

Reclamation Manual

Policy

TEMPORARY RELEASE

(Expires 06/30/2009)

Subject:	Certification of Select Water Resources Management Reports
Purpose:	To establish quality assurance requirements for certification of select Reclamation water resources management reports. The benefits of this Policy are improvements in quality of Reclamation's water resources management reports and consistency among reports selected for certification.
Authority:	The Reclamation Act of 1902 (Act of June 17, 1902, 32 Stat. 388), as amended and supplemented.
Approving Official:	Commissioner
Contact:	Director, Office of Program and Policy Services

1. **Policy.** Reclamation Senior Executive Service (SES) members are responsible and accountable for water resources management reports (Reports) produced under their delegated authority. Certain Reports will be selected by the SES member who is delegated authority for the Report, to be certified before they are approved and released. Selection and subsequent certification of selected Reports will conform to the requirements stated in this Policy and those found in the accompanying Reclamation Manual (RM) Temporary Reclamation Manual Release (TRMR), FAC TRMR-23, *Performing Certification of Select Water Resources Management Reports*.
2. **Scope.** Certification is required for any Report prepared or procured by Reclamation that is selected by an SES member¹ because it exhibits one or more of the following characteristics:
 - A. Contains budgetary commitments that have significant Reclamation-wide impacts;
 - B. Is to be provided directly to Congress on behalf of the Administration;
 - C. Would likely be used or referenced by Reclamation or project proponents to seek congressional authorization or appropriation; or
 - D. Presents results, conclusions, or recommendations that are inconsistent with RM Policy, Directive and Standard, or TRMR requirements (unless a specific legal authority has been provided or a waiver approved²).

¹The SES member with delegated authority for a Report is responsible for determining if the Report will be selected to be certified.

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3. **Definitions.**

- A. **Water Resources Management.** For this Policy, water resources management is defined as those planning, design, construction, operations, maintenance, rehabilitation, and/or dam safety activities performed by Reclamation to accomplish its mission. More specifically, for purposes of defining the scope of this Policy, water resources management includes those functional areas included in the *RM Program* series³, but not the *RM Administrative* series⁴ (see <http://www.usbr.gov/recman/>).
- B. **Report.** A formal, substantial document prepared or procured by Reclamation to accomplish water resources management activities (as defined in Paragraph 3.A. above).

4. **Responsibilities.**

- A. **Commissioner.** The Commissioner is ultimately responsible for the quality of Reclamation Reports and the credibility of the organization as supported by those Reports.
- B. **SES Members.**
- (1) Each Reclamation SES member will ensure Reports that are prepared or procured within a functional area for which they have delegated authority and that are included within the scope of this Policy are certified in conformance with this Policy and the accompanying FAC TRMR-23. The SES member will, following consideration of the Report certification documentation (see FAC TRMR-23, Paragraph 8) completed for a Report they have selected for certification, make the decision whether or not to certify the Report.
 - (2) SES members will provide their certified Reports to the appropriate officials for their review and approval (e.g., by the Commissioner, the Office of the Solicitor,

²Requirements for requesting and processing waivers are found in Reclamation Manual Directive and Standard RCD 03-03, *Request for Waiver from a Reclamation Manual Requirement and Approval/Disapproval of the Request*.

³*Program* series included in the scope of this Policy: Environmental Management; Project Planning and Facility Operations, Maintenance, and Rehabilitation; Land Management and Development; Loans, Grants, Rehabilitation and Betterment and Distribution; National and International Affairs; Program Economics, Revenues, and Contracts; Research, Testing, and Technical; Security and Law Enforcement; and Water Management and Development.

⁴*Administrative* series excluded from the scope of this Policy: Acquisition and Financial Assistance Management; Administrative Management; Budget Management; Financial Management; Human Resources Management; Information Resource Management; Property Management; Records Management; and Safety Management.

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the Assistant Secretary - Water and Science, the Secretary of the Interior, the Office of Management and Budget, Congress, and/or other entities) on a Report-by-Report basis.

5. **Individuals to Perform Report Certification Activities.** The SES member will select individuals to perform Report certification activities from their staff, from other Reclamation organizations, or from outside Reclamation.
6. **Primary Characteristics of Report Certification.** Each certification effort will be:
 - A. Performed by qualified individuals selected by the SES member, who have, as practicable, not directly participated in the subject activity or Report preparation.
 - B. Integrated into the work process so that the investment in certification is most cost effective.
 - C. A complete and comprehensive review of the Report, conducted to comply with requirements as stated in this Policy and FAC TRMR-23.
7. **Documentation of Report Certification.** Documentation of certification information will be prepared and signed by those who performed the certification activities. A Report is certified when the SES member signs the Report certification documentation. The documentation will become part of the official record.