United States Environmental Protection Agency

FY 2020-2021 Agency Priority Goal Action Plan

Accelerate the Pace of Cleanups and Return Sites to Beneficial Use in Their Communities

Goal Leader:

Barry Breen, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Land and Emergency Management

Deputy Goal Leader:

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Fiscal Year 2020, Quarters 1 & 2

Overview

Goal Statement
- o **Accelerate the pace of cleanups and return sites to beneficial use in their communities.** By September 30, 2021, EPA will make an additional 102 Superfund (SF) sites and 1,368 brownfields (BF) sites ready for anticipated use (RAU).

Challenge
- o Complex environmental problems, such as the presence or perceived presence of hazardous substances in soil, sediment, and groundwater, persist at many contaminated properties, and can threaten the health of American families and hamper economic redevelopment. EPA's Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM) tracks more than 532,000 sites, representing about 20 million acres of land.
- o Implementation of institutional controls (ICs) is critical to ensuring the protectiveness of SF remedies. Implementing ICs remains a major barrier to achieving site-wide RAU (SWRAU) at many SF sites because EPA relies on external parties, such as state, local and tribal governments. ICs require those entities outside of EPA to perform tasks and consent to actions that are outside of EPA's control for implementation to occur.
- o Federal facilities must also clean up environmental contamination. EPA's Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse (FFRR) Program works with Other Federal Agencies (OFAs) to support achieving SWRAU at SF sites at federal facilities; FFRR works to implement the Superfund Task Force recommendation to enhance engagement with OFAs to target and resolve critical programmatic issues and site-specific issues.
- o Reporting for BF RAU relies on grantee-reported data, which are often difficult to obtain for a variety of reasons.
- o Implementing ICs remains a major barrier to achieving RAU designation at BF sites because EPA and grantees must rely on external parties, such as state, local and tribal governments. ICs require those entities outside of EPA to perform tasks and consent to actions that are outside of EPA's control for implementation to occur.
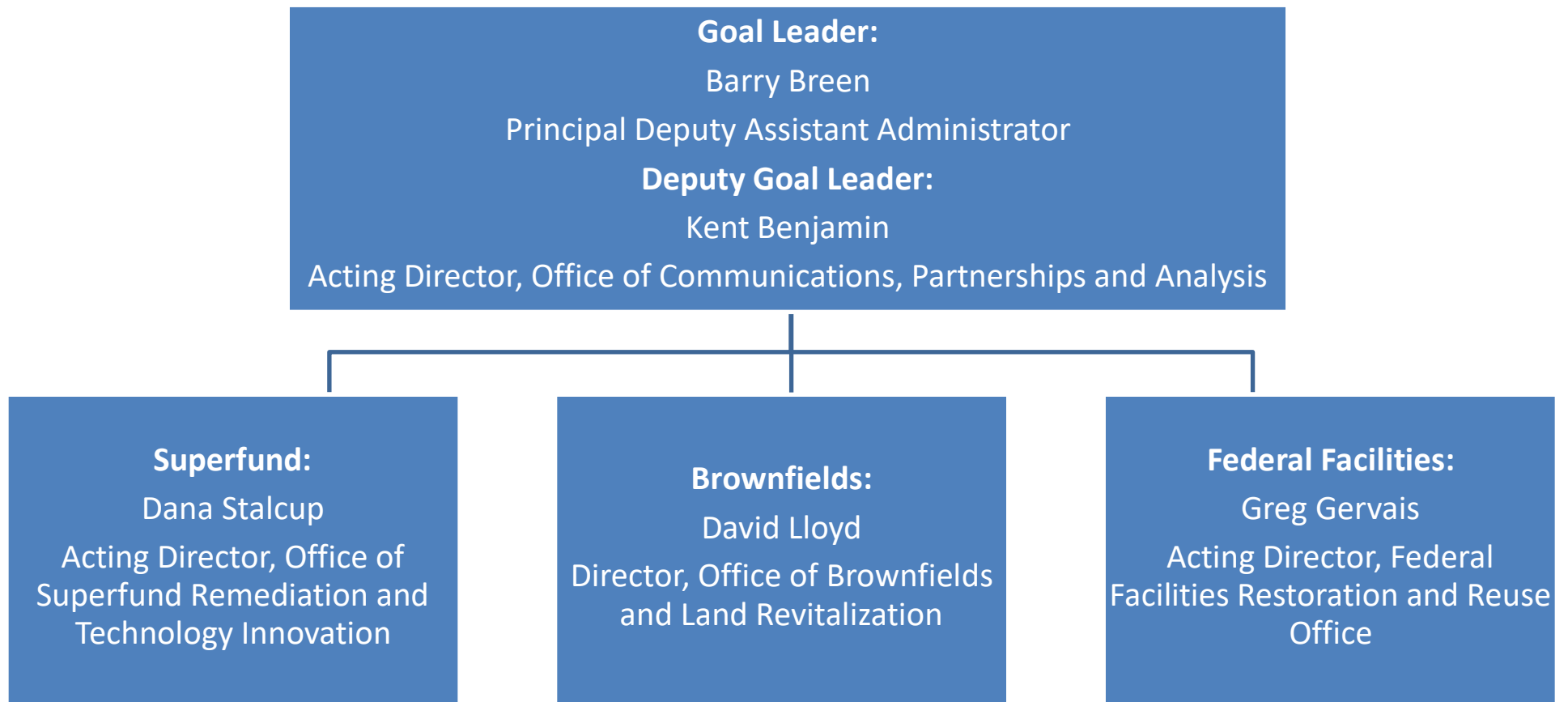
Opportunity
- o EPA's cleanup programs reduce risks to human health and the environment by assessing and cleaning up contaminated sites to enhance the livability and economic vitality of neighborhoods. The RAU Agency Priority Goal offers an opportunity for EPA to identify and apply lessons learned, improve efficiencies as supported by the EPA Lean Management System (ELMS) and leverage opportunities to advance site cleanup working with key stakeholders. For example, the BF RAU priority goal prompted two ELMS projects to ensure greater accuracy and

