

**Conflict Resolution and Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX)
FY 2015-2020 Strategic Plan
DRAFT DATE: 2 October 2014**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) collaborates with a purpose: to deliver creative and sustainable solutions to increasingly complex challenges while balancing competing interests in the communities we serve. Conflict resolution and public participation skills are required to achieve the varied missions of the Corps. They are promoted in the Corps strategic plan, environmental principles, watershed approach and principles of IWRM.

The Conflict Resolution and Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX) develops the collaborative capacity of the Corps, improving the ability of staff to work together effectively both internally and externally. This strategic plan (the second since designation of the CX in 2008¹) outlines the focus and direction of the CX to 2020.

Mission

CPCX's mission is to enable Corps staff to anticipate, prevent and manage water-related conflicts through collaboration² while ensuring that the interests of the public are addressed in a fair and transparent manner.

Vision

CPCX is highly valued throughout all mission areas of the Corps for advancing a culture of collaboration that improves the management of U.S. water resources.

Core Values

The values that underlie the collaboration work we support include impartiality, fairness, transparency, and democratic practice. We promote collaboration that is impactful, effective and efficient.

The values that we bring to this work include an ethic of service, continual learning, honesty, trustworthiness, and diligence.

The values that underlie our work as a team include a positive attitude, encouragement and teamwork.

We strive to enact these values in collaborative work with other partners and members of the public we serve, in our relationships within the Corps, and in our interactions within our team.

Goals and Objectives

¹ MG Don T. Riley. Memo (17 October 2008): Designation of the Corps Conflict Resolution & Public Participation Expertise (CX) at IWR.

² For purposes of readability, the terms 'collaboration' and 'collaborative processes' are used to encompass a wide range of participatory processes rather than listing such processes separately, e.g., conflict resolution, public participation, civic engagement, and so forth. **INSERT DEFINITION**

Goal 1. *Build the collaborative capacity of Corps staff and partners to enable effective convening of, and participation in, collaborative processes.*

To accomplish this goal, CPCX will continue its integrated program of training, peer learning, and mentoring that will enable Corps staff and partners to strengthen their knowledge, skills and abilities to lead and participate effectively in collaborative processes.

Objective 1.1: Use a variety of means to learn from field and headquarters staff about the challenges they face and their need for support and training.

Means and Strategies

Identify staff needs through the following activities and consolidate this information to develop the annual work plan.

- Periodic Collaborative Capacity Assessment
- Quarterly and field review group meetings with MSC Liaisons
- Engagement in collaborative aspects of various pilot studies
- Periodic meetings with Public Involvement Specialists
- Engagement with Headquarters Business line managers
- Annual Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution report
- Evaluation and feedback from CPCX trainings

Metrics

The annual work plan reflects current needs of Corps staff.

Objective 1.2: Build Corps-wide awareness of collaborative tools and techniques and their effective uses.

Means and Strategies

Information sharing activities will publicize best practices in collaboration from both inside and outside the Corps. Research activities will link indicators of collaborative effectiveness. Through consultation services we will demonstrate collaborative tools first-hand and expose Corps staff to different tools that can be applied to other collaboration challenges. Training activities (see objective 1.5) will expose Corps staff to collaborative tools and techniques. CPCX will publish and distribute papers, pamphlets and other materials to highlight collaborative processes. CPCX staff will regularly deliver presentations, webinars and briefings to build awareness.

Metrics

On an annual basis, CPCX will track the number of awareness-building activities conducted, including trainings, outreach materials, and presentations.

Objective 1.3: Strengthen information exchange about collaborative processes across the Corps and with external partners.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will facilitate the sharing of information, experiences, and perspectives among members of the Collaboration and Public Participation Community of Practice (CPP CoP). CPCX will also share information with the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR) roster of neutrals and other federal conflict resolution centers. Information sharing methods include webinars, workshops, publications, newsletters, online portals, case study database, and CPP CoP listserve emails.

Types of information exchanged will include best practices, lessons learned, challenges that need to be addressed, and new approaches and tools (such as virtual methods) to help the Corps collaborate both internally and externally. CPCX will synthesize and distill insights and advice about best practices for collaborative and participatory processes. CPCX will establish a system for collecting case descriptions, relying largely on the points of contact in divisions and districts and other members of the CPP CoP. These case examples will be a resource for the annual ECCR report to the Council on Environmental Quality, for training programs and reports on best practices, and for supporting Corps leadership (Headquarters and the Assistant Secretary of the Army) on special initiatives (see Objective 3.3).

