

Evaluation of USDA's ADR Programs

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Agenda

1. Purpose of the study
2. The role of the University of St. Thomas
3. What is expected of agencies
4. Confidentiality protection
5. How and when reports will be generated
6. Avoiding duplication
7. Cost benefit study
8. Questions



Purpose of the study

- ▶ *Ascertain the benefits of ADR programs in USDA agencies and mission areas.*
- ▶ *Provide feedback to ADR programs for their use in program improvement, including “identifying and resolving problems” and marketing the program.*
- ▶ *Demonstrate the cost-benefit of ADR programs in USDA.*



The Role of the University of St. Thomas

- ▶ *Originally Indiana University (IU) was hired to design and implement the evaluation. IU began the process.*
- ▶ *John Conbere at the University of St. Thomas had assisted the work of IU.*
- ▶ *IU lost the resources to implement the evaluation, and the University of St. Thomas was asked to continue the implementation of the evaluation.*
- ▶ *IU will continue to be involved in design and analysis of the evaluation.*



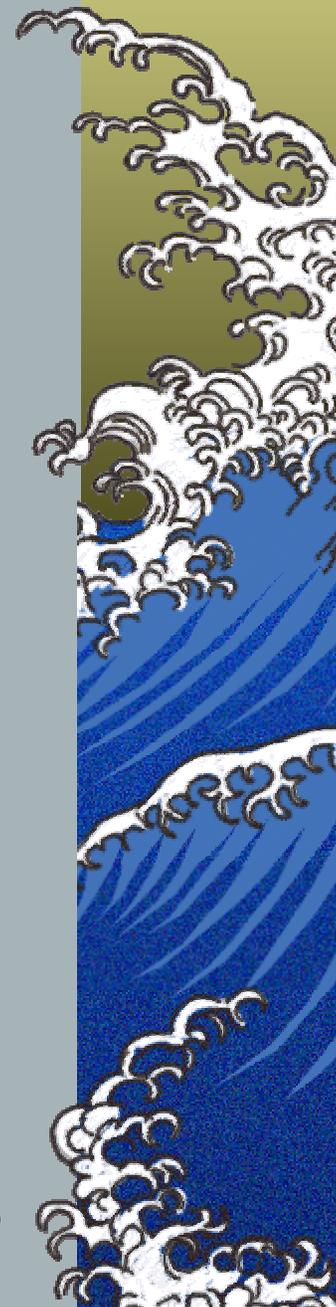
Elements of the Evaluation – Data collection

- ▶ *Surveys given to all ADR participants.*
- ▶ *Surveys given to ADR neutrals in each ADR session.*
- ▶ *Surveys given to people who request and receive consultation.*
- ▶ *(There is also a separate cost-benefit of ADR study.)*



What is expected of agencies – Preparing for Evaluation

- ▶ *Commit to giving the choice of participation in evaluation to every participant.*
- ▶ *Prepare neutrals to understand the purpose of the evaluation (so they can accurately present it) and their role in distributing the surveys.*
- ▶ *Have all handouts and stamped envelopes available for each neutral.*
- ▶ *Think through the possible overlap in current post ADR session surveys and the new surveys, and what the agency will do about avoiding duplication of efforts.*



What is expected of agencies – ADR sessions

Inform neutrals that they are expected :

- ▶ To provide evaluation materials to ADR participants,*
- ▶ To remind participants that completing the surveys is entirely voluntary, entirely anonymous, and helpful to improving ADR programs in USDA.*
- ▶ To fill in their own surveys and seal these in an envelope.*
- ▶ To encourage participants to complete the surveys before they leave.*
- ▶ To collect all sealed envelopes and mail them ASAP.*



Avoiding Duplication of Efforts

- ▶ *Concern has been raised about asking ADR participants to fill in 2 surveys – possibly duplicating efforts, possibly wasting time.*
- ▶ *To examine this issue, look at the outcomes of the current surveys, and the projected outcomes from the USDA-wide surveys.*
- ▶ *Then see if there is a way to reduce or replace the agency survey in a manner that will serve participants and the agency.*



Outcomes from USDA-wide Evaluation

- ▶ *Kind of ADR process.*
- ▶ *Stage of conflict (e.g., early intervention, Formal EEO...).*
- ▶ *Participant's role in process.*
- ▶ *Were there representatives?*
- ▶ *Kind of issues that were the focus of the ADR session.*
- ▶ *Participants' hopes entering into ADR.*
- ▶ *Was ADR chosen voluntarily?*
- ▶ *Reasons participants chose ADR.*
- ▶ *Participants' experience.*
- ▶ *How well the neutral performed.*
- ▶ *Outcomes of ADR session.*
- ▶ *ADR sessions' effect on relationships.*
- ▶ *What would have happened if ADR were not successful?*
- ▶ *How people learned about ADR.*
- ▶ *Strengths and benefits of ADR.*
- ▶ *How ADR process could be improved.*