Overview (continued)

efficiency of RAU reporting; EPA is obtaining additional information about grantee accomplishments that have previously gone unreported.

Leadership & Implementation Team

Goal Leader:

Barry Breen

Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator

Deputy Goal Leader:

Kent Benjamin

Acting Director, Office of Communications, Partnerships and Analysis

Superfund:

Dana Stalcup

Acting Director, Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation

Brownfields:

David Lloyd

Director, Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization

Federal Facilities:

Greg Gervais

Acting Director, Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office

Goal Structure and Strategies

Strategy 1 – Implement lessons learned from Superfund Task Force recommendations critical for SWRAU and efficiencies developed using ELMS:

- o Hold planning meetings and monthly conference calls to address issues related to implementing Superfund Task Force recommendations as well as routine performance management issues. The outcomes of these conversations will be incorporated into the reporting for the milestones. For example, OLEM and EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) will provide support to EPA regional offices to develop and implement ICs at sites identified during these meetings and/or conference calls.
- o Sustain implementation of Superfund Task Force recommendations to expedite cleanup and remediation, promote redevelopment and community revitalization, and engage partners and stakeholders, using ELMS to improve processes, supporting a national SWRAU workgroup, continuing the annual SWRAU audit, and creating tools and resources for EPA regional offices (e.g., best management practices, webinars).
- o Use performance metrics to ensure accountability for the Agency in implementing lessons learned from the Superfund Task Force. EPA will evaluate the metrics and their usefulness and consider adopting additional or different methods to measure and report on progress.
- o Use monthly business review meetings to discuss SWRAU accomplishments and effectiveness of strategies working toward the goal.

