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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

FEB 25 1998

OFFICE OF  
THE ADMINISTRATOR

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Peer Review Handbook

TO: Assistant Administrators  
General Counsel  
Chief Financial Officer  
Inspector General  
Associate Administrators  
Regional Administrators

We are very pleased to present this Peer Review Handbook to guide Agency scientists and managers on the organization and conduct of peer review. EPA has a long, rich history of peer review. EPA staff and others are most familiar with reviews undertaken by standing peer review bodies, such as the Science Advisory Board and the FIFRA Scientific Advisory Panel. In addition, EPA programs, regions and laboratories regularly sponsor peer reviews for major reports, generic risk assessment guidelines, research plans, and specific risk assessments as well as contribute to the peer reviewed scientific literature.

The June 1994 Peer Review Policy reconfirms and expands EPA's commitment to peer review of scientific and technical work products used in Agency decision-making. Shortly after the Policy was issued, EPA program and regional offices adopted office-specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to assist implementation of the policy. Now, drawing on Agency experience with the SOPs, the Science Policy Council, the Peer Review Coordinators from each of your offices, and ORD's National Center for Environmental Research and Quality Assurance has created a single peer review guidance document for Agency-wide use. The Peer Review Handbook supersedes the original SOPs. Agency offices and regions may supplement this guidance with additional guidance specific to their organizations.

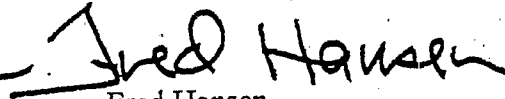
The new Handbook complements the 1994 Policy by providing a plain English, question-and-answer format that offers all users a focused, user-friendly reference on peer review issues. We believe that the Handbook is an excellent reference for you and your staff, and that use of the



Handbook will assist the Agency in meeting its goal of enhancing the quality and credibility of Agency decisions through peer review of the underlying scientific and technical work products.



Carol M. Browner  
Administrator



Fred Hansen  
Deputy Administrator

Attachment