ALIGN

Registered Entity Newsletter
January 2023

Release 4.5 Update and Training

On November 16, 2022, the Align project team deployed Release 4.5 into production. This is the final release planned under the current business case and includes features to enable development of inherent risk assessments (IRAs) and compliance oversight plans (COPs). Training for Release 4.5 is scheduled to begin in January 2023 (subject to change).

Release 4.5 Milestones	
Milestone	**Due Date**
IRA/COP Train the Trainer	2/9/23
IRA Pilot in Production	3/31/23
COP – Collaborative Testing in UAT	3/31/23
IRA-Use Full Time	4/3/23
COP Pilot In Production	6/30/23

Future releases of Align will be handled under the governance model (discussed further here). The project team will transition into this governance model, and all future priorities will be managed by the Align User Group (AUG), Align Product Management Team (PMT), and the Operations Leadership Team (OLT).

Data Migrations from Legacy Systems

The project team will now focus on data migrations from legacy systems (webCDMS and CITS) with the data team (a sub-group of the Align project team) executing a data migration plan in partnership with each Region. This data will include a subset of past scheduled engagements as well as closed and open violations; however, not all historical data will be migrated. The data migration is the final element to completing the scope outlined in the Align business case.

Data Migrations	
Region	**Migration Date**
MRO	March 2023
NPCC	February 2023
ReliabilityFirst	February 2023
SERC	January 2023
Texas RE	Complete
WECC	Complete

The data migration schedule has been revised since the last Align newsletter. Closed violations will be completed after all open violations are migrated.

Canadian Jurisdictions' Use of Align

The Align project team continues to work with those Regional Entities that support Canadian regulators—MRO, NPCC, and WECC—to execute project plans and activities in support of Canadian Align usage. These activities include determining detailed requirements by province, importing provincial standards data into Align, and defining the appropriate user roles.

The requirements definition work is completed, but the production deployment schedules are still in flight.

Transition to Governance Model

As mentioned in a previous edition of the Align newsletter, future releases of Align and the ERO SEL will come under the governance model. The model, approved by the Align Steering Committee, consists of three tiers: OLT, PMT, and AUG.

Registered entity insight and input is gathered through Compliance and Certification Committee (CCC) representation on the AUG. The CCC provides three representatives on the AUG and seeks stakeholder input on Align and SEL priorities.

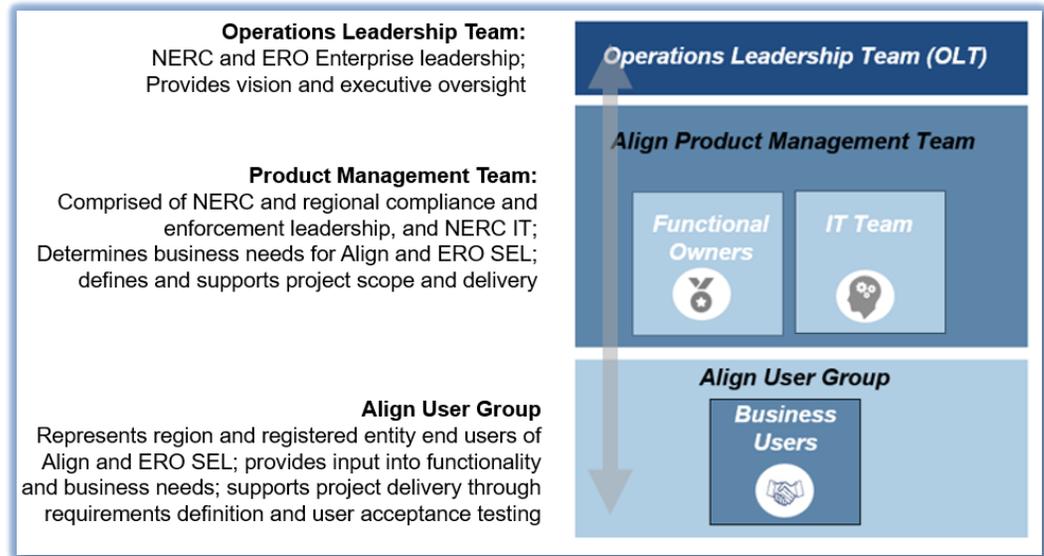The full governance model can be found on here on the Align project page.

Operations Leadership Team:
NERC and ERO Enterprise leadership; Provides vision and executive oversight

Product Management Team:
Comprised of NERC and regional compliance and enforcement leadership, and NERC IT; Determines business needs for Align and ERO SEL; defines and supports project scope and delivery

Align User Group
Represents region and registered entity end users of Align and ERO SEL; provides input into functionality and business needs; supports project delivery through requirements definition and user acceptance testing

Figure 1.1: Governance Model

Align User Group Members	
Organization	**Members**
CCC Representatives	Jennifer Flandermeyer, Scott Tomashefsky, Silvia Parada-Mitchell
MRO	Janice Anderson, Marissa Falco
NERC	Cas Nowicki, Dan Chanda, Sara Minges, Jamie Calderon
NPCC	Aaron Hornick, Thomas Butler
ReliabilityFirst	Elizabeth Rettig, Patrick O'Connor
SERC	Richard Dodd, Shawna Speer
Texas RE	Curtis Crews, Kaitlin Van Zee
WECC	Holly Peterson, Angela Shapiro

Accessing Align

Appropriate access to the system is very important to maintain data security. An active ERO Portal Account is required to access Align and the ERO Secure Evidence Locker (SEL). **Please follow the instructions below to verify an existing account or set up a new account and note that it takes 48 hours for a new account to be activated**. For password resets, select the "Forgot Password/Username" to reset a password. For questions or problems concerning ERO Portal accounts, please submit a support ticket here.

All registered entities' primary compliance contacts (PCCs) should also have an ERO Portal Account and be set up as Align Registered Entity Submitters and the Entity Administrators responsible for approving access requests. Users approved by the PCCs are automatically given an ERO SEL submitter role. Additional access to the ERO SEL outside of Align access must be handled with a support ticket. Refer to the Registered Entity User Access Guide for detailed instructions.

To Set Up an 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."

To Verify an 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.

Quick Links for Reference

Here is a list of links to commonly requested materials for Align and the ERO SEL. Please reach out to your AUG members for additional materials.

Quick Links
FAQs
ERO Enterprise BES Artifacts Submittal Exception Process
Registered Entity SEL Requirements
NERC Training Site
CEA SEL User Guide
Release 1 CEA User Guide
Release 2 CEA User Guide
Release 3 CEA User Guide
Release 4 / Release 4.5 CEA User Guides
Registered Entity User Access Guide
Data Handling Guide to Align and ERO SEL
Align Business Case

Want to Learn More?

Please submit questions to AskAlign@NERC.net or reach out to your Regional AUG member.

ABOUT THE ALIGN NEWSLETTER

This 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 AskAlign@nerc.net with feedback on this newsletter. Current newsletters and additional project resources, including the regularly updated Align FAQs, can be found on the Align Project Site.