Strategy 2 – Improve timely reporting of brownfields RAU by past and current grantees:

- o Hold planning meetings and monthly conference calls to assess performance; in addition to routine performance management issues, topics on these calls include issues related to implementing ELMS projects that are focused on delivering improved data and reporting. The outcomes of these conversations will be incorporated into reporting for the milestones.
- o Create monthly work package counts to track backlog reduction.
- o Regional Quarterly Outreach Initiative: EPA regional offices will contact 10 past cooperative agreement recipients for additional accomplishment reporting in each quarter of FY 2020. OLEM will work with regional office staff to identify past cooperative agreement recipients to be targeted for increased engagement on accomplishment reporting.
- o Identify sites that are only missing documentation of ICs as the final barrier to being considered RAU. EPA will evaluate the timing of IC development and placement to find opportunities for streamlining, where possible. ICs often take the
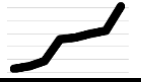
Goal Structure and Strategies (continued)

greatest amount of time to put in place at a site and documentation is often overlooked due to the time lag, resulting in fewer documented RAU completions.

o Develop more accurate methods to predict the timing of future RAU site designations based on previous grantee reporting trends.

o EPA will use visual management, a key ELMS tool, to reduce reporting backlogs with current grantees and identify strategies to access data form past grantees.

o Use monthly business review meetings to discuss BF RAU accomplishments and effectiveness of strategies working toward the goal.

Summary of Progress – FY 2020 Q1

EPA has made 2 Superfund sites and 177 brownfield sites RAU, missing the FY 2020 Q1 Superfund target of 5 and exceeding the FY 2020 Q1 brownfields target of 177.

Indicator	Jumping Off Point		FY 2020 Q1	FY 2020 Q2	FY 2020 Q3	FY 2020 Q4	FY 2021 Q1	FY 2021 Q2	FY 2021 Q3	FY 2021 Q4	Pref Dir	Trend
Number of Superfund sites made ready for anticipated use site-wide	0	Target	5	8	11	51	54	60	64	102	↑	
		Actual	2									
Number of brownfields sites made ready for anticipated use	0	Target	171	342	513	684	855	1,026	1,197	1,368	↑	
		Actual	177									

Accomplishments:

Strategy 1 – Implement lessons learned from Superfund Task Force recommendations critical for SWRAU and efficiencies developed using ELMS:
- o EPA has made two Superfund sites sitewide RAU as of FY 2020 Q1, missing the target of five sites.

Strategy 2 – Improve timely reporting of brownfields RAU by past and current grantees:
- o EPA exceeded the FY 2020 Q1 target of 171 sites RAU; achieved 177 sites RAU.
- o EPA is evaluating sites that are potentially RAU but have not yet been documented due to missing ICs.
- o EPA contacted 10 past cooperative agreement recipients for additional accomplishment reporting, resulting in EPA documenting additional RAU that had previously not been reported.
- o EPA staff and contract support conducted enhanced Grantee and Project Officer ACRES 6.0 training at BF2019 Conference with focus on achieving RAU.
- o New RAU workgroup with EPA regional office representatives was established to develop more accurate prediction of future RAU sites.

Challenges:

Strategy 1 – Implement lessons learned from Superfund Task Force recommendations critical for SWRAU and efficiencies developed using ELMS:
- o EPA is reviewing missed FY 2020 Q1 targets to understand and address issues related to making sites sitewide RAU.
- o EPA has identified 30 sites that are currently predicted to reach RAU in FY 2020. This presents a gap of 21 sites in relation to the FY 2020 APG target of 51 sites. EPA is conducting a national audit in order to identify additional sites for sitewide RAU in FY 2020, including an assessment of where EPA can take action to reduce the gap.

Strategy 2 – Improve timely reporting of brownfields RAU by past and current grantees:
- o EPA is working to reduce the number of work packages open for more than 90 days, which can potentially delay RAU reporting.

Summary of Progress – FY 2020 Q2

EPA has made 6 Superfund sites and 435 brownfield sites RAU, missing the FY 2020 Q2 Superfund target of 5 and exceeding the FY 2020 Q2 brownfields target of 342.

