

NERC

NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC
RELIABILITY CORPORATION

ALIGN

Registered Entity Newsletter

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LET'S GET ALIGNED: KEY TAKEAWAYS

ERO Secure Evidence Locker Progresses with Registered Entity Testing

The Align team continues progress with the ERO Enterprise Secure Evidence Locker (ERO SEL), to be implemented in conjunction with Align Release 1. The ERO SEL and Align are key components of NERC's reimagined suite of Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Program (CMEP) work and data management tools.

NERC and regional SMEs have successfully finished testing the ERO SEL, which is now undergoing testing by 16 registered entities and 50 registered entity testers.

Benefits

The ERO SEL will provide an isolated, on-premise environment for evidence analysis across the ERO Enterprise. In addition to securing the evidence process, the ERO SEL will provide the following benefits:

- Ensure proper chain of custody management for registered entity evidence through compartmentalized access provided to select authorized users
- Monitor and limit the length of time that evidence is within the possession of the ERO Enterprise
- Eliminate the creation of evidence copies to limit exposure and destroy evidence in accordance with the approved records retention policy to ensure that evidence is for kept the least amount of time necessary

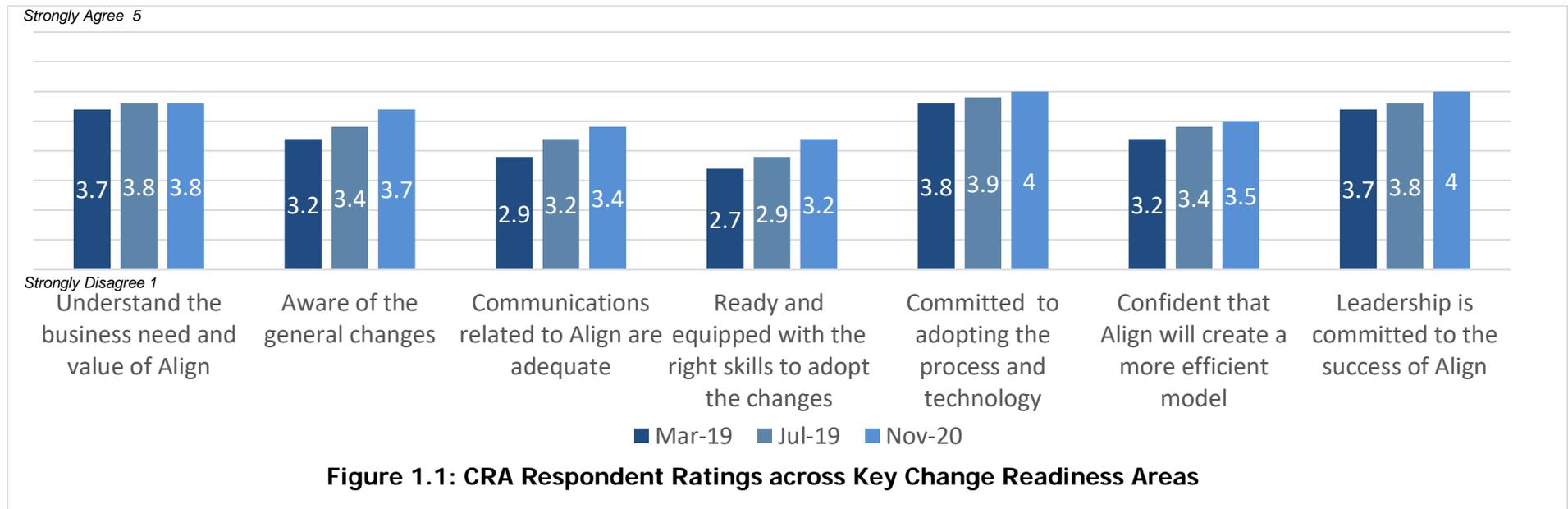
For more information on the ERO SEL, visit the "Secure Evidence Locker Functionality" section on the [Align FAQs](#) page.

Change Readiness Assessment Pulse Check Survey Results

As part of our efforts to measure change readiness across the ERO Enterprise and registered entities, the Align team conducted a short survey-style change readiness assessment (CRA) in November 2020. The CRA helps identify areas where additional training, communication, and stakeholder engagement activities are required to drive change adoption.

The Align team received more than 900 responses to the survey and saw higher weighted average scores across all change readiness dimensions in comparison to previous CRAs conducted in 2019. Significant improvement has been made in stakeholders' perceptions of communications, awareness of general changes, and readiness for upcoming changes associated with Align. The CRA results demonstrate that

our change management and readiness activities are resonating with ERO Enterprise staff and registered entities as we continue preparations for the upcoming launch of Release 1.



