



### Office of Acquisition and Project Management

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## Causal Connection between Design Maturity and Project Cost

**Rick Elliott, PE, CCE, CFM, CEM**

Design maturity is one of the principal criteria that the Office of Acquisition and Project Management considers when evaluating the readiness of a project to receive Critical Decision (CD) 2, Approve Performance Baseline, and CD-3, Approve Start of Construction or Execution. An “immature” design is simply one that has not been fully developed, and that consequently is more susceptible to changes, in contrast to a “mature” or fully developed design. Design changes normally result in corresponding cost changes. If a CD-2 or CD-3 cost estimate is to be considered reliable, it should be based on a mature design.

There is a common perception that project costs increase as design maturity increases, but this is not necessarily true. A project team’s understanding of project scope normally improves with increasing design maturity. If the project scope is not adequately defined during the early phases of design, then a cost projection based on that scope definition is likely to be inaccurate. A cost estimate based on the more complete definition of project scope that a final design provides may be higher than an earlier estimate. However, this may simply mean that the earlier estimate was too low, not that the subsequent estimate is too high.

At CD-1, Approve Alternative Selection and Cost Range, a conceptual design based on broad design concepts has been developed. Following CD-1, a preliminary design

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### Still on the Road:

### Upcoming PARS II/EVMS Road Show Dates



- Argonne National Laboratory/Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, September 17-18
- Pantex, October (exact dates TBD)
- Germantown, October (exact dates TBD)

process begins to convert those broad design concepts into a more detailed design from which more detailed and reliable cost and schedule estimates are developed. Preliminary design is considered complete when it provides enough information to support development of the CD-2 Performance Baseline. The appropriate design completion percentage (e.g. 30%, 50%, 70%) required to satisfy CD-2 requirements depends on the type of project. For basic facilities, such as administrative buildings, general purpose laboratories, and utilities, the design does not have to be as mature as for a complex chemical or nuclear processing facility. The design is mature when a point estimate can be developed and the estimate is ready for an independent review. The determination of a design completion percentage for reporting purposes will generally be made by the architect-engineer and subsystem designers contracted to do the work, as well as other integrated project team (IPT) members.

A CD-2 design is not necessarily adequate for construction or project execution purposes. Before construction can begin, highly detailed construction documents must be developed. Construction documents are often referred to as “100% design” documents, although this can be misleading. Construction subcontractors and vendors typically provide shop drawings, which are based on the construction drawings and specifications. On that basis, design is not truly complete until all vendor shop drawings have been completed. However, the completion of construction drawings is generally adequate for cost estimating purposes at CD-3. A good construction cost estimate will include a reasonable allowance for design changes that may occur during the shop drawing phase of a project.

The takeaway is to be mindful of the connection between design maturity and project cost. This will help you execute successful projects.

## Procurement Management Review Program

**Lisa Jones, Procurement Analyst, APM**

The Procurement Management Review (PMR) Program is a peer review program that provides a periodic review of DOE field procurement organizations by an independent team of senior Federal procurement and program personnel drawn from various DOE program and procurement offices. While APM manages the Program, the reviews are performed in a collaborative manner with both field and Headquarters personnel. Each review focuses on areas such as regulatory compliance, opportunities for improvement, and best practices to promote department-wide knowledge management and other areas as may be requested by the cognizant Head of Contracting Activity and Procurement Director. The primary objective of the Program is to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the procurement organization in its support of its respective site mission requirements as defined by applicable statutes and regulations, and as implemented by the organization’s policies and procedures.

Over the past year, the Office of Acquisition and Project Management (APM) has redesigned management systems and processes, including the PMR program, to achieve significant improvements in critical measures of performance, quality, and service of the Department’s acquisition system. Reflecting the collaborative nature of the PMR Program, senior program officials such as Chief Operating Officers and Heads of Contracting Activities are asked to provide input to APM relating to the lines of inquiry. The result is a “charge memo” signed by the Senior Procurement Executive and a senior program official, specifically identifying the applicable lines of inquiry for each review.

Reviews are also intended as a learning tool for the site and cognizant Program to determine what is working well and to identify opportunities to improve performance. Another important feature of the Program is the sharing of lessons learned. The sites and PMR reviewers learn from one another during each review. Reviewers gain valuable insight into how other field offices deal with contracting, program, and assistance issues. They exchange ideas with staff of the offices being reviewed and other PMR team members, and, most importantly, bring back new perspectives that may benefit their organization.

