ARD Data Management Strategy Plan
Branch Breakout Report

SOME FUN FACTS ABOUT ARD PRE-WORKSHOP BREAKOUTS

- 16.5 hours of facilitated breakouts
- Over 90% staff participation
- 105 Pages of notes taken
- 4 surveys completed by ARD partners
- Revealed diverse work
- Highlighted common threads
- Approximately 4x more successful in both data quality and participation than experts say to expect from "data calls"

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MANAGERS' BREAKOUT THEMES

- Shorter time with managers (1.5 hours)
- Questions were refined for managers
  - Overarching Themes for Data Management Strategy Plan
  - Evaluation of ARD tools
    - Need improvement
    - Need training/awarenss
    - No longer effective
  - What functions need tools in order to be more efficient
  - Efficiency From Internal & External Data Process

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MANAGERS' BREAKOUT THEMES

- Overarching Themes Managers Expect in DM Strategy
  - Introduction/Summary Document clearly defining scope
    - Identify linkage to other ARD initiatives (e.g. Knowledge Management System)
  - Definitions of Important terms
    - Amy jump started this with data and information definitions today
  - Best Practices for sharing data & Compatability with external case partners co-trustees
  - Comprehensive of Data Lifecycle (collection to case retirement)
  - Accommodate all sizes of cases (especially M-L*) & types (remedial, etc)
  - Focus on Needs and Increased Productivity
  - Link Budget/Budget tracking to data management
  - Connection to other NOAA partners, especially NOS groups with whom we share budgets
  - Identify Requirements (minimum to deluxe needs and options)
  - Identify criteria to set priorities systematically to assure time and cost investments pay off and meet the most important needs

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MANAGERS' BREAKOUT THEMES

- Existing Tool Evaluation
  - Staff need more training/awareness on DIVER
    - There is unrealized potential
  - Theory for migrating from legacy tools to new tools
  - Need to figure out how we can tell if the tools we are developing are effective at being more efficient and require minimal to no additional manipulation in order to make them work

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MANAGERS' BREAKOUT THEMES

- Functions We Need Tools To Cover
  - make sure we are driving this from a science base
    - what do the scientist need to make their decisions
    - without that we have a fancy machine no one wants to drive
  - Consistency on data collection for small to medium cases
    - want to collect more non-chemistry data as we move forward
    - consistency in how we approach a case (4 photos or 4K photos)
    - barcoding– so when you look back the data are there
    - more efficient than people's hard drives
    - ability to quickly insert data into database X
    - if there was an easier system people would probably be more inclined for smaller cases
    - Standardization
      - levels of QA/QC required for types of case
      - validation/is it possible

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MANAGERS' BREAKOUT THEMES

- Functions We Need Tools To Cover – Cont'd
  - System for tracking Budget – Project Management type tool
    - Restoration Center has DART
  - Streamline the process for synthesizing the geographic chemistry data - still have room for improvement in this area
  - somewhere down the road where we want to figure out % of cost of case to have as a goal for DM vs unreasonable
    - 75% is unrealistic
    - is there some standard when consultants bid on a package they assume 10% (for example) are for DM
  - the ability to maintain history of case so its transferable for succession planning or for RC
    - in a format that can be understood by the group as a whole

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MANAGERS' BREAKOUT THEMES

- Efficiency from Internal/External Data Processors
  - Philosophical Improvements
    a. Efficiency – not specific to one group- too many people assigned to task too many trying to get up to speed be involved in a tasks 5 vs 1-2 people involved--how do we "rightsize" projects?
       a. Large case – may be seen more as an archival system – ability exists to send analysis functions to contractors
       b. Small case - direct search and query capabilities to support data analysis and data types
    b. Timeliness – may be lack of clarity on needs and deadlines, maybe lack of understanding of what the need actually is – can be bottlenecks in the process (QM getting processed thorough EXA is one of the biggest bottlenecks)
    c. Effectiveness – making sure people understand what the need is – communication issue on both sides – person w/ need and people addressing the need – who needs to be in what meetings – balance this with efficiency--how much involvement do data management staff need to have all the way through the process? Create more of a balance.

BRANCH BREAKOUTS

- Variety exists in approaches to cases
  - Staff would like to at least know what the approach was in another region to a similar case or a case with the same RP
- Staff generally feel majority of Data Management focus is on Analytical Chemistry and Toxicity Data
  - What about other types of cases
  - Tools are too cumbersome for the smaller, "more typical" cases
- Reality is cases are as driven an much (if not more) by regulations and legal perspective than science

BRANCH BREAKOUTS

- There is not a typical case
  - Collaborative vs Litigation
  - Small vs large
  - Spills vs Groundings vs Waste Sites
- Staff doesn't have a "typical week"
  - Cases last years
    - Sometimes you deal with a case daily for weeks/months and then it goes "dormant" for months
  - Tools may only be used monthly or annually
    - may be invaluable for a type of case or for a phase of case
  - Timeframe for evaluating usefulness should be 3-5 years or even decadenal

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BRANCH BREAKOUTS

- Tool Selection
  - Desire to be able to do tasks quickly themselves
- Toolkit
  - 3 pages of tools used
  - Everything from stacks on desk to DIVER
  - A few legacy & unsupported tools were mentioned
  - Google most consistent across division (branch to branch)
    - (search, Scholar, Maps/Earth, docs)
- Training
  - More training and refresher options are desired