

## Bureau of Air Quality Questions and Answers

### **What are the current number of filled positions/ authorized positions?**

Total Air Compliment				
	Total	Filled	Vacant	% Vacant
Central office	124	111	17	14%
SERO Air Qlty	35	32	3	9%
NERO Air Qlty	24	23	1	4%
SCRO Air Qlty	29	27	2	7%
NCRO Air Qlty	20	19	1	5%
SWRO Air Qlty	25	24	3	12%
NWRO Air Qlty	25	24	1	4%
	282	260	28	10%

### **Have any additional positions been added in the current fiscal year? If so, please describe**

Two positions were added in the recent budget cycle to add staff to support the Western PA Oil and Gas Project.

### **What is the number of positions that would be considered “full complement” for the air program?**

Based on the current legislatively approved authorizations, the air program is currently authorized a compliment of 282 positions with 260 currently filled with a current vacancy of 10%. Available vacancies are actively being worked on as they occur.

### **What additional positions are needed?**

Based on our current funding and legislative authorizations, additional positions are not necessary at this time.

### **Are any positions now ready to be filled but can't be due to lack of funding?**

Funding is currently not an issue with filling vacancies. We have been actively working on filling vacancies as they occur. Any real challenges in replacing vacancies comes from a lack of candidates applying for the openings. We have had to repost multiple jobs several times due to receiving no bidders. We are evaluating annual revenue to determine next steps the Bureau of Air Quality could take to address any future funding issues.

### **How much additional funds would the air program need to reach full complement.**

Funding is currently not an issue with filling vacancies. We have been actively working on filling vacancies as they occur. Any real challenges in replacing vacancies comes from a lack of candidates applying for the openings. We have had to repost multiple jobs several times due to

receiving no bidders. However, we are in the early stages of developing a new fee package to address a funding shortfall in FY 26/27 that may impact the programs' ability to fund positions going forward.

At current funding levels, the Bureau has a vacancy rate of 10%. While funding will not address this problem, the Bureau is doing everything it can to attract new candidates.

**In 2005 the air program had 349 filled positions. What positions existed then that don't exist today.**

It would be challenging to account for organizational changes and compliment changes over the past 20 years. While we are 67 positions short of the compliment authorized in 2005, the program has been able to take advantage of technology to be more efficient with the staffing currently available.

**What is the consequence of this staffing loss?**

The air program, like most others in the Department, has learned to be more efficient in our work and take advantage of available technology to accomplish the mission. One example would be the digitalization and access to word processing and other software, which allowed the program to lessen the number of clerical staff necessary to support the program.

**Can you provide a breakdown of the number of air monitors maintained by the program per year for the last 20 years? Can you break down these figures by federal and state monitors.**

The calculations in the table below are based on state monitors (monitors in which the state is responsible for operating). There was a decrease in monitoring in 2023 and 2024 primarily due to the decrease in VOC monitoring. This decrease was due to a couple of reasons: lack of staffing at the Bureau of Labs (BOL) to handle the VOC sampling and also the Bureau of Air Quality (BAQ) was looking for ways to cut costs to the BOL (for its own financial well-being).

Year	# of Monitors	# of Parameters
2003	197	972
2004	198	980
2005	196	978
2006	205	1755
2007	205	1987
2008	203	1978
2009	176	1607
2010	180	899
2011	181	900
2012	194	1009
2013	226	2661
2014	231	2952
2015	223	2857
2016	206	2743

Year	# of Monitors	# of Parameters
2017	209	2670
2018	227	2756
2019	200	2729
2020	198	2535
2021	195	2532
2022	183	2098
2023	174	1483
2024	172	1587

**Can you tell me what reduction in these monitoring sites were due to lack of staffing?**

None of the monitoring reductions were due to staffing reductions in BAQ. EPA requires the air monitoring program to annually reevaluate the effectiveness of the air monitoring network. Individual pieces of equipment and entire air monitoring sites are evaluated as to their ongoing usefulness in providing quality air monitoring data. As monitoring technologies have evolved, older manual filter-based sampling has been replaced with modern continuous samplers providing better quality data requiring fewer samplers. Additionally, thanks to regulation and enforcement efforts, several criteria pollutants such as lead, carbon monoxide and coarse particulate matter (PM10) are not the issue they were 20 years ago.

**Does your program inspect any conventional drilling operations for methane leakage? If not, why not?**

The Department is currently involved in litigation with the conventional industry pertaining to the VOC RACT regulations (25 Pa. Code §§ 129.131-129.140) before the Commonwealth Court in *PIOGA et al. v. DEP et al.* (574 M.D. 2022). The Commonwealth Court has granted a joint motion to stay the litigation proceedings while the parties explore settlement options. The annual reporting obligations under 25 Pa. Code § 129.140(k)(1) are on hold for the conventional operators until the litigation concludes.

**Can you describe how the responsibilities of the Air program have increased in the past 20 years?**

The complexity of air regulatory requirements has significantly increased over the past 20 years. Since 2011, additional regulations have been implemented for the oil and gas industries, further increasing the workload. Despite these challenges, the current staff continues to manage a wide range of critical responsibilities. These include ensuring the timely issuance of major and minor permits, conducting compliance inspections, and responding to complaints. Staff also oversee the ambient air monitoring network, perform ambient air impact modeling, and handle major source

SIP planning and regulatory development. Additional duties include maintaining emissions inventory and tracking systems, developing and managing an electronic permit application system for general plan approvals and operating permits, implementing an electronic fee payment system, and covering general administrative costs.

**Has your program produced any reports or other documents which contain any information regarding staffing needs? If so, can you provide me with those documents?**

We have not developed a full analysis of staffing levels for the Bureau of Air Quality or the regional air staff. We have been working in conjunction with EPA Region 3 staff to develop a process map and limited staff analysis for the air resources management division.

**Has your program received any letters or performance evaluations from the EPA in the last 5 year which indicate any sub-par performance or program deficiencies? Is so can you provide me with copies?**

BAQ participates in two performance evaluations with EPA, a technical systems audit is performed every three years on the ambient air monitoring program and the state review framework on our compliance and enforcement program is conducted every five years. Attached are the most recent reports for the most recent finalized evaluations for both programs.

**Can you tell me in the past 2 fiscal years what dollar amount and percentage of the Clean Air Fund was used for staff salaries?**

For FY2022, \$18,205,775.68 or 64.06% of the Clean Air Fund was used for Personnel.

For FY2023, \$24,148,710.04 or 66.83% of the Clean Air Fund was used for Personnel.