Metrics

On an annual basis, CPCX will track activities and uses (e.g., numbers of web hits, requests for information).

Objective 1.4: Grow and institutionalize the Public Involvement Specialist program.

Means and strategies

CPCX will continue to convene the cadre, providing ongoing support, opportunities for advancing skills, and peer support in dealing with public involvement challenges. The cadre will increase awareness of, and demand for, their skills, and consider formal options to institutionalize the position by investigating how other agencies' conflict resolution centers operate, exploring position descriptions with Human Resources, and investigating funding options.

Objective 1.5: Offer multiple types of collaboration training addressing Corps needs.

Means and Strategies

Using a needs assessment to identify appropriate activities, CPCX will develop, revamp or maintain, and facilitate courses in Public Participation, Conflict Resolution, Risk Communication for Flood Risk Management, and Shared Vision Planning. Other topics may be added as separate courses or linked with existing courses relevant for public engagement, collaboration and/or conflict resolution managed by PAO, Planning, and other communities of practice. CPCX will promote certification for higher-level training, such as the USIECR Certificate in Environmental Collaboration. Public engagement, collaboration, and conflict resolution skills will also be integrated into existing trainings from various business lines and communities of practice.

Metrics

CPCX will track the evaluations of trainings each year by our team and review results on an annual basis.

Goal 2. Increase the success of collaborative processes for activities conducted by Corps and its partners by *providing direct support*.

To accomplish this goal, CPCX will continue to build awareness of how collaborative processes can make a difference to Corps districts, division, and headquarters across all mission areas. CPCX staff and internal partners, supplemented by external collaboration experts, will provide consultation services including diagnosis, process design, and facilitation and mediation.

Objective 2.1: Provide assistance by CPCX & our field partners (Major Subordinate Command Points of Contact (MSC Liaisons), District Public Involvement Specialists, and Facilitators) to field and headquarters staff across all mission areas.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will continue to improve its intake process including concrete criteria for assistance or referral to ensure an efficient assessment of needs for each request from the field and headquarters. While most CPCX services will be by request, CPCX will proactively engage on high profile or controversial issues that could benefit from collaborative solutions.

CPCX will provide technical expertise and support to Corps programs, including the International Center for Integrated Water Resources Management.

Objective 2.2: Build awareness of the benefits of, and requirements for, collaborative processes.

Means and Strategies

Many Corps staff may not be aware of regulatory or policy requirements for collaborative processes, or the benefits these processes may bring. Information sharing activities will publicize best practices in collaboration from both inside and outside the Corps. Consultation services will demonstrate the benefits of collaborative tools that can be applied to other collaboration challenges facing Corps staff. Training activities - from face-to-face classes to virtual courses - will expose Corps staff to requirements and guidance for convening and participating in collaborative processes. CPCX will publish and distribute papers, pamphlets and other materials to highlight collaborative processes, their benefits and available training and resources. CPCX staff will regularly deliver presentations, webinars and briefings to build awareness.

Metrics

CPCX will track the number and type of requests received and assistance provided by staff and field partners.

Objective 2.3: Strengthen and expand the network of skilled Corps professionals available to assist in collaborative services.

Means and Strategies

The CPCX will expand the Collaboration and Public Participation Community of Practice (CPP CoP) across the Corps. This CoP provides a wealth of experience and interest in

situation assessments, process design, facilitation, risk communication, shared vision planning and other collaborative processes across the Corps. Training, peer learning and coaching programs will strengthen the membership of the CoP and provide ongoing opportunities for professional development for its members. CPCX will also continue to expand and develop the Corps *Find a Facilitator Database* to increase internal accessibility of qualified facilitators for staff.

Metrics

CPCX will track the number of members of the CoP and the implementation of the annual CoP workplan as well as the number of USIECR tuition waivers granted to Corps staff in each FY.

Goal 3. Advise Corps leadership in designing, implementing and investing in effective collaboration.

When requested, CPCX will review or draft policies and procedures that relate to collaboration and advise headquarters on current national and international trends or issues in public participation, conflict resolution and collaborative governance. CPCX will also provide guidance for investments in collaboration. CPCX will serve as a liaison with other agencies, will staff required interagency gatherings, and will contribute to relevant interagency reports.

