

US EPA Region 3 Analytical Request Form Instructions (ARF 2.1)

For the Office of Analytical Services and Quality Assurance (OASQA)

Version: 04/20/2018

These are instructions for populating and submitting the PDF version of the Analytical Request Form, ARF 2.1 for the request of OASQA analytical services. This form was originally launched 04/16/2016 as the ARF 2.0. The updated ARF 2.1 version has several improvements to streamline and help assure accuracy of data entry.

Please note, when submitting the ARF 2.1, all analysis for a single site/event should be entered on one form. TSB will assign all analyses to the appropriate laboratory(s).

TSB may contact the request preparer if clarification or additional information is required to complete the ARF 2.1. Once all analytical services have been assigned, a Final Lab Assignment Report will be emailed to you showing all RAS, DAS and other non-Superfund Lab assignments.

1.0 Clearing the Form

To clear all information from the form, click the “Reset Form” button  at the top of the page.

2.0 Printing the Form

To print, click the “Print Form” button  at the top of the page, and follow instructions.

3.0 Submitting the Form

There are two (2) ways of submitting the form:

- 1) Select the “Submit” button  in the ribbon at the top of the page
- 2) Select the “Submit” button  at the top of the page.

A completed form will be emailed to the TSB Client Services Team at R3_Clients@epa.gov in pdf format.

Note: Analyte specific quantitation limits (QLs) must be submitted and emailed along with the completed ARF either as a separate form or listed in the “Special Instructions” section of the ARF.

4.0 Sampling Site Information Section

All fields on the form must be completed using the dropdown options, or by manually typing in the required information. Some fields may be auto-filled in “NA” when not applicable. If there are questions concerning what information will be required in a field, please contact the TSB Client Services Team for clarification.

NOTE: Most fields are required to be filled in. If they are missed, an error message will be displayed when the “Submit” button is pressed.

Date Submitted - This automatically updates when the form is submitted and cannot be changed by the user.

Is this a new sampling site?

Check “Yes” if this is the first event at this site, or “No” if this site has had any previous sampling events.

Site Name

Select the facility/site name from the dropdown menu. When a site is selected, the street address, city, state, zip code

and CERCLIS number fields will be populated automatically. Only NPL sites will be available in the dropdown menu. If a site name is not listed, this information will need to be entered manually.

Note: When entering site information manually do not use any abbreviations which are not outlined in the QA documents or program-specific tracking system.

Street Address / City / State / Zip Code

If not automatically filled in, manually enter this information for the sampling site.

Division or Office / Site Activity / Program

Use the dropdown menus to populate the EPA organization, site activity, and program information. This information allows the laboratory to clarify sampling details and to contact the samplers and project managers in the event of problems.

Note: If an EPA organization / site activity / program is not in the above list, please contact the TSB Client Services Team to have the division/office added.

EPA ID (a.k.a. CERCLIS Number) / Account Number / Spill ID (SSID) / Operable Unit

This critical information is used **only** for a Superfund (RAS and/or DAS) site. These numbers are required for applying costs to specific areas of the Superfund site and site specific invoicing.

5.0 QA Document Information Section

Provide the document **Title**, EPA personnel who it was **Approved By**, and **Date** the document was approved.


Note: EPA Order CIO 2105.0 (formerly 5360.1 A2) Section 6.a.(7), states that “Approved Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs), or equivalent documents defined by the QMP, for all applicable projects and tasks involving environmental data with review and approval having been made by the EPA QAM (or authorized representative defined in the QMP). QAPPs must be approved prior to any data gathering work or use, except under circumstances requiring immediate action to protect human health and the environment or operations conducted under police powers”. An approved QAPP or equivalent document should be submitted to the TSB QA Document Review team prior to or along with the ARF.

For additional information and guidance on preparing and submitting QAPPs, SAPs or other QA documents, contact any of the TSB Quality Assurance Team at this website: <https://www.epa.gov/regionallabs/epa-region-3-laboratory-and-technical-services>

6.0 Contact Information Section

Proper contact information is required for the EPA Project Lead (RPM/OSC, etc), Site Leader and/or Analytical Request Preparer so the laboratory will know who to contact and who to send the reports/data. For each contact, enter the name, phone number, cell number and email address. **Contractor** and **EPA CO/PO** should be left as “NA” for non-Superfund sites. **Site Leader** is a contract employee for Superfund sites, EPA employee for non-Superfund sites.

7.0 Analysis Information Section

Complete this section for analysis requested for each matrix/parameter/method requested. If additional rows are needed, click the “Add a New Row” button **Add a New Row** at the top of the table. To delete a row, click the “X” button  to the left of the row.

Equivalent Method substitution

Click on the box labeled ***Equivalent method substitution allowed** if you would be amenable to OASQA substituting your request with an equivalent method which will still meet your required QLs and analyte list requirements. For example, we may substitute EPA 200.7 and 200.8 for your request for metals by the CLP SOW. *This should help reduce email traffic required for negotiations.* But, if there are any special circumstances or requirements, please be sure to add an explanation in the Special Instructions.

QTY (Quantity)

Enter the **total** number of samples by matrix (e.g., air, aqueous, solid, etc.) and by parameter to be analyzed. Field QC samples (trip blank, rinse blank, field reference blank and field duplicate) should be included in the number of samples. Other QC (laboratory duplicate, matrix spike and matrix spike duplicate) should not be counted as separate from their parent sample.

