



Indicators 101 Webinar Questions & Answers

September 1, 2026

Link to recorded webinar: https://youtu.be/poNe_VgL1Rg

This document contains questions and answers from the Indicators 101 Webinar, presented in September 2026 by Doug Bell (EPA) and Katie Ayers (EPA).

The purpose of this webinar is to learn more about the Chesapeake Bay Program's Indicators Framework, the role of Indicators in our work, recent changes made to the supporting documentation and operating procedures, the roles and responsibilities of the Indicators Team, and the process to determine if an Indicator is needed and if so, how to develop and maintain the product.

Please reach out to the Indicators Team with any additional questions. Thank you!

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Q&A

Q1: Are there any major changes in expectations for the A&M documentation? Is the workload more or less than in past reporting years?

A: The Analysis & Methods (A&M) document recently underwent a significant update; however, the intent was to streamline the requested information. Those familiar with both versions have said it is shorter to complete, and the overall workload should be reduced. The Data File has also been updated, primarily to meet updated [Chesapeake Bay Program metadata requirements](#). Some questions from the A&M were transferred to the Data File requirements.

Q2: Is there a standard expectation that new Indicators should be approved at the Goal Team level? Or in some cases, would these be just approved by a Workgroup (with the Goal Team being looped in for awareness)?

A: There is no formal requirement for Indicator approval at the Goal Team level, but the Indicators Team generally recommends that Indicators be developed and approved in consultation with the Goal Team chairs and associated Workgroup(s).

Q3: Are there plans to address how we best track targets that cross multiple goals and/or outcomes with Indicators?

A: At this time, the Indicators Framework generally assumes a 1:1 Outcome-to-Indicator relationship, with the expectation that individual Indicators will generally be relevant to individual outcomes. That said, this is not a hard-and-fast rule, and it may sometimes be necessary to reference, describe, or discuss an Indicator in the context of multiple outcomes.

Beyond Indicators, there are many ways to identify meaningful datasets and assess their potential value for demonstrating progress, supporting strategic awareness, and informing program decision-making. Such information could be compiled and shared in a variety of ways, depending on the intended audience and on when such analysis and synthesis fits within the Chesapeake Bay Program's accountability framework (for example, annual check-ins, three-year reviews, and six-year program evaluations).

Q4: How and when should we evaluate the current Indicators for our specific Outcome or Target?

A: Ideally, at this point in the Management Strategy development process, Outcome groups should be considering whether they want to: a) continue maintaining an existing Indicator, b) confirm a revised or newly proposed Indicator before June 2027, or c) develop an Indicator when time allows. The best approach is to review the guidelines in the [Indicators Framework](#) and the criteria listed on Slide 8 of the webinar presentation with your Outcome colleagues, and to discuss your thoughts and intentions with the Indicators Team.

Q5: If Outcome groups are responsible for developing Indicators, what role does the PSC play in ensuring that the suite of Indicators we have sufficiently achieve the goals of accountability, transparency, etc. and represent the data needed to show progress?

A: The role described here is probably best managed by Goal Team co-chairs and teams. Goal Teams are focused on overseeing a holistic approach to demonstrating outcome-specific progress through each Goal's Management Strategy. Indicators are one potential tool for demonstrating progress. The PSC would provide oversight of the overall Strategic Plan and each Goal's respective Management Strategy, including whether the plan communicates approaches that meet internal and public accountability expectations.

Q6: Will the Management Strategies be updated with the Indicator to match Chesapeake Progress?

A: The Management Strategies that Workgroups and Goal Teams are developing now should outline plans for Indicators. The content of the Management Strategies, including descriptions of Indicators or other measures of progress, will then inform content on ChesapeakeProgress. If, after your Management Strategy is published, your team develops an Indicator that was not described in that strategy, you do not need to update the published strategy to include it. Instead, you may describe that Indicator in the next Management Strategy, scheduled for publication in 2033.