

CHARTER
National
Technical Innovation and Professional Services Team (TIPS)
Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement
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Article I. Team Operations

Section 1.01 Team Mission

To enhance the technical skills of States, Tribes, and Office of Surface Mining staff by providing advanced engineering and scientific software and hardware, along with the

training and assistance necessary to use them. Users apply practical Technical Innovation and Professional Services (TIPS) tools in efforts that regulate ongoing coal-mining operations and their reclamation and help to reclaim lands that have been degraded by past coal mining.

Section 1.02 Customers and Services

Our customers are States, Tribes, and OSMRE offices. Customer services include:

- Training Program
- Software and Hardware
- Research and Development
- Technical Assistance upon request

The team is committed to providing customer-focused computer applications and technical assistance. The team makes every effort to schedule work on projects to accommodate conflicting schedules of different customer groups. To ensure that customers' needs and requirements are being met to the degree possible the team periodically surveys its customers for feedback. Based on this and other feedback the team makes adjustments to improve the quality of services delivered.

Section 1.03 Relationship of the Team to the OSMRE Structure

The Team Manager is the WR TIPS and Technology Transfer Branch Manager and reports to the WR Technology Management Division Chief. The Team Manager will coordinate major TIPS activities with the Chairperson of the TIPS Steering Committee. The Team Manager will coordinate personnel workload and regional concerns with the Chiefs of other Divisions of the Appalachian, Mid-Continent, and Western Regions, the Knoxville-Field Office Director and other appropriate OSMRE officials.

Section 1.04 Team Etiquette

All team members are expected to follow proper team etiquette when interacting with the team members. Each member will be on time for team meetings and prepared to discuss issues identified on the agenda. No member is to commit significant team time or resources without team approval or to represent the TIPS team on significant issues that have not been agreed upon by the team.

All members are expected to support team decisions. It is the responsibility of members to voice concerns at team meetings. No personal attacks on team members will be tolerated. Members are expected to support other members and share relevant information in a timely manner.

Members are expected to meet deadlines for which they are responsible. If they cannot, they are expected to inform the Team Manager in advance. Members are expected to attend team meetings when held.

Section 1.05 TIPS Branch Chief

The TIPS Branch Manager provides pro-active leadership for TIPS services nationwide. The TIPS Branch Manager supports the team's goals for mutual commitment, trust, and interdependency among team members, OSMRE management, Steering Committee, and customers. Duties are as follows:

- Provide coordination and integration of TIPS services nationally.
- Coordinate the nationwide implementation, operation and maintenance of TIPS.
- Ensure the smooth operation of the National TIPS Training Centers in Alton, Denver and Pittsburgh.
- Provide direction to the TIPS Training Program.
- Oversee and monitor TIPS budget and procurements.
- Be a pro-active internal/external outreach TIPS spokesperson.
- Provide direction and leadership for technical and management aspects of TIPS services, including liaison with OSMRE-Headquarters.
- Assist the team in ensuring that major tasks are properly assigned and assign tasks as necessary.
- Represent the team's interests to management and coordinate team activities with other units.
- Facilitate and schedule meetings, prepare meeting agendas, ensure effective communications and encourage participation by all team members in meetings.
- Negotiate workload priorities with other OSMRE managers.
- Serve as the chair of the TIPS Technical Advisory Group.

Section 1.06 Membership

From time-to-time National TIPS team members may be added or removed. The Team Manager will coordinate with appropriate OSMRE management officials and keep the Team advised. In addition, the Team Manager will consult with the team to ensure that skills and expertise required for the team are maintained.

Section 1.07 Meetings

The team will hold routine and special meetings when needed to discuss team business. The routine meetings will be held monthly. Meeting length will be limited to sixty minutes unless otherwise agreed. The meetings will be held using conference calls to connect all members' offices. Team members are expected to arrange their schedules to attend meetings as frequently as possible.

All team members are expected to be present during off-site team meetings. Division Chiefs from the regional offices will be invited to attend these meetings, as appropriate. The Team Manager may call special meetings.

