

Description of the Bureau's IT Project Management Training Program

Program Background (Drivers): The complexity of IT investment management and its dependency for improved project management is the primary driving force behind why the Bureau has established a project management training program. The project management process is applicable to any effort that is time-bounded and creates unique products. The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 was passed to make it easier for agencies to buy/invest in IT. In return, agencies are required to do a better job setting system requirements, demonstrating a positive return on investment, and managing IT projects. In addition, the CIO has identified reaching CMM Level 2 (SEI's Capability Maturity Model) as one of his primary goals. Reaching CMM Level 2 involves establishing a repeatable project management process.

Program Goals: To strengthen the Bureau's skills in Information Technology Project Management with primary focus on national-level projects. To have trained project managers managing these projects in such a way that they have a better chance of being delivered on time, within budget, and delivering a quality product that meets customer/end-user needs. As a secondary, the program will develop, maintain, and mentor a cadre of trained and experienced project managers with representation from each State, Center, and Washington Office, with approximately half of the cadre from the IT/IRM area and half the business/program areas.

Program Scope: Since Bureau of Land Management (BLM) believes that all IT investments at the national level are major capital investment commitments, it is imperative that each project be led by a trained or experienced project manager. This cadre of trained Project Managers will be used to:

- develop business driven investment proposals or business cases for national level projects;
- prepare acquisition and project plans once a business case has been approved;
- serve as a project manager for a national and state-level, business driven (ITIB) project, and
- assist in the development and maintenance of the Bureau's IT Investment Management Process.

Program Development: The BLM has partnered with ESI International and George Washington University to deliver a six week course, normally offered over a 3 month period. The program is delivered by a nationally-known project management training vendor, ESI International. ESI International has unparalleled experience in developing project managers and improving organizational project management capabilities. ESI has provided training to over 215,000 professionals in 50 countries. Students are awarded a Master's Certificate in IT Project Management from George Washington University School of Business and Public Management. Master's Certificates from major universities are widely recognized as evidence of superior competence in professional fields. Students may also receive up to nine credit hours towards a Masters of Science degree in Project Management from George Washington University.

Program Target Group: The program's target group is both IRM or IT professionals and Program or Business professionals at the GS-11/12/13/14 level.

Program Operations: SCO has the lead for the developing and directing the training program, the National Training Center (NTC) has the lead for delivering and evaluating the program.

Program/Course content: Students take Managing Information Technology Projects followed by six other courses. The remaining six courses include: Project Scheduling and Cost Control; Requirements Management; Risk Management; Quality for Project Managers; Testing; and Project Leadership, Management and Communications. Students also attend a one-week workshop which covers how the Bureau is implementing project management into its capital asset planning and investment management practices. This will include mapping the business process/system to the Bureau Architecture, re-engineering business processes; preparing ITIB project proposals, developing a benefit/cost analysis, preparing project planning documents, and reporting project status.

Program Implementation: Interested employees "apply" to a training interest announcement, are evaluated by a panel, and selected by the CIO. Employees apply in response to a Training Interest Announcement that is transmitted via a Washington Office Information Bulletin. Applicants address five to seven KSAs in a two page application form. A selection panel is convened and selection are made by the CIO. Applicants must have supervisory approval to apply and supervisory approval is confirmed prior to selection. Employees and their supervisors commit to use their newly acquired skills by agreeing to serve as a project manager on at least on national level project. There is no formal change of duty station. Project Managers are assigned to classified position descriptions for IT Project Managers (OPM GS-2200 Series) at the GS-12/13 level.

Program Costs: The first four training sessions have been sponsored by the CIO (Assistant Director for Information Resource Management). Funding for tuition and travel is paid for from the 4550 sub-activity. Salaries are paid by the employee's home office. The program cost, excluding the student's labor, is approximately \$12,000 (tuition \$7,500 and travel \$4,500) per employee.

Program Status: As of January 01, 2002, we have trained 45 Project Mangers in the first three Classes. Of the 45 trained Project Managers 25 of the 32 have been assigned to national level ITIB projects or are working on National or State level efforts as Sub Project Manager or leads, or are members of the Bureaus' new offices that were established to support IT Investment Management (IMG and SCO). Class 4 has been scheduled for February, April and June of 2002.

Currently there are approximately 45 ITIB approved national level projects. The program initial goal was to have approximately 50 to 60 trained project managers. Once we have reached this goal an analysis will be performed to determine if the program should continue and at what frequency.

Program Benefits: Projects at the national level will be better planned, designed, developed, and implemented. By having trained project managers assigned to all projects, the Bureau has a better chance of successfully delivering projects on time, within budget, and producing a quality product that meets customer/end-user needs. The Bureau will see an immediate cost savings, and a much better return on our capital asset investments.

Program Acceptance: The Project Management Training Program has been a tremendous success and has been well received by all who have attended the program. In addition to the 45

certified project managers, approximately 45 other BLM employees participated in the first week of the program where they were introduced to the basic principles of project management.

Program Interest by outside agencies/groups: The Department of Interior's CIO has attended the opening session for the second class and provided opening remarks and supported the development and continuation of the program. The BIA has expressed interest in participating in the training program. The GAO has requested information on the program (vendor, course description, and numbers of graduates and number of assignments). Several other agencies (referred to by ESI) have contacted this office about the program. The Department has also contacted us regarding establishing a similar program.

Program direction for the future: The program is moving toward providing "advanced" training opportunities as well as offering support for employees wishing to obtain PMI certification as a Project Management Professional (PMP). In addition to training, the SCO is moving toward providing a standardized "tool chest" for all BLM Project Managers. The SCO is also evaluating ways it can provide "mentoring" support for our new Project Managers.

Training Program's Primary Point of Contact: Kurt Ballantyne of the SCO (WO-570D) is the Point of Contact. Kurt can be reached at (303) 236-5270 or via e-mail at Kurt_Ballantyne@blm.gov