

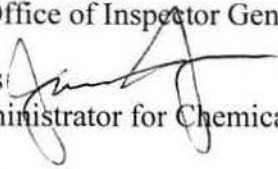


UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

NOV 13 2015

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Response to Office of Inspector General Final Report No. 15-P-0279

FROM: James J. Jones 
Assistant Administrator for Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

TO: Arthur A. Elkins, Jr.
Inspector General

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the issues and recommendations in the final report entitled "EPA's Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards Program Lacks Adequate Support and Transparency and Should Be Assessed for Continuation," dated September 15, 2015. This memo discusses OCSPP's position on each of the final report recommendations. For those report recommendations with which the agency agrees, we have provided intended corrective actions and estimated completion dates.

AGENCY'S OVERALL POSITION

The Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards (PGCCA) are an effective tool for publicly acknowledging innovative technologies that help solve important environmental problems. EPA believes the PGCCA serve a critical role in raising the profile, importance, and credibility of green chemistry technologies. For a relatively minimal investment, the PGCCA showcase and highlight the tremendous pollution prevention potential of innovative technologies once commercialized and in the marketplace. Consequently, EPA will continue to support the PGCCA.

In accordance with the OIG's recommendations in the final report, OCSPP will remove the PGCCA results from the Pollution Prevention Program's annual performance results reporting at the end of the current program performance year. However, because we believe that thoughtful analysis, information-sharing, and outreach on green chemistry is an important component of our chemical safety mission, the Agency will continue to capture and analyze environmental results data from the PGCCA, using OCSPP's existing Green Chemistry Matrix system. EPA agrees with the OIG on the importance of investment in a data and results system and an enhanced feedback system on the impacts of the PGCCA, and will be developing mechanisms to gather post-award impacts and results among winning technologies. To further improve our existing data system, and fully implement the OIG's recommendations, OCSPP will also work to address backlogs in data entry. Finally, OCSPP will also be undertaking corrective actions to develop a PGCCA-specific logic model which links program activities to outcomes, goals and measures.

AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO FINAL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

No	Recommendation	Corrective Action	Estimated Completion Date
1	Discontinue the use of Green Chemistry Awards data in EPA pollution prevention performance metrics until controls over data quality are implemented.	OCSPP agrees, and will discontinue the use of PGCCA program data in EPA pollution prevention performance metrics.	September 30, 2015
2a	Implement a system to track and analyze data and environmental results collected by the program.	OCSPP agrees, and will complete the entry of backlogged PGCCA program data into the existing tracking system (the Green Chemistry Matrix system). Note: this system will be used for information outreach and education purposes only.	September 30, 2016.
2c	Improve data integrity by ensuring that domestic and international benefits are separate and distinct when being reported.	Since PGCCA program data will be used for information outreach and education purposes only, benefits will not need to be segregated.	Not applicable.
2d	Develop program-specific goals, objectives and measures.	OCSPP will expand the Green Chemistry Awards component of the existing Pollution Prevention logic model to include program-specific goals, objectives and measures.	September 30, 2016
2e	Link the program's activities to EPA and Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention strategic plan goals and performance measures.	OCSPP will expand the Green Chemistry Awards component of the existing Pollution Prevention logic model to link the program's activities to EPA and Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention strategic plan goals and performance measures.	September 30, 2016
2f	Create a program-specific logic model that reflects outputs and short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes of the program.	OCSPP will expand the Green Chemistry Awards component of the existing Pollution Prevention logic model to reflect outputs and short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes of the program.	September 30, 2016

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Janet L. Weiner, OCSPP's Audit Liaison at (202) 564-2309.