



INTERSTATE TECHNOLOGY & REGULATORY COUNCIL

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Partnership for Accelerated Characterization FY-97 Summary Report (ASC-1)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION:

The ITRC and ASTM established a partnership on accelerated site characterization to improve communication between the ITRC and ASTM, and to undertake cooperative efforts to develop protocols and standards for innovative environmental site characterization processes. ITRC is a national coalition of state environmental regulatory agencies working cooperatively with federal agencies and other stakeholders to promote development, acceptance, and interstate deployment of innovative environmental technologies. ASTM is a world leader in developing consensus-based standards for technologies and technical systems.

The ITRC/ASTM Partnership for Accelerated Site Characterization report summarizes the results of this initial year, including development of a state- and stakeholder- reviewed ASTM Expedited Site Characterization (ESC) Guide, proposed pathways and criteria by which ITRC might take advantage of the ASTM process, and recommendations on specific steps for future interactions between the ITRC and the ASTM.

BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP:

ITRC involvement with ASTM during the past year revolved around ITRC review of the ESC Guide. In addition, the Partnership used a Virtual Private Network, which provided communication among team members. Also, interested ITRC members were provided with a one-year paid ASTM membership which allowed increasing familiarity for those ITRC members with ASTM processes and products.

The ITRC/ASTM Task Team has been able to:

- Identify ITRC products, past and present, as candidates for the ASTM Standards process.
- Develop pathways and criteria for application of the ASTM Standards development process to ITRC needs.
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THE ITRC REVIEW OF ESC GUIDE:

The ITRC states and stakeholders provided review on drafts of the ESC Provisional Guide, including Draft 7.0, which is on the Fall ASTM D18 Committee/Society Ballot and is expected to become a full consensus ASTM Standard. Seven major issues were identified by the ITRC technical review process as needing additional information or definition; these have been addressed in the current Guide. In addition, a number of significant revisions were also made to the guide in response to ITRC members' input.

RESULTS OF SURVEYING THE STATES ON THE ITRC/ASTM PARTNERSHIP:

The ITRC solicited additional information from ITRC state Point-of-Contact's (POCs) through a questionnaire. In the interest of developing further ASTM/ITRC partnerships each state was also asked to recommend future standards development projects between ITRC and the ASTM.

More than half of the states responding to the questionnaire had used ASTM Guides or Standards in the past. Nearly half the states responding thought the ITRC review improved the quality and usefulness of the ASTM ESC Guide. While most states responded that they do not currently use ESC techniques, they indicated that there are plans to use ESC in future projects. Some states recommended that state adoption/acceptance could be accelerated by having EPA adopt the ESC guide; states would likely follow suit in a more expedient manner in this case.

CONCLUSIONS:

The partnership engendered a mutually beneficial relationship between the ITRC and ASTM over the past year. ASTM and the ITRC have developed better understandings of each other's organization and work. Both agreed that the ITRC state and stakeholder review of the ESC Guide had a substantial and positive impact on the quality of the Guide. State regulatory agencies are principle users of the guide and can in fact recommend its use as they become familiar with its benefits.

The positive results of ITRC review of the ESC guide suggests that application of the ITRC review process to other ASTM standards would be beneficial. Recommendations for future ASTM/ITRC Partnership activities include becoming familiar with ASTM Standards and relaying state needs for ASTM standards development.

It is clear that there are opportunities for ASTM and the ITRC to partner in the future by having ASTM use its peer review process to standardize ITRC products. Pathways and criteria presented for opportunities for interactions are: involvement as individual members of ASTM; utilizing a full ITRC-member review of ASTM Standards; and, selection of ITRC products to become ASTM standards. Interactions between the ITRC and ASTM have also demonstrated the need for follow-up work and continued involvement. The following report describes activities, the responsible organization and a schedule for initiating these activities.