Monitoring Report Review Standard Operating Procedure

Department of Information Resources (DIR)

VERSION: 1.0 AUTHORED BY: Heather Hardy
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Contents

1. Purpose

Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(g), enables the Quality Assurance Team (QAT) to require state agencies to provide project status on all Major Information Resources Projects (MIRPs). The Project Delivery Framework Monitoring Report Template is required for all MIRPs to report status.

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to help DIR staff review the Monitoring Reports submitted to QAT by state agencies. This SOP details the following required steps for DIR:

- Review the Monitoring Report using the Procedure described in this SOP.
- Document review results.
- Communicate the review results to the QAT and the submitting agency.
- Complete the review process.

2. Background

The Monitoring Report provides a consistent method for presenting project status information to the QAT. The purpose of the monitoring process is to help ensure projects have the means to achieve stated objectives.

Unless waived, QAT requires state agencies to:

- Quantitatively define the expected outcomes and outputs for each major information resources project at the outset.
- Monitor cost; and
- Evaluate the final results to determine whether expectations have been met (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(h)3).

Additionally, for the entire life cycle of each major information resources project, QAT is required to monitor and report on defined performance indicators (developed by DIR) for each project, including schedule, cost, scope, and quality (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.159(a)).

Critical project information is reported as part of this monitoring process. The Monitoring Report helps provide assurance to state leaders that project teams will deliver projects on time and within budget, and that the projects deliver the promised benefits. They also provide early identification of project issues and concerns.

The QAT can request any project information to determine project status/health.

3. Scope

This SOP applies to the Monitoring Report required of state agencies to periodically submit as directed (monthly or quarterly) by QAT.

4. Requirements

Staff will only review monitoring reports for projects that are defined as MIRPs and have been **approved** by the QAT. Additionally, reports must be submitted at the frequency (monthly or quarterly) assigned in the QAT's approval letter.

5. Procedure

Review Steps

Agencies submit their approved business case documents through the QAT@dir.texas.gov and projectdelivery@dir.texas.gov mailboxes.

Once the project is approved by QAT, project performance is monitored for the project duration. The DIR Statewide Project Delivery Project Manager creates a project entry in DIR's Statewide Project Automated Reporting (SPAR) system for the agency to enter project details and upload project documents. If the agency does not have an existing SPAR license, the Project Manager creates a SPAR account for the agency representative/liaison and informs that person on how to access their projects in the system. State agencies are required to provide regular project updates in SPAR. All agencies must provide their monitoring reports both in PDF format using the required Monitoring Report Template, as well as manually entering the required project information into SPAR.

DIR's Strategic Sourcing Director tracks project review statuses in a Project Spreadsheet.

The QAT reviews monitoring reports using the following procedures typically within **7 days** (**NOTE:** Additional time may be required when an incomplete initial Monitoring Report is received, or clarification questions require agency response):

The Monitoring Template Checklist contains general questions related to format and approval requirements for the deliverable, a comparison to the Statewide Project Automated Reporting (SPAR) system entries, and sections that are titled to correspond to the Monitoring Report Template sections. The Template line-item number appears in parenthesis just after the question, if applicable.

Based on the content of the Monitoring Report under review, answer the questions accurately. Respond "Yes", "No", or "NA".

Responses of "No" and "NA" may require further examination.

Monitoring Report Template Checklist

Template Information	**Yes/No/NA**
Was the Monitoring Report submitted as a searchable PDF file?	

