinone has been offered to the public on the NTP website for over 3 years...” “We have asked, once again, that the abstract of draft TR494 be removed from the NTP website and replaced with an explanation of the non-mutagenic nature of Anthraquinone and contamination of the test material with a mutagen...”

- **Type of Appeal Process Used:** senior official review
- **Appeal Resolution** “The abstract of draft TR-494 will immediately be removed from the NTP website. Further studies are underway on the metabolism of anthraquinone in rodents and on the relative mutagenic potency of this compound, its major metabolites, the contaminant 9-nitroanthracene, and two isomers of 9-nitroanthracene. Additional information from this work will eventually be incorporated into a revised abstract and technical report which will be submitted for peer review and subsequent publication.”