Matrix, Parameter and Method – *need to turn on CAP LOCK to search drop-down lists*

Select from the dropdown list, or manually enter matrix, parameter and method. Only enter one matrix, parameter, and method per row. Note: the list of available methods will be filtered for the selected parameter. Any changes can be entered manually. Note: if you want to edit the Parameter, choose the Method first, then go back and edit. Otherwise, you will need to type the Method in manually. Add as many rows as necessary; the form will expand.

Validation Level

All CLP data automatically undergoes data review and assessment via [Electronic Data Exchange and Evaluation System \(EXES\)](#) which also allows Region 3 to eliminate its “zero validation” option.

Given these changes, Region 3 has renamed its tiered system of data validation. The following table shows current nomenclature, which was derived from the National Contract Laboratory Program's Guidance for Labeling Externally Validated Laboratory Analytical Data for Superfund Use.

Data Validation Level Cross-Walk Table

Fraction	Old Name	New Name	Summary	Superfund Stage
Inorganic	IM-1 or Zero Level	INORGANIC LEVEL 1 is IM1	QC, false negatives, detection limits	Stage 2B Validation Electronic and Manual (S2BVEM)
Inorganic	IM-2	INORGANIC LEVEL 2 is IM2	CLP National Functional Guidelines with Region 3 Modification (Use of ‘B’ qualifier)	Stage 4 Validation Electronic and Manual (S4VEM)
Organic	M-1	No longer used	No longer used	No longer used
Organic	M-2 or Zero Level	ORGANIC LEVEL 1 is M2	QC, false negatives, detection limits	Stage 3 Validation Electronic and Manual (S3VEM)
Organic	M-3	ORGANIC LEVEL 2 is M3	CLP National Functional Guidelines with Region 3 Modification (Use of ‘B’ qualifier)	Stage 4 Validation Electronic and Manual (S4VEM)

NOTE: Defaults for Region 3 work are IM2 and M3

Unvalidated Data TAT (number of days)

The turn-around-time (TAT) in days, after samples are received by the laboratory, you can expect to receive unvalidated/preliminary data. The default option is 0 (not requested).

Region 3 HSCD policy is that any request for unvalidated/preliminary data (analytical TATs) less than 21 days requires Branch Chief (or higher) approval prior to processing. This is a cost saving measure as laboratories often apply a surcharge of up to 75% per analysis for TATs less than 21 days.

Final Report Due (number of days from last sample shipped)

The number of days, after samples are received by the laboratory, you can expect to receive the Final Report. The default option is 45 days.

Please note, the Unvalidated Data TAT must be a subset of the Final Report Due value. Both of these are a measure of days from when, the laboratory has received all samples. It is not additive.

Sample(s) Ship Dates

Start Date: The first date samples are scheduled to be shipped to the laboratory for analysis.

End Date: The final date samples are scheduled to be shipped to the laboratory for analysis.

Note: TSB **MUST** be notified in advance anytime samples are shipping on Friday for a Saturday delivery. This notification is required to ensure laboratory personnel will be available to accept delivery.

Electronic Data Deliverables (EDD)

All EDDs will be provided in the Region 2/Region 3 format unless otherwise specified. Select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down box.

Quantitation Limits (QLs) are:

This section alerts the TSB Client Services Team where the Quantitation Limits (QLs), are located for this sampling event. The limits can be:

- 1) Attached in the email to R3 Clients with the ARF 2.1; **or**
- 2) Included in the Special Instructions of the ARF 2.1; **or**
- 3) Included in both the email and the Special Instructions.

Special Instructions

Any special requirements, comments, or information should be noted in this section. This includes, but not limited to, the following:

- Special data review requirements
- Quick turnaround times for completion of analysis
- If activity is part of a Criminal Investigation or Confidential Business Information (CBI)
- Project Quantitation Limits (QLs)
- Modified Analysis (MA) information
- Equipment required for sampling (e.g., summa canisters, regulators, filters, etc.)
- Address and contact information for sending equipment to the field
- Requests for specific laboratory by the RPM

NOTE: This section is limited to 5000 characters. If the information is larger than that, it should be attached as a separate document in the email.

8.0 Common Errors

Following are common errors that result in delays in processing the submitted ARF and ultimately, delays in final laboratory assignments:

- Insufficient lead time to process request.
- Analyte list(s) or table(s), along with the project Quantitation Limits (QLs) not included. Lists, tables, and limits should be either 1) included in ARF's Special Instruction section, or 2) attached with ARF in email submitted to TSB Client Service Team.
- Incorrect or missing Sampling Site Information (e.g., Site Name, Account no., EPA ID, Address, etc.).
- QA Document not submitted, approved or dated prior to sampling event.
- Information on ARF does not match requirements in QA document.
- Analytical method requested in the ARF not correct based on matrix or parameter.
- Validation levels not specified.
- Missing turnaround time (days) for Unvalidated Data and/or Final Report.

If, at any time, the ARF preparer has questions on how to properly complete the ARF, please contact the TSB Client Services Team or [R3 Clients@epa.gov](mailto:R3Clients@epa.gov).

If you experience any technical problems accessing or using the form, contact Robin Costas (costas.rob@epa.gov) at (410) 305-2659.

The form and instruction are available on the EPA Region 3 Internet at:

<https://www.epa.gov/regionallabs/epa-region-3-laboratory-sample-submission-process-0#instructions>