Indicator	Jumping Off Point		FY 2020 Q1	FY 2020 Q2	FY 2020 Q3	FY 2020 Q4	FY 2021 Q1	FY 2021 Q2	FY 2021 Q3	FY 2021 Q4	Pref Dir	Trend
Number of Superfund sites made ready for anticipated use site-wide	0	Target	5	8	11	51	54	60	64	102	↑	
		Actual	2	6								
Number of brownfields sites made ready for anticipated use	0	Target	171	342	513	684	855	1,026	1,197	1,368	↑	
		Actual	177	435								

Accomplishments:

Strategy 1 – Implement lessons learned from Superfund Task Force recommendations critical for SWRAU and efficiencies developed using ELMS:
- o EPA made six Superfund sites sitewide RAU as of FY 2020 Q2, missing the target of eight sites; achieved 75% of target.
- o Superfund exceeded its incremental quarterly target of three by making four Superfund sites RAU in Q2.

Strategy 2 – Improve timely reporting of brownfields RAU by past and current grantees:
- o EPA exceeded the FY 2020 Q2 target of 342 sites RAU; achieved 435 sites RAU which is 127% of the target.
- o EPA regional offices contacted ten past cooperative agreement recipients in Q2 for additional accomplishment reporting, resulting in EPA documenting additional RAU that had previously not been reported.
- o The RAU workgroup concluded; guidance was distributed to regional offices with techniques for estimating annual RAU accomplishments.
- o EPA continued to evaluate sites that are potentially RAU but have not reached RAU status due to missing ICs.
- o The total number of work packages open more than 90 days went below 600.

Challenges:

Strategy 1 – Implement lessons learned from Superfund Task Force recommendations critical for SWRAU and efficiencies developed using ELMS:
- o EPA missed FY 2020 Q2 targets; and must review information to understand and address issues related to making sites sitewide RAU.
- o EPA previously identified 30 sites that are currently predicted to reach RAU in FY 2020. This presents a gap of 21 sites in relation to the FY 2020 APG target of 51 sites. EPA is finalizing results of a national audit in order to identify additional sites for sitewide RAU in FY 2020, including an assessment of where EPA can take action to reduce the gap.
- o Multiple regions indicated that they will be able to submit additional sites to reduce the gap, and EPA is updating its recommended targets for each region in order to achieve the APG target of 51 sites.

Strategy 2 – Improve timely reporting of brownfields RAU by past and current grantees:
- o Contacting previous grantees for additional accomplishment reporting is difficult due to staff turnover and limited historical project knowledge.

Key Milestones

Strategy 1 – Implement lessons learned from Superfund Task Force recommendations critical for SWRAU and efficiencies developed using ELMS

