Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

VA DIRECTIVE 6071
Transmittal Sheet
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PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM (PMAS)

1. REASON FOR ISSUE. To set forth policies and responsibilities for managing VA Information and Technology projects under PMAS.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS / MAJOR CHANGES. This Directive establishes mandatory Department-wide policy for the implementation of the Project Management Accountability System (PMAS).

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE. Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, PMAS Business Office (005Q).

4. RELATED HANDBOOK. None.

5. RESCISSION. None.

CERTIFIED BY:

/s/
Roger W. Baker
Assistant Secretary for
Information and Technology

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:

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Distribution: Electronic Only

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM (PMAS)

1. **PURPOSE.** This Directive establishes mandatory Department-wide policy for the establishment of the Project Management Accountability System (PMAS). PMAS is a disciplined approach to information technology (IT) project development and delivery within which IT project managers are held accountable for meeting cost, schedule, and scope. PMAS is designed to reduce project implementation risks, institute monitoring and controls, establish accountability, and create a reporting discipline. At all times, VA officials will develop, follow, and enforce policies which support the PMAS methodology.

2. **POLICY.** This Directive mandates the use of PMAS. Specific instructions and further guidance regarding PMAS IT project implementation will be found in the PMAS Guide.

a. Use of PMAS is mandated for all IT development projects, whether the project will create new functionality or enhance existing capabilities within VA's current systems or infrastructure.

b. Use of PMAS is mandated for all IT development projects, whether funded by the IT Appropriation or any other appropriation, and that is resourced at a value greater than $250,000 total life cycle cost.

c. Projects must be completed in increments. An increment is the segment of the project that produces an agreed portion of functional business capability.

(1) Increments must not exceed six months in length.

(2) Increment completion must be validated and accepted by the customer.

d. PMAS has four standard states. Advancement through the states will be allowed only upon successful completion of the requirements for each state as confirmed via a Milestone Review.

(1) New Start state: Projects are conceptual and have not been approved to spend money. The project performs initiating activities to define the project scope. Advancement to the Planning state is achieved by completing a Milestone 0 Review.

(2) Planning state: Projects perform initial planning activities to prepare the project for entry into the Active state. Advancement to the Active state is achieved by completing a Milestone 1 Review for Active.

(3) Active state: Projects execute the processes to build and deliver increments according to committed increment deliverables until all scope requirements of the

project are accomplished. There are two types of increments in the Active state, Active Development and Active Implementation. Advancement to the Active Implementation increment is achieved by completing a Milestone 2 Review. At the completion of the last implementation increment, advancement to the Closed state is achieved by completing a Milestone 3 Review.

(4) Closed state: Projects must perform closeout activities. Completion of the Closed state is achieved by completing a Milestone 4 Review.

e. PMAS has two conditional states:

(1) Provisioning state: Projects that have been successfully planned, but require additional resources will enter this state. Projects can enter this state from the Planning, Paused, or Active state. If entering from the Planning state, and if a project needs a contract to be awarded, a project can request a Milestone 1 Review for Provisioning. If granted, the review approves the project to complete its acquisition. Advancement to the Active state is achieved by completing a Milestone 1 Review for Active.

(2) Paused state: Projects will be paused after missing three consecutive customer increment deliverables, or when it is unfunded, but still has a valid business need. Projects will be placed into this state at any time at the determination of senior leadership.

f. A Yellow Flag is raised for situational awareness of changes in the project environment that have the potential to increase the level of acceptable risk. These changes have the potential to affect significantly the project financials, schedule, quality, or performance.

g. A Red Flag will be raised by anyone associated with the project when a project faces any significant issues or risks that jeopardize the successful delivery of an increment.

(1) A Red Flag goes directly to the Assistant Secretary for Information Technology (AS/IT) or Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for IT (PDAS). The AS/IT or PDAS/IT can provide any necessary assistance.

(2) Red Flags will be raised in a timely enough manner in order to increase visibility among senior leadership and provide the opportunity for timely resolution.

h. Green Flags will be awarded by program leadership when a project achieves significant success, which required the project to overcome a significant obstacle to attain that success.

i. A TechStat Meeting will be held when a committed date will be or has been missed. The TechStat Meeting allows senior leadership to examine the issue preventing the project(s) from executing according to plan.

(1) A TechStat Meeting must be initiated by the PM when any increment deliverable date is or will be missed. A TechStat Meeting must be initiated by the PM when an internal milestone is or will be missed which prevents the increment deliverable from being achieved.

(2) At a TechStat Meeting the determination is made for the issuance of a Strike against a project. Upon the issuance of three strikes, the AS/IT or PDAS/IT may evaluate the project for entry into the Paused state or Closed state.

j. Each project under PMAS must have an Integrated Project Team (IPT).

k. A project must be adequately resourced before it will gain approval to enter the Active state.

l. PMAS projects must adhere to processes and instructions outlined in ProPath.

m. Exceptions to the PMAS Directive must be approved by the AS/IT or PDAS/IT.

