



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

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

May 5, 2023

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Response to Planned Corrective Actions for Office of Inspector General
Report No. [23-P-0003](#), *The EPA Met 2018 Water Security Requirements but Needs to Improve Oversight to Support Water System Compliance*, issued November 21, 2022

FROM: Sean W. O'Donnell 

TO: Radhika Fox, Assistant Administrator
Office of Water

Thank you for your February 15, 2023 memorandum, which includes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's planned corrective actions and estimated completion dates for the recommendations issued in the subject Office of Inspector General report. We appreciate that you agreed to all of the recommendations. However, planned corrective actions are only partly responsive to our recommendations.

Recommendation 1: The Office of Water agreed with Recommendation 1 and proposed corrective actions that are partly responsive. The OW laid out corrective actions that will lead to an update of its section 2013 of the America's Water Infrastructure Act *Strategic Communications Plan* by August 2023. This update will be based on the findings from an after-action report the OW intends to complete by June 2023. However, it is unclear if this updated plan will support community water systems so that all systems comply with all certification requirements included in section 2013 of AWIA, including past and future deadlines related to risk and resilience assessments and emergency response plans.

Recommendation 2: The OW agreed with Recommendation 2 and described the work it is already doing related to the recommendation. However, the OW needs to provide the OIG with an estimated completion date for when it intends to integrate section 2013 of AWIA information into the modernized SDWIS database.

Recommendation 3: The OW agreed with Recommendation 3 and described the work it is already doing related to the recommendation. While a continuous improvement process is good, the OW needs to provide the OIG with an estimated completion date for its review of risk and resilience assessments and emergency response plans completed by community water systems under section 2013 of the AWIA. Completing a certain number of reviews prior to finalizing the after-action report the OW mentioned in its response to Recommendation 1 would be a reasonable approach to completing actions to fulfill the intent of Recommendation 3.

Recommendation 4: The OW agreed with Recommendation 4 and proposed a corrective action that is partly responsive. The OW proposed that it would place a section 2013 of AWIA fact sheet in its *Water Supply Guidance Manual* by May 2023. However, the OW needs to propose a corrective action and estimated completion date for updating its publicly available guidance with any improvements identified

in the finalized after-action report.

As a result, we consider the recommendations issued in the subject report unresolved. EPA Manual 2750 requires that recommendations be resolved promptly.

We will post your memorandum and this memorandum on our public website at www.epa.gov/oig.

cc: Cameo Smoot, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of Water
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