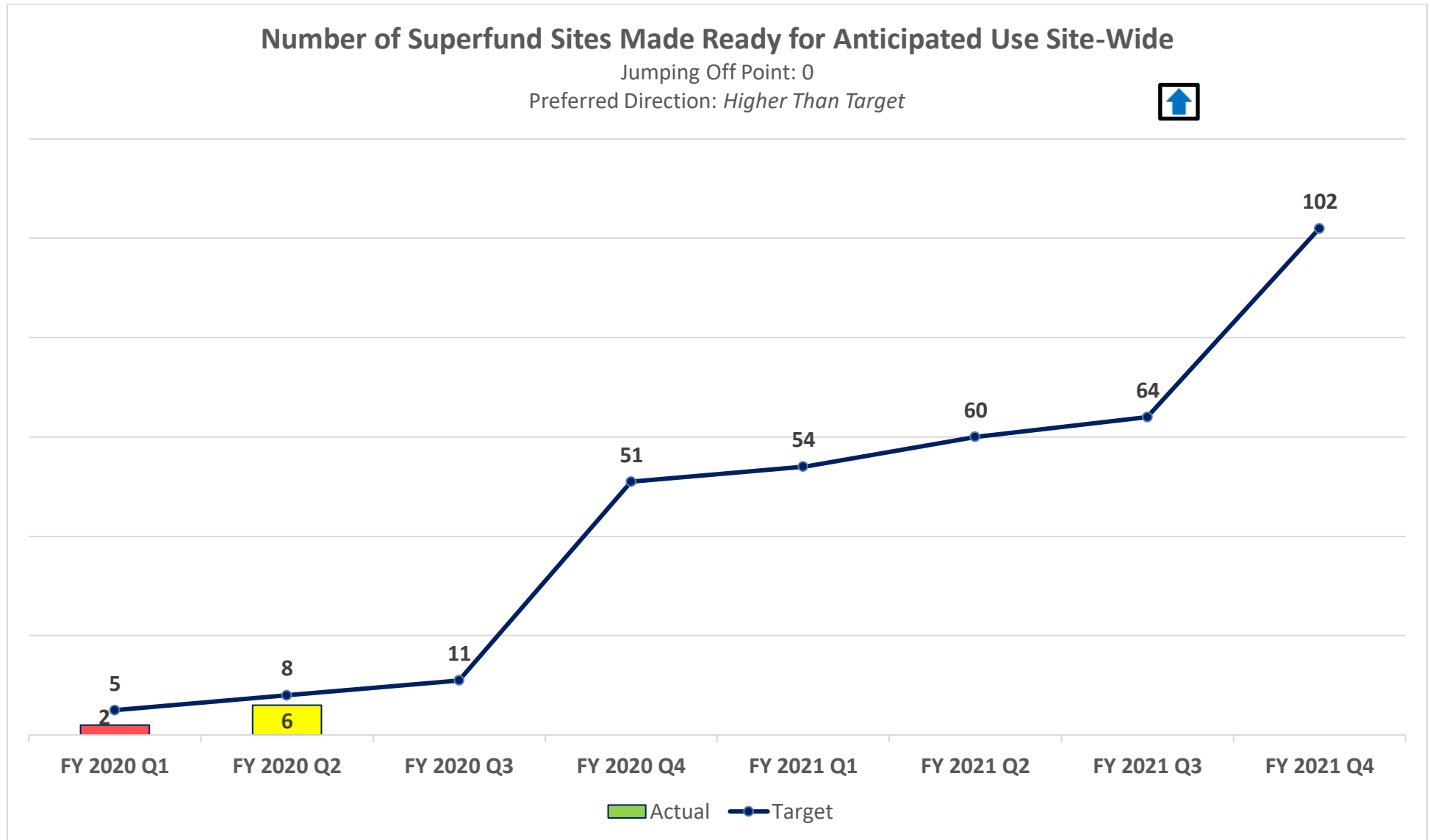| Key Milestones	Due Date	Status	Change from Last Quarter	Comments
Review the universe of sites to improve target development for the fiscal year, focusing on developing ICs in cooperation and coordination with local governments and Potentially Responsible Parties.	Q3/FY 2020	On Track	N/A	HQ is working with a region to obtain the data needed and complete the review.
Conduct a national SWRAU audit to identify sites that could achieve SWRAU in FY 2020-2021.	Q3/FY 2020	On Track	N/A	HQ is working with a region to obtain the data needed and complete the audit.
Evaluate identified performance metrics to impose accountability on the Agency in implementing lessons learned from the Superfund Task Force. EPA will consider adopting additional or different methods to measure and report on progress.	Q4/FY 2020	On Track	N/A	
OLEM and OECA will provide support to EPA regional offices to develop and implement ICs at sites as needed.	As needed	On Track	N/A	OLEM and OECA are providing support to EPA regional offices as needed. During Q2, site-specific support was provided to two regions.

Strategy 2 – Improve timely reporting of brownfields RAU by past and current grantees