CPCX will also serve as a resource for special national or international initiatives on collaboration. These initiatives may be inter-organizational or internal to the Corps. To be most effective in these efforts, CPCX will leverage the full resources of the Corps by collaborating with Public Affairs Offices, Office of General Counsel, the Engineering Research and Development Center, and relevant sections of Headquarters, Divisions and Districts.

Objective 3.1: Support Corps Headquarters in the development and implementation of policies, business processes and platforms³ involving collaboration.

Means and Strategies

Support may include review of proposed or current policies, development of new policies or guidance, or studies on collaboration policies in other agencies and recommendations for the Corps. CPCX will support collaboration across CoPs such as Planning, Regulatory, Emergency Management and Tribal affairs. CPCX will seek to incorporate collaborative processes within general Corps and federal water policies such as the Planning Guidance notebook, or the implementation guidance for the Principles and Guidelines.

CPCX also will seek to establish business processes to incentivize and reward collaboration as well as hold staff accountable, e.g., add a job performance rating for collaborative competencies. CPCX will also investigate and improve policy and business processes that can be used to fund collaboration.

^{3 3} Platforms are defined as technologies, infrastructure, tools, hardware, and structures.

CPCX will work to identify the best collaboration platforms available for both internal and external collaboration, and if insufficient will work with ACE-IT and HQ to acquire better platforms.

Metrics

CPCX will track efforts that CPCX assists and supports

Objective 3.2: Assess the Corps' capacity to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders (including cost-share sponsors) on water resources planning and management objectives.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will work in partnership with Division points of contact to conduct periodic organization-wide assessments of the Corps' collaborative capacity. The assessment may cover staff skills, agency culture and incentives, laws, and policies within districts, divisions, and headquarters that support Corps capacity to convene and participate in effective collaboration processes. This assessment will elicit suggestions for capacity enhancements from the field and provide recommendations for how to build collaborative capacity.

CPCX will administer surveys of recently completed facilitated processes, facilitated meetings, conflict assessments, mediated processes, and trainings affiliated with Corps-led projects or initiatives, using tools developed and managed by USIECR. CPCX will house the data and disseminate results to projects managers. CPCX will conduct at least two surveys per year on facilitated processes.

CPCX will conduct assessments of pilot projects (e.g. the Public Involvement in Flood Risk Management pilots) and other programs to enhance collaboration processes (e.g. the Public Involvement Specialists' program).

Metrics

CPCX will track annually the number of surveys administered and pilots assessed.

Objective 3.3: CPCX will serve as the Corps' representative for external coordination and reporting on collaboration.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will continue the following roles:

- Lead the development of the required annual Environmental Conflict Resolution report to CEQ.
- Serve as the liaison with other Conflict Resolution Centers in the Army and other agencies.
- Serve as the lead for the Corps interactions with USIECR.
- Lead Corps participation in national ECCR forums such as CEQ's quarterly ECCR forum.

Metrics

CPCX will document completion of each of the activities listed above.

Objective 3.4: Support Corps Leadership (ASA & HQ) on relevant parts of special initiatives and emerging issues.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will continue to provide technical expertise and support, as requested, for national initiatives such as the Corps Campaign Plan, Actions for Change, SMART Planning, the White House Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government, and the. The Corps approach to climate change may involve more focused collaboration with DOI Climate Science Centers, Landscape Conservation Cooperative's; therefore, CPCX will facilitate a Corps-wide conversation about climate change across business lines.

Metrics

CPCX will document participation in each of the efforts listed above.

Goal 4. Establish the Corps as a thought-leader in collaboration by building the knowledge necessary to address future challenges and embrace opportunities.

The success of Corps' projects and programs benefits from a tradition of investment in research and innovation that has established the Corps to be a leader in the water resources field. CPCX will continue to collaborate with colleagues in headquarters and the field to identify opportunities and emerging water resources challenges, convene meetings or workshops to explore these challenges, discuss ideas for new tools and furthering the development of existing tools, and sponsor the development and pilot testing of tools that appear promising. Initiatives to modify and test Shared Vision Planning approaches in a regulatory context continue to advance new knowledge about ways to integrate multi-stakeholder involvement with modeling tools.

