

After Action Reviews – Lessons Learned Using Innovative Data – Driven Approaches and Methodology
September 23, 20201
Q&A Session

The 23 September PCoP webinar provided an overview of recent After Action Reviews (AARs) on USACE Civil Works planning and project delivery efforts. Planners, project managers, and leaders can apply the information gathered from any AAR to document lessons learned and opportunities for change in the enterprise. AARs are a powerful tool to facilitate knowledge sharing and help build a culture of learning within USACE.



The webinar was presented by Dr. Nadia Mohandessi (Emergency Management Continuous Improvement Program Manager, Readiness Support Center) and Gwyn Jarrett (Program Manager with the NWD/POD Regional Integration Team). Andy MacInnes, Water Resource Certified Planner (MVN) and Regional Technical Specialist (MVD), co-facilitated and developed the AARs discussed with Dr. Mohandessi.

This summary of the Question / Answer session of the webinar is not a transcription; questions and responses have been edited and reordered for clarity.

How the AARs Were Conducted

Can AARs be conducted in a different forum other than face-to-face meetings, such as on WebEx or offsite?

Yes. The structure of the AAR can vary. Interviews can be conducted in person, via webex, or by phone. Surveys, one-on-one interviews, small group interviews, or facilitated group meetings are all approaches to gather information as part of the review.

Were other methods, other than interviews, used to bring factual hard data to the AAR process? Was qualitative coding used to acquire data?

AARs use both qualitative and quantitative data. The primary source of information in the AARs discussed today were interviews and research using existing guidance, policy regulations, study/project documentation, and other doctrinal references.

Do AARs reveal anything about the technical capability on the studies?

Yes, these specific AARs touched on all aspects of the study delivery process, including the technical capability and capacity of the PDT and reviewers.

Participation in AARs

Does Headquarters fund the Project Delivery Team's (PDT) labor to participate in AARs?

In general, AARs are funded by the project as part of the project delivery business process. Headquarters did fund Nadia and Andy's labor to conduct the Ala Wai FRM Study and Puerto Rico CSRSM Study AARs Dr. Mohandessi presented, but the PDT's labor was not funded.

Did these AARs include the non-federal sponsors or communities?

Sponsors or other external stakeholders can be included in AARs, and the ongoing AAR in Puerto Rico does include the non-federal sponsor. The purpose of the other two AARs recently conducted was focused primarily on understanding the decision making and internal processes that may have impacted project delivery, so the non-federal sponsor or community were not interviewed.