Align Project: Release 1 Update FAQs
August 2019

The purpose of this document is to address frequently asked questions regarding the Align Release 1 schedule and deployment. For general information regarding the Align project, we encourage you to visit the Align web page and refer to our previous Align FAQ document.

We will continue to update this FAQ document as the project progresses.

FAQs

Q: Why was Align Release 1 delayed?

A: NERC's management team decided to delay Release 1, planned for the last quarter of 2019, and NERC's Board accepted the schedule change at its August Board meeting. The primary drivers for the delay are related to ensuring data security, refining compliance audit and investigation business processes, and addressing stakeholder concerns.

The project team continues with its other scheduled activities, including completing user acceptance testing, identifying critical enhancements, completing data integration and reporting efforts, and developing training materials—with the intention of launching Release 1 in 2020.

Q: How will the Release 1 delay impact Align training?

A: The Align project team will work with regional staff to update the Release 1 training schedule. While exact dates are still being determined, training will likely be completed in Q1/Q2 2020. The Align project team will use the remainder of Q4 to refine training materials and work with the regional project team members to ensure that all impacted Align users are prepared for the Release 1 launch. When the final schedule is published, there will be ample time to register for training.

Q: Will the delay impact the Release 1 features in the Align Tool?

A: Release 1 will still include self-reporting, self-logs, mitigation, and enforcement activities.

Q: What benefits can be expected from Align Release 1?

A: The Align project will deliver on the same business objectives originally communicated, which are to:

- Provide a single, common portal for registered entities, enabling consistency of experience;
- Offer real-time access to information, eliminating delays and manual communications;
- Improve capability to support the risk-based compliance oversight framework;
- Enhance quality assurance and oversight, enabling consistent application of the CMEP;
- Improve analytics, including visibility into compliance and reliability risks;

- Increase capability to implement audit best practices and processes (planning, fieldwork, reporting, and quality assurance);

- Standardize the implementation of common business processes and workflows, enabling increased productivity; and

- Reduce application costs across the ERO Enterprise.

Q: How can I stay informed on Align updates and progress?
A: The Align project team will provide regular updates on our progress toward Release 1. We encourage you to review the Align newsletters, attend regional workshops featuring Align, and reach out to your [Align change agent](#) or the [Align project team](#) with any additional questions.