Project Reviews - Lessons Learned

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Topics of Discussion

- Best Practices and Lessons Learned
  - Integrated Baseline Reviews
  - Joint Surveillance Reviews
  - Program Management Reviews

Establishing validity and realism in the Performance Measurement Baseline (PMB) is essential to controlling Scope, Cost and Schedule.

Evaluation and maintenance of the PMB through formal reviews is critical.
Benefit of Reviews

- **Integrated Baseline Review**
  - Agreed upon baseline of scope, cost and schedule. Assignment of expectations and authority to perform tasks within the baseline. Avoidance of deviation from the baseline.
    - Confidence in the ability to execute the project.

- **Joint Surveillance Review**
  - Assurance that a system is in place that can accurately report project status. Adherence to contractor System Description. Validation that the contractor is compliant with System Description and industry standards.
    - Confidence in the reporting and accuracy of the system

- **Project Management Review**
  - Clear understanding of issues and ability to take action to correct them in a timely manner.

- **Overall benefits:**
  
  Sustainment of baseline, ability to make critical decisions to ensure the success of the project. Reviews keep stakeholders informed, and communication between client and contractor transparent.
  
  “Perfect” execution of reviews does NOT guarantee the project will be “perfect”.
# Business Rhythm of Reviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review</th>
<th>Typical Frequency</th>
<th>Level of Effort</th>
<th>Preparation Time Needed</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Baseline Review (IBR)</td>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2-4 Months</td>
<td>Client and Contractor: PM, D/PM IPT Leads and CAMs Business Operations</td>
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<td>Contracts Management EVM Analyst/SME DCMA Representative *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint Surveillance Review (JSR)</td>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>1-2 Months</td>
<td>Client and Contractor: PM, D/PM IPT Leads and CAMs Business Operations EVM Analyst/SME DCMA Representative *</td>
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Choosing an appropriate review

• **Integrated Baseline Review**
  - Out of Cycle Triggers: Baseline execution has “unsteady” variances from month to month. Continual downward trend after correct actions have been implemented. Authority to Proceed (ATP), large project milestone shifts or any large impact to the Performance Measurement Baseline.

• **Joint Surveillance Review**
  - Out of Cycle Triggers: Management is having difficulty identifying root cause of issues or variances. Negative actuals on a regular basis. Continual errors in the system report or lack of a proper EV analysis, lack of accurate or functional process, lack of adhering to System Description. Continual best practice adherence and updates.

• **Project Management Review**
  - Triggers: Fire fighting is a frequent management technique, downward trend of variances, missed milestones, and lack of clear definition of issues driving variances. Open communication on project opportunities.

**Responsibility of Earned Value Analyst:**

Evaluate current project needs, make recommendation on review needed and schedule as soon as feasible. Ensure minimum disruption to existing project events and activities during reviews.
Integrated Baseline Reviews

- Definition: A joint review by Client Program Managers and their technical staffs, and Contractor Program Managers and their technical staffs to provide a mutual understanding of the Performance Measurement Baseline (PMB).

- Desired Outcome: Clear understanding of Issues/Findings and Improvement Opportunities. Realistic and executable performance baseline. Identification of potential risks to the project performance.

- Application: Valuable following contract award (within 160-180 calendar days) or after a major program event:
  - Rolling Wave, Re-baselining, Single Point Adjustment, or Over Target Baseline
  - Preliminary Design Review, Critical Design Review, First Article to Test
  - Significant changes in the funding or direction of the program

  *Integrated Baseline Reviews should be regarded as a continuing process rather than a program event.*
IBR Objectives

- Evaluate the Performance Measurement Baseline
  1. Technical Scope – PMB captures the entire scope of work
  2. Planning/Scheduling – Realistic and accurately scheduled
  3. Budget/Resources – Proper amount/mix of resources
  4. Risk and Opportunities – Appropriate mitigation and identification

- Evaluate Capabilities/Process Implementation
  5. Organization – Clear lines of responsibility and ownership
  6. Work Authorization – All planned work is authorized at appropriate levels
  7. Risk Management Process – Classification and assignment approach
  8. Progress Assessment/Reporting & Change Control – Effective implementation
Client Planning and Training (IBR and EVM)
- Formal notification to Contractor
- System Description Review

Review of Contractor Data (Data Traces)
- Review of Contractor Risk Logs/Registry
- Mock Control Account Management (CAM) Interviews
- Shoulder-to-Shoulder Discussions with Client and Contractor

Control Account Manager Discussions
- Actions Items/Findings Preparation
- Agreement on Risk Watch Items
- Agreement on Action and Risk Closure Process
- Initial Memorandum for Record (MOR) issued to the Contractor (Findings and action items formalized)

Tracking and Close out of Action Items and/or Findings
- Updating of Risk Database
- Final (Closeout) Memorandum for Record to Contractor

Initial

Intermediate

In-Plant Reviews

Final
IBR Lessons Learned

- Kick-off meetings are critical
  - Sets expectations and opens lines of communication.

