



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

THE ADMINISTRATOR

signed: January 13, 2003

MEMORANDUM

Subject: Streamlining of communications product development and approval;

and,

Delegation of final product approval

To: Assistant Administrators  
Regional Administrators  
Inspector General  
General Council  
Chief Financial Officer  
Associate Administrators  
Staff Office Directors

EPA Order 2200.4A, EPA Publication Review Procedures (06/04/84), establishes procedures for development and approval of communications products. Currently, production responsibilities are those of the originating office while final approval resides in the Office of Public Affairs here in headquarters. Technological advances have tremendously changed communications since 1984 and public interest in our programs has expanded. For these reasons, over the past year or so, the headquarters Office of Public Affairs (OPA/OA) has coordinated with most of your offices to review Agency procedures for developing, evaluating and approving both Web and hardcopy communications products. This review resulted in three recommendations:

- That the product development and approval process be strengthened by placing content review and approval authority for regional and program communications products within the offices of the Assistant and Regional Administrators, General Counsel, Chief Financial Officer and Inspector General with monitoring only by OPA/OA.
- That product development procedures and style guides be revised.
- That the online communications product review tracking system, PROTRAC, be upgraded from prototype to an agency-wide operating system.

The last two of these recommendations have been implemented by authority vested in OPA/OA:

- Publishing procedures have been revised and incorporated into a document titled Policy and Implementation Guide for Communications Product Development and Approval. This is a working document that will be revised as future needs require and may eventually be evaluated through the directive review system. The guide as currently drafted is available at <http://intranet.epa.gov/prodreview/guide/>.
- PROTRAC, which facilitates planning, coordination and archiving of communications products from conceptualization to publication, has been upgraded and will soon be installed in each of your offices.

The remaining recommendation is that content of the Agency's communications products be the responsibility of the originating office. I concur and am therefore delegating the authority for final approval of program and regional communications products, including Web content, to Assistant and Regional Administrators, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer and the Inspector General (collectively referred to as Delegates) with only monitoring by OPA/OA. This is an interim delegation pending the revision of EPA Order 2200.4A. OPA/OA retains its consultant functions and will monitor hardcopy and Web publications, and when necessary, will withdraw them from publication. I am asking each of you to develop a plan for your implementation of the guidance outlined by the Policy and Implementation Guide for Communications Product Development and Approval prepared by OPA/OA. OPA/OA will review and approve the plans.

Consistent with my memorandum of January 11, 2002, "Improving EPA's Web Site," I strongly recommend that the responsibility for development and final approval of both Web and hardcopy products be coordinated through your Communications/Public Affairs Directors, who have the necessary skills to evaluate the tone, policy, and messages conveyed in communications products. It is essential that you ensure adequate resources are provided to carry out this function.

This delegation supercedes Section 3 of EPA Order 2200.4A for the delegates only. OPA/OA will continue to approve publications produced by staff offices within the Office of the Administrator. OPA/OA will provide additional guidance concerning the implementation of this delegation.

Thank you for your assistance in building an effective communications program across the Agency.

Christine Todd Whitman  
Administrator