

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Subject:	Request for Deviation from a Reclamation Manual Requirement and Approval or Disapproval of the Request
Purpose:	Establishes a process for Bureau of Reclamation Senior Executives to request to deviate from a Reclamation Manual (RM) requirement and the approval or disapproval of the request. The benefits of this Directive and Standard (D&S) are improved communication and transparency of decision making.
Authority:	381 DM 1, <i>Directives Management</i>
Approving Official:	Director, Policy and Administration (Policy)
Contact:	Business and Administrative Services Division, Program Services Office (84-52100)

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). The Commissioner has established the RM as Reclamation's directive system in RM Policy, *Bureau of Reclamation's Directives System - Reclamation Manual* ([RCD P03](#)).
- B. Adherence to all requirements in RM releases is mandatory.¹ However, if a Senior Executive determines a deviation from a RM requirement is necessary, a request to deviate from the requirement will be made in accordance with this RM release. The request will be reviewed and resolved by the Senior Executive responsible for the program function. Deviations will not be granted for statutory, regulatory, Executive Order, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), or Departmental requirements that are applicable to Reclamation.

2. Applicability. This D&S applies to all Reclamation employees, particularly Senior Executives who:

- A. have determined a deviation from a RM requirement is needed, or
- B. are responsible for approving or disapproving deviation requests for a particular program.

3. Definitions. - See Paragraph 3 of RCD P03 for definitions applicable to this D&S.

¹An overall description of the RM is found in RCD P03 and RM D&S, *Reclamation Manual Release Procedures* ([RCD 03-01](#)).

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4. Responsibilities.

A. **Commissioner.** The Commissioner² is responsible for approving or disapproving requests for a deviation from a Policy requirement.

B. Senior Executives.

- (1) Senior Executives are responsible for requesting a deviation when they determine it is in Reclamation's best interest to deviate from a particular RM requirement.
- (2) Senior Executives identified as the contact or approving official on a RM release are responsible for:
 - (a) reviewing the deviation request and recommending to the Commissioner whether to approve or disapprove the request for deviation from RM Policy or Temporary Reclamation Manual Release (TRMR) Policy;
 - (b) reviewing the deviation request and determining whether to approve or disapprove the request to deviate from RM D&S or TRMR D&S;³
 - (c) providing an explanation in accordance with Paragraph 5.D.(3) if a deviation request is disapproved;
 - (d) determining if a revision to RM Policy or TRMR Policy is warranted based on the deviation request and recommending the revision to the Commissioner in accordance with RCD 03-01;
 - (e) determining if a revision to RM D&S or TRMR D&S is warranted based on the deviation request and revising the D&S or TRMR D&S in accordance with RCD 03-01; and
 - (f) submitting the deviation request to their supervisor, (i.e., Deputy Commissioner) if the deviation is for a requirement within the program function for which the requesting Senior Executive is responsible, who will then perform the activities assigned to the Senior Executive in the Paragraph 4.B.(2).

C. **Reclamation Manual Manager.** The RM manager (84-52100) shall receive and maintain a copy of each deviation request and each approval or disapproval.

²The Commissioner's authority may be redelegated in accordance with the Departmental Manual, Executive Order, OMB, or Secretarial Order.

³Contact the RM manager (84-52100) if an approving official has not been identified on the RM release. Identification of an approving official on each RM release has not always been required; however, the RM manager maintains the approvals of all RM releases, and the information is available upon request.

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5. **Procedure for Requesting, Reviewing, and Approving or Disapproving Deviations.**
- A. **Requesting a Deviation from a Reclamation Manual Requirement.** When a Senior Executive becomes aware that it would be in the best interest of Reclamation to deviate from a RM requirement, a deviation will be requested. The request, containing at least the information specified in Paragraph 5.B., will be transmitted to the Senior Executive responsible for the program within which the deviation is being requested. A copy of the deviation request must be provided to the RM manager (84-52100).
- B. **Contents of the Deviation Request.** The deviation request will include the following information:
- (1) identification of the Senior Executive making the request;
 - (2) explanation of why compliance with the RM requirement is not in the best interest of Reclamation, including an exact reference to the requirement in the RM;
 - (3) issue or problem faced and proposed action;
 - (4) duration of the request for deviation;
 - (5) potential Reclamation-wide effects (positive and/or negative) if the deviation is approved or disapproved;
 - (6) position of interested parties if the deviation is approved or disapproved;
 - (7) potentially precedent-setting implications if the deviation is approved; and
 - (8) a plan for internal and external communication if the deviation is approved.
- C. **Reviewing the Deviation Request.** The Commissioner or Senior Executive, as defined in Paragraphs 4.A. and 4.B., will review the deviation request and contact the requestor for additional information and/or discussion as necessary.
- D. **Communicating the Decision.**
- (1) **Policy or Temporary Reclamation Manual Release Policy.** Senior Executives identified as the contact on RM Policy or TRMR Policy will review the request and recommend to the Commissioner whether to approve or disapprove the request (see Appendix A template).
 - (2) **Directives and Standards or Temporary Reclamation Manual Release Directives and Standards.** The Senior Executive identified as the approving official on RM D&S or TRMR D&S will review the request and either approve or disapprove the request (see Appendix B template).

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- (3) **Approval/Disapproval of Deviation Request.** The Commissioner (Policy or TRMR Policy) or Senior Executive (D&S and TRMR D&S) will mark whether the deviation is approved or disapproved, sign the deviation request, and return it to the requesting Senior Executive who in turn will provide a copy to the RM manager (84-52100). If the deviation is disapproved, the disapproving official will provide an explanation of why the deviation was not approved.

6. **Appendices.**

- A. **Appendix A.** Sample Requesting Deviation from Reclamation Manual Policy.
- B. **Appendix B.** Sample Requesting Deviation from Reclamation Manual Directive and Standard.

RECLAMATION MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Effective Date: _____

Release No. _____

Ensure all employees needing this information are provided a copy of this release.

Reclamation Manual Release Number and Subject

Summary of Changes

NOTE: This Reclamation Manual release applies to all Reclamation employees. When an exclusive bargaining unit exists, changes to this release may be subject to the provisions of collective bargaining agreements.

Filing instructions

Remove Sheets

Insert Sheets

All Reclamation Manual releases are available at <http://www.usbr.gov/recman/>

Filed by: _____

Date: _____