

FY 2020 TEMPLATE
Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR)¹
Policy Report to OMB-CEQ

On September 7, 2012, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Chairman of the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued a revised policy memorandum on environmental collaboration and conflict resolution (ECCR). This joint memo builds on, reinforces, and replaces the memo on ECR issued in 2005.

The memorandum requires annual reporting by departments and agencies to OMB and CEQ on progress made each year in implementing the ECCR policy direction to increase the effective use and institutional capacity for ECCR.

ECCR is defined in Section 2 of the 2012 memorandum as:

“ . . . third-party assisted collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution in the context of environmental, public lands, or natural resources issues or conflicts, including matters related to energy, transportation, and water and land management.

The term Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution encompasses a range of assisted collaboration, negotiation, and facilitated dialogue processes and applications. These processes directly engage affected interests and Federal department and agency decision makers in collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution.

Multi-issue, multi-party environmental disputes or controversies often take place in high conflict and low trust settings, where the assistance of impartial facilitators or mediators can be instrumental to reaching agreement and resolution. Such disputes range broadly from policy and regulatory disputes to administrative adjudicatory disputes, civil judicial disputes, intra- and interagency disputes, and disputes with non-Federal persons and entities.

Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution can be applied during policy development or planning in the context of a rulemaking, administrative decision making, enforcement, or litigation with appropriate attention to the particular requirements of those processes. These contexts typically involve situations where a Federal department or agency has ultimate responsibility for decision making and there may be disagreement or conflict among Federal, Tribal, State and local governments and agencies, public interest organizations, citizens groups, and business and industry groups.

Although Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution refers specifically to collaborative and conflict resolution processes aided by third-party neutrals, there is a broad array of partnerships, cooperative arrangements, and unassisted negotiations that Federal agencies may pursue with non-Federal entities to plan, manage, and implement department and agency programs and activities. The Basic Principles for Agency Engagement in Environmental Conflict Resolution and Collaborative Problem Solving are presented in Attachment B. The Basic Principles provide guidance that applies to both Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution and unassisted collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution. This policy recognizes the importance and value of the appropriate use of all forms collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution.”

¹ The term ‘ECCR’ includes third-party neutral assistance in environmental collaboration and environmental conflict resolution

This annual reporting template is provided in accordance with the memo for activities in FY 2020.

The report deadline is February 26, 2021.

We understand that collecting this information may be challenging; however, the departments and agencies are requested to collect this data to the best of their abilities. The FY 2020 report, along with previous reports, will establish a useful baseline for your department or agency. Departments should submit a single report that includes ECCR information from the agencies and other entities within the department. The information in your report will become part of an analysis of all FY 2020 ECCR reports. You may be contacted for the purpose of clarifying information in your report.

For your reference, synthesis reports from past fiscal years are available at <https://www.udall.gov/OurPrograms/Institute/ECRReport.aspx>.

FY 2020 ECCR Report Template

Name of Department/Agency responding:	Department of the Air Force
Name and Title/Position of person responding:	Patricia Collins, Associate General Counsel
Division/Office of person responding:	Installations, Energy & Environment, Office of the General Counsel
Contact information (phone/email):	patricia.collins@us.af.mil
Date this report is being submitted:	February 19, 2021
Name of ECCR Forum Representative	Patricia Collins

1. ECCR Capacity Building Progress:

- a) Describe any **NEW, CHANGED, or ACTIVELY ONGOING** steps taken by your department or agency to build programmatic and institutional capacity for environmental collaboration and conflict resolution in FY 2020, including progress made since FY 2019.

Please also include any efforts to establish routine procedures for considering ECCR in specific situations or categories of cases, including any efforts to provide institutional support for non-assisted collaboration efforts.

Please refer to the mechanisms and strategies presented in Section 5 and attachment C of the OMB-CEQ ECCR Policy Memo for additional guidance on what to include here.

Examples include but are not restricted to efforts to:

- Integrate ECCR objectives into agency mission statements, Government Performance and Results Act goals, and strategic planning;
- Assure that your agency's infrastructure supports ECCR;
- Invest in support, programs, or trainings; and d) focus on accountable performance and achievement.

