



April 1, 2016

TO: Quality Assurance Providers on the ITPS Contract

FROM: /s/ Rob St. John
Deputy Director

SUBJECT: QA Policy and Standards

Several months ago, interviews were held with the Quality Assurance (QA) vendors providing services to current projects under Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) oversight. The interviews allowed the OCIO to get a sense of experience-based critical project success factors, how QA could be used more effectively on projects and other improvement areas.

The insight gained from these interviews was incredibly valuable and supported the development of targeted improvement areas to increase likelihood of successful project outcomes. These target areas include:

- Engaged sponsorship
- Effective & timely governance
- Appropriately staffed project management
- Organizational readiness
- Quality procurement & vendor management
- Change the Quality Assurance conversation

With an eye on these targets, the existing Project Quality Assurance Policy has been updated and upgraded. While the material was adopted in January, final approval of the revised policy and new standards occurred on March 15. The final policy and standards are posted and I encourage you to familiarize yourself with them.

- Policy 132: [Project Quality Assurance](#)
- Standard 132.10: [Minimum QA Provider Qualifications](#)
- Standard 132.20: [Minimum Project QA Activities - Readiness Assessment](#)
- Standard 132.30: [Minimum Project QA Activities](#)

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Key changes

- The QA provider, not the agency, is responsible for posting monthly QA reports. There is a timeline associated with the delivery of the final report (10 days following end of reporting period) and posting on the OCIO Dashboard site (2 days following delivery).
- The agency is responsible for responding to QA findings and recommendations within the timelines outlined in the policy. QA will continue to monitor the planned actions.
- The QA provider will independently deliver QA reports to the project Sponsor, the OCIO and the Steering Committee. Additionally, the QA Provider will routinely brief the project Steering Committees on report content and status. One of the key goals of the policy is to enhance relationships between QA, the project manager, the sponsor and the steering committee to increase transparency and prompt early action when challenges and risks are identified.
- A Readiness Assessment is required prior to the approval of the project investment plan. This requirement stems from one of the QA interview themes that one of the most critical success factors for a project was ensuring that it starts well. The QA provider providing readiness assessment services does not have to be the same provider for the ongoing project.
- The minimum QA activities are aligned with the PMBOK knowledge areas. The standard also requires reporting on transition planning and operational readiness as the project progresses.

The OCIO considers the QA community to be a valued partner in the project oversight function. Your comments and suggestions on future iterations of these policy/standards or other ways of improving project outcomes are always welcome.

If you have questions about this policy or standards, please contact Sue Langen at (360) 407-8686, or [by email](#). If you have other improvement suggestions, please send to the [OCIO mailbox](#).