Outcomes from USDA-wide Evaluation

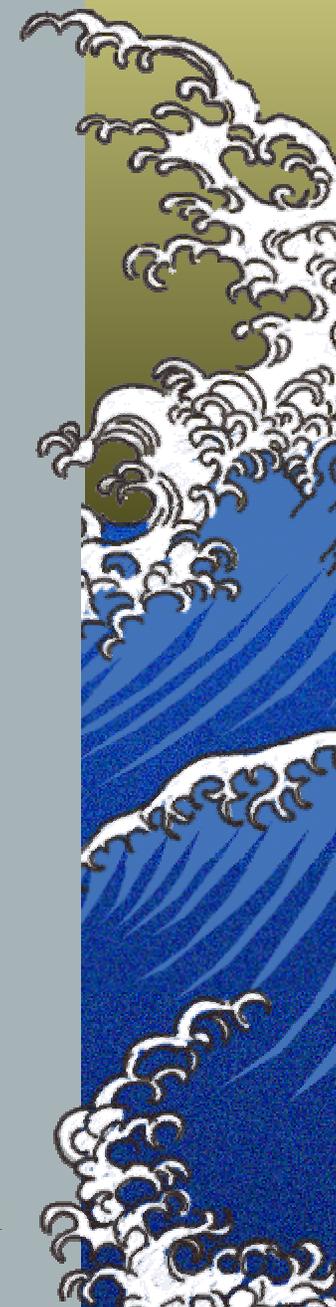
Information in general about:

- ▶ *The timing of the session (early intervention etc.)*
- ▶ *Kinds of issues, use of representatives.*
- ▶ *Participants reasons for using ADR.*
- ▶ *Participants satisfaction with ADR.*
- ▶ *Perceptions about strengths, benefits and improvements.*



Outcomes from USDA-wide Evaluation

- ▶ *Reporting agency results to stakeholders.*
- ▶ *Program improvement – a steady stream of information about how participants find out about and use ADR, what did and did not work, satisfaction with outcomes. Quarterly reporting if more than 10 sessions were held (a necessary # to preserve confidentiality).*
- ▶ *Program marketing – can use data to demonstrate to agency employees “Here is what your peers have said about ADR.”*



Outcomes from USDA-wide Evaluation

The USDA-wide evaluation will not:

- ▶ *Identify how well a particular neutral performed.*
- ▶ *Identify if a particular participant has unmet needs or frustration resulting from the ADR process.*



Results from USDA-wide Evaluation

Two possible methods for learning about participant satisfaction and performance of neutrals from each specific ADR session:

- 1. Call them 1 – 3 weeks after the ADR session. Ask how well they were satisfied. (The “Honda “quality approach.”) This also gives you more detail, and will improve customer relationships with participants.*
- 2. In the evaluation handout to the participants, include your own letter asking them to call you if they have feedback about neutral or process that they wish to give.*



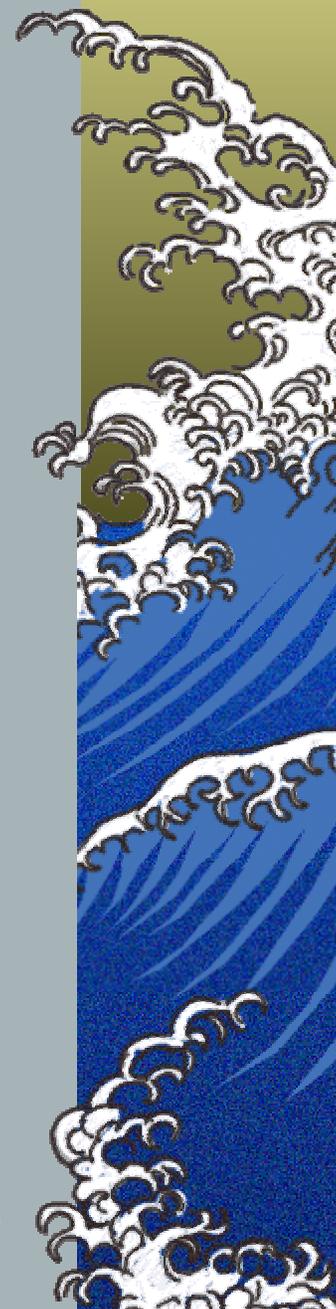
What is expected of agencies – Consultations

- ▶ *The neutral who does the consultation tells the participant that she or he is asked to complete a brief survey, and that the survey is entirely voluntary and entirely anonymous.*
- ▶ *The neutral informs the participant that the survey will help USDA assess the value of ADR consultations.*
- ▶ *The survey and a stamped, pre-addressed envelope is sent to given to the participant.*



Confidentiality Protections – ADR surveys

- ▶ *Surveys are given to all participants. They fill out the survey “on company time” and seal in is a stamped, pre- addressed envelope. No names or other identifiers are used.*
- ▶ *They give the envelopes to the neutral, who mails them.*
- ▶ *Each participant has their own envelope so there is no “package” from an ADR session that might be used to identify participants.*



Confidentiality guarantees – Consultation evaluation

- ▶ *After consultation the participant is given or sent an evaluation form and stamped, pre-addressed envelope.*
- ▶ *The participant fills in the survey and mails it to the University of St. Thomas.*
- ▶ *No names or other identifiers are used.*



Confidentiality guarantees – Reports

- ▶ *In the reporting from the University of St. Thomas to USDA or to ADR programs, no names or information that would identify an individual is given.*
- ▶ *All information is given in the aggregate – that is, as trends or summaries of many participants' responses.*