The Align team also received several insightful comments from survey respondents, which highlight the importance of upcoming training and the need for continued communications leading up to go-live.

“System walkthroughs during recent training sessions, as well as written communications have been helpful to understand how Align looks, feels, and works. We hope that additional training will be provided soon to give users time to “play” with the tool and ask questions before going live.”

“The magnitude of communication efforts around Align, implementation timelines, upcoming changes etc. have been great. Over the past year NERC has done an excellent job of soliciting industry participation to remedy issues with the security and effectiveness of Align. It is critical that this level of participation continue through the implementation and operation of the platform.”

This investment in standardization facilitated by Align will have learning curves and growing pains along the way but this will be a great thing in the long term. I appreciate that NERC and Regional Entity staff are working to ensure that the product is secure and functional prior to rolling out the new tool."

Know What's Coming: Registered Entity Training

The Align team and regional training leads have shifted their focus towards training, starting with the ERO Enterprise. The training leads are responsible for regional and registered entity training and have begun scheduling and hosting training sessions for regional and registered entity staff. Registered entities will receive separate communications in the coming months that share relevant details on go-live dates and upcoming trainings from their respective Regions. Note that there will be variations in the training schedule and delivery for different Regions based on their respective training plans. Registered entities that fall under coordinated oversight will be expected to go-live with their Lead Regional Entity (LRE).

All training materials can be found on the [NERC Training Site](#), including a new training video and user guide on submitting evidence to the ERO SEL. You can navigate to the training videos relevant for your role as seen in the screenshot below.

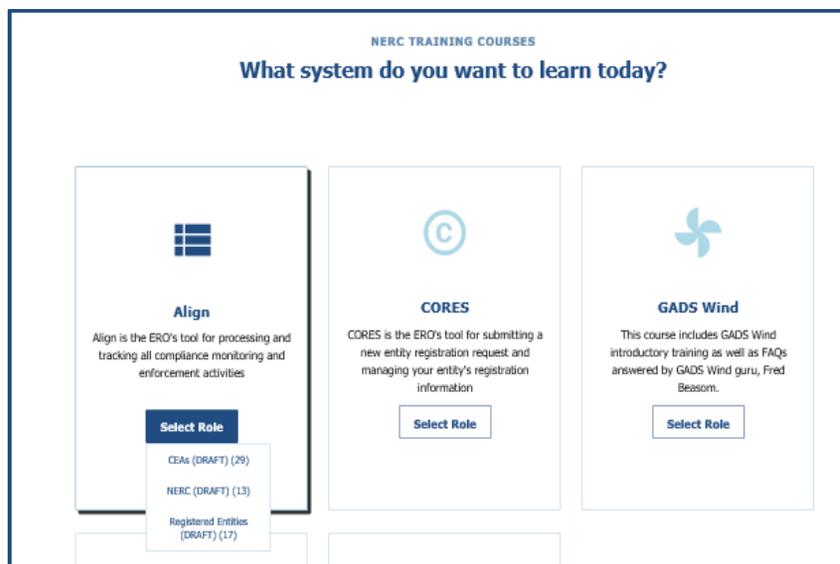


Figure 1.2: NERC Training Site

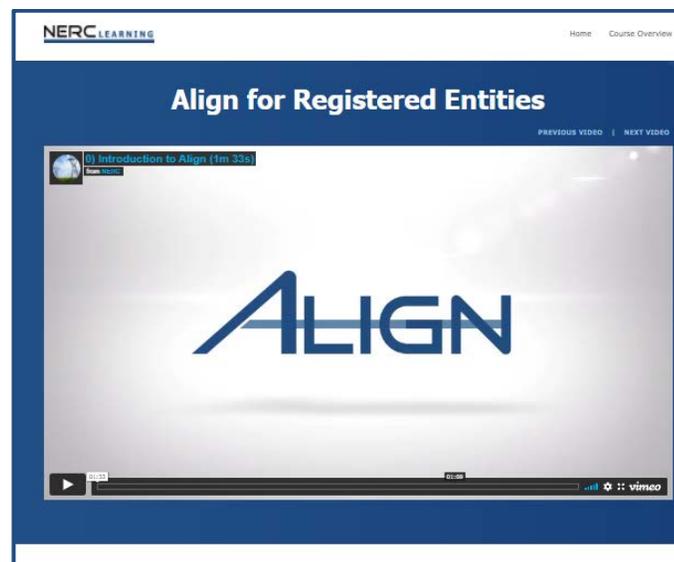


Figure 1.3: NERC Training Site

In addition to the training videos, the site contains comprehensive End-User and Start/Stop/Continue guides, all of which will be used during training. The End-User guides provide a detailed overview of how to navigate through Align Release 1 functionalities, while the Start/Stop/Continue guides provide detailed guidance on which activities move to Align and which activities stay inside the legacy systems. Each Region will use the same training materials as seen in the screenshot below.