Minutes will be taken at all meetings by a designated Team member. The minutes will be short, discussion-oriented, and in the form of "Topic-Discussion-Decision". Minutes will be distributed to the Team within a week of the meeting.

There will be an agenda for each meeting. The Team Manager is responsible for compiling an agenda prior to each meeting. Members are responsible for submitting agenda items to the Team Manager.

Section 1.08 Decision Making

Decisions on establishing or modifying services and team goals will be made by consensus; other decisions will be by discussion and agreement by majority. Team goals will be formulated and established each year by the team. Goals are established in the TIPS Strategic Plan. All team decisions will be made in a manner that assures that member's concerns are heard and that all factors identified through discussions are considered. More than 50% of members must be present to make decisions. The TIPS Technical Advisory Group Chairperson and PSD Division Chiefs from the regional offices will be invited as appropriate. Decisions are subject to management review.

Article II. Team Services

Section 2.01 TIPS Core Software

The TIPS website at http://www.tips.OSMRE.gov/Software/Current_List.shtml lists the current TIPS core software along with other pertinent information. This software will be fully supported by the TIPS Team. This will include providing sufficient licenses, training and technical support. The core software may be modified from time-to-time by the Team as deemed appropriate and in consultation with the TIPS Technical Advisory Group.

In addition, the Team may provide limited support for additional software after consultation with the TIPS Technical Advisory Group. This will be done on a case-by-case basis. Before approval by the Technical Advisory Group, software under testing is considered "evaluation software." It is envisioned that customer demand for this evaluation software will be modest when compared to the core software. It will be provided on a limited basis to customer's having a need and will not be part of the TIPS Training Program. If the need increases the software could be moved to the core software category.

Section 2.02 TIPS Training Program

The TIPS Training Workgroup consists of the Training Program Team Leader, Course Managers, Training Center Computer Specialists, Instructors, Course Developers, and Training Coordinators. The goals of this workgroup are the following:

- provide training in TIPS software applications to TIPS customers;
- provide hardware and software resources and facility management for training customers in TIPS regional training centers;
- provide necessary support to ensure the smooth delivery of on-site classes;
- annually assess the training needs of TIPS customers;
- develop and maintain TIPS courses that meet TIPS customer needs as defined by the annual joint NTTP-TIPS Survey, Service Managers and the TIPS Technical Advisory Group;
- coordinate with NTTP in customer surveys and the scheduling of TIPS courses and instructors;
- provide course titles and catalog descriptions to NTTP that give TIPS customers needed information to make training determinations;
- schedule training classes to meet a significant percentage of TIPS customer requests;
- develop a cadre of professional and authoritative TIPS instructors;
- produce and keep current individual course manuals including instructor and student materials;
- maintain a logistically sound method of course nomination and registration that

- ensures the maximum number of student enrollment in TIPS classes;
- internally audit TIPS customer comments regarding TIPS training and resolve any issues;
- and, achieve or surpass the annual GPRA customer satisfaction goal.

This document should be referred to for current Training Program roles, expectations, and guidelines.

What follows is a description of the duties for the Training Program Team Leader, Course Managers, Training Center Computer Specialists, Instructors, Course Developers, and Training Coordinators. Listing the duties by role will help ensure that the TIPS Training Program is effectively coordinated and carried out. This is particularly important as the TIPS Training Program expands to meet customer needs.

All TIPS training courses, facilities, and instructors will be evaluated under the procedures developed in the OSMRE Annual Performance Plan, as mandated by the Government Performance and Review Act of 1993.