- Be realistic in time lines
  - Optimistic IBR schedules lead to cutting corners and missing vital discoveries.
  - Training of Client and Contractor
  - Data Traces
  - Interviews

- Communication is Key
  - Open and Clear discussions allow early resolution of problems.
  - Discussion need to be encouraged between counterparts

- Logistics and Details
  - Administrative support is vital

- Timing of the IBR
  - The initial and subsequent IBRs are time-consuming and usually run simultaneously with project objectives.

- Risk is not properly addressed
  - Initial IBR is most difficult should have as many as possible.

- This is NOT solely a financial review
  - Common misconception is that the baseline is only validated for acceptable levels of Management Reserve (MR)
Joint Surveillance Reviews

- **Definition:** Confirmation that the contractors internal process and procedures are being followed in accordance with the contractors EVM system description. Evaluation of the contractor to execute accurate collection and reporting of earned value.

- **Desired Outcome:** Clear understanding of contractor’s ability to follow the processes defined in its system description, timely and accurate reporting of earned value data, and the resolution of all Corrective Action Requests (CARs).

- **Application:** Generally, the JSR is held annually to ensure the contractor continues to apply their earned value processes per the EVM system description and deliver accurate earned value reporting. Also can be performed on systems that show signs of inaccurate reporting.

*Joint Surveillance Reviews should be regarded as a vehicle for continual improvement of Earned Value Systems and Procedures.*
JSR Objectives

• Assess the contractor’s commitment and ability to implement the EVMS as an integral part of its management processes as evidenced by:
  1. Organization – Clear understanding of roles and responsibility.
  2. Work Authorization – Understanding of and ability to demonstrate the approved process to include control account level scope, cost and schedule.
  3. Planning/Scheduling – Understanding of how tasks are horizontally and vertically integrated, material and sub-contract planning and statusing.
  5. Risk Management Process – Classification and assignment approach process and applicability to estimates.
  7. Estimates – Understanding of requirements and processes for updating estimates. Understanding how risk processes are applied to estimates.
**Demonstrated ability to follow System Description processes**

- Selection of Project for Review
- JSR Kick-off Presentation
- Creation of JSR Schedule and Objectives
- Notification of Review
- Control Account Manager Training
- System Description Review
- Review of Contractor Data
- Tracing of processes through System Processes to ANSI 32 Criteria
- Control Account Manager Interview Selection
- Review of Contractor Risk Processes
- Shoulder-to-Shoulder Discussions
- Action item discussions with Client and Contractor prior to in-plant review
- In-Brief, review of expectations
- Control Account Manager Discussions
- Close out of Action Items – could reduce unnecessary CARs
- Corrective Action Requests issued
- Out-Brief with assignment of actions
- Tracking and closing out of Corrective Action Requests
- Joint Surveillance Report issued and closure evidence documented
JSR Lessons Learned

- Kick-off meetings are critical
  - Sets expectations and opens lines of communication.
  - Encourage participation of contractor in data traces
- Communication is Key
  - Open and clear discussions allow early resolution of problems.
  - Allows meaningful CAM discussions
- Set Roles and Responsibilities
  - Each participant needs to understand their expectations and role in the review.
- Appropriate Questions
  - Ensure that all questions have been verified with interview team.
  - Ambiguous questions can lead to misunderstandings.
- Interviews are critical
  - Make PM interviews mandatory.
  - No more than 1.5 hours per interview, have short breaks for interviewers.
  - Don’t leave out Business Operations, fidelity in this area is just as critical as technical areas.
  - Review information prior to visit.
  - One lead in a discussion.
- Set the Stage
  - Brief the "rules of engagement" during the start of the in-plant CAM interviews.
- Be Prepared
  - Have a cross reference for the systems description to the 32 ANSI criteria.
Project Management Reviews

- Definition: A quarterly/monthly review of progress on key deliverables and project performance to date between the client and contractor.

- Desired Outcome: Review of project progress and addresses issues with the baseline. Clear understanding of current risks and opportunities. Review of upcoming deliverables and expectations.

- Application: Valuable to provide formal accountability of project execution. Open dialog between client and contractor. Should be held at least quarterly, generally held monthly, depending on the size and complexity of the project.

*Project Management Reviews keep lines of communication continuously open in regards to progress of Project Objectives.*
PMR Objectives

- Review of Performance and Technical Accomplishments
- Evaluation of the Project’s ability to maintain scope, cost and schedule.
  - Status of the Contract – changes in scope
  - Technical Issues, Concerns and Risks – changes in scope
  - Business Operations and Financial Management – changes in cost
  - Schedule Review and Potential Risks – changes in schedule
  - Open Action Items and Special Topics
Proposed PMR Agenda

**Attending:** Client PM, D/PM, Business Operations/FM, IPT Leads, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), Contracts, Contractor PM, D/PM, Business Operations/FM, IPT Leads, Support Staff

- **Contract Status**
  - Funding and Contract Actions
  - Engineering Change Proposals and Opportunities
  - Status of Contractual deliverables

- **Technical Issues and Concerns**
  - Define current technical issues by Product Team.

- **Business Operations and Financial Management**
  - Review EV data at Program level and then by Product Team.
  - Review progress towards project milestones. 30-60-90 day look ahead.

