

NERC

NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC
RELIABILITY CORPORATION

ALIGN

Registered Entity Newsletter

May 2020

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LET'S GET ALIGNED: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Benefits of the Secure Evidence Locker

A key component of Align is the ERO Enterprise Secure Evidence Locker (SEL), which will be implemented in conjunction with Release 1 and used for the collection and analysis of evidence provided by registered entities in support of the Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Program (CMEP). The need for this highly secure repository comes at a time when the security of the bulk power system is constantly under attack by threat actors seeking information to compromise the bulk power system.

Rachel Snead, director of NERC Reliability Compliance and NERC Policy for Dominion Energy, has been with the company for nearly 15 years and has been collaborating with the ERO on Align in her current role for the past nine months. Dominion Energy has been actively engaged in discussions around the Align tool and the SEL since the concept was first discussed in 2014. “An important measure of success for the SEL will be ensuring stakeholders’ most sensitive information is secure and mitigating the risk of this comprehensive data being accessible to a bad actor, for example,” said Ms. Snead.

Luis Zaragoza, director of Regulatory Compliance for Clearway Energy, has been following NERC’s outreach on information regarding Align and the Centralized Organization Registration ERO System (CORES) Technology Project and is familiar with the system, having worked with it. “Without ensuring the safety and privacy of records and compliance evidence, there’s no interface,” said Mr. Zaragoza. “For us, the privacy of our documentation is of the utmost importance. The SEL provides the certainty that there’s protection and that our privacy is ensured. We have to be comfortable in providing evidence and documentation and knowing that it is secured and the SEL makes that easier on us.”

The ERO SEL is specifically designed to address these concerns by providing 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 on a schedule 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 and view this [webinar](#).

Registered Entity Testing on the Align Tool

In June, through coordination with the Compliance and Certification Committee (CCC) Alignment Working Group (AWG) and Regional Entities, a targeted group of registered entities will interact via WebEx with the Align tool. They will have an opportunity to walk through the various functions that will be available to them as part of Release 1 and provide feedback to the Align project team.

Registered entities will perform the following functions in the Align tool after the Release 1 Go-live:

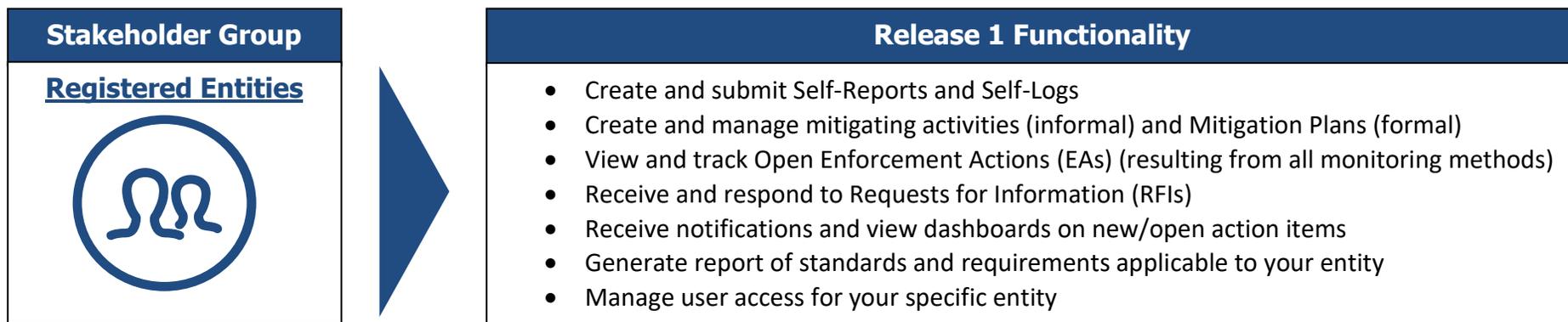


Figure 1.1: Registered Entity Release 1 Functionality

Training Materials in Development

The Align team is creating a robust training program, which will provide all the resources needed for Day 1 as well as refresher tools once Align has been launched. There will be a variety of training options available, including instructor-led webinars, short videos, job aids, and quick reference guides.

The team is also building a comprehensive training website that will be made available in the months leading up to Release 1 and serve as the launching point for training resources, including short video demos to guide you through the various Release 1 processes and functions.

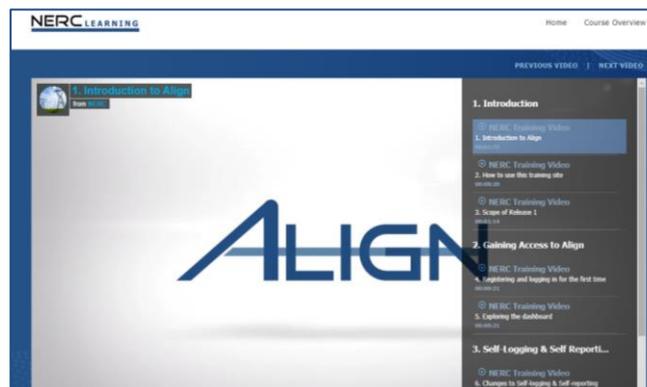


Figure 1.2: Align Training Website

Accessing Align: Act Now!

Even though there is still time prior to Release 1, it is important that you complete the setup or verification of your ERO Portal Account now. You are required to have an active ERO Portal Account prior to accessing Align. Additional instructions and next steps on provisioning will be sent closer to Release 1. Please follow the instructions below to verify your existing account or set up your new account.

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.

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](#).

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 newly updated [Align Project Site](#).