(a) Training Program Team Leader Duties

The Training Program Team Leader has overall responsibility for leading the Training Program Workgroup and ensuring the successful planning, development and execution of the training program. The TIPS Team Manager will provide policy direction and resolution of major problems with customers. Team Leader duties are as follows:

- Develop and maintain the annual TIPS training schedule. This includes consulting and coordinating with Course Managers, NTTP, Training Contacts, Instructors, Course Developers, Training Center Computer Specialists, Training Coordinators, and supervisors' of instructors/developers.
- Coordinate with NTTP concerning the training program initiatives, including annual customer training needs survey, class schedules, announcement of training schedule, letters to supervisors of instructors/developers, and OSMRE technical training catalog submissions.
- Report to the TIPS Team Manager and TIPS Technical Advisory Group on program achievements, initiatives and issues.
- Develop and maintain a Training Program Project Plan each year identifying major tasks and milestones. This plan will assist the Training Program Team Leader in planning and executing the training program throughout the year.
- Propose the training program budget and manage expenditures throughout the year, making adjustments and approving non-budgeted items as needed.
- Interface with Service Managers to ensure customer needs are being met within resource constraints and to recruit qualified instructors.
- Coordinate with Course Managers to ensure progress in course development and class delivery is being met, and planned course development expenditures are approved and tracked.
- Take a proactive role in coordinating with customers to ensure student enrollment in each class is timely and classes are full to the extent possible. Coordinate with state, tribal, and OSMRE training contacts in advance of classes to reconcile problems.
- Communicate training center use dates (final class schedule) and coordinate with Training Center Coordinators to ensure room availability and resolve schedule conflicts.
- Coordinate with Lead Instructors and customer representative(s) to ensure on-

- site training is scheduled and that facilities, hardware and software are adequate for each class. See On-Site Class Information and Request for On-Site TIPS Training Class form for specific information.
- Compile and report GPRA statistics on a quarterly/yearly basis.
 - Run student evaluation summary reports, and forward to instructors/course manager for review. Personally review evaluation reports and coordinate with appropriate individuals (instructors, course managers, supervisors, TIPS Team Manager, and Training Coordinators) to resolve student concerns with the training program.
 - Ensure class sign-in sheets are received in Denver and students are “completed” in Fed Talent tracking database utilized by TIPS.
 - Assess course and instructor efficacy and recommend changes. Coordinate with Course Managers to ensure instructors have the appropriate level of training (i.e., NTTP Instructor Training Course, course software).
 - Consult with course managers on the need for course modifications.
 - Provide recommendations for new training areas to TIPS Team Manager and course managers for consideration.
 - Collaborate with the Training Coordinator to ensure timeframes and roles established are being adhered to, and resolve any potential conflicts that arise.

(b) Course Manager Duties

Course Managers have the lead responsibility for development and continuous improvement of assigned courses. This includes assembling a workgroup of qualified experts, planning, course development, and piloting classes. Duties include are as follows:

- Establish and lead the course workgroup for the assigned course including scheduling and coordinating necessary meetings.
- Lead the course workgroup in developing course material. Test class manuals and materials with a pilot class. Modify and maintain course materials for assigned courses, as necessary.
- Upload course manuals and materials to the TIPS website 10 weeks in advance of classes so students may download course manual, print, and bring with them to class if they choose.
- Ensure instructors know and understand their duties as outlined below.
- Communicate to the Lead Instructor whom in turn serves as the liaison with Training Center Computer Specialists (on-site and in Alton, Denver and Pittsburgh Training Centers) on course and software logistics and provides Training Center Computer Specialists with detailed instructions on software installation and updates. This includes ensuring that each class has properly licensed software installed on each workstation.
- Provide input into the annual training needs survey by identifying courses to be offered in the coming year, those to be eliminated, and projected pilot courses through coordination with course instructors and the Training Program Team Leader.
- Provide input into the annual training schedule by confirming the number of classes to be delivered and class locations, and coordinating instructor availability, reporting any conflicts to the Training Program Team Leader for resolution.
- Serve as lead instructor as available.
- Review student class evaluations; recommend improvements to course content

- and execution, as appropriate.
- Plan and project annual training costs associated with course development taking into consideration instructor travel and training, course materials, and miscellaneous expenses; forward request to the Training Program Team Leader for inclusion in requested Training Program budget.
- Ensure instructors have the necessary software training to be effective.
- Continually recruit new instructors.

