



2009 STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

Assure for all citizens of the state a safe, healthful
and productive environment

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Purpose

This Unified Strategic Plan links the strategy for the AEMC (Commission) and the ADEM (Department). It is a unified, multi-year strategic plan to accomplish significant results in the fulfillment of both the Commission's and the Department's mission as set out in the Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 22-22A-2.

Mission, Values, Operating Guidelines

The joint mission of the Department is to ...

Assure for all citizens of the state a safe, healthful and productive environment.

Both the Department and Commission have identified the following values that are important to the fulfillment of their mission and which will guide the operation of the Commission and Department.

1. Clear, Science-Based Decisions and Policies to Protect Human Health and the Environment - We seek clarity and certainty in our regulations, methods and actions, ensuring they are based on objective, peer-reviewed scientific standards and that they provide protection for all citizens.

2. Respect each other's Roles - We will respect the roles of the Commission as a body, the Department as an organization, with the Director as Chief Executive Officer.

3. Seek Transparent Communication - We will seek open and transparent communication within the Commission, the Department, and between the Commission and Department, as appropriate.

4. Use Resources Wisely - We respect the wise, productive and efficient use of resources, prioritizing actions to gain the greatest environmental return on the investment of our limited resources and relying on innovation and efficiency to multiply the resources we have.

5. Act on Agreed upon Goals - The Commission will seek agreement on goals and plans to achieve the most meaningful results to achieve our mission, a safe, healthful and productive environment, and the Commission will act upon those goals and plans only when agreed upon.

Roles of the Commission and Department

In the fulfillment of its mission, the Commission and the Department have cooperative but different roles and responsibilities.

AEMC	ADEM
<p>The Commission’s role is set to policy by ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promulgating rules • Hearing appeals • Managing the Director of the Department 	<p>The Department’s role is to implement policy by ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing permitting, compliance determinations and enforcement actions to implement the Commission’s set policy • Providing quality information to the Commission to help them in policy setting decisions
<p>To fulfill its role, the Commission needs ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive, clear and unbiased information for policy decision making 	<p>To fulfill its role the Department needs ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear direction from the AEMC • Resources
<p>The Commission depends on systems and procedures as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined processes to set policy, deal with emerging issues, adopt regulations and interact with public • Defined processes to obtain comprehensive, clear and unbiased information from the department • Operating guidelines to enable open, efficient and collaborative decision making 	<p>The Department relies on systems and procedures as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget management to manage financial resources • Operations management to manage the permitting, compliance determination and enforcement action operations of the organization • Performance and Quality management to lead the Department’s people resources to seek high levels of performance and quality

Vision for Achieving the Most Meaningful Results for the Environment

The Commission and Department share a joint vision to achieve the most meaningful results for a safe, healthful and productive environment. Areas of accomplishment include, but are not limited to, the achievement ambient air quality at or above standards set by EPA, increasing recycling of all reusable materials and minimizing solid waste by establishing performance benchmarks according to the Solid Waste Recyclable Materials Management Act, the attainment of water quality standards and stream classifications, minimizing the effects of stormwater runoff and increasing land re-use and redevelopment.

Key Goals for AEMC/ADEM

1. Effective and Responsive Commission - An effective and responsive commission is getting an open flow of information from all major stakeholders, is collaborating within the Commission on decisions and reasons for them, is dealing with disagreements in a productive way, is setting and following operational guidelines that reflect their stated values, is addressing issues in a timely manner, is opening only issues agreed to by the Commission and receiving comprehensive and unbiased information from the Department.

2. High Performing Work Environment - The AEMC and the ADEM need a work environment that is productive and fulfilling for the organization and the people. A reflection of a high performing work environment is the accomplishment of goals, is a clear line-of-sight between our mission, goals, strategies to accomplish goals and an individual's work activities, is high employee morale, is improved productivity and is the generation of efficient solutions to performance problems.

3. Credible Relationships with External Stakeholders - Having a credible relationship with stakeholders (including citizens, the regulated community and all branches and levels of government) is having an open, efficient flow of information to and from stakeholders about their expectations, is treating stakeholders fairly, is providing equal access and consideration for all parties/stakeholders, is making economically sound decisions as they influence stakeholders and is making timely decisions.

