

## DPM 2019-02: Operationalizing Risk-Informed Decision Making in Project Management

July 11, 2019

Q&A Session

*This webinar discussed the content and implications of [Director's Policy Memorandum \(DPM\) Civil Works \(CW\) 2019-02, Operationalizing Risk-Informed Decision Making in Project Management \(Planning Phase\)](#). The webinar was presented by Ms. Andrea Bias-Streat (Deputy, Program & Project Management Community of Practice [CoP]) and provided an overview of key highlights of the memo, including its purpose of reaffirming key project management responsibilities during the Planning phase of a project, with the goal of ensuring consistency across the USACE enterprise.*



*This summary of the Question / Answer session of the webinar is not a transcription; questions and responses have been edited and reordered for clarity.*

### **How does the Risk Register fit into the overall risk-informed decision making process?**

Every study should have a Risk Management Plan, and along with that, a Risk Register. The Institute for Water Resources (IWR) maintains an electronic Risk Register through its online IWR-Assistance for Planning Teams (APT) tool. 155 project delivery teams (PDTs) have used the electronic Risk Register over the past several years, and approximately 64 PDTs have used the tool in the last 6 months.

In addition, the project delivery CoP leads at Headquarters are working on the development of an Enterprise Risk Register (e-Risk Register) tool that takes PDTs through the lifecycle of a project (i.e., from Planning through Construction). It may help those in the O&M phase and those in O&M could potentially use the tool in the future; however, it is not within current scope. The new tool is an expansion of the existing IWR-APT tool, which means that planners can use their existing login information and will use the same processes they use with the current tool. This will also include Military Program. Additional technical questions regarding the IWR-APT tool can be directed to Erin Rooks (IWR) and Rachel Grandpre (IWR).

### **When will the new enterprise Risk Register tool for O&M be completed?**

The new enterprise Risk Register tool is currently in testing, with the goal of conducting a pilot of the tool with PDTs by the end of the fiscal year. To clarify, the tool may help with O&M, but O&M is not currently in the official scope of the tool's development. It will be up to the CoP leads whether a specific O&M component gets added to the tool.

### **Is a Safety Assurance Review (SAR) required for O&M plans?**

Guidance was issued in April ([Interim Guidance on Streamlining Independent External Peer Review \(IEPR\) for Improved Civil Works Product Delivery](#)) that addresses the requirement for SARs during construction. In addition, [Engineer Circular 1165-2-217, Water Resource Policies and Authorities, Review Policy for Civil Works](#), will be released as an Engineer Regulation by the beginning of next fiscal year, and

will address SAR requirements. Any additional questions regarding SAR can be directed toward John Clarkson (RMC).

**In the schedule indicated in Paragraph 6b (Project Management Plan), the target date for the District submittal of the final report is 30 months, with the Chief's or Director's Report submitted at 36 months. Has the SOP for the Office of Water Project Review (OWPR) or the Regional Integration Team (RIT) changed the timeline to 6 months to process a report?**

The time between the submission of the District Engineer's Report and the signing of the Chief's Report is estimated to be approximately 4-5 months, but there are many more tasks that are taking place other than just "processing the report." The tasks that must be completed during this period of time include: review of the final report and compilation of the Project Guidance Memorandum (approximately 30 days); resolution of final comments (variable); revisions of the final report by the District (variable); Senior Leaders' Briefing; State and Agency (S&A) Review (30-day review plus potentially 1-2 weeks to get responses back from the letter recipients and prepare responses); final National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review (concurrent with S&A review); finalization of the Chief's Report, Documentation of Review Findings, and Agency responses to Independent External Peer Review (IEPR); briefing the Chief of Engineers; and all of the myriad of scheduling and document preparation needed for these tasks. OWPR is working to streamline and standardize as many of the processing requirements as possible to further reduce the time required to complete the feasibility study.

In order to reduce the time required between submission of the District Engineer's Report and the Chief's Report, PDTs should aim to submit a concise, well written policy compliant document that has undergone thorough District Quality Control after engaging in consistent communication with the vertical team throughout the study to reduce the possibility of policy and/or legal issues. In addition, Agency responses to IEPR should be prepared in the proper format, tone, and level of detail. The Agency responses are not the same as the responses to the IEPR panel (examples can be [viewed here](#)). Finally, PDTs should ensure quick resolution of policy issues and revisions to the final report, as needed.