Please refer to your agency's FY 2019 report to only include new, changed or actively ongoing ECCR capacity building progress. **If none, leave this section blank.**

The Air Force continued education and training in negotiation and interest-based conflict resolution skills through the following initiatives:

-The Air Force Negotiation Center (AFNC), based at Air University in Montgomery, Alabama, has successfully imbedded negotiation and conflict management skills into every level of commissioned officer and noncommissioned officer Professional Military Education (PME). AFNC also conducted Negotiation and Dispute Resolution Workshops at Maxwell AFB. Additionally, a pilot program is underway to develop negotiation skills at separate organizational units with the goal of negotiation becoming an individual and enterprise-wide corporate capability.

-Training in ECCR has been institutionalized as part of a module at the week-long Negotiation and Appropriate Dispute Resolution Course (NADRC) conducted annually at the AF JAG School at Maxwell AFB, AL.

In FY 2020, the Air Force continued increasing its education and training efforts through the following initiatives:

-The General Counsel's Office partnered with a contractor to host a course for the legal community, which included an environmental module. The course was attended by more than 90 members of the legal community, including members from 7 other DoD organizations.

-The General Counsel's Office partnered with Air University and the Air Force Personnel Center to increase training opportunities for leaders across the force. Improved communication and dispute resolution skills are transferrable to the environmental arena, and such skills aid in open communication of potential environmental concerns.

-The General Counsel's Office partnered with a contractor to design and deliver three guides for resolving conflict in a remote environment.

ECCR is encompassed within the overall Air Force Negotiation & Dispute Resolution program. AF Policy Directive 51-12 makes negotiation a critical leadership skill, and sets the expectation that AF leaders will use negotiation and dispute resolution techniques to preclude, manage, or resolve conflict. The Policy Directive's implementing instruction requires AF programs, including those resolving environmental disputes, to, where appropriate, use negotiation and dispute resolution processes. The resources of the AF NDR program are, and have been, available to support the use of ECCR and train AF personnel in negotiation and communication skills within the context of ECCR.

- b) Please describe the trainings given in your department/agency in FY 2020. Please include a list of the trainings, if possible. If known, please provide the course names and total number of people trained. Please refer to your agency's FY 2019 report to include **ONLY** trainings given in FY 2020. **If none, leave this section blank.**

See above.

2. ECCR Investments and Benefits

- a) Please describe any **NEW or CHANGED or INNOVATIVE** investments made in ECCR in FY 2020. Examples of investments may include (but are not limited to):
- ECCR programmatic FTEs

- Dedicated ECCR budgets
- Funds spent on contracts to support ECCR cases and programs

Please refer to your agency's FY 2019 report to only include new, changed, or innovative investments made in ECCR. **If none, leave this section blank.**

Senior leadership has long recognized the value of ADR and its contribution to mission accomplishment through its creative problem-solving attributes as well as savings in cost and time. ADR is treated by the Air Force as "budget neutral" with a positive impact on mission accomplishment. Air Force leadership fully supports the need for up-front investment in training in the use of collaborative processes and conflict resolution.

ECCR is fully integrated into Air Force budgeting and costs are not separated. The real savings from ECCR is the ability to accomplish mission without dispute-caused interruption. Air Force environmental conflicts and disputes tend to be small in number covering a wide range of issues. The volume is not as high as for agencies with licensing and enforcement as their primary mission.

b) Please describe any **NEW or CHANGED** benefits realized when using ECCR in FY 2020. Examples of benefits may include (but are not limited to):

- Cost savings
- Environmental and natural resource results
- Furtherance of agency mission
- Improved working relationship with stakeholders
- Avoidance of litigation
- Timely project progression

Please refer to your agency's FY 2019 report to only include new or changed benefits of ECCR realized in FY 2020. If none, leave this section blank.

See FY 2019 Report.

3. ECCR Use

Describe the level of ECCR use within your department/agency in FY 2020 by completing the three tables below. [Please refer to the definition of ECCR from the OMB-CEQ memo as presented on page one of this template. An ECCR “case or project” is an instance of neutral third-party involvement to assist parties in a collaborative or conflict resolution process.]

To avoid double counting processes, please select one category per case for decision making forums and for ECCR applications.

	Total FY 2020 ECCR Cases ²	Decision making forum that was addressing the issues when ECCR was initiated:			
		Federal agency decision	Administrative proceedings /appeals	Judicial proceedings	Other** (specify below)
<i>Context for ECCR Applications:</i>					
Policy development	___	___	___	___	___
Planning	12	12	___	___	___
Siting and construction	___	___	___	___	___
Rulemaking	___	___	___	___	___
License and permit issuance	___	___	___	___	___
Compliance and enforcement action	2	___	2	___	___
Implementation/monitoring agreements	___	___	___	___	___
Other (specify): Litigation	1	___	___	1	___
TOTAL	15	12	2	1	___
(the sum of the Decision Making Forums should equal Total FY 2020 ECCR Cases)					

****If you indicated above that any of your ECCR cases or projects were initiated in an “other” decision making forum, please elaborate here.**

² An “ECCR case” is a case in which a third-party neutral was active in a particular matter during FY 2020.