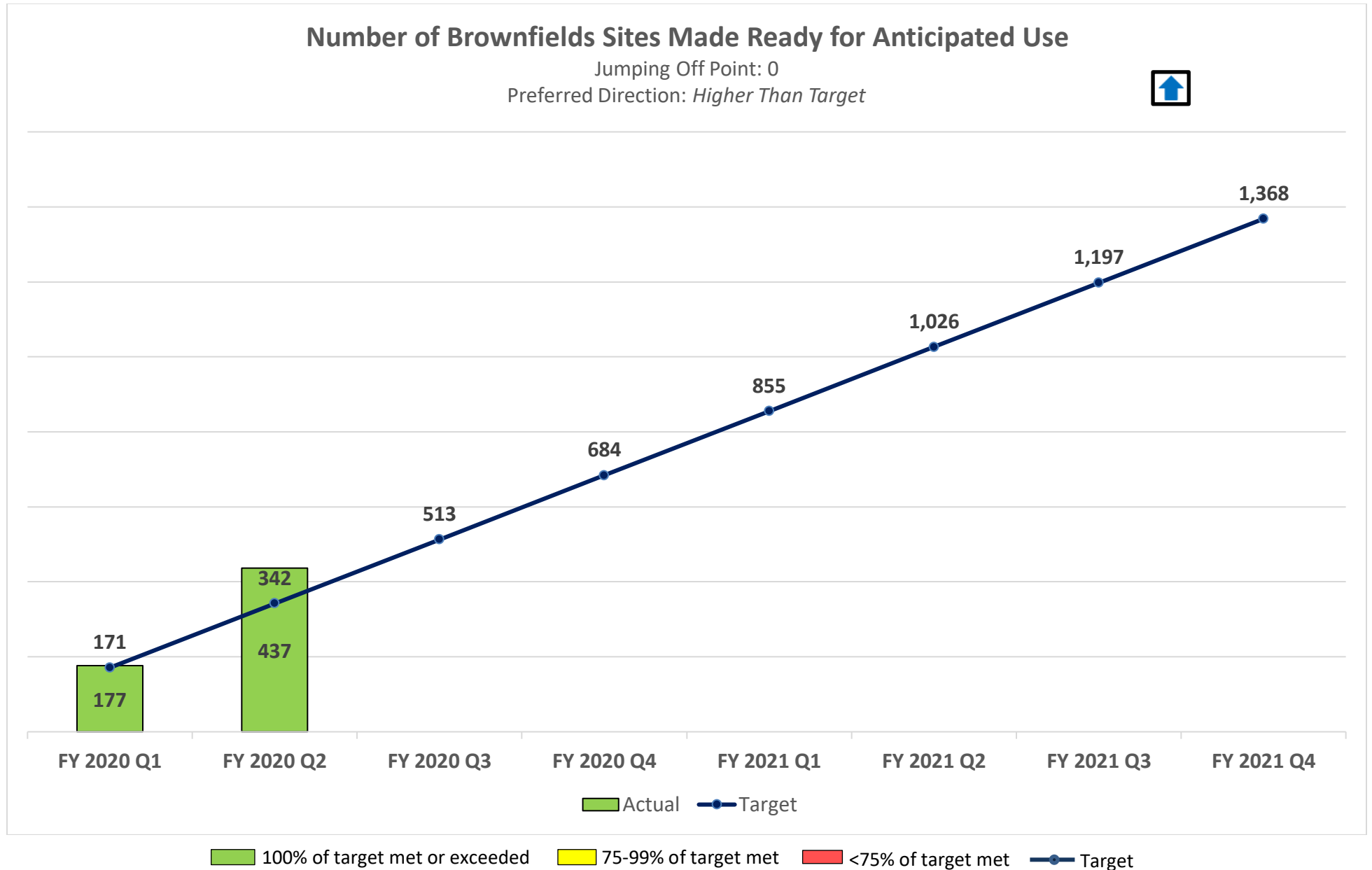| Key Milestones	Due Date	Status	Change from Last Quarter	Comments
Reduce the work package backlog to 500 work packages open more than 90 days	Q3/FY 2020	On Track	NA	Continued from FY 2019.
New Regional Quarterly Outreach Initiative: Regional offices will contact 10 past cooperative agreement recipients for additional accomplishment reporting in each quarter of FY 2020	Q1-Q4/FY 2020	On Track	NA	EPA Regions completed quarterly outreach for Q1 and Q2.
OLEM provides regional offices with monthly lists of reporting backlogs	Q4/FY2020	On Track	N/A	OLEM distributes lists the first week of each month.

