



Air Resources Board



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To PQAO Contacts:

The Corrective Action Notification (CAN) process is used to document, investigate, correct, and reduce the recurrence of air monitoring issues that could potentially impact data quality within the Air Resources Board's (ARB) Primary Quality Assurance Organization (PQAO). Any person within ARB or a local monitoring organization within the PQAO, may initiate the CAN process when an issue is identified.

In 2015, a total of 56 CANs were initiated. Of those, 12 resulted in the flagging and/or invalidation of data. This included six CANs that were initiated for data in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Air Quality System (AQS) with improper exceptional events flags and incorrect parameter and method codes. Other issues included data acquisition system recording errors, sensor misalignment, siting issues, and sample documentation errors.

Overall, CANs were initiated for a wide range of issues. The most common issues included:

- Calibrations, and/or certifications not being performed at the required frequency. (20)
- Anomalous trends and values observed in data that needed to be investigated and/or flagged in AQS. (6)
- Outdated or incorrect metadata information in AQS. (5)
- Data assigned incorrect parameter and/or method codes in AQS. (3)
- Siting requirements not being met. (3)

Anomalous trends, patterns, and/or data typically revolved around unusually high values. Outdated or incorrect metadata were a result of new or closed monitors that were not added or updated correctly in AQS. Particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) data in AQS was often assigned a method code that reflected the incorrect particle separator used on the sampler. The eight CANs initiated for outdated or incorrect AQS metadata, parameter, and method codes highlight the need to review this information in AQS and to update AQS when changes are made. Overall, the review did not identify any systemic issues that impacted a specific instrument or agency, but did highlight the need to review QA/QC requirements and documentation practices.

Anomalous data, outdated or incorrect metadata, and calibrations and/or certifications not being performed at the required frequency were also common issues previously highlighted in the 2013 and 2014 CAN reports. Since 2013, a total of 115 CANs have been initiated for these

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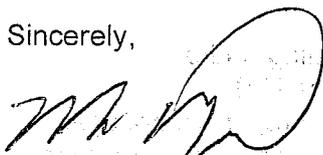
California Environmental Protection Agency

three issues (anomalous data - 42 CANs, incorrect metadata - 35, and late calibrations and/or certifications - 38). However, the number of CANs for anomalous data and outdated or incorrect metadata decreased significantly in 2015. The decrease in these CANs reflects the good work of air monitoring staff throughout the ARB PQAO and the positive impact of the ARB PQAO training events held in 2014 and 2015, which covered proper data validation procedures. ARB will assemble a work group comprised of staff from ARB and air monitoring organizations, tasked with the goal of finding ways to reduce the recurrence of late calibrations and/or certifications. The results of the workgroup will be shared with ARB and air monitoring organizations throughout California.

ARB and air monitoring organizations utilizing the CAN process should continue to report operational problems, instrument malfunctions, and/or any items needing corrective action or investigation and resolve these issues in a timely manner.

If you have any questions regarding specific CANs or suggestions regarding the CAN process, please contact Mr. Patrick Rainey at (916) 327-4756, or by email at patrick.rainey@arb.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



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