<i>Context for ECCR Applications:</i>	Interagency ECCR Cases and Projects	
	Included Other Federal Agencies Only	Included Non-Federal Participants (e.g., states, Tribes, and non governmental)
Policy development	_____	_____
Planning	_____	12
Siting and construction	_____	_____
Rulemaking	_____	_____
License and permit issuance	_____	_____
Compliance and enforcement action	_____	2
Implementation/monitoring agreements	_____	_____
Other (specify): Litigation	_____	1
TOTAL	_____	15

<i>Context for ECCR Applications:</i>	ECCR Cases or projects completed ³	ECCR Cases or Projects sponsored ⁴
Policy development	_____	_____
Planning	12	12
Siting and construction	_____	_____
Rulemaking	_____	_____
License and permit issuance	_____	_____
Compliance and enforcement action	_____	_____
Implementation/monitoring agreements	_____	_____
Other (specify): Litigation	_____	_____
TOTAL	12	12

³ A “completed case” means that neutral third-party involvement in a particular ECCR case ended during FY 2020. The end of neutral third-party involvement does not necessarily mean that the parties have concluded their collaboration/negotiation/dispute resolution process, that all issues are resolved, or that agreement has been reached.

⁴ Sponsored - to be a sponsor of an ECCR case means that an agency is contributing financial or in-kind resources (e.g., a staff mediator’s time) to provide the neutral third party’s services for that case. More than one sponsor is possible for a given ECCR case.

Note: If you subtract completed ECCR cases from Total FY 2020 cases it should equal total ongoing cases. If you subtract sponsored ECCR cases from Total FY 2020 ECCR cases it should equal total cases in which your agency or department participated but did not sponsor. If you subtract the combined interagency ECCR cases from Total FY 2020 cases it should equal total cases that involved only your agency or department with no other federal agency involvement.

4. ECCR Case Example

Using the template below, provide a description of an ECCR case (preferably **completed** in FY 2020). If possible, focus on an interagency ECCR case. Please limit the length to **no more than 1 page**.

Name/Identification of Problem/Conflict:
<i>[Please add case "title" here]</i>
Overview of problem/conflict and timeline, including reference to the nature and timing of the third-party assistance, and how the ECCR effort was funded.
See FY 2019 Report.
Summary of how the problem or conflict was addressed using ECCR, including details of any innovative approaches to ECCR, and how the principles for engagement in ECCR outlined in the policy memo were used.
Identify the key beneficial outcomes of this case, including references to likely alternative decision-making forums and how the outcomes differed as a result of ECCR.
Please share any reflections on the lessons learned from the use of ECCR.

5. Other ECCR Notable Cases

Briefly describe any other notable ECCR cases in FY 2020. (OPTIONAL)

6. Priority Uses of ECCR

Please describe your agency's **NEW or CHANGED** efforts to address priority or emerging areas of conflict and cross-cutting challenges either individually or in coordination with other agencies. For example, consider the following areas: NEPA, ESA, CERCLA, energy development, energy transmission, CWA 404 permitting, tribal consultation, environmental justice, management of ocean resources, infrastructure development, National Historic Preservation Act, other priority areas. Please refer to your agency's FY 2019 report to only include new or increased priority uses. **If none, leave this section blank.**

See FY 2019 Report.

7. Non-Third Party-Assisted Collaboration Processes (Optional)

Briefly describe other **significant** uses of environmental collaboration that your agency has undertaken in FY 2020 to anticipate, prevent, better manage, or resolve environmental issues and conflicts that do not include a third-party neutral. *Examples may include interagency MOUs, enhanced public engagement, and structural committees with the capacity to resolve disputes, etc.* **If none, leave this section blank.**

Throughout FY20, Air Force participated on 80 active, Air National Guard (ANG), and reserve Restoration Advisory Boards, the great majority of which do not utilize third party neutrals. These advisory boards include community and regulator representatives and employ collaborative decision-making processes for many cleanup issues.

