

NERC

NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC
RELIABILITY CORPORATION

ALIGN

Formerly the CMEP Technology Project

Registered Entity Newsletter

May 2019

INSIDE THIS EDITION

[Let's Get Aligned: Top 3 Takeaways](#)

[Align Goals and Process Improvements](#) | [Upcoming Events](#) | [About the Align Newsletter](#)

Let's Get Aligned: Top 3 Takeaways

When will I be trained?

In preparation for the **Align Release 1 Go-live in September**, all registered entity staff who have responsibilities related to self-reporting, self-logging (if eligible), mitigation processes, and enforcement activities should plan to attend a Release 1 registered entity training. Please see the training dates in your Region below and plan to attend the session closest to your location. Additional training options, including webinars, short videos, and quick reference cards, will be made available leading up to the September Go-live.

Release 1 Registered Entity Trainings		
Region	Training Date(s)	Location
MRO	September 4 September 10	N/A
NPCC	September 11	NPCC Office, New York City, NY
RF	September 10 September 12	Reliability First Office, Independence, OH
SERC	August 13 August 20	SERC Reliability Corporation, Charlotte, NC
Texas RE	August 28	Texas Reliability Entity, Austin, TX
WECC	August 27	Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Westminster, CO
	August 29	California ISO, Folsom, CA
	September 5	WECC, Salt Lake City, UT
	September 10	Bonneville Power Authority, Portland, OR
	September 12	Douglas County PUD, East Wenatchee, WA

To register for Align Release 1 registered entity training, please contact your Regional POC for further instructions.

How do I access Align?

To access the Align tool, it is mandatory that you have an ERO Portal account. You will be unable to access the tool if you do not have a valid NERC ERO Portal account. Act now to verify your existing account or to set up your new account.

It is important to note that this is the **first step** in accessing the Align tool and this foundational process should be completed as soon as possible. We will share additional information on access provisioning in the near future.

Please note: As a Primary Compliance Contact (PCC) receiving this newsletter, is it your responsibility to identify any additional personnel in your organization that require training on and access to Align. To help determine who in your entity requires an ERO Portal account, you can log in to your current regional CMEP system (CDAA/CITS and/or webCDMS) to view and validate who currently has access at your entity.

To verify your ERO Portal Account:

1. Navigate to <https://eroportal.nerc.net>.
2. Select “Sign In” in the upper left-hand corner.
3. Enter your credentials to confirm access to ERO Portal.
 - a. If you cannot remember your username/password, select the “Forgot Password/Username” to reset your password.

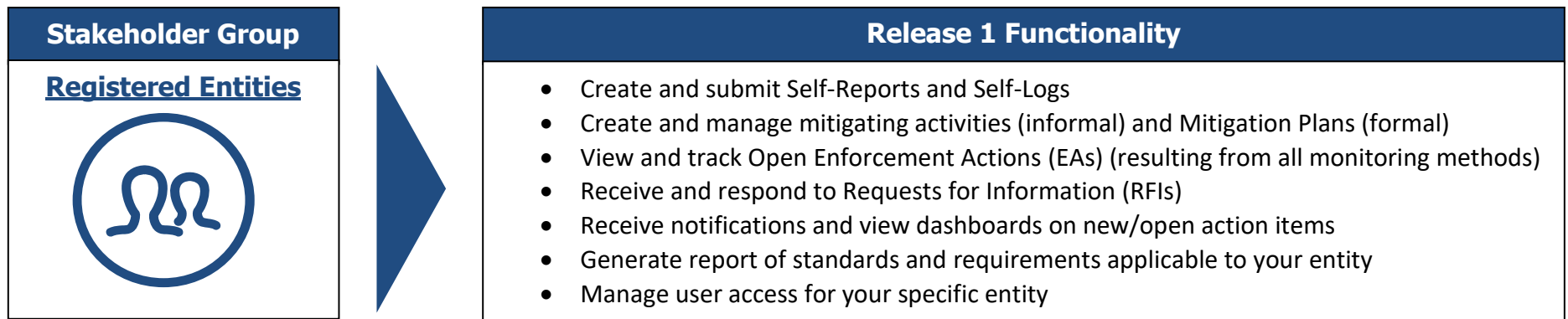
To set-up your ERO Portal Account:

1. Navigate to <https://eroportal.nerc.net>.
2. Select “Register” in the upper left-hand corner.
3. Complete the registration form and click “Submit.”

If you have questions or problems concerning your ERO Portal account, please submit a support ticket [here](#).

What can I expect in Release 1 as a registered entity?

Registered entities will perform the following functions in the Align tool after the Release 1 Go-live:



Align Project Goals and Process Improvements

Align Project Goals

The Align project seeks to provide a single, common CMEP system in a secure environment that will:

- Improve documentation, sharing, and analysis of compliance work activities;
- Meet requirements under applicable professional standards and the Rules of Procedure;
- Increase efficiency by aligning and consolidating CMEP processes across the Regions;
- Define and standardize CMEP data for consistency and improved analysis; and
- Deliver a common platform and registered entity experience.

Release 1 Process Improvements for Registered Entities

During the Release 1 process harmonization activities, the project team and NERC/Regional Entity SMEs documented a list of key process improvements enabled by the Align tool. The list below is not inclusive of all process improvements, but highlights some of the major improvements identified for Release 1.

Align Release 1 Process Improvements			
Process	Process Area	Current State	Future State – Align
General	System Forms	Inconsistencies across regional legacy systems	Standardized forms, workflows, dashboards, etc. throughout the system will significantly increase consistency in processes and end-user experience
	Standards	Manual and cumbersome process to navigate to multiple locations to pull a report of standards and requirements	Ability to generate a report of standards and requirements applicable to your entity
	RFIs	RFIs are sent manually by Regions, outside of current systems, creating inconsistency in the user experience	Receive and respond to RFIs in a single, consistent tool
Mitigation Processes	Mitigation Plans vs. Mitigating Activities	Mitigating activities have limited-to-no tracking capabilities in current tools	Both Mitigation Plans and mitigating activities will have similar tracking capabilities

		Results in Mitigation Plans being used more often than necessary (e.g., for minimal risk compliance exceptions), creating unnecessary work and complexity	All mitigation will begin as mitigating activities by default, with the ability to escalate to a formal Mitigation Plan when necessary, simplifying the process and reducing level of effort
Enforcement	Tracking	Tracking of non-monetary sanctions and other activities agreed to during settlement (e.g., above and beyond activities) is limited	Introduction of an “obligations” section of the record to capture and track settlement activities similar to mitigating activities

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Workshops and Conferences Featuring Align		
Region	Date	Location
FRCC	May 23	RECCF Meeting
MRO	May 23	MCCF Meeting (stakeholder forum)
NPCC	May 22	Spring Compliance Workshop
RF	May 22	Board of Director Meeting
SERC	July 29	SERC Open Forum
Texas RE	May 15	Board/MRC Meeting
	May 21	Talk w/ Texas RE
WECC	May 16	Open Webinar (Align)

About the Align Newsletter

This monthly newsletter compiles a list of important Align project updates with actionable deadlines, as well as upcoming events, recently posted resources, and other relevant news and information. Please email CMEP@nerc.net with feedback on this newsletter. The current, and future, newsletter and additional project resources, including the regularly updated [Align FAQs](#), can be found on the [Align Project Site](#).