

Align and ERO SEL Release 2 Start, Stop, Continue Guide

Registered Entities

Use this document to familiarize yourself with Registered Entity Align process changes related to Release 2!

Executive Summary

Overview






Align is a software tool that supports the ERO's vision of a single business process shared across our industry, tracking compliance data through a central hub that integrates CORES registration data with compliance monitoring and enforcement activities.

All Regions began using Release 1 of Align as of May 24, 2021. Release 1 included self-reporting/self-logging, enforcement processing, and mitigation functionality in the Align system, as well as the deployment of the ERO Secure Evidence Locker (ERO SEL). The ERO SEL is used to collect registered entity-provided evidence as part of the ERO Enterprise's CMEP activities.

The upcoming Release 2 will include Self-Certifications, Periodic Data Submittals, Technical Feasibility Exceptions and Attestations in Align. Align and the ERO SEL are built in a way that requires changes to the processes and language you use today, and this guide will help you better understand those changes and what to expect upon our second production release. Please note that the Release 2 go-live dates differ by Region starting July 19, 2021.

To what level is my work impacted due to this change?





Moderate

Start/Stop/Continue	
<p><i>What should you start doing?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing activities related to Self-Certification in Align Performing activities related to most Periodic Data Submittals in Align (see PDS section for more details) Performing activities related to Technical Feasibility Exceptions in Align Submitting attestations related to Self-Certification and PDS in Align If necessary, submit associated evidence in the ERO SEL
<p><i>What should you stop doing?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing activities related to Self-Certification using existing tools Performing activities related to most Periodic Data Submittals using existing tools (see PDS section for more details) Performing activities related to Technical Feasibility Exceptions using existing tools Submitting attestations related to Self-Certification and PDS using existing tools Submitting evidence through legacy tools
<p><i>What should you continue doing?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitting Periodic Data Submittals that are currently sent through MIDAS, GADS, and TADS
Additional Details	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Align Release 2 Start, Stop, Continue Executive Summary provides only high-level information on process, terminology, and tool changes Please see the section below for detailed information on what processes will be completed in Align vs. existing tools 	





Impact Scale	
Significant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant impact resulting in fundamental changes in tools and/or processes. You will likely require significant training to perform in your role. In addition, new tasks may be added, or current tasks may be eliminated from your role
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several ways in which you do your jobs will change. You may have new work, requiring new skills that will potentially require some training
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal changes to the way you do your jobs. Existing tools and processes will remain in place. Training not required

Detailed Guides





1. Self-Certifications

Overview	
	<p>All Self-Certifications will be sent and completed within Align. Registered Entities will have the ability to log in respond to Self-Certifications in Align, submitting the Self-Certifications for CEA review.</p>
<p>To what level is my work impacted due to this change? Significant</p>	
Start/Stop/Continue	
<p>What should you start doing?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving and responding to Self-Certifications in Align Submitting related evidence through the ERO SEL Submitting Attestations related to Self-Certifications in Align
<p>What should you continue doing?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving and responding to Self-Certifications in existing tools (e.g., CITS, WebCDMS, etc.) Submitting evidence through legacy tools (e.g., CEA EFT servers)
<p>What should you stop doing?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving and responding to RFIs as needed in Align <p><u>For non-U.S. jurisdictional Self-Certifications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing all Self-Certifications in existing tools Receiving evidence through legacy tools
Additional Details	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered Entities will use Align to respond to all Self-Certification questions, and will use the ERO SEL to submit all related evidence. 	