(c) Training Center Computer Specialists

The Alton, Denver and Pittsburgh training centers each have a Training Center Computer Specialist that provides the necessary computer support for the Training Program. Duties are as follows:

- Maintain computers and peripherals in assigned training center to a high level of reliability.
- Coordinate with Course Managers and instructors regarding preparation for course delivery before and during class.
- Install software on computers and ensure all computers are fully operational with the appropriate software before scheduled classes, initiating contact with the Lead instructor to ensure smooth delivery of class.
- Physically meet with instructors in the OSMRE Training Center the day before class starts to ensure everything is in order
- Trouble-shoot and provide support to the instructors and students during scheduled class time ensuring equipment is operational.
- Arrange for multiple log-in privileges for Course Managers, developers and instructors.
- For on-site courses provide support as requested by Lead Instructor. Based on past experience the level of effort in this area is expected to be low. See On-Site Class Information and Request for On-Site TIPS Training Class form for specific information.

(d) Instructor Duties

Instructors, including Lead Instructors and co-instructors, are responsible for successful delivery of the TIPS classes. Duties are as follows:

- Teach classes at the time, date, and location agreed upon when the annual training calendar was coordinated by the Course Manager.
- Complete the Instructor Checklist (Lead Instructor) and return to National Training Program Coordinator 60 days prior to class delivery, or upon request.
- Coordinate distribution of the teaching load (Lead Instructor) through consultation with the co-instructors. Co-instructors will contribute significant effort in teaching each class.
- Review student prerequisites (Lead Instructor) for advanced or specialized courses to ensure student attendance is appropriate and make adjustments as necessary.
- Arrive at the training location the day before the class starts to meet with the local Training Center Computer Specialist and ensure the computers and software are functioning properly and the classroom is set-up and ready for students.
- Coordinate with Training Coordinators at each training center to ensure class paperwork is completed; ensure the class roster is sent to the National Training Program Coordinator within one week after course delivery.

For on-site classes at user locations (i.e. state, tribal, and university sites) the Lead Instructor is responsible for:

- Confirming the training facility is adequate for the class size and the hardware and operating systems are capable of running the required TIPS software. A visit by a member of the teaching team to the on-site training location prior to confirmation of class delivery is required, unless the classroom was previously approved in the past six months. See On-Site Class Information and Request for On-Site TIPS Training Class form for specific information.
- Ensuring needed software/hardware is shipped to the on-site computer support contact with the state/tribal/university at least two weeks prior to the class.
- Ensuring the computers and software are ready for the class, requesting assistance from the Training Center Computer Specialists when necessary.
- Distributing course completion certificates to students at the end of each class, signed by all instructors.
- Collecting the completed sign-in sheet and mailing to the National Training Program Coordinator within one week after course delivery.

(e) Course Developer Duties

New TIPS courses are developed and existing courses are continuously improved as determined by the Team and management. The Course Manager is responsible for coordinating and leading their course workgroup. Each course workgroup will meet as necessary and conduct pilot classes (dry-runs) to ensure the most effective course is developed. Duties are as follows:

- Coordinate meetings with the Course Manager and ensure work assignments are completed in a timely fashion.
- Participate in development sessions on the scheduled dates, times, and locations.
- Serve as TIPS faculty and teach classes.
- Develop course materials using PowerPoint format (minimum Office 2003), MS Word, or Adobe Acrobat according to guidelines provided.

(f) Training Coordinator Duties

Training Coordinators provide administrative support for the TIPS Training Program for classes held at the Alton, Denver and Pittsburgh Training Centers and for on-site training classes. Detailed step-by-step processes with examples can be found in the Training Coordinator Handbook. Duties are as follows:

- Schedule TIPS classes on automated training center room calendar to ensure room availability for TIPS annual schedule.
- The National Training Program Coordinator (Currently Jessica Villanueva) receives course registration forms via Fed Talent from State/Tribal training contacts and OSMRE employees for all TIPS classes. The National Training Program Coordinator compares slots assigned to the course registrations received and moves students from a “closed roster” status to a “registered” or “waitlist” status for each class. Students and their training contacts receive an e-mail from Fed Talent to confirm this change in status when this process takes place.
- A minimum of 10 weeks in advance of the class, the National Training Program Coordinator sends an e-mail to the instructor team including a student roster, the

most recent course agenda, a Travel Worksheet form (all traveling instructors will complete and return to the Regional Training Coordinator), and an instructor checklist (the lead instructor completes and returns to the National Training Program Coordinator for distribution to affected parties). The Regional Training Coordinator prepares a travel authorization and voucher for all instructors, including OSMRE, as appropriate.