Air Force has Regional Environmental Coordinators (RECs) for all EPA Regions and serves as DOD lead in EPA Regions 2, 6 & 10. Air Force has chaired partnering sessions and participated in working groups with Federal and State partners to address installation, DOD, regulatory and environmental compliance matters in AL, GA, FL, MI, MD, NC, SC, NY, NJ, PA WA, OR, ID, AK, OK, NM, CA, TX, CO, MT, WY and other States. Working with the EPA regional offices, RECs are spearheading “Ask-the-Inspector” workshops, “Compliance Assistance Visits” and Federal Facilities Workshops to develop mutual understandings between Airman and Regulators thereby reducing environmental compliance issues. Air Force is active on working groups for Chesapeake Bay, TX Commander’s Council, TX Military Commission, Federal Climate Partners, and for E.O. on Sustainability implementation. Air Force is also active in the Western Regional Partnership focused on collaboration between Federal, State and Tribal leadership in AZ, CA, NV, NM, MT, WY and UT to develop solutions that protect natural resources while promoting sustainability, homeland security and military readiness. Air Force Legislative and Regulatory Engagement Division also holds frequent partnering meetings in States with Air Force installations in order to address planning and compliance issues. The Air Force participates in the Western States Water Council’s Federal Agency Support Team addressing drought, climate change, water availability and energy issues, as well as in the CA/NV Drought Monitor Groups.

Air Force participates in numerous partnering and collaborative groups including: the California Desert Managers Group to partner with Federal, State and local stakeholders to resolve potential conflicting land use in the Mojave Desert; the Southeastern Region Partnership for Planning and Sustainability to develop mutually beneficial solutions to problems associated with prescribed fire, natural resource conservation, sustainable development, sentinel landscapes, and threatened and endangered species protection in the six state region; as well as on groups addressing wind turbine encroachment on Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) Launch Facilities and Missile Alert Facilities. Air Force works with Nevada State Clearinghouse and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on many issues including renewable energy development and energy transmission line siting. Air Force meets quarterly with California EPA to resolve hazardous waste permitting challenges. The Air Force is a member of the Alaska Statement of Cooperation (SOC) Compliance Assurance Work Group partnership focused on resolving environmental compliance issues in Alaska.

Examples include: 1) Collaborated with CA state and local agencies on EPA Region 9 Clean Air Technology Initiative accelerating development and use of low and zero emission technologies to improve air quality and public health; 2) Conducted online EPA/AF Sync Meeting (in lieu of annual Restoration Summits) receiving 100% positive feedback from all attendees; 3) Coordinated first ever Tier II Restoration Partnering Meetings in Texas and Region 7; 4) Chaired quarterly Working Group meetings in NY and NJ with management from state environmental agencies, EPA Region 2 and DoD installations.

8. Comments and Suggestions on Reporting

Please comment on any **NEW or CHANGED** difficulties you encountered in collecting these data and if and how you overcame them. Please provide suggestions for improving these questions in the future. Please reference your agency's FY 2019 report to identify new/increased difficulties. **If none, leave this section blank.**

See FY 2019 Report.

Please attach any additional information as warranted.

Report due Friday, February 26, 2020.

Submit report electronically to: kavanaugh@udall.gov

**Basic Principles for Agency Engagement in
Environmental Conflict Resolution and Collaborative Problem Solving**

Informed Commitment	Confirm willingness and availability of appropriate agency leadership and staff at all levels to commit to principles of engagement; ensure commitment to participate in good faith with open mindset to new perspectives
Balanced, Voluntary Representation	Ensure balanced inclusion of affected/concerned interests; all parties should be willing and able to participate and select their own representatives
Group Autonomy	Engage with all participants in developing and governing process; including choice of consensus-based decision rules; seek assistance as needed from impartial facilitator/mediator selected by and accountable to all parties
Informed Process	Seek agreement on how to share, test and apply relevant information (scientific, cultural, technical, etc.) among participants; ensure relevant information is accessible and understandable by all participants
Accountability	Participate in the process directly, fully, and in good faith; be accountable to all participants, as well as agency representatives and the public
Openness	Ensure all participants and public are fully informed in a timely manner of the purpose and objectives of process; communicate agency authorities, requirements and constraints; uphold confidentiality rules and agreements as required for particular proceedings
Timeliness	Ensure timely decisions and outcomes
Implementation	Ensure decisions are implementable consistent with federal law and policy; parties should commit to identify roles and responsibilities necessary to implement agreement; parties should agree in advance on the consequences of a party being unable to provide necessary resources or implement agreement; ensure parties will take steps to implement and obtain resources necessary to agreement