

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Part 120: U.S. Geological Survey

Chapter 10: Office of the Associate Director for Water

Originating Office: U.S. Geological Survey

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10.1 Office of the Associate Director for Water. This office provides executive leadership to ensure the quality and scientific integrity of U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) investigations of the occurrence, quantity, quality, distribution, uses, and movement of surface and ground waters. These investigations allow the USGS to develop and disseminate scientific knowledge and understanding of the Nation's water resources. Activities include data collection, resource assessment, research, and coordinating the activities of numerous other entities involved in water-resources research, data acquisition, or information transfer. These activities are carried out through specific Federal programs, or in cooperation with State and local governments or other Federal agencies.

10.2 **Associate Director for Water.** The Associate Director for Water exercises the authority delegated by the USGS Director to provide leadership and nationwide guidance for the establishment of water resources programs and priorities and for the scientific efficacy of all bureau activities in the hydrologic discipline. The Associate Director for Water provides executive direction and oversight to ensure effective and efficient program planning, management and execution of the bureau's nationwide water resources programs, including the development of methods and tools, research, and quality assurance. Responsibilities for these functions are shared with a Deputy Associate Director. The Associate Director and Deputy Associate Director for Water are assisted in the development and implementation of the water programs by the following senior management team:

A. Cooperative Water Program Coordinator provides leadership and nationwide guidance for the Cooperative Water Program and for the scientific efficacy of all projects funded through this Program. The Cooperative Water Program provides reliable, impartial, and timely information needed to understand the Nation's water resources through a program of shared efforts and funding with State, tribal, and local partners to enable decision makers to wisely manage the Nation's water resources.

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B. National Research Program Office plans and develops national basic and applied research programs related to the hydrologic environment. Through these programs long-term studies are conducted that integrate hydrologic, geologic, chemical, biologic, and climate information to answer questions related to water resource use and management and environmental change. The National Research Program Office develops policy, identifies priorities, oversees the execution, and evaluates the results of research efforts conducted in-house by the staff of the National Research Program and by universities under the mandates of the Water Resources Research Act of 1984. The Office also coordinates the Hydrologic Research and Development Program, the Hydrologic Network and Analysis Program, and the Water Resources Research Institute Program.

C. Office of Groundwater provides leadership in the development of techniques for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of groundwater data as well as policy and technical guidance to field employees on matters pertaining to the Nation's groundwater resources. The staff exercises bureau-wide responsibility for designing programs, establishing priorities, and developing guidance and standards for the national groundwater data collection program; maintains a system of quality assurance and quality control to assure the technical excellence of field programs and human resources with respect to groundwater; manages the Branch of Geophysics; and coordinates the Groundwater Resources Program.

D. Office of Surface Water provides leadership in the development of techniques for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of surface-water data, as well as policy and technical guidance to field employees on matters pertaining to the Nation's surface-water resources. The staff exercises bureau-wide responsibility for designing programs, establishing priorities, and developing guidance and standards for the national surface water data collection program; manages the Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility at the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi; manages the Federal Interagency Sedimentation Project in Vicksburg, Mississippi; maintains a system of quality assurance and quality control to assure the technical excellence of field programs and human resources with respect to surface water; and coordinates the National Streamflow Information Program. In addition, the Chief of the Office of Surface Water acts as the Delaware River Master according to the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decree.

E. Office of Water Information ensures the timely and accurate dissemination of water information. The staff is responsible for satellite data relay activities; the Federal water information coordination program; the public hydrologic software program; the design, installation, maintenance, operation, and continuing evaluation of a National Water Information System for the storage and manipulation of water data in a distributed environment, including NWISWeb; collaborates with other Federal agencies and their representatives to improve dissemination of USGS water data for emergency management, recreation, engineering design, and scientific analysis; and coordinates the International Water Program.

F. Office of Water Quality provides leadership in the development of techniques for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of water-quality data as well as policy and technical

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guidance to field employees on matters pertaining to the quality of the Nation's water resources. The staff exercises bureau-wide responsibility for designing programs, establishing priorities, and developing guidance and standards for the National Water Quality Data Collection Program; manages the National Water Quality Laboratory in Lakewood, Colorado; maintains a system of quality assurance and quality control to assure the technical excellence of field and laboratory programs and human resources with respect to quality of water; manages the Branch of Quality Systems; and coordinates the National Water Quality Assessment Program.

G. Water Science Field Teams, composed of surface water, groundwater and water quality specialists, provide technical guidance to USGS science centers to assure the quality of groundwater, surface water, and quality of water projects, investigations and data-collection activities. The specialists provide technical guidance in the development, preparation and review of project proposals and work plans; planning of field data-collection activities; and review of investigative and data projects. The specialists also respond to technical inquiries and disseminate technical information to the science centers.

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