- A minimum of 8-10 weeks in advance of the class, the National Training Program Coordinator sends a confirmation e-mail to the student, the student's state/tribal training contact, and the Regional Training Coordinator who prepares the student's travel authorization and voucher advising the student they are registered for the class. The e-mail contains pertinent class information, a class agenda, and a Travel Worksheet form and requests that the student completes the Travel Worksheet form and return to the Regional Training Coordinator. The National Training Program Coordinator works closely with the Training Program Team Leader to resolve problems or lack of nominations or conflicts.
- A minimum of 6 weeks in advance of the class, Regional Training Coordinators prepare the necessary Travel Authorizations for state/tribal students and all instructors for the assigned class. The traveler is provided with this information as soon as it is finalized. OSMRE students are responsible for preparing their own Travel Authorization.
- One to two weeks prior to each class the Regional Training Coordinator e-mails a final class roster to the instructor team. The Regional Training Coordinator creates and prints student class certificates; creates and prints name tags, creates and prints student attendance roster for sign-in sheet; and, prints CEU information sheet. The Regional Training Coordinator ensures all materials are in the hands of the Lead Instructor prior to the first day of the class.
- When a class is complete the Regional Training Coordinator receives the necessary information from the students and instructors, and completes travel vouchers in a timely manner. Original signed vouchers with travel authorization are sent to DFM and a copy is sent to the National Training Program Coordinator and the traveler.
- For classes held at OSMRE training centers, the Regional Training Coordinator is available on the morning of the last day of the class to gather information to complete the vouchers and answer questions. If the Regional Training Coordinator is not on-site, an on-site designated representative fills this role. For on-site classes, the instructors may request phone assistance from the Training Coordinator.
- Using the actual class rosters provided by the instructors, the Regional Training Coordinator will update Fed Talent to indicate "complete", "admin drop", or "no show" for all students on the roster. The Regional Training Coordinator forwards the completed class roster to the National Training Program Coordinator.
- National Training Program Coordinator produces CD/DVD/thumb drive's containing manuals and materials as necessary.

Section 2.03 Service Manager Team and Service Manager Lead

TIPS Service Managers are the primary contacts between TIPS and its customers. All Service Managers are members of the TIPS Service Manager Team and the National TIPS Team. Service Managers for specific states, tribes, OSMRE regional and field offices are identified on the TIPS website at <https://www.tips.osmre.gov/contacts.shtm>. The goals of the Service Managers are to communicate the TIPS mission; maintain relationships with the TIPS user community; and provide value-added services to meet

those needs. The Lead Service Manager serves to coordinate the activities of the Service Managers and compile their action plans into an annual National Action Plan.

The duties of the Service Managers (SM) include:

- As the primary TIPS liaison, meet with assigned customers as needed, with a minimum annual visit, to communicate the TIPS mission and facilitate partnerships between SMCRA programs;
- Identify technical programmatic needs and value-added opportunities, and ensure needs are addressed by maintaining a state/tribe/OSMRE office specific TIPS action plan;
- Facilitate implementation of TIPS services including: technical training, coordinate TIPS core software and hardware support, and TIPS-related technical assistance;
- Ensure timely processing of new software distributions in cooperation with the Software Manager;
- Coordinate availability and use of latest distributed versions of TIPS core software;
- Coordinate with the Training Program Team Leader on any special training requests;
- Coordinate with Software Managers, and IT staff as appropriate, regarding software deployment and licensing issues;
- Coordinate with OSMRE technology transfer team members as necessary for value-added opportunities;
- Keep OSMRE field office managers informed of site visits and significant TIPS program activities;
- Deliver progress reports, as necessary;
- Encourage customers to provide quality feedback concerning the use of TIPS tools;
- Ensure that TIPS-aided success stories are relayed to Regional TIPS Coordinators;
- Attend all scheduled TIPS monthly teleconferences, quarterly Service Manager teleconferences, and the TIPS annual meeting;
- Provide Service Manager Team Leader with all requested information for inclusion into the Service Manager bi-annual report; and
- Maintain appropriate shared information on the TIPS Service Manager SharePoint site.