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

a. **Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology (AS/IT)**. **The AS/IT or Designee will:**

(1) Authorize new projects and increments in PMAS.

(2) Approve funding needed for projects via the Budget Operating Plan (BOP).

(3) Authorize changes to a project status: Planning, Active, Paused, Provisioning, or Closed.

(4) Monitor PMAS project and increment progress via reporting, review, and assessment.

(5) Certify to Congress that before funds are obligated for any development project that it has completed all required PMAS activities.

(6) Approve and sign the IPT Charter.

(7) Address Green Flags, Red Flags, and Yellow Flags.

(8) Conduct TechStat Meetings.

(9) Approve exceptions to PMAS.

b. **Business Sponsor (Customer/End User). The Business Sponsor will:**

(1) Participate as a key member of the IPT by determining requirements, monitoring and approving changes to those requirements, and accepting project increment deliverables.

(2) Determine overall project and increment requirements.

(3) Validate and approve all project requirements.

(4) Validate and sign for increment deliverables.

(5) Provide prompt feedback for post implementation operation of the system.

(6) Participate in the overall prioritization of projects, advocating for their specific projects as necessary.

(7) Provide an appropriate Privacy Officer (PO).

c. **Office of Responsibility (OOR). The OOR will:**

(1) Work with the Business Sponsor to develop project and increment scope.

(2) Ensure all resources are available for project success.

(3) Conduct internal reviews as necessary.

(4) Monitor project cost, schedule, and scope.

(5) Make recommendations to the AS/IT regarding project status.

(6) Address Red Flags.

(7) Report Green Flags and Yellow Flags as appropriate.

(8) Create internal processes that support PMAS policy.

d. **Program Manager (ITPROG) or Major Initiative (MI) Lead. The ITPROG or MI Lead will:**

(1) Participate as a key member of the IPT.

(2) Ensure all PMs, within their programs, have the necessary resources for

project success.

(3) Monitor project cost, schedule, and scope.

(4) Ensure necessary contracts and contract vehicles are in place to support incremental deliveries.

(5) Maintain a status list of PMAS projects and increments which constitute the program.

(6) Recommend an independent review or pause of project activities as necessary.

(7) Raise and/or address Red Flags.

(8) Report Green and Yellow Flags as appropriate.

(9) Identify the project alignment program, MI, and OMB Exhibit 300 investment according to established standards.

(10) Report all required project data on a timely basis.

e. **Project Manager (PM). The PM will:**

(1) Manage the project cost, schedule, and scope.

(2) Participate as a key member of the IPT.

(3) Ensure all requirements and resources necessary to deliver a project are available.

(4) Raise Red Flags.

(5) Report Green Flags and Yellow Flags as appropriate.

(6) Raise risks and issues that could impact project success or that require management intervention.

(7) Provide project level metrics as required by the PMAS reporting structure.

(8) Determine when the subsequent increment will be ready to be started.

(9) Prepare and sign the Customer Acceptance Form.

(10) Terminate or re-plan the project as directed.

(11) Track and report project data to the PMAS Dashboard as outlined in the PMAS Reporting Guide on a monthly basis.

(12) Provide current fiscal year investment performance data in compliance with the OMB Exhibit 300b on a monthly basis.

(13) Monitor project changes such as scope, cost, and schedule

f. **PMAS Business Office (PBO). The PBO will:**

(1) Administer PMAS to ensure effective operation and execution.

(2) Serve as the Business Owner for the PMAS database, dashboard, and other reporting tools.

(3) Serve as stewards of PMAS data and dashboard reporting discipline.

(4) Monitor the progress of all VA IT projects in PMAS.

(5) Develop and maintain PMAS policy and guidance.

(6) Develop tools and techniques to gather, analyze, and report on PMAS project data.

(7) Provide guidance and training on PMAS policy.

(8) Provide guidance and data quality analysis on PMAS status reporting and produce reports.

(9) Provide support to the AS/IT (or designee), ITPROGs, MI Leads, and PMs in the area of management reviews, Green Flag, Red Flag, Yellow Flag, TechStat meetings, and Milestone Reviews. This support includes meeting facilitation, developing and/or consulting on materials, processes, and procedures.

(10) Provide OMB 300B data gathering tools and tool support for PMs.

(11) Coordinate independent assessments of PMAS projects.

(12) Provide findings and recommendations regarding project performance as requested.

g. **Architecture, Strategy, and Design (ASD), Information Security (IS), Information Technology Resource Management (ITRM), and Product Development (PD). ASD, IS, ITRM, and PD will:**

(1) Execute projects in accordance with PMAS.

(2) Function as appropriate as the OOR for PMAS projects within its respective organization.

(3) Provide an organizational member as appropriate to serve as a key member of each IPT.

(4) Participate as appropriate in Milestone Reviews.

h. **Service Delivery and Engineering (SDE). SDE will:**

(1) Execute projects in accordance with PMAS.

(2) Function as the OOR for PMAS projects within SDE.