OLEM assists regional offices with identifying sites that are potentially RAU but have not yet been documented due to missing ICs.	Q1/FY2020	Complete	N/A	OLEM distributed initial lists October 2020; updates planned for mid-year 2020.
Establish new RAU workgroup with regional representatives to develop more accurate prediction of future RAU sites.	Q1/FY2020	Complete	N/A	First call held in December 2019.
Conduct enhanced Grantee and Project Officer ACRES 6.0 training at BF2019 Conference with focus on achieving RAU	Q1/FY2020	Complete	N/A	
RAU Workgroup provides best practices to predict future RAU reporting	Q2/FY2020	Complete	N/A	OLEM distributed best practices to regional offices in March 2020.
OLEM assists regional offices with identifying sites that are potentially RAU but have not yet been documented due to missing ICs – midyear update.	Q3/FY2020	On Track	N/A	Lists will be distributed in May 2020.
Monthly check-in calls with regional offices on reporting backlog, and progress towards reaching out to past cooperative agreement recipients	Q4/FY2020	On Track	N/A	Monthly calls were held in each month of FY 2020 Q1 and Q2.
OLEM will explore with regional offices the timing of IC development and placement to find opportunities for streamlining, where possible.	Q1/FY2021	Not Yet Started	N/A	

Key Indicators

Number of Superfund Sites Made Ready for Anticipated Use Site-Wide

Jumping Off Point: 0
Preferred Direction: *Higher Than Target*

	FY 2020 Q1	FY 2020 Q2	FY 2020 Q3	FY 2020 Q4	FY 2021 Q1	FY 2021 Q2	FY 2021 Q3	FY 2021 Q4
Target	5	8	11	51	54	60	64	102
Actual	2	6						

Actual — Target

100% of target met or exceeded   75-99% of target met   <75% of target met   Target

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Key Indicators (continued)

Number of Brownfields Sites Made Ready for Anticipated Use

Jumping Off Point: 0
Preferred Direction: *Higher Than Target*

Data Accuracy and Reliability

Data Accuracy and Reliability

o Regional offices report data for the Ready for Anticipated Use (RAU) measures to systems administered by the Superfund (SF), Federal Facilities Restoration and Recovery (FFRR), and Brownfields (BF) Programs.

o EPA's authority and control over contaminated sites varies depending on the statutory authority under which the site is being addressed. BF data are self-reported by grantees.

o The SF Program provides the following information to the public on the EPA Superfund Remedial Annual Accomplishments website: FY 2016 and prior performance measure and program accomplishments webpage, site-specific site-wide RAU (SWRAU) status on the SF Site Profile pages, SWRAU Guidance document, and SWRAU checklists. This includes data for SWRAU at federal facilities.

o Data Quality Records have been developed for the strategic measures associated with this Agency Priority Goal: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-05/documents/dqr-1-3-superfund-rau.pdf and https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-05/documents/dqr-1-3-brownfields-rau.pdf

Additional Information

Contributing Programs
- o The lead office is EPA's Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM). The key official is Barry Breen, the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator of OLEM. The Superfund (SF), Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse (FFRR) and Brownfields (BF) programs contribute to this goal. These programs collaborate with EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) to deliver environmental results.

Other Federal Agencies / Stakeholder / Congressional Consultations
- o EPA also works in concert with states, tribes, local governments, and other federal agencies. In some cases, states are authorized to operate cleanup programs, while in others they are partners. Where other federal agencies are designated as the lead for the cleanup actions at their sites, EPA's environmental cleanup goals are subject to, and reliant on, the lead federal agencies' cleanup budgets, execution, and site cleanup performance.

Definition of RAU
- o Ready for anticipated use (RAU) is an aggregate performance measure and is not a reporting of site-specific risk. The RAU determination by the appropriate entity is based on information when the determination is made and may change if the site's conditions change or if new or additional information is discovered regarding contamination or conditions at the site.
- o The RAU performance measure is defined as the number of sites at which: (1) there are no complete pathways for human exposures to unacceptable levels of contamination based on current site conditions; (2) all cleanup goals have been achieved for media that may affect current and reasonably anticipated future land uses of the acres or sites so that there are no unacceptable risks; and (3) all institutional or other controls identified as part of the response action to help ensure long-term protections have been put in place. Review of the data for these prerequisite measures is part of OLEM's evaluation process for determining the potential RAU universe.