Service Manager Team activities will be coordinated and facilitated by the Service Manager Team Lead. The Service Manager Team Leader is appointed by the TIPS Team Manager.

The duties of the Service Manager Lead include:

- Holding quarterly Service Manager teleconferences;
- Reporting significant issues/concerns to the National TIPS Team during the regularly scheduled quarterly TIPS Team meetings;
- Maintain the individual Action Plans on the TIPS Service Manager SharePoint site (This is an internal OSMRE site only);
- Compile a master national Action Plan of customer needs to submit to the TIPS Manager on an annual basis;
- Help to increase communication between the TIPS Service Managers and the

- user community; and
- Develop and share tools and techniques to facilitate the Service Manager duties.

Section 2.05 Software Managers

Each core TIPS software application is assigned a Software Manager. This individual is the primary person responsible for TIPS team activities associated with their assigned software application(s). Software Managers are appointed by the Support Teams and in some cases by the Team Manager. Software Managers are an expert in their assigned software. Duties are as follows:

- Make recommendations to the Team regarding needed software updates.
- Propose annual budget regarding assigned software (e.g., maintenance, upgrades, license increases)
- Provide information to the Software Distribution Manager and Team Manager as requested.
- Prepare requisitions for software maintenance and new purchases, as necessary.
- Serve as the point-of-contact for technical support with vendor and TIPS users.
- Ensure that the TIPS license server client is properly loaded on each computer using TIPS software. This is done by adding a reminder to the beginning of the installation instructions for every software distribution.
- Provide the Software Distribution Manager with all materials necessary for software distribution as new versions are released. Follow procedures as outlined in the TIPS Software Distribution Procedures maintained on the TIPS Team SharePoint.
- Provide the Software Distribution Manager with all updates to information maintained on the TIPS Software Licenses Spreadsheet. This information includes but is not limited to; vendor, software name, software extensions/modules, version numbers, format, upgrade version numbers, location by hyperlink for retrieval of upgrade if online, last deployment date, renewal cost, license server, and software manager information.
- Load TIPS software to the computers of appropriate users as necessary.
- Complete Role-Based Security Training as required to maintain elevated login privileges.

Section 2.06 License Administrators

TIPS provides most of its core software via license managing software. Duties are as follows:

- Maintain assigned license manager software (Sentinel, FlexLM, and Key Server) on data centers in Denver and Reston.
- Provide user support for problems related to license manager software nationwide.
- Provide reports to the Software Distribution Manager to assist in monitoring software usage and problems. These reports assist in making decisions regarding increasing or decreasing the number of licenses for core software.
- Report to the Team Manager any critical problems related to user access of the software.
- Coordinate with Software Managers regarding software problems.

Section 2.07 Software Support Teams

TIPS Software Support Teams provide leadership and direction to the SMCRA community regarding specific TIPS disciplines. Currently TIPS maintains support teams for CAD, GIS, Hydrology, Mobile Computing, and Remote Sensing. The goals of these teams are to deliver software, training, and technical guidance to customers in each of these software specialty areas.

The duties of the Support Teams include:

- Identify Software Managers for each TIPS software, and assure the duties of the Software Manager(s) are fulfilled.
- Identify Course Managers for each TIPS training course and assure the duties of the Course Manager(s) are fulfilled.
- Facilitate technical assistance concerning each discipline to the SMCRA community.
- Maintain web content on the TIPS website for their subject of interest.
- Provide on-site training as requested in coordination with the Training Program Team Leader.

