

FLORIDA ARRA DATA QUALITY REVIEW

A REFERENCE AND CHECK SHEET

As ARRA reporting systems are designed and become operational the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of information captured by those systems should be considered.

Organizations designing systems or performing oversight should consider the following. These points were taken, in part, from OMB documents:

Implementing Guidance for the Reports on Use of Funds Pursuant to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, dated June 22, 2009 and Assessing the Reliability of Computer-Processed Data, July 2009, External Version I.

The information is categorized by whether the responsibility or activity is generally at the agency level or the Governor's Economic Recovery Office level. Some issues overlap.

– AGENCY LEVEL

1. Does the agency, program office, etc. have a complete listing of entities required to provide information and is a system in place to ensure all entities have appropriately reported their data (i.e., checking total number of records provided against agency totals)?
2. Have reporting requirements been clearly communicated to each sub-recipient?
3. Is the reporting requirement included in the contract or grant agreement?
4. Is there any consequence associated with the failure of a sub-recipient to properly report required information?
5. Have reporting time frames been properly communicated?
6. Have the required data elements been included in the communications to the sub-recipients?
7. Have reporting forms, as appropriate, been created to ensure completeness of information?
8. Is communication efficient, effective and properly documented?

9. Do the reporting entities have a clear understanding of mechanics of the reporting process?
10. Have all the data fields for “non-variable” information been complied and validated prior to reporting deadlines? This information would include the following:
 1. Federal funding agency name
 2. Award identification
 3. Recipient D-U-N-S
 4. Parent D-U-N-S
 5. Recipient CCR information
 6. CFDA number, if applicable
 7. Recipient account number
 8. Project/grant period
 9. Award type, date, description, and amount
 10. Activity code and description
 11. Project description and status
 12. Recipient primary place of performance
 13. Recipient area of benefit
 14. Recipient officer names and compensation
11. Has a process been established to assure data validity where the agency chooses to report data in the aggregate? Is this information reported in each of the three categories? Is detail documentation available to support the submitted totals?
 - Where sub-awards are less than \$25,000
 - Where sub-awards are to individuals, and
 - Where payments to vendors are less than \$25,000
12. Is update access to the database restricted to those who have to enter or update information in the system?
13. Have prime recipients established processes where submitted information is verified and sub-recipients are notified of reporting errors or omissions? Verification should include:
 - testing for missing data, either entire missing records or missing values in key data elements;
 - looking for duplicate records;
 - looking for invalid or duplicate identifiers;
 - testing for values outside a designated range;
 - looking for dates outside valid time periods or in an illogical progression, and
 - following up on troubling aspects of the data—such as extremely high values.

14. Has the receiving program identified any additional reporting requirements of the granting federal organization? This information might be reported separately from ARRA data.
15. Have reporting entities reviewed the data as presented on the federal site?
16. If an error is discovered in reported data after submission to the federal reporting database, is a process in place to ensure this error is corrected in a timely manner and properly reported in the following reporting period? Is it clear who will correct the error?

- GOVERNOR'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY OFFICE LEVEL

1. Does the system have edit checks or controls to help ensure accurately entered data? For example, are there electronic safeguards, such as error messages for out-of range entries or inconsistent entries, or when personnel enter information in the system, do they receive error messages when they enter obviously incorrect data? For instance, edit checks could demand certain precision for dates that can be entered. If money is being obligated for a current fiscal year, does the system allow only dates from the current fiscal year?
2. Is data system training made available to users entering data into the system? What is the quality of the data system training?
3. Who can access the system? What controls limit access to only the appropriate people? What are the controls on who has "read" access versus "write" access to the system? Who is able to change programming in the system?
4. Is an informal review of the data performed? Informal reviews could include reviews of summary-level reports to look for outliers or the evaluation of period-to period changes, looking for differences from historic trends.
5. Is a systematic review of the data performed? Systematic reviews could include those recommended by GAO guidance which includes the following:
 - Establishing control totals (e.g., total number of projects subject to reporting, total dollars allocated to projects) and verify that reported information matches the established control totals;
 - Creating an estimated distribution of expected data along a "normal" distribution curve and identify outliers;
 - Establishing a data review protocol or automated process that identifies incongruous results (e.g., total amount spent on a project or activity is equal to or greater than the previous reporting), and

- Establishing procedures and/cross-validation of data to identify and/or eliminate potential “double counting” due to delegation of reporting responsibility to sub-recipient.
6. Does the system have a feature that captures and archives the version of the data transmitted to the federal system. For example, is a separate file created that mirrors each transmission to the federal system and is this file maintained?
 7. Are procedures in place to prevent the duplicate recording of the same record?
 8. OMB guidance suggests the general public and non-governmental entities interested in “good government” can help with data quality, as well, by highlighting problems for correction. Has a system been developed to control comments and requests from the general public or non-governmental entities?
 9. Have oversight authorities, including the Economic Recovery Office and agency Inspectors General:
 - Established data quality expectations?
 - Established data and technical standards to promote consistency?
 - Coordinated any centralized reviews of data quality?