

Pathways to Project Success

APRIL 2009

Temporary Project Management Career Development Certification

The Project Management Career Development Program (PMCDP) Certification Review Board (CRB) established a new process whereby candidates with strong project management experience from outside the Department, hired into Federal Project Director (FPD) positions, may be granted a temporary PMCDP certification by their Program Directors.

Temporary certification allows newly-hired FPDs to be assigned project manager responsibilities on capital asset projects while simultaneously completing DOE-specific training and preparing their certification packages for final CRB action. Temporary certification will be good for one calendar year.

Temporary certifications are granted by the sponsoring Program CRB member or their designee. If the sponsoring Program Office is not a voting member of the CRB, the Office of Engineering and Construction Management will act as the grantor of temporary certification.

Temporary FPDs will also be required to (at a minimum):

- Complete the PMCDP Orientation Course
- Accept formal mentoring from the CRB voting member or an FPD of his/her choosing
- Satisfy PMCDP requirements under DOE Order 361.1B

- Populate competency data within DOE Corporate Human Resource Information System/ Employee Self Service (CHRIS/ESS) system and a complete profile for CRB consideration
- Complete other training and/or developmental assignments deemed appropriate by the sponsor.

This information is available at the following website:
http://www.management.energy.gov/policy_guidance/policy_flashes.htm.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Do You Know What MR Is?	2
CRB Decision	2
CAP Corner	3
Continuing Education Hours	4
FPD Corner	4
Upcoming Courses	5
Question of the Month	5

PMCDP Certification and Equivalency Guidelines Update

The PMCDP Certification and Equivalency Guidelines has been updated and can be found on the PMCDP website at <http://management.energy.gov/1576.htm>. This update includes all Certification Review Board decisions and clarifications, as well as the Federal Acquisition Institute requirements. Persons coming forward for certification in 2010 should note the updated requirements and plan accordingly with their supervisor or Program Office.

Congratulations to Colleague Consulting, Inc.

They successfully re-competed and were awarded the Department of Energy, Nationwide Professional Skills Training Program contract, which includes the Project Management Career Development Program (PMCDP). The period of performance is from March 15, 2009, through March 14, 2014. We look forward to continuing our work and PMCDP success with Colleague Consulting.



Do You Know What MR Is?

**By John D. White, P.E.
OECM**

If you have been involved in project management, the answer is probably an overwhelming “yes”, but MR, or Management Reserve, does not always mean the same thing to everyone. Sometimes MR and contingency are used incorrectly and treated interchangeably. The Department of Energy Order 413.3A defines MR as: “An amount of the total contract budget withheld for management control purposes by the contractor. MR is not part of the Performance Measurement Baseline.” MR is not used as a source of budget for new scope or as a source for available funding. Under this definition, MR is a project management tool used to facilitate project management discipline.

The amount of MR is calculated by the contractor after the government and the contractor have agreed to the contract price. In contrast, contingency is that amount included in the total project cost that is controlled by the government and is available for risk uncertainty within the project scope, but outside the scope of the contract.

The contractor must consider several factors in determining the proper amount of MR to withhold; such as, project risk, management philosophy and constraints related to time and experience. Good examples for using MR would be the recent price volatility in construction materials such as steel and concrete or less than anticipated productivity because of stringent security requirements. Experienced contractors recognize that when assessing project risk, the near-term clearly-defined work is usually

less risky than long-term ill-defined work. Obviously, the MR budget is then adjusted for that uncertainty related to the timing and magnitude of future difficulties. Contractors have the ability to determine what amount of MR to hold back from construction cost accounts to cover these uncertainties.

MR is an amount of the total allocated budget withheld by the contractor for management control ensuring an adequate budget for in-scope uncertainties, while contingency is an amount within the total project cost that is withheld by the government in order to address project uncertainties within the project scope. Understanding the subtle differences between MR and contingency is important to the proper use of MR as an effective project management tool.

CRB DECISION

Certification requirements at levels 2, 3, and 4 allow the certification candidate to fulfill part of the work/developmental experience requirement by serving for at least one year as a Deputy Federal Project Director (FPD) on a Level 3 or higher project. In order to be granted fulfillment for experience as a Deputy FPD, the following criteria must be met:

- Formally recognized in project documents (e.g. Project Execution Plan) on a Level 3 or higher project.
- Serve one continuous year as the deputy FPD documented in either an SF-50 or the Employee Performance Plan/Rating Documentation.
- Manage all project assignments through their completion as assigned by the project director.