(3) Provide an organizational member as appropriate to serve as a key member of each IPT.

(4) Participate as appropriate in Milestone Reviews.

(5) Provide support with infrastructure engineering, capacity assessment, System Engineering and Design Review (SEDR), infrastructure solution ratification, system testing and certification, training, release management, system deployment, operational planning and management, and help desk services.

(6) As requested, provide implementation support personnel and processes responsible for project and increment release management, including all elements of deployment (e.g. Implementation Manager, ESM Release Management).

i. **Integrated Project Team (IPT). The IPT will:**

(1) Through active participation, serve as an oversight body for the project to ensure all business requirements are fully addressed and projects are successfully executed.

(2) Communicate and coordinate project status and project needs with the sponsoring organizations of each IPT member.

(3) Ensure all project and increment requirements are in place, including contracts and resources necessary to have a reasonable expectation for project success.

(4) Implement internal review and control processes as needed to ensure the effective delivery of project and increment deliverables.

(5) Maintain awareness of the current status of the project(s).

(6) Raise Red Flags if necessary.

(7) Report Green Flags and Yellow Flags as appropriate.

(8) Approve and sign any relevant project artifacts.

j. **Office of General Counsel. The Office of General Counsel will:**

(1) Participate as a key member of the IPT by reviewing and coordinating all legal and contractual actions.

k. **Contracting Officer (CO). The CO will:**

(1) Participate as a key member of the IPT team by reviewing and coordinating all contract related actions.

(2) Commit and modify Government funds throughout contract life from inception to completion.

4. **REFERENCES**

a. OMB 25 Point Implementation Plan to Reform Federal Information Technology Management.

b. VA Directive 6500, Information Security Program.

c. VA Handbook 6500.5, Incorporating Security and Privacy into the System Development Lifecycle.

d. VA Directive 6502, VA Privacy Enterprise Program.

e. VA Integrated Project Team (IPT) Guide.

f. VA Project Management Accountability System (PMAS) Guide.

g. VA Project Management Accountability System (PMAS) Reporting Guide.

h. VA ProPath.

i. VA Technical Reference Model (One-VA TRM).

5. **DEFINITIONS**

a. **Business Sponsor/Customer.** The Business Sponsor or the Customer is the business unit executive requesting certain IT functionalities or IT services. The Business Sponsor identifies the high-level requirements, makes the business case for the project to exist, and defines the acceptance criteria of the product in broad terms. As a key member of the IPT, the Business Sponsor directly shapes the

overall direction and governance of a project. The Business Sponsor may or may not be the end user.

b. **Green Flag.** A Green Flag is raised when a project has a timely completion of a significant milestone and/or increment, the successful deployment of a project deliverable, and/or a momentous and positive event which could be brought forward to the VA Secretary. This will include, but is not limited to, overcoming an obstacle or saving the Agency significant capital.

c. **Integrated Project Team (IPT).** An IPT is a team of people with complementary skills and expertise who collaborate and commit to the timely delivery of specified work products.

d. **Increment.** An increment is a segment of the project that produces a customer facing deliverable into production in a cycle of six months or less. A project may have multiple increments. A project increment has the following characteristics:

(1) A body of work that delivers business capability directly related to a project.

(2) Has a defined start and end date.

(3) Has a specified budget.

(4) Requires business sponsor acceptance of delivered product(s) referred to as the incremental deliverable.

(5) A Milestone 1 Review is required prior to starting execution.

e. **Major Initiative (MI) or Program.** An MI or program is a group of related projects planned, managed, and coordinated together to maximize benefits that would otherwise not be available from managing the projects individually. An MI or program may include overarching capabilities and services that are necessary but not within the scope of the individual projects. An MI or program is mission aligned and ongoing for an extended period of time.

f. **Milestone Reviews.** Milestone Reviews are mandatory decision points which are conducted by the OOR. Milestone approval is required for a project to enter the Planning, Active, and Closed PMAS states. Milestone 1 Reviews for Provisioning are mandatory for projects that require acquisition approvals.

g. **Office of Responsibility (OOR).** The OOR is the office of the OIT Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS)/Deputy CIO (DCIO), which has principal responsibility for executing the project.

h. **Project.** A project is any effort which has definable start and end dates and defined goals and whose principal intent is to enhance VA business functionality or to improve, supplement, or replace parts of the IT infrastructure.

i. **Red Flag.** A Red Flag is any significant issue or risk that jeopardizes the successful delivery of an increment deliverable or overall project completion.

j. **Strike.** A Strike occurs at the milestone or increment level and refers to a missed product deliverable date as recorded and tracked in the PMAS Dashboard system.

k. **TechStat Meeting.** A TechStat meeting is a forum at which Senior Leadership is presented with the root cause of a project's missed increment deliverable date or committed baseline date. Lessons learned are developed when necessary.

l. **Yellow Flag.** Yellow Flags provide situational awareness to senior leadership of changes in the project environment that have the potential to increase the level of acceptable risk.