

# Reclamation Manual

## Policy

<b>Subject:</b>	Bureau of Reclamation's Directives System (the Reclamation Manual (RM))
<b>Purpose:</b>	Establishes the RM as Reclamation's directives system. The benefits of this Policy are improved internal and external communications, efficiency, and transparency of Reclamation-wide requirements for doing business.
<b>Authority:</b>	381 Departmental Manual (DM) 1, <i>Directives Management</i> ; and 200 DM 1, <i>Delegation of Authority</i>
<b>Approving Official:</b>	Commissioner
<b>Contact:</b>	Director, Policy and Program Services (PPS) (84-50000)

### 1. Introduction.

- A. The Department of the Interior requires each of its bureaus to establish a directives system setting forth its bureau-wide requirements (see 381 DM 1.2). Reclamation's directives system is the RM. The RM supersedes the sunset Reclamation Instructions in its entirety.
  - B. Requirements set forth in the RM do not supersede those set forth in higher-level authorities, such as statutes, Executive Orders, regulations, Office of Management and Budget Circulars and Bulletins, Secretarial Orders, and departmental directives.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Applicability.** This Policy applies to all Reclamation employees who participate in the development and approval of RM releases. It has limited applicability to discretionary guidance documents. See Paragraph 3.A., defining "Discretionary Guidance" and see Paragraph 10 for pertinent requirements.
3. **Definitions.** For the purposes of this Policy and RM Directive and Standard (D&S), *Reclamation Manual (RM) Release Procedures*, [RCD 03-01](#), the terms in this Paragraph are defined as follows:
- A. **Discretionary Guidance.** Discretionary guidance explains, but does not create requirements and provides guidance for implementation. Examples of discretionary guidance include handbooks, manuals, guidebooks, and other instructional materials.
  - B. **Program.** An agency function (e.g., water contracting, accounting, resource management) through which Reclamation performs activities and provides services in support of its mission.

<sup>1</sup>While these are not part of the RM, the RM website provides direct links to supplements to higher-level regulations, such as the Federal Acquisition Regulation and Federal Property Management Regulation.

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- C. **Reclamation Manual.** The RM consists of the current set of RM releases, which establish requirements, assign program responsibility, and establish and document required methods of doing business. It is divided into three components according to the three types of RM releases identified in Paragraph 3.D.(2). The RM references higher-level directives but does not restate them.
- D. **Reclamation Manual Release.**
- (1) An RM release is a written document that:
    - (a) states one or more Reclamation-wide requirement;
    - (b) sets the framework and provides direction for management decisions;
    - (c) initiates or governs actions, conduct, or procedures; and/or
    - (d) describes results to be achieved.
  - (2) The three types of RM releases are
    - (a) **Policy.** Policy reflects the Commissioner's leadership philosophy and principles and defines the general framework in which Reclamation pursues its mission. Policy is structured to encourage innovation to accomplish implementation at the local level.
    - (b) **Directives and Standards.** D&S provide the level of detail necessary to ensure consistent application of Policy Reclamation-wide. The D&S, however, are also structured to provide flexibility to local offices, allowing the unique aspects of each Reclamation project and program to be taken into consideration.
    - (c) **Temporary Reclamation Manual Releases.** Reclamation issues Temporary Reclamation Manual Releases (TRMRs) to accelerate the release of Policy and D&S or make temporary changes in requirements. TRMRs will either be incorporated permanently into the RM within 1 year or expire. Requirements for final approval of TRMRs are identical to those for permanent releases. TRMRs have the full force of permanent Policy or D&S (Paragraphs 3.D.(2)(a)-(b)).
4. **Responsibilities.**
- A. **Commissioner.** The Commissioner is responsible for approving RM requirements and waivers from the requirements in RM Policy and TRMR Policy. See Appendix A for the Commissioner's re delegation of authority for approving certain RM releases. See

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RM D&S, *Request for Waiver from a Reclamation Manual Requirement and Approval or Disapproval of the Request*, [RCD 03-03](#), for specifics on the approval or disapproval of waivers from RM requirements.

**B. Senior Executives.** Reclamation Senior Executives who have been delegated authority to approve RM releases will:

- (1) provide oversight to ensure that RM releases conform to the requirements in this Policy and RCD 03-01;
- (2) support and provide resources for development, revision, and review of RM releases;
- (3) decide whether draft RM releases will be provided for official internal and external comment independently or concurrently; and
- (4) approve or disapprove waivers from requirements for RM D&S and TRMR D&S for which they are the approving official. See RCD 03-03 for specifics on the approval or disapproval of waivers from RM requirements.

**C. Director, Policy and Program Services.**<sup>2</sup> The Director, PPS will:

- (1) manage the RM;
- (2) support the oversight function for the RM (Paragraph 4.B.(1));
- (3) provide training support related to the RM (Paragraph 4.D.(5)); and
- (4) assist with the RM request-for-waiver process outlined in RCD 03-03.

**D. Managers and Supervisors.** Managers and supervisors will:

- (1) inform new employees and contractors of the existence and location of the RM and their responsibility for understanding and adhering to the Policy and D&S contained within the RM;
- (2) ensure their employees comply with all RM release requirements for doing business consistent with the effective date of the RM release;
- (3) determine the need for RM releases for their programs;

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<sup>2</sup>These responsibilities are in addition to the PPS Director's responsibilities as a Senior Executive and a member of the Reclamation Leadership Team.

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- (4) serve as the originating office (see Paragraph 5.A. of RCD 03-01) for development and revision of RM releases for their programs, ensuring that:
  - (a) RM releases do not conflict with or unnecessarily duplicate other RM releases, which requires collaboration with other affected offices;
  - (b) RM releases are written in clear, accurate, and concise language, while providing sufficient information for intended users to implement their requirements; and
  - (c) RM releases are current;
- (5) review draft RM releases; and
- (6) provide training on RM procedures, as necessary.

### 5. **Policy.**

- A. Reclamation will use the RM to establish and formally communicate, internally and externally, Reclamation-wide requirements necessary for the consistent and efficient accomplishment of its mission. All requirements set forth in the RM constitute official Reclamation-wide mandates.
- B. Reclamation will not establish Reclamation-wide requirements by issuing memoranda or any other means outside of the RM process established by this Policy and RCD 03-01.

6. **Collaboration with Affected Offices.** Reclamation will develop RM releases through collaborative efforts among affected offices to ensure balance between centralized responsibility for establishing RM requirements and decentralized implementation. Collaboration will be documented in the request for internal review and comment as described in Paragraph 5.A.(4) of RCD 03-01.
7. **Communication with Potentially Affected Outside Entities.** Reclamation will post draft RM releases on the RM website for public comment for a minimum of 30 calendar days. Final RM releases and points of contact for additional information will be available at <http://www.usbr.gov/recman>.
8. **Identification of Benefits.** RM releases will be designed to contribute to the accomplishment of Reclamation's mission. See Paragraph 6.A.(2) of RCD 03-01 for related requirements.
9. **Waivers from Reclamation Manual Requirements.** Adherence to requirements in the RM is mandatory unless specifically waived in writing. RCD 03-03 sets forth requirements for waiver requests.

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10. **Discretionary Guidance.** Discretionary guidance is not included in the RM and must state that it does not create requirements. Discretionary guidance must specifically identify the sources, in the RM and elsewhere, of the requirements it addresses. The Senior Executive issuing discretionary guidance is solely responsible for the discretionary guidance their organization produces and shall ensure that it does not conflict with RM and other requirements.