Subordinate Requirements:

- Provide recommendations to the project director on project assignments.
- Review, evaluate and monitor cost, schedule and scope baseline.

- Monitor and oversee the progress of detailed engineering, design and construction work.
- Ensure the preparation of required project documentation.
- Participate in the project acquisition strategy as required.
- Ensure preparation of requirements to reflect project status, costs and schedule trends, manpower adequacy, funding and project uncertainties.
- Conduct field inspection of work in progress and evaluate the performance of contractors using established baselines.
- Ensure environment, safety and health (ES&H) requirements and quality assurance (QA) requirements are properly implemented.
- Develop, review and endorse annual budget requests.
- Oversee the planning and coordination of the turnover of completed projects.

CAP Corner: Attaining Success by Concentrating on Programmatic

Project Characterization

**By Carmelo Melendez,
Eng.D., P.E., PMP
OECM**

This is an excerpt from a thought-provoking article by Dr. Melendez. The full article can be read on our website; http://management.energy.gov/pm_certification.htm.

Upon reading the latest edition of the Government Accountability Office's High Risk List, undoubtedly the Department of Energy (DOE) should consider some improvements to consistently deliver successful capital asset projects, enhance our credibility and change the perception of our capabilities. We have a clearly-defined program management approach, (DOE Order 413.3A with accompanying Guides), and strive to apply this approach to all capital asset projects. However, we have not embraced the concept of programmatic project characterization for capital asset plans; having a program with multiple projects fulfilling a common "mission need statement." Perhaps a Federal Project Director (FPD) should ask, "Is my project a single-bounded endeavor or a program-in-disguise? How would I know?"

A project is a bounded endeavor designed to deliver a

unique output or deliverable within a definite duration. It focuses on attaining/ completing the output/ deliverable within a predetermined cost, schedule and quality baseline.

A program is a group of related projects managed in a coordinated way to obtain benefits and control not available from managing them individually. Capital asset programs may include elements of related work outside the scope of discrete projects as in the case of a common factor such as contiguous proximity.

In our DOE practice, prior to requesting Critical Decision (CD)-I, a Program Support Office should clearly identify unique and discrete projects necessary to fulfill an approved CD-0 "Mission Need." One "programmatic" important decision at CD-I could result in multiple project CD-2s/3s/4s, each of which would be tethered to the original programmatic CD-I decision and programmatic cost estimate range. Hence, one Senior FPD could be appointed at CD-I with subordinate FPDs for each CD-2. Appropriately chosen and resourced projects, effectively delivered in the framework of programmatic control and oversight, create the highest probability for success in delivering large

and complex capital asset programs.

Defining the requirements is where it all begins. Successful project execution is about properly defining requirements and then delivering each project at the original, approved CD-2 performance baseline. Reducing the scope of the requirements provides greater visibility on the cost drivers, reduces the timeline and mitigates risks for project execution. Establishing a program with multiple, phased and smaller projects provides greater clarity and focus for successful project execution. Consistent, successful project execution fosters credibility with stakeholders and garners future funding support.

Consider reviewing your projects in this framework. Ask yourself, "Is my project a single-bounded endeavor or a program-in-disguise?" More importantly, "Would my team be able to lower the execution risks and have a higher probability of success if we treated a program-in-disguise as separate projects?" We are working on updating DOE Order 413.3A and value your input, please send us your opinions or comments to: car-melo.melendez@hq.doe.gov.

PMCDP Requirements Clarification

The Project Management Career Development Program (PMCDP) Certification Review Board (CRB) clarifies the following PMCDP requirements:

Level 1 requirement for working-level knowledge of the performing as a Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) and the Level 3 requirement for one-year experience as a COR. The following will be considered as fulfillment through equivalent work experience.

- On a case-by-case basis, the CRB will accept acting as an Alternate COR.
- Documentation of the appointment and details of the roles and responsibilities the experience to satisfy COR-related certification competencies must be provided.
- Details of the time served must adequately demonstrate that the candidate's experience is equivalent to a one-year appointment as a COR.

Level 1 requirement to successfully complete the PMCDP core course, Planning for Safety in Project Management.

- All current Federal Project Directors are required to complete the PMCDP Level 1 core course, Planning for Safety in Project Management (formerly called Integrating Safety into Project Management), no later than January 3, 2010, or one of the following equivalencies.
 - Successfully complete the DOE course, SAF-220, Senior Technical Safety Manager Overview.
 - Hold a Senior Technical Safety Manager or Certified Safety Professional certification.
 - Demonstrate equivalent experience.

