

**NERC**

NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC  
RELIABILITY CORPORATION

# ALIGN

Formerly the CMEP Technology Project

## Regional 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 regional staff who have responsibilities related to self-logs, self-reports, preliminary screens, mitigation processes, and enforcement activities should plan to attend a Release 1 regional training. Please see the training dates in your Region below:

Release 1 Regional Staff Trainings		
Region	Training Date(s)	Registration Open (LMS)
MRO	July 31 August 14	May 1 ( <a href="#">Register Here</a> )
NPCC	August 19	
RF	August 7 August 20	
SERC	August 6	
Texas RE	August 5-6	
WECC	July 30-31	
	September 3-4	

To register for Align Release 1 regional staff training, please navigate [here](#), and follow the prompts on the LMS site. If you are unsure if you need to attend the training, please reach out to [CMEP@nerc.net](mailto:CMEP@nerc.net) or to your local [Align change agent](#).

### 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 should be completed as soon as possible. We will share additional information on access provisioning in the near future.

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.

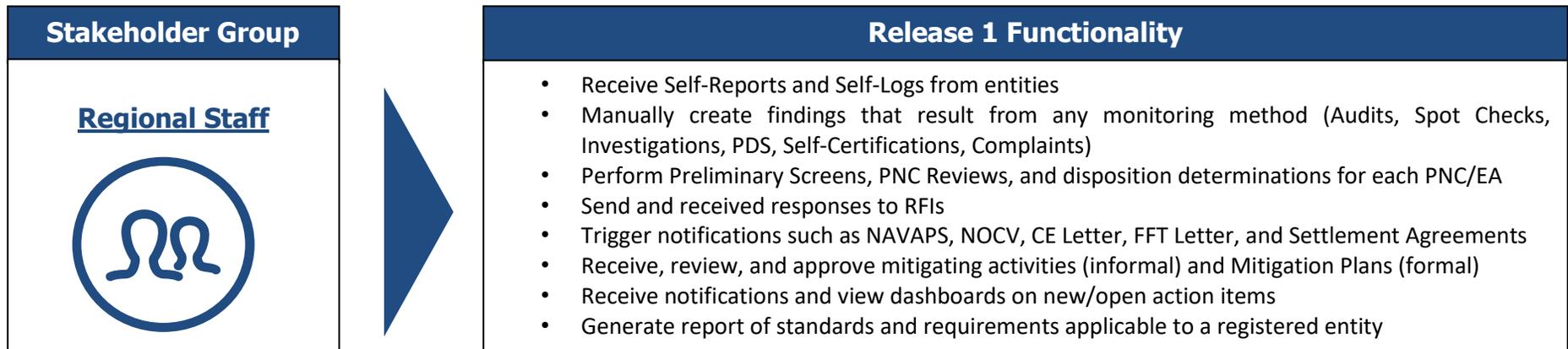
To set-up your ERO Portal Account:

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 regional staff?

Regional Staff will perform the following functions in the Align tool after the Release 1 Go-live in September:



For additional detail on Release 1 functionality by stakeholder group, please review the full presentation [here](#).

## Align Project Goals and Process Improvements

### Align Project Goals

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

- Improve documentation, sharing, and analysis of compliance work activities across the ERO Enterprise;
- Meet requirements under applicable professional standards and the Rules of Procedure;
- Increase efficiency by aligning and consolidating 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 Regional Entities

During the Release 1 process harmonization sessions, the project team and ERO Enterprise 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 in forms across regional legacy systems	Standardized forms throughout the system will significantly increase consistency in processes
	Standards	Manual and cumbersome process to navigate to multiple channels to pull a report of standards and requirements	Ability to generate a report of standards and requirements applicable to an entity
Self-Reports and Self Logging	RFIs	RFIs are sent manually, outside of current systems, creating inconsistency in the user experience	RFIs can be triggered ad-hoc within the tool; all information is tied to the correct record
	Self-Logging	Eligible entities submit spreadsheets on a quarterly basis; Regions manually enter into current systems	Eliminate use of spreadsheets; Self-Log items submitted on-demand by entities
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
	Reporting	Reporting and oversight for mitigation is largely manual and burdensome	Enhanced tracking and reporting capabilities will result in meaningful efficiency gains
<b>Enforcement</b>	Tracking	Tracking of non-monetary sanctions and other activities agreed to during settlement (e.g., above and beyond activities) is limited	Ability to capture and track all settlement activities similar to mitigating activities
	Dismissals	Inconsistent classification of dismissals (i.e., why something was dismissed)	Standardized set of dismissal categories, enabling improved analytics, trending, and metrics monitoring
	Record Management	Inconsistencies in how related PNC/violation records are linked/managed  Limited-to-no data visibility across Regions	Improved record linkage (e.g., related PNCs/violations) and visibility across Regions (e.g., MRREs)

### Upcoming Events

Please see below for a list of workshops and conferences in your Region where Align will be featured.

Upcoming Workshops and Conferences Featuring Align		
Region	Date	Location
MRO	May 17	All Staff Meeting
	May 23	MCCF Meeting
NPCC	May 22-23	Spring Compliance Workshop
RF	May 22	RF Board of Director Meeting
SERC	May 6	SERC Open Forum
	July 29	SERC Open Forum

## 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](mailto:CMEP@nerc.net) with feedback on this newsletter. Newsletters and additional project resources, including the regularly updated [Align FAQs](#), can be found on the [Align Project Site](#).