- Open Action Items and current issues – assign responsibility and completion dates.
PMR Lessons Learned

- Have those that are in the authority to make decision present.
- Stay true to the schedule. Take in-depth discussions off-line so SMEs are present for focused discussions.
- Record decisions and minutes and review at the end of the meeting, memories tend to be bias.
- Dead weight attendees – All in attendance need to contribute or facilitate.
  - If a person is attending for informational purposes, they can read the presentation slides afterwards.
- Reviews can be rapidly turned into Technical Exchange Meetings – stay out of the weeds, information presented needs to pertain to all attendees not just a small subset.
- Discuss inter-product team impacts, sometimes the solution is being worked in the wrong area. Look for root causes.
- Review presentations 2-3 days prior to meeting to ensure topics of interest are covered.
Improper Application of Reviews

- **Integrated Baseline Review**
  - Used as a kick-off meeting for the project, meet and greet. One day quick review for completion of a project objective. Lower level reviews not preformed prior to system review.

- **Joint Surveillance Review**
  - Attempt to pass responsibility of accurate reporting to the client. In-plant reviews have ended badly due to lack of preparation and no clear understanding of objectives. Seen as a review of the bare minimum to “get past” the processes.

- **Project Management Review**
  - Excessive or cumbersome reviews, only presenting positive topics, no set agenda or review of information. No decision making or informational only.

**Outcome of Improper Application of Reviews:**

- The misuse of limited resources can drain the life from a project.
- Excessive travel places a burden on the project budget.
- Loss of Baseline integrity
- Cancellation or failure of project and objectives.
References

- Project Management Institute®
  - PMBOK® – 4th Edition
  - Practice Standard for Project Scheduling®
  - Practice Standard for Project Risk Management®
- Department of Defense
  - Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA)
    - EVM Community of Practice
    - Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) 252.234-7002
  - Defense Acquisition University (DAU)
    - Program Managers Guide to the Integrated Baseline Review Process
    - Integrated Master Plan and Integrated Master Schedule Preparation and Use Guide
    - Earned Value Management Integration Guide (EVMIG)
- ANSI/EIA Standard 748-Latest Revision
  - Earned Value Management Systems
Acronyms

- **AACE** – Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering
- **ANSI/EIA** – American National Standards Institute/Electronic Industries Alliance
- **ATP** – Authority to Proceed
- **CAM** – Control Account Manager
- **CAR** – Corrective Action Request
- **CoP** – Community of Practice
- **DAU** – Defense Acquisition University
  (EVM CoP https://acc.dau.mil/evm)
- **DCMA** – Defense Contract Management Agency
- **D/PM** – Deputy Project Manager
- **EVM** – Earned Value Management
- **EVMS** – Earned Value Management System
- **EVP** – Earned Value Professional (AACE)
- **FM** – Finance/Financial Manager
- **IBR** – Integrated Baseline Review
- **IPT** – Integrated Product Team
- **JSR** – Joint Surveillance Review
- **MR** – Management Reserve
- **OSD** – Office of the Secretary of Defense
- **PM** – Project Manager
- **PMB** – Performance Management Baseline
- **PMBOK** – Project Management Body of Knowledge (A Guide to the PMBOK)
- **PMI** – Project Management Institute
- **PMI-SP** – PMI Scheduling Professional
- **RMP** – Risk Management Professional (PMI)
- **SME** – Subject Matter Expert
Questions and Answers
## Project Review Cheat Sheet

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<th>Desired Outcome</th>
<th>Application</th>
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- Baseline execution has "unsteady" variances from month to month  
- Continual downward trend after correct actions have been implemented  
- After Contract Award or Authority to Proceed (ATP)  
- Large project milestone shifts or any large impact to the PMB. | - Clear understanding of Issues/Findings and Improvement Opportunities.  
- Realistic and executable performance baseline.  
- Identification of potential risks to the project performance. | - Valuable following contract award (within 160-180 calendar days) or after a major program event:  
- Rolling Wave, Re-planning/Re-programming, Single Point Adjustment, or Over Target Baseline  
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- Negative actuals on a regular basis  
- Continual errors in the system report or lack of a proper EV analysis  
- Lack of accurate or functional process or in adhering to MCSD. | - Clear understanding of contractor’s ability to follow the processes defined in its system description, timely and accurate reporting of earned value data  
- Resolution of all Corrective Action Requests (CARs). | - Generally, the JSR is held annually to assure the contractor continues to apply their earned value processes per the EVM system description and deliver accurate earned value reporting  
- Can also be performed on systems that show signs of inaccurate reporting. |
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- Fire fighting is a frequent management technique  
- Downward trend of variances and lack of clarity in issues driving variances  
- Missed milestones  
- Open communication on project opportunities. | - Review of project progress and addresses issues with the baseline  
- Clear understanding of current risks and opportunities  
- Review of upcoming deliveries and expectations. | - Valuable to provide formal accountability of project execution  
- Open dialog between client and contractor  
- Should be held at least quarterly, generally held monthly, depending on the size and complexity of the project. |