Continuing Education Hours

Effective April 1, 2011, all certified Federal Project Directors (FPDs) will be required to complete 80 hours of continuing education (CE) in compliance with the Federal Acquisition Institute certification of Program and Project Managers in all Federal civilian agencies. Certified FPDs whose CE hour 2-year cycle completes prior to April 1, 2011, will be held to the current requirement of 60 CE hours. After April 1, 2011, the certified FPD will be required to attain 80 CE hours during the next 2-year cycle (1/1/2011 through 1/1/2013). Persons certified after April 2, 2009, will be required to attain 80 CE hours.

Details on this requirement is in the Certification and Equivalency Guidelines (CEG), Sections 2 and 7. The CEG is posted on the PMCDP website at: <http://management.energy.gov/1576.htm>.

Upcoming CRB Meetings

May 15, 2009—Cancelled

June 12, 2009—Forrestal

September 11, 2009—Germantown

Certified Federal Project Director (FPD) Corner

Congratulations to the FPDs who have recently attained new levels of certification!

Level 1

William S. Harker, ID
 Chester E. Miller, EM
 Thomas I. Elias, ID
 Martha E. Shields, NE
 J. Madison Drake, SPR

Level 2

Gregory D. Collette, Golden, CO
 Thomas W. Fletcher, RL
 Ellen M. Mattlin, RL

Level 3

Joe G. Estrada, AL
 Mark R. Arenaz, ID
 Pepin Carolan, CH

Upcoming PMCDP Courses

April

6-9 Planning for Safety in Project Management (L1), Berkeley, CA
 7-9 Contract Administration for Technical Reps (L1), Richland
 7-9 Environmental Laws (L2), Albuquerque
 13-16 The Federal Budgeting Process (L2), Oak Ridge
 21-24 Project Risk Analysis and Management (L2), Idaho Falls
 27-30 Planning for Safety in Project Management (L1), Cincinnati
 28-May 9 (Blended Learning) Advanced Concepts in Project Management (L2), Idaho Falls
 29-May 1 Earned Value Management (L1), Golden, CO
 29-May 1 Executive Communications (L4), Chicago

May

5-8 Planning for Safety in Project Management (L1), Cincinnati
 11-14 Planning for Safety in Project Management (L1), New Orleans
 12-14 Advanced Risk Management (L4), Chicago Operations Office
 12-14 Contract Administration for Technical Representatives (L1), Savannah River
 12-14 Acquisition Strategy and Planning (L1), Las Vegas
 19-21 Project Leadership and Supervision (L2), Richland
 19-21 Facilitation Techniques and Conflict Resolution (L3), Oak Ridge
 19-July 2 Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE (L1), Las Vegas

June

1-4 Planning for Safety in Project Management (L1), Germantown
 1-5 Advanced Leadership (L4), Richland
 1-5 Project Management Simulation (L2), Oak Ridge
 9-11 Systems Engineering (L3), Las Vegas
 15-19 Program Management and Portfolio Analysis (L3), Las Vegas
 16-18 Facilitation Techniques and Conflict Resolution (L3), Idaho

July

7-9 Contract Administration for Technical Reps (L1), Washington, DC
 20-24 Advanced Leadership (L4), Chicago
 20-23 The Federal Budgeting Process (L2), Las Vegas

Please be aware that course dates and locations sometimes change.
 For the most up-to-date course schedule, please visit:
http://www.colleagueconsulting.com/ct-training_sched-DOE.shtml.

Question of the Month

Question: How do blended learning courses work? Do I have to travel?

Answer: Blended learning courses are delivered via a combination of video tele-conference and onsite learning over a series of 5-8 weeks. During that time, you will report to your site's VTC room and participate in a 2-hour classroom session twice a week except during the three-day onsite portion during which you must travel to a specified site. You will be given a course matrix after registering in CHRIS that details which week the onsite will take place. For more information of how blended learning courses work, please see the "Blended Learning FAQs" at http://www.colleagueconsulting.com/ct-training_sched-DOE.shtml.

Questions or Comments?

General questions and comments about the newsletter should be directed to: PMCDP.Administration@hq.doe.gov. Or visit our website at http://management.energy.gov/pm_certification.htm. For further information about the OECM PMCDP or Program Management Career Development Curriculum contact:

Peter O'Konski, P.E., CEM, PMP, Director, Office of Facilities Management and Professional Development: 202.586.4502

Marylee Baker, Lead Professional Career Development Analyst: 202.586.8254