Software Support Team activities will be facilitated by a Team Leader. Each Software Support Team Leader will represent their team all TIPS budget discussions and will provide team information to the TIPS Manager, Training Program Team Leader, Software Distribution Manager, and License Administrators, as needed and/or requested. The Software Support Team Leader will be elected by the Support Team, and must be approved by the TIPS Team Manager.

Section 2.08 Software-Hardware Technical Assistance

Team members will provide technical assistance to customers as needed in their areas of expertise. The TIPS WEB site includes a listing, by software, hardware, and Support Team with names, phone numbers and email addresses. TIPS Service Managers will refer requests for support to the appropriate software experts. Hardware support can be found by going to the "Current Hardware List" on the TIPS website at <https://www.tips.osmre.gov/hardware.shtml> and click on the appropriate hardware device, or by contacting a TIPS Service Manager.

Section 2.09 Technical Assistance Requests

As requested, TIPS Team members will participate in providing technical assistance to States, Tribes and OSMRE offices. Technical assistance includes specific requests to provide reports, engineering designs and/or field investigations in available TIPS expertise including engineering, hydrology, and geology for both Titles IV and V. Requests for technical assistance will be made to the appropriate Division of each respective region. If regional management determines they do not have the necessary resources they may request, through the Team Manager, that the TIPS Team provide assistance. The Team Manager will identify National TIPS resources that may be available and will coordinate with the region.

On-the-job (OJT) training provided by TIPS Team members should not be confused with technical assistance. OJT training is considered assistance that is provided by the TIPS Team primarily to train individuals in the use of TIPS tools and should be coordinated with the TIPS Training Program Team Leader. OJT training is considered part of the "Training Program" services offered by the TIPS Team while technical assistance is considered part of OSMRE's routine services.

Section 2.10 Research and Development

On a continuing basis Support Team members will recommend research needs for existing and new field devices and software. These proposals will be brought to TIPS Team meetings for discussion and potential action. The Support Team will establish criteria to evaluate priorities for research and development. The TIPS Team will be periodically updated on the progress of all research and development activities. In the case of field equipment, TIPS has a policy of “seeding technology,” which means it will research new field devices such as GPS, tablet computers, or field analysis devices by purchasing a limited number and placing them in state, tribal, or OSMRE offices that demonstrate a genuine application need for the device. If the device proves successful, that office may elect to purchase more at their own cost. This way, the worth of new devices to SMCRA applications can be proven before significant investment is made. Final recommendations will be made to the Team regarding the beneficial use of the tools to meet the TIPS mission.

TIPS policy with software is to regularly evaluate new software that may replace existing TIPS software. Based on recommendations by the Support Team testing the software, and in consultation with the TIPS Technical Advisory Group the Technical Advisory Group will decide if the software should become core TIPS Software. If the Technical Advisory Group approves of the software as core, a proposed roll-out plan will be developed. This may include the development of training courses and vendor supplied training as needed.

Section 2.11 Government Performance and Results Act

Team members will ensure that they properly gather and report necessary GPRA Performance Measurement data. The team will report this data as required in OSMRE’s Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plans and as directed by OSMRE management (e.g., training).

Article III. TIPS Technical Advisory Group

In cooperation with the States and IMCC, in 1987, OSMRE established the TIPS to help guide OSMRE’s TIPS efforts. In August 2016, a Training Steering Committee was created that includes both the TIPS and NTTIP programs to help guide TIPS Training activities.

In January of 2108, the TIPS Technical Advisory Group (TAG), consisting of technical subject matter experts from the SMCRA programs nationwide, was formed to advise the TIPS Manager of SMCRA technical developments and provide core software recommendations.

Article IV. Team Structure/Charter Modifications

The team regards its structure as flexible and makes adjustments whenever needed to make the team more efficient and more responsive to its customers and the needs of management. Individual team members are encouraged to initiate discussions and make recommendations for improvement.

Any of these provisions may be altered, amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of the members of the team at any special meeting of the team or by management.