**QAPP Worksheet #37: Data Usability Assessment**

**(UFP-QAPP Manual Section 5.2.3 including Table 12)**

**(EPA 2106-G-05 Section 2.5.2, 2.5.3, and 2.5.4)**

This worksheet documents procedures that will be used to perform the data usability assessment. The data usability assessment is performed at the conclusion of data collection activities, using the outputs from data verification and data validation. It is the data interpretation phase, which involves a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of environmental data to determine if the project data are of the right type, quality, and quantity to support the decisions that need to be made. It involves a retrospective evaluation of the systematic planning process, and, like the systematic planning process, involves participation by key members of the project team. The data usability assessment evaluates whether underlying assumptions used during systematic planning are supported, sources of uncertainty have been accounted for and are acceptable, data are representative of the population of interest, and the results can be used as intended, with the acceptable level of confidence.

Identify personnel (organization and position/title) responsible for participating in the data usability assessment:

Project Manager

Project QAM

Risk Assessor

Geologist/Hydrogeologist

Project Chemist

Field Task Leader

Statistician

Describe how the usability assessment will be documented:

Summarize the data usability assessment process including statistics, equations, and computer algorithms that will be used to analyze the data:

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| **Step 1** | **Review the project’s objectives and sampling design**  *Review the key outputs defined during systematic planning (i.e.,PQOs or DQOs and MPCs) to make sure they are still applicable. Review the sampling design for consistency with stated objectives. This provides the context for interpreting the data in subsequent steps.* |
| **Step 2** | **Review the data verification and data validation outputs**  *Review available QA reports, including the data verification and data validation reports. Perform basic calculations and summarize the data (using graphs, maps, tables, etc.). Look for patterns, trends, and anomalies (i.e., unexpected results). Review deviations from planned activities (e.g., number and locations of samples, holding time exceedances, damaged samples, non-compliant PT sample results, and SOP deviations) and determine their impacts on the data usability. Evaluate implications of unacceptable QC sample results.* |
| **Step 3** | **Verify the assumptions of the selected statistical method**  *Verify whether underlying assumptions for selected statistical methods (if documented in the QAPP) are valid. Common assumptions include the distributional form of the data, independence of the data, dispersion characteristics, homogeneity, etc. Depending on the robustness of the statistical method, minor deviations from assumptions usually are not critical to statistical analysis and data interpretation. If serious deviations from assumptions are discovered, then another statistical method may need to be selected.* |
| **Step 4** | **Implement the statistical method**  *Implement the specified statistical procedures for analyzing the data and review underlying assumptions. For decision projects that involve hypothesis testing (e.g., “concentrations of lead in groundwater are below the action level”) consider the consequences for selecting the incorrect alternative; for estimation projects (e.g., establishing a boundary for surface soil contamination), consider the tolerance for uncertainty in measurements.* |
| **Step 5** | **Document data usability and draw conclusions**  *Determine if the data can be used as intended, considering implications of deviations and corrective actions. Discuss data quality indicators. Assess the performance of the sampling design and Identify limitations on data use. Update the conceptual site model and document conclusions. Prepare the data usability summary report which can be in the form of text and/or a table.* |