In fiscal year 2012, PMRs were conducted at the Golden Field Office and the National Energy Technology Laboratory. The schedule of PMRs for the next fiscal year will be coordinated by APM’s Field Assistance and Oversight Division, approved by the Senior Procurement Executive, and published on APM’s website prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>.

## DOE/NNSA Acquisition Workshop

### December 4-5, 2012



Significant changes and developments are taking place in federal acquisition that affect DOE and NNSA's M&O and non-M&O business. In addition, during the past several months there has been turnover at the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) and DOE in procurement leadership, realignment of some DOE HQ offices that impact how the Department executes contract and project management, and enhancement of the approach to conducting Procurement Management Reviews of DOE (non-NNSA) procurement offices. To address these developments and other challenges facing the corporate DOE procurement system, the Office of Acquisition and Project Management will convene a DOE Acquisition Workshop December 4-5, 2012 in the DC Metro area.

The workshop is planned for the DOE and NNSA Federal acquisition workforce. The workshop will cover a myriad of topics to include information on recent changes in procurement and financial assistance-related policies and procedures, OMB initiatives, small business initiatives, strategic sourcing, cost savings, etc. In order for the workforce to become more efficient and effective, training must be conducted that provides detailed instructions to implement industry best practices, e.g., strategic sourcing, commercial item acquisition.

Maximum participation of federal acquisition community members from across the DOE/NNSA complex is encouraged. The Workshop will be designed to be a meaningful venue for learning, questioning, and sharing of ideas and best practices. Priority for attendance will be 1102 and 1109 series personnel. Contracting Officer Representatives (CORs) and other program personnel will be accommodated as facility limits allow.

Please mark your calendars now to attend the Workshop December 4-5, 2012. Attendees should plan to travel to Washington on Monday, December 3, as the opening session will be Tuesday morning. For additional information and to access the registration website, go to the Workshop Powerpedia page: [https://powerpedia.energy.gov/wiki/Acquisition\\_Workshop](https://powerpedia.energy.gov/wiki/Acquisition_Workshop).

## Recently Certified FPDs

The Certification Review Board certified the following individuals:

### Office of Environmental Management

- Jeffrey L. Bentley, Level I
- David W. Dollins, Level I
- Ellwood T. Glossbrenner, Level I

**Congratulations to our  
newly certified FPDs!**



# PMCDP Course Schedule

Course Available Online	PMCDP Info	Course Code
Contracting Officer Representative Training	Level I Core	CLC222
To register through the Federal Acquisition Institute's Training Application System (FAITAS): <a href="#">Ctrl + Click Here</a>		
For a Tutorial on using FAITAS: <a href="#">Ctrl + Click Here</a>		

Start	End	Course	CLPs	Location	Instructor	PMCDP Info	CHRIS Code/ Session	Registration Restrictions
September 2012								
9/24/12	9/27/12	Advanced Risk Management	25*	Oak Ridge, TN	Holmlin	Level 3 Core	001042/0014	None
October 2012								
10/1/12	11/16/12	Project Management Systems & Practices in DOE	60*	Washington, DC	Krupa	Level 1 Core	001024/0041	None
Onsite: 10/30-11/1/12								
10/16/12	10/18/12	Value Management	21	Aiken, SC	Morrell	Level 2 Elective	001037/0012	None
10/22/12	10/25/12	Managing Contract Changes	28*	Richland, WA	Bibler	Level 1 Core	002102/0025	None
10/22/12	10/25/12	Project Risk Analysis & Management	25*	Washington, DC	Holmlin	Level 1 Core	001033/	Not in CHRIS Contact B. Chin for enrollment
10/22/12	10/26/12	Acquisition Management for Technical Personnel	32*	Albuquerque, NM	Morrell	Level 1 Core	000145/0036	None
10/23/12	10/25/12	Executive Communications	21	Idaho Falls, ID	Sims	Level 3 Core	001031/0028	None
10/29/12	11/2/12	Cost & Schedule Estimation & Analysis	35*	Grand Junction, CO	Morrell	Level 2 Core	001044/0021	None
10/30/12	10/31/12	Capital Planning for DOE O 413.3B Capital Asset Projects	14*	Albuquerque, NM	Benchmark: TBA	Level 1 Elective	002152/0006	None
10/30/12	11/2/12	Federal Budgeting Process in DOE	28*	Washington, DC	Murphy Olsen	Level 2 Elective	001034/0018	None
November 2012								
11/6/12	11/8/12	Scope Management Baseline Development	21*	Albuquerque, NM	Daughtry	Level 2 Core	001036/0016	None
11/6/12	11/9/12	Managing Contract Changes	28*	Germantown, MD	Bibler	Level 1 Core	002102/0032	None
11/27/12	11/29/12	Earned Value Management Systems	21*	Richland, WA	Daughtry	Level 1 Core	001026/0080	None