Was the Monitoring Report completed using the currently published template?	
Are all template information fields completed?	
SPAR Comparison	**Yes/No/NA**
Are all fields in the **Details** section of SPAR completed?	
Does the information, including the Project Dashboard, entered in the **Details** section in SPAR match the Monitoring Report PDF?	
Are there Explanation/Mitigation comments for any Project Dashboard fields with red or yellow in the **Details** section in SPAR? Are the comments appropriate based on the metric and project information?	
Is the Monitoring Report PDF uploaded in SPAR **Attachments** section in SPAR?	
If this is the final SPAR update that a state agency submits for the project, does it contain the final (actual) project cost and finish date? (**NOTE:** The project's final cost and finish date should be entered along with the project's Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes within six months after the project ends.)	
General Information and Dashboard	**Yes/No/NA**
Does the Project Title match the title in the Legislative Appropriations Request and the QAT approval letter? (1.1)	
Is the Reporting Period accurate for the submission period? (1.1)	
Is the Monitoring Report Frequency accurate based on the QAT approval letter? (1.1)	
Is the Project Phase accurate (example: if the contract has not been executed, the project is still in the Plan phase)? (1.1)	
Are all project contact information fields completed? (1.1)	
Are all of the following Reporting and Compliance items selected and aligned with the project's Business Case? (1.1.1): • Project/Product Methodology • Project/Product Type • Funding Type/Source • IV&V	
Public Dashboard	**Yes/No/NA**
Is the Schedule indicator completed, including the Explanation or mitigation (required if the Dashboard color is Yellow or Red)? (1.2)	
Is the Budget indicator completed, including the Explanation or mitigation (required if the Dashboard color is Yellow or Red)? (1.2)	
Is the Scope indicator completed, including the Explanation or mitigation (required if the Dashboard color is Yellow or Red)? **NOTE:** If the Scope indicator is Red, it will remain so for the project duration. (1.2)	

Is the Quality indicator completed, including the Explanation or mitigation (required if the Dashboard color is Yellow or Red)? (1.2)	
Has the project submitted a Project Plan Quality Register? If yes, does the Quality Result align with the Register? **NOTE:** If no Quality Register has been submitted to QAT for the project, the Dashboard color default is RED. (1.2)	
Project Cost, Schedule, and Accomplishments	**Yes/No/NA**
Are data fields completely filled out and explanations given to describe variances? (2.1)	
Does the Initial Estimated Project Cost match the submitted Business Case and Business Case Workbook? (2.1)	
If there is a cost change, is the explanation of variance completed and does it make sense and contain enough detail (example: dates, roles, amounts, and approvals) to determine appropriateness? Does the explanation indicate that the agency has put controls in place to keep cost variances from occurring in the future? (If not, notify QAT for further examination.) (2.1)	
Does the vendor information include the vendor's name, responsibilities, and contract amount? (2.1)	
Project Schedule	**Yes/No/NA**
Do the Initial Planned Start and End Dates match the submitted Business Case? (2.2)	
If the Start or Finish Dates differ, is a Rebaseline Date entered? (2.2)	
If there is a date change, is the explanation of variance completed and does it make sense and contain enough detail (example: dates, roles, amounts, and approvals) to determine appropriateness? Does the explanation indicate that the agency has put controls in place to keep schedule variances from occurring in the future? (If not, notify QAT for further examination.) (2.2)	
Does the Estimated Percentage of Project Complete make sense based on the Project Phase selected in Section 1.1 and other information in the report? (2.2)	
Are the descriptions of tracking and reporting methods/mechanisms appropriate to ensure accurate reporting and management awareness of project health? (2.2)	
Accomplishments	**Yes/No/NA**
Do the Accomplishments Achieved contain a description of the value added to the project and dates achieved? (2.3)	
Do the Accomplishments Achieved align with Section 3 Milestones during the monitoring period in the Monitoring Report? (2.3)	
Do the Accomplishments Planned contain a description of the value added to the project and dates achieved? (2.3)	
Do the Accomplishments Planned align with upcoming Section 3 Milestones in the Monitoring Report? (2.3)	