2. Periodic Data Submittals (PDS)

Overview	
	<p>Periodic Data Submittals are collected by the Regions on a periodic basis. Some PDS are initiated by the CEA as a data request, while others are event-driven and submitted by the Registered Entity ad hoc as required by the NERC Standards. In general, if a PDS is currently collected through a NERC tool that will NOT be retired by Align (e.g., MIDAS, GADS, TADS), then it will continue to be collected in those tools. All other submittals will now be collected through Align.</p>
<p>To what level is my work impacted due to this change? Moderate</p>	
Start/Stop/Continue	
<p>What should you start doing?</p> 	<p><u>For PDS that are NOT currently collected through MIDAS, GADS, or TADS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving and responding to PDS requests in Align for FAC-003-4 and PRC-023-4 R5 submittals Creating and submitting PDS within Align for event-driven PDS for requirements: EOP-008-2 R8, PRC-023-4 R6.2, PRC-002-2 R12, TPL-001-4, and TPL-007-4 If necessary, submitting related evidence to the ERO SEL Submitting Attestations related to PDS in Align
<p>What should you stop doing?</p> 	<p><u>For PDS that are NOT currently collected through MIDAS, GADS, or TADS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving and responding to PDS requests in legacy tools (e.g., CITS, webCDMS, etc.) Submitting PDS in legacy tools for requirements: EOP-008-2 R8, PRC-023-4 R6.2, PRC-002-2 R12, TPL-001-4, and TPL-007-4
<p>What should you continue doing?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving and responding to RFIs as needed within Align <p><u>For PDS that ARE currently collected through MIDAS, GADS, or TADS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to submit PDS submittals in MIDAS, GADS, and TADS for the requirements for which you currently submit them today <p><u>For non-U.S. jurisdictional PDS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing all PDS in existing tools Submitting evidence through legacy tools
Additional Details	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will be possible to create, schedule, and send a PDS request for multiple Registered Entities at once. 	





3. Technical Feasibility Exceptions (TFEs)

Overview	
	<p>Registered Entities create a TFE when they are unable to meet their compliance obligations for a Requirement. Regions review and approve/reject TFEs on a case by case basis. This entire process will now take place in Align.</p>
<p>To what level is my work impacted due to this change? Moderate</p>	
Start/Stop/Continue	
<p>What should you start doing?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and submitting TFEs and Material Change Requests (MCRs) in Align • Monitoring approved TFEs in Align • Terminating approved TFEs in Align when no longer needed
<p>What should you stop doing?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and submitting TFEs and Material Change Requests (MCRs) existing tools (e.g., CITS, WebCDMS, etc.) • Monitoring approved TFEs existing tools (e.g., CITS, WebCDMS, etc.) • Terminating approved TFEs existing tools (e.g., CITS, WebCDMS, etc.) when no longer needed
<p>What should you continue doing?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Additional Details	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Align, there is no functional difference between a TFE and a Material Change Request (MCR) • Registered Entities will be able to reduce their asset count on a TFE without requiring CEA approval 	

4. Self-Certifications, PDS, TFEs, Compliance Audits, Spot Checks, Compliance Investigations, and Complaints

Overview	
	<p>The processes for IRA, COP, Compliance Audits, Spot Checks, Compliance Investigations, and Complaints will not change due to Align Release 2. Continue to use the current established process & systems for conducting IRA, COP, Compliance Audits, Spot Checks, and Compliance Investigations, and for receiving Complaints.</p>
<p>To what level is my work impacted due to this change? Low</p>	
Start/Stop/Continue	
<p>What should you start doing?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
<p>What should you stop doing?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
<p>What should you continue doing?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating in and receiving results for IRA, COP, Compliance Audit, Spot Check or Compliance Investigation using existing tools (e.g., CITS, WebCDMS, etc.) Submitting Complaints using existing tools
Additional Details	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	

5. Support Process

Overview	
	<p>Support for Align will follow the new ERO Enterprise Application Support Process. Support of enterprise applications, including Align, will follow a disciplined process to ensure requests are handled in a timely manner, and are prioritized according to business importance and criticality.</p>
<p>To what level is my work impacted due to this change? Low</p>	
Start/Stop/Continue	
<p><i>What should you start doing?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
<p><i>What should you stop doing?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
<p><i>What should you continue doing?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requesting and receiving support for all existing CMEP applications using current processes and tools for noncompliance started in CITS/CDMS. Requesting and receiving support for the Align application and existing CMEP applications via a support request ticket (enabled by FootPrints) for noncompliance started in Align.