Objective 4.1: Develop innovative applications of technology in collaboration.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will continue to research and pilot the use of collaborative decision support and computer modeling tools in different contexts (e.g. the regulatory context) including different stages of collaborative processes (e.g., eliciting and responding to public comments, Shared Vision Planning, web-based dialogues). CPCX will investigate and test visualization techniques and ways to communicate uncertainty and risk. Efforts will include establishment of best practices for what tools to apply in different collaborative decision making contexts, and stages.

CPCX also will identify, and pilot test tools and approaches for Corps to take advantage of "new media" (e.g. Web 2.0) in public participation, with particular attention to the challenges of planning or ecosystem restoration projects that involve large geographic areas, and a diverse range of stakeholder groups.

Metrics

Number of innovative applications developed, reports written, or webinars delivered on collaborative technologies.

Objective 4.2: Conduct research and pilot innovative processes, tools and approaches to strengthen the Corps'

ability to meet emerging issues and future challenges.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will identify and support the development of new tools and approaches to address emerging issues and future challenges with implications for how the Corps engages in collaboration. For example, adaptation to climate change and the related scientific uncertainty or increased consideration of energy-water linkages will likely increase the scale and complexity of collaboration and may create new opportunities for collaborative action among Corps partners, stakeholders and the public. Research will seek to identify indicators of effective collaboration that can help guide future investments in collaboration.

CPCX also will seek opportunities to keep our knowledge of literature and tools current by engaging with academic faculty and students, through mechanisms such as internships and independent studies, and involvement in thesis and dissertation projects.

Metrics

Number of activities completed and number of times lessons learned shared with the field.

Measuring Outcomes and Long-term Impacts to the Corps

CPCX will develop an integrated system for evaluating its work.

At the macro-level, CPCX will measure success throughout the Corps by the extent of following conditions:

- *CPCX supports Corps personnel facing collaboration challenges as they execute their mission.*
- *The Corps has a widely dispersed network of collaboration expertise.*

Other indicators of CPCX impact are:

- *The Corps respects, incorporates the views of, and responds to the needs of stakeholders.*
- *The Corps prioritizes and funds collaborative problem solving and public engagement in all mission areas.*
- *HQ ⇔ Districts ⇔ Divisions ⇔ Centers are better integrated.*

CPCX values learning and sharing best practices as we continually improve our capacity to accomplish our mission. We will measure our internal success by the extent of the following conditions:

- *CPCX engages the most challenging issues confronting the Corps and its partners.*
- *CPCX secures sufficient funding and support to fulfill its mission.*
- *CPCX builds and utilizes internal Corps expertise and external partners to accomplish its mission.*
- *CPCX is highly respected by other agencies, tribes, and public stakeholders for its leadership and innovation in collaborative problem solving and public engagement.*

Appendix 1

Implementation: Using the Strategy to Sustain and Expand CPCX capacity.

Implementation Goal 1: Prioritize CPCX workload based on the goals of this strategic plan.

Means and Strategies

Activities and accomplishments will be formally tracked during monthly team meetings, using the strategic plan as a benchmark. At the end of each year CPCX will review the year's accomplishments as part of an annual evaluation process and use the results to identify the next year's work plan.

Implementation Goal 2: Achieve the appropriate staffing level (both labor hours and skills) for the CPCX mission.

Means and Strategies

Each year the CX will assess its staffing needs and, if warranted, consider options to augment its capacity with full time or temporary positions, either developmental assignment, fellows, contractors, or IPAs, to meet the goals for that year.. These positions will contribute specific skill sets and experiences from HQ or the field or may be experts from the private sector. CPCX will also accomplish work through the MSC Liaisons and the PI specialists.

CPCX staff will complete details at HQ, Districts, and other agencies to maintain a situational awareness of the agency's and partner's needs. Staff will complete training each year to build expertise and will complete IAP2 and USIECR certifications.

Implementation Goal 3: Develop a strategic marketing plan and an outreach plan for each FY.

Means and Strategies

CPCX will be marketed across the Corps to increase awareness and use of its services in different organizations and business lines. CPCX will build on its work in Planning, Public Affairs, and Flood Risk Management to establish or improve relationships with ACE-IT, Human Resources, Regulatory, Emergency Management, Operations, Military Programs, interagency partnerships, and Office of Counsel.

Marketing will occur via presentations and information in Corps newsletters, webinars, conferences, brown bag lunches, websites, videos, trainings, and informal and formal networking. Basic marketing materials will be improved and used in these avenues.