Milestones	**Yes/No/NA**
Does the Milestones: Background Information table contain a brief description of the project? (3)	
Is a project start date included as a milestone? (3)	
Is a project complete date included as a milestone? (3)	
Are milestones comprehensive to include typical IT project elements for gauging project progression (examples: requirements, design, testing, implementation, iterations, sprints, epics, federal/external stakeholder reviews)? (3)	
Do all milestones have a Planned Start/Finish date? Do those dates make sense based on the phrasing of the milestone (example: "UAT complete" milestone could be on same date because it's a completion milestone, whereas, "UAT" should have different start/end dates)? (3)	
If this is not the first Monitoring Report submitted, are the Planned Start/End Dates consistent with previous reports? If any dates have changed, is there an associated entry in Section 6 Project Changes (Planned Start/End Dates **should not change** unless there is a documented change (revised Business Case or PCR) describing the reason for the change)?	
Is a percentage complete included for each milestone? (3)	
If a milestone is not 100% complete, but the Planned End Date occurred during the monitoring period, is there an explanation for the missed milestone in the Milestones: Background Information section and/or Section 4 Project Issues? (3)	
Project Issues	**Yes/No/NA**
If issues are identified, does the Project Issues: Background Information clarify the project issues? (4)	
If issues are identified, do the Issue Description and the Actions for Managing the Issue appropriately describe the problems and how the agency is addressing them, including dates by which actions must be taken to avoid further project impacts and associated cost, resource, schedule, and quality impacts? (4)	
Risks	**Yes/No/NA**
If risks are identified, does the Risks: Background Information clarify the project issues? (5)	
If risks are identified, do the Risk Factor and the Actions for Managing the Issue appropriately describe the risks and how the agency is addressing them, including dates by which actions must be taken to avoid further project impacts and associated cost, resource, schedule, and quality impacts? (5)	
Project Changes	**Yes/No/NA**
If changes are identified, does the Project Changes: Background Information clarify the project change information? (6)	

Are major project changes (e.g., scope, budget, system requirements, technology) that occurred during this reporting period appropriately described, including selection(s) for Impact, a Change Description, and Actions for Managing the Change for each entry? (6)	
If changes are identified, do the Change Description and the Actions for Managing the Issue appropriately describe the changes and how the agency is addressing them, including dates by which actions must be taken to avoid further project impacts and associated cost, resource, schedule, and quality impacts? (6)	
Do the described changes indicate the submittal to QAT of a Revised Business Case (BC) or Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) as a result of the change? **NOTE:** The submitting agency may need to be notified by QAT of the required submission of these documents based on the percent change in cost/scope/schedule (10% or more increase = Revised BC; 50% or more increase = CBA). (6)	
If there is a Current Estimated Project Start or Finish Date variance in Section 2.2 Project Schedule of the Monitoring Report, is there an associated change described? (6)	
If there is a cost variance in Section 2.1 Cost of the Monitoring Report, is there an associated change described? (6)	
Comparison to Previous Monitoring Reports (not applicable for 1st submittal)	**Yes/No/NA**
Do the Monitoring Reports show continuity (examples: same start dates, budgets, and staffing) in reported data?	
Do Planned Accomplishments from previous Monitoring Reports show appropriate progress toward completion on subsequent reports (example: If a March report indicates a task is supposed to complete in April, does the April report indicate the task complete)?	
DIR Actionable Data - Subjective	**Yes/No/NA**
In reading through the Monitoring Report, are all reported elements considered routine and do not need to be brought to the attention of the DIR executive leadership team or individual DIR units? (Example: If a report indicates issues due to delays from a DIR Data Center Services (DCS) vendor, answer NO to this question and inform DIR management.)	

Post-Checklist Steps

After completing the Review Steps, the assigned reviewer will do the following to complete the Review Procedure:

a. The reviewer sends DIR’s Strategic Sourcing Director an email summary of any comments and any “No”/”NA” checklist responses that may need revision.

b. The director reviews edits/comments from the reviewer and submits them to QAT via email or discussion at a scheduled QAT meeting.

c. At QAT direction, the director may send project comments directly to agency.

Optional Steps

The review period may include meeting with agencies to discuss issues or concerns.

If QAT has recommendations, then the agency is required to comply with the recommendations or submit a written explanation to QAT@dir.texas.gov stating their rationale for why the recommendations are not applicable to the project under review.

The agency may resubmit documents (Monitoring Report) addressing the comments made by QAT.

6. Revision History

Version	Date	Name	Description
1.0	06/21/2023	Jenn Norman/Heather Hardy	V1.0

7. Acronyms

BC – Business Case
BCW – Business Case Workbook
CBA – Cost-Benefit Analysis
DIR – Department of Information Resources
MIRP – Major Information Resources Project
QAT – Quality Assurance Team
SOP - Standard Operating Procedure
SPAR – Statewide Project Automated Reporting