4. Efficient and Effective Departmental Operations - Efficient and effective operations is implementing a robust quality management system, is managing program operations to specific key performance metrics, is effectively managing our operational budget and individual program budgets, is making decisions, including both regulatory assistance and administrative deterrence, to most positively affect the achievement of 100% compliance and is consistently achieving timeliness standards in our actions.

Critical Success Factors

Critical Success Factors (CSFs) are those key activities that define the strategy to achieve the Commission/Department's Mission, Most Meaningful Results and Key Goals.

The Commission and the Department will focus on the following CSFs to achieve results in the above areas:

A. Practices for High Communication between the Commission and the Department - Establish and promote practices, as appropriate, to obtain comprehensive, clear and unbiased information necessary to fulfill responsibilities.

B. Processes for Emerging Issues, Regulations and Interaction with the Public - Implement processes to effectively deal with emerging issues, adopting regulations and interacting with the public.

C. Departmental Support for AEMC - Improve departmental support provided to the Commission.

D. Goal Focus - Focus ADEM staff on department and program goals.

E. Quality Operations - Ensure quality management of operations.

F. Compliance - Implement operational and policy changes to encourage 100% compliance among all regulated entities.

Strategies

A. Practices for High Communication Between the Commission and the Department - Establish and promote practices to obtain comprehensive, clear and unbiased information necessary to fulfill responsibilities.

Intent

- Improve quality of information available to the Commission for decision making.
- Increase transparency in communication between the Commission and Department.

Strategies

1. Information Gathering Process for the Commission - Develop and implement a process so the Commission can obtain information from the Department and other sources necessary to make rulemaking and policy decisions.

2. Communications - To be effective, the Commission and the Department need transparent, effective and positive communication...communication within, communication in and communication out. Commissioners need productive ways to deal with conflicting opinions about various issues. They need to explore practices that will enable them to move forward productively even when they agree to disagree.

a. Communication within – collaboration and joint decision making requires high communication among the Commissioners. To be effective Commissioners must create opportunities to openly and clearly talk with each other about issues, opportunities and decisions and do so in compliance to the Open Meetings Act.

b. Communication out – The Commission also needs to be effective communicating out to various stakeholders including the Department; the communication relates to the use of resources, policy decisions, requests for information and general public announcements.

b. Communication in – The Commission needs information from the Department as well as from other stakeholders to enable sound decisions. Departmental communication should include reporting financial and operational performance as well as technical and scientific information related to policies and programs.

3. Managing the Director - Develop and use an approach for the Commission to set guidelines and procedures related to the Commission's role in managing the Director.

4. Operational Guidelines - Create a set of Operational Guidelines based on Values for the Commission and the Department to use to guide how they will work together

B. Processes for Emerging Issues, Regulations and Interaction with the Public - Implement processes to effectively deal with emerging issues, adopting regulations and interacting with the public.

Intent

Provide for efficient and effective Commission operations by...

1. standardizing practices for critical Commission activities and
2. increasing and improving stakeholder involvement.

Strategies

1. Emerging Issues - Develop and use an approach for the Commission to set policy/ adopt rules related to emerging interests and issues including such issues as:

- Sustainable Development
- Environmental Justice
- Anti-degradation
- Cumulative Risk
- Air Toxics
- Climate Change

These issues apply to things such as quarries, new industries, etc.

3. Public Input – Evaluate and improve, as necessary, the AEMC process for receiving input from stakeholders.

4. Department Initiated Regulations - Develop and use an approach for the Commission to adopt regulations related to issues initiated by the Department with primary focus being on how the AEMC is informed on these issues.

C. Departmental Support for AEMC - Improve departmental support provided to the AEMC.

Intent

Provide the Commission with comprehensive, unbiased and clear information with which to make decisions.

Strategies

1. Information Support for Decision Making - Develop a structured format for providing support to the Commission to better meet their information needs and include a clear agreement on the expenditure of departmental resources in developing information for the AEMC.