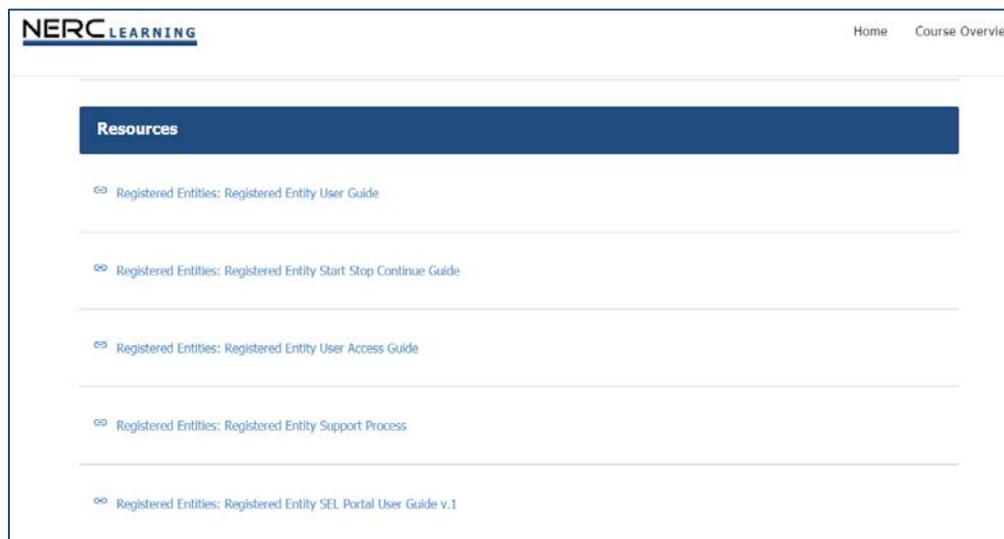


Figure 1.4: NERC Training Site

Please visit the regional websites or reach out to the regional training leads listed below for any training-related questions.

Training Information by Region		
	Links to Regional Training Pages	Regional Training Leads
MRO	Coming Soon	Michael Spangenberg ; Ryan McNamara
NPCC	-	Daniel Kidney ; Kimberly Griffith
RF	Coming Soon	Bob Folt ; Ron Ross
SERC	SERC News	Janice Carney ; Rick Dodd ; Shawna Speer
Texas RE	Texas RE Page	Machelle Castro ; Rachel Coyne ; Rochelle Brown
WECC	WECC Page	Angie Shapiro ; Mailee Cook

Accessing Align: Act Now!

As we continue to get closer to Release 1, it is important that you complete the setup or verification of your ERO Portal Account. **You are required to have an active ERO Portal Account prior to accessing Align.** Please follow the instructions below to verify your existing account or set up your new account! If you cannot remember your username/password, select the “Forgot Password/Username” to reset your password. If you have questions or problems concerning your ERO Portal account, please submit a support ticket [here](#).

All registered entities should also have a PCC set up with an ERO Portal Account and all regions are validating that their PCC list is updated in CORES. Prior to go-live, NERC will ensure all PCCs with ERO Portal Accounts are set up as an Align Registered Entity Submitter and the Entity Administrators responsible for approving access requests. Users who need access to Align can request access through the ERO Portal using the step-by-step instructions outlined in the [Registered Entity User Access Guide](#).

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 project materials for Align and the ERO SEL. Please reach out to the Regional Change Agents (listed in the section below) for additional materials.

Quick Links
FAQs
Program Business Case (Updated April 2020)

- [Align Governance Model](#) (Updated February 2021)
- [Registered Entity SEL Requirements](#) (Updated November 2020)
- [NERC Training Site](#)

Want to Learn More? Key Contacts and Resources

Please reach out to AskAlign@NERC.net if you have any questions. You can also reach out to the Regional Change Agents, who meet on a monthly basis and have the latest project updates. They are another resource available to you for asking questions or sharing comments and feedback on the project.

Align Change Agents	
Organization	Change Agents
MRO	Desiree Sawyer , Marissa Falco
NERC	Chris Boyd-Witherspoon , Jamie Calderon , Farzaneh Tafreshi , Sara Minges
NPCC	Jason Wang , Kimberly Griffith
RF	Ray Sefchik
SERC	Andrew Williamson , Janice Carney , Melinda Montgomery , Rick Dodd , Todd Curl
Texas RE	Rochelle Brown
WECC	Ben Aldous , Mailee Cook , Michael Dalebout

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 and future newsletters and additional project resources, including the regularly updated [Align FAQs](#), can be found on the [Align Project Site](#).