**Note:** Asterisked courses are PMI approved.

For a step-by-step guide to register for PMCDP courses in CHRIS/ESS, please visit the PMCDP website:

<http://energy.gov/management/downloads/pmcdp-course-registration-process>

## FPD Question of the Month #1

**Question:** Why do I have to list my projects in the History of Project Management section of the FPD certification application? Isn't it enough that I address all of the competencies required for certification?

**Answer:** When completing the certification application, it is understandable that applicants will spend the bulk of their focus addressing the competencies; however, the History of Project Management section is also important because it allows candidates to demonstrate the breadth of their overall project management experience. Applicants should use this section to expand upon the projects featured in their application, and provide information such as project scope descriptions, critical decision (CD) dates, and a broader description of their responsibilities. In addition, having thorough project descriptions in this section allows candidates to provide more succinct responses to the different competencies. That way, applicants do not have to continue to repeat themselves in each competency as the Certification Review Board will often reference the "project history" section when reviewing applications.

This section is particularly important for those applying for Level III and IV certifications because applicants are required to demonstrate experience working on projects in each phase of the critical decision (CD) process. The projects used to satisfy experience competencies may have passed through multiple CD gates prior to an applicant's tenure and the project history can be used to capture that. Thus, applicants may need to rely on other projects listed in the "project history" section to demonstrate experience in all CD phases.

## FPD Question of the Month #2

**Question:** I recently submitted a continuous learning point (CLP) request for incumbent FPD experience. My request was placed on hold because I did not provide the PARS II number. Why is this necessary?

**Answer:** To validate incumbent FPD experience requests, the PMCDP requires the name of the project, the dates assigned as FPD, and the PARS II number. This information enables the approving official to confirm the accuracy of the information by cross referencing with PARS II. Without this information, the CLP request cannot be validated, hence credit cannot be awarded.

## PMCDP Continuing Education Hours Name Change

What do you call the hours of learning that are required to maintain your certification? If you are FAC-C or FAC-COR certified, you call those hours continuous learning points. If you are FPD certified, you call them continuing education hours and report them in ESS using a continuing education hours form. Or, at least, that is the way it used to work.

To align the way continuous learning hours are reported for Acquisition workforce members, PMCDP adopted the convention used by the other acquisition certifications. What were formerly known as continuing education hours are now called continuous learning points or CLPs. Continuing education hours are not to be confused with continuing education units, credit earned for completing college courses. They are to be associated with continuous learning points: one continuing education hour is equivalent to one continuous learning point.

## Full PMCDP Course Schedule



For the full listing of FY2012 and FY2013 classes, visit the PMCDP website:

<http://energy.gov/management/downloads/pmcdp-course-schedule>

## Questions or Comments?

For PMCDP, please email general questions and comments to [PMCDP.Administration@hq.doe.gov](mailto:PMCDP.Administration@hq.doe.gov), or visit our website: <http://energy.gov/management/office-management/operational-management/project-management-career-development-program>.

For ACMP, please email questions and comments to [ACMP@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ACMP@hq.doe.gov).

For specific information, please contact one of the following individuals:

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- Victoria C. Barth, MA ISD - Professional Development Division, PMCDP Course Schedule, CRB Information, CEG, Newsletter, [Victoria.Barth@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Victoria.Barth@hq.doe.gov)
- Lorri Wilkins - Professional Development Division, COR Certification Program Manager, [Lorri.Wilkins@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Lorri.Wilkins@hq.doe.gov)