2. Department Performance Reporting - Develop and provide operational (program), financial and performance information to the Commission on a regular basis.

D. Goal Focus - Focus ADEM staff around department and program goals.

Intent

- Implement a performance management system to...
- Hold staff accountable for individual performance
- Center employee rewards around high performance
- Focus management on program metrics
- Improve employee satisfaction/morale
- Create clarity and alignment (employee line-of-sight) on departmental goals
- Enhance internal communications about performance expectations
- Improve quality through continuous process improvement.

Strategies

- 1. Mission** - Communicate and align all staff with the Department's mission.
 - 2. Program Outputs and Performance Metrics** - Identify primary program outputs and their key performance metrics. Evaluate program and staff performance based on performance metrics.
 - 3. Performance Management** - Use performance metrics to communicate and reward high performance and to address and change poor performance.
 - 4. Staff Alignment** - Engage all staff in aligning work expectations with program goals. Gain staff input in setting program goals.
 - 5. Celebrate Successes** - Identify key successes and find ways to celebrate them with employees, Commissioners and other involved stakeholders.
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E. Quality Operations - Ensure quality management of operations.

Intent

Successfully manage the Department's operations by...

- Providing clarity and accountability for funding and resource allocation
- Create a clear picture of funding sufficiency
- Gain greater efficiency in operations
- More effectively meet customer needs and expectations for each identified process
- Speed up the ability to accept and use new technologies
- Create clarity and accountability for operational performance
- Gain consistency across operations
- Develop a system that rewards employees for high performance
- Empower employee success
- Instill greater trust in the Department by the Commission, Alabama citizens and the regulated community.

Strategies

- 1. Quality Assurance Measures** - Implement quality assurance measures within permitting, compliance evaluation, enforcement and other pertinent support processes and functions.
 - 2. Audit Quality Performance** - Audit quality assurance measures and performance.
 - 3. Evaluate Program Performance based on Output Metrics** - Identify primary program products and evaluate performance by the key metrics for those products.
 - 4. Budgeting and Cost Accounting** - Implement a standard budgeting and cost accounting method across all programs.
 - 5. Support of Department** - Ensure Department support is adequate to successfully meet defined program requirements
 - 6. Continuous Process Improvement** - Implement a Department-wide continuous process improvement strategy.
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F. Compliance - Implement operational and policy changes to encourage 100% compliance among all regulated entities.

Intent – Encourage and support 100% compliance by...

- Reinforcing a normal expectation of compliance among all regulated sources
- Provide appropriate, measured and focused compliance assistance where needed
- Assure fair and consistent enforcement among all regulated entities
- Increase the speed of compliance determinations and enforcement actions
- Provide departmental and commission focus on programs needing assistance with noncompliance rates
- Identify and implement solutions for achieving high compliance rates.

Strategies

- 1. Program-level Changes for Compliance** - Implement program-level operational changes that will lead to the greatest increase in compliance.
 - 2. Operational Obstacles to Compliance** - Identify the biggest operational impediments that hinder compliance which are outside the program's direct control; implement department level operational changes to lead to the greatest increase in compliance.
 - 3. Policy Obstacles to Compliance** - Identify the most meaningful policy impediments as they relate to compliance and which are outside the Department's direct control. Present suggested changes to the Commission.
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Plan Implementation

The first step in the implementation of the Unified Strategic Plan is to define measurable actions that will be taken in an effort to achieve the stated goals of the plan. These actions will bring both entities together around:

1. The meaningful environmental results and the metrics that will be used to evaluate the realization of the vision.
2. The key metrics that will be used to measure implementation.

Annual Operations Plan – The Unified Strategic Plan is intended to give the Commission and Department an agreed on direction by identifying major goal areas and strategies to achieve the goals. Execution of the plan will require the annual development and implementation of measurable actions coupled with a review of performance from the previous year. The identified measurable actions will be included in an Annual Operations Plan.

Day-to-Day Performance – The Unified Strategic Plan as well as annual action plans are intended to inform the Commission and guide the Department in the execution of the Department’s mission.



ADEM