

SECTION 2-4: PRE-PROJECT PLANNING AND THE PROJECT DEFINITION RATING INDEX

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2-4-00 POLICY

This section describes HHS policies and procedures to be followed by HHS OPDIVs in accomplishing thorough pre-project planning using industry best practices and specifically, the use and preparation of the Construction Industry Institute (CII) Project Definition Rating Index (PDRI). Pre-project planning is defined as a process of developing sufficient strategic information with which an OPDIV can address risk and decide to commit resources to maximize the chance of a successful project. HHS has adopted pre-project planning as a best practice. The Project Definition Rating Index (PDRI) is to be used as a tool to evaluate the ongoing status of a project. A PDRI is required as part of the submission of HHS Form 300 – Facility Project Approval Agreement for federally-owned real property assets. The rating index is not used as criteria for project approval, but as an indication of the projects readiness in terms of its development. The index should be further developed throughout the planning and design stage of the project.

2-4-10 PROCEDURES

A. PRE-PROJECT PLANNING OVERVIEW

Pre-project Planning – Pre-project Planning starts with the identification of requirements and continues through schematics of the project. The pre-project planning phase establishes the project requirements and concept, and provides the basis for project budget and approval. The CII's Pre-Project Planning Handbook can be used as additional guidance on pre-project planning. Pre-project planning should include:

- Statement of mission requirements
- Outline of known alternatives
- Defined schedule for Pre-project planning
- Defined Pre-project planning
- Defined budget for Pre-project planning
- Defined information availability
- Location of Pre-project planning work
- Contract Strategy
- Permit analysis
- Defined deliverables
- Status reporting requirements
- Defined tasks for minimizing risk
- Project outline
- Pre-project planning priorities
- Defined responsibilities for all Pre-project planning team members

B. ORGANIZING FOR PRE-PROJECT PLANNING

For projects of minimal scope, the pre-project planning effort may be informal, but for larger, more complex projects, the pre-project planning should be formal, rigorous and well documented. Partnering among all project stakeholders is necessary to ensure all requirements are defined and incorporated into the project documentation and budget. The following are suggestions for use by the pre-project planning team as appropriate:

- Stakeholders for the team may change as the project progresses through its planning and development phase. The team should include members based upon knowledge, skills, authority, and operations and administrative functions that are needed to develop the project requirements.

- For a formal team draft a charter to define the objectives. It is important the stakeholders define their respective project goals.
- For larger, more complex projects develop a Pre-Project Plan defining needs, requirements, and objectives and team member roles and responsibilities.
- After the team has been organized for the project, use the PDRI tool as a checklist to review the project collectively so each team member understands the implications of the project and the team can assess what information is missing.

C. PROJECT DEFINITION RATING INDEX

Project Definition Rating Index - The PDRI is a tool to evaluate and measure the level of scope definition for proposed projects. The intent is to evaluate the completeness of scope definition at any point prior to the time a project is considered for authorization to perform detailed design and construction. It is a comprehensive checklist of 64 scope definition elements in a 1000-point scoring system. Each element is weighted based on its relative importance to the other elements. The PDRI score relates to risk. Those areas that need further work can easily be isolated.

The overall rating helps determine whether the project should proceed through the budget cycle, allowing the OPDIV to make the best investments and improving project success by thinking ahead and planning early. All projects requiring HHS approval should be evaluated using the PDRI tool at three separate points during a project's development as follows:

- After assembling the pre-project planning team for a project, collectively use the PDRI as a checklist so that each team member understands the implications of the project, to assess what information may be missing, and to assign actions to collect missing information. Scoring is not recommended at this stage, as most of the elements still need to be developed.
- The project must be evaluated and scored by the pre-project planning team near completion of the requirements documentation and prior to initial budget submittal. The evaluation should provide a sense of adequacy of the project estimate; rate the completeness of the project scope definition, and redirect efforts to correct inadequately defined areas prior to design. The PDRI documentation must be included with the FPAA as part of the initial budget submittal.
- The final evaluation and scoring is required on all projects and should take place after completion of the planning documents (planning studies, program of requirements, project justification document, schematic design) and prior to the decision to proceed with final design.

2-4-20 GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION

A. PRE-PROJECT PLANNING CHARTER

The Charter is a statement of business need and an opportunity for a project team to translate business objectives or mission into project specific objectives. It is the link between the organizations management and project management functions. The charter may be several pages or one page, should be reviewed with the decision maker early in the team's life and should be revisited if there are major changes to the project. The charter should address cost, schedule, and quality tradeoffs.

Recommended Contents of the Charter

- Translate business need into a project objective
- Outline of known alternatives
- Define mission
- Define quality of deliverables
- Timing requirements
- Budget requirements

B. ALIGNMENT DURING PRE-PROJECT PLANNING

To ensure that the appropriate project participants are working together to develop and meet a uniformly defined and understood set of project objectives, the project team should measure alignment throughout pre-project planning. A suggested tool to address project team alignment is CII's Alignment Thermometer as addressed in CII IR 113-3 Alignment during Pre-Project Planning. The Alignment Thermometer addresses the following 10 key alignment issues:

- a. Stakeholders are appropriately represented on the project team.
- b. Project leadership is defined, effective, and accountable.
- c. The priority between cost, schedule and required project features is clear.
- d. Communication within the team and with stakeholders is open and effective.
- e. Team meetings are timely and productive.
- f. The team culture fosters trust, honesty and shared values.
- g. The PPP process includes sufficient funding, schedule and scope to meet objectives.
- h. Reward and recognition systems promote meeting project objectives.
- i. Teamwork and team building programs are effective.
- j. Planning tools (e.g., checklists, simulations and work flow diagrams) are effectively used.

