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# Review Plans for Decision Documents

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# Objectives

- Identify key policy and guidance documents
- Understand the requirements and procedures for preparing and approving a Review Plan (RP)
- Understand the type and level of detail of information needed in a RP (RP Checklist)



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# Policy and Guidance

- Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review, Office of Management and Budget, 16 December 2004
- Engineering Circular (EC) 1105-2-408 Peer Review of Decision Documents, 31 May 2005
- Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007, Sections 2034 and 2035
- EC 1105-2-410 Review of Decision Documents, 22 August 2008
- *DRAFT EC 1165-2-209, Civil Works Review Policy, 6 Jan 2009*



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# Requirements & Procedures

- Decision Document Review Plans
  - Component of the Project Management Plan (PMP)
  - Defines the scope and level of peer review
  - Should be prepared before execution of the FCSA (or ASAP if FCSA already executed)
  - RP approved by the MSC Commander
  - FY 09 (and future) work allowance dependent on having an MSC approved RP posted on the district website



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# Requirements & Procedures

- RP Process
  - District prepares draft RP
    - Decision Document RP Checklist (Mar 09)
  - District submits draft RP and completed checklist to appropriate PCX for coordination and concurrence; provides cross-charging labor code for \$1,500 for the PCX review
  - PCX provides guidance on (national) policy issues and appropriate level of review; coordinates with other PCXs as required



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# Requirements & Procedures

- RP Process (cont.)
  - Comments, responses, and back check are documented in the RP checklist; after back check, the PCX provides the District a concurrence memorandum
  - District submits final RP and PCX concurrence memorandum to MSC for MSC Commander approval
  - Upon MSC approval, District posts the RP and MSC approval memorandum on District website and provides the final RP and website address to the lead PCX
  - RP is a living document (like the PMP) and should be updated as conditions change



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# Requirements & Procedures

- Peer Review Types
  - DQC: Managed by home district (performed by experts outside the PDT)
  - ATR: Managed by PCX; reviews performed by experts outside of home district (may include both experts internal and external to USACE)
  - IEPR: Coordinated by PCX; managed by Outside Eligible Organization (OEO); reviews performed by experts outside of USACE



# Review Plan Checklist

## Review Plan Checklist For Decision Documents

Date: [redacted]  
Originating District: [redacted]  
Project/Study Title: [redacted]  
PWI #: [redacted]  
District POC: [redacted]  
PCX Reviewer: [redacted]

Please fill out this checklist and submit with the draft Review Plan when coordinating with the appropriate PCX. Any evaluation boxes checked 'No' indicate the RP may not comply with ER 1105-2-410 (22 Aug 2008) and should be explained. Additional coordination and issue resolution may be required prior to MSC approval of the Review Plan.

REQUIREMENT	REFERENCE	EVALUATION
<b>1. Is the Review Plan (RP) a stand alone document?</b>	EC 1105-2-410, Para 8a	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
a. Does it include a cover page identifying it as a RP and listing the project/study title, originating district or office, and date of the plan?		a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> b. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Is the Review Plan (RP) a stand alone document?
  - Does it include a **cover page** identifying it as a RP and listing the project/study title, originating district or office, and date of the plan?
  - Does it include a **table of contents**?
  - Is the **purpose** of the RP clearly stated and **EC 1105-2-410** referenced?
  - Does it **reference the Project Management Plan (PMP)** of which the RP is a component?



# Review Plan Checklist

- Is the Review Plan (RP) a stand alone document?
  - Does it succinctly **describe the three levels of peer review**: District Quality Control (DQC), Agency Technical Review (ATR), and Independent Technical Peer Review (IEPR)?
  - Does it include a paragraph stating the **title, subject, and purpose of the decision document** to be reviewed?
  - Does it list the names and disciplines of the **Project Delivery Team** (PDT)?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Is the RP detailed enough to assess the necessary level and focus of peer review?
  - Does it indicate which **parts of the study will likely be challenging**?
  - Does it provide a preliminary assessment of where the **project risks** are likely to occur and what the **magnitude** of those risks might be?
  - Does it indicate if the project/study will include an **environmental impact statement** (EIS)?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Is the RP detailed enough to assess the necessary level and focus of peer review?
  - Does it address if the project report is likely to contain **influential scientific information** or be a highly influential scientific assessment?
  - Does it address if the project is likely to have **significant economic, environmental, and social affects to the nation**
  - Does it address if the project/study is likely to have **significant interagency interest**?



# Review Plan Checklist

- Is the RP detailed enough to assess the necessary level and focus of peer review?
  - Does it address if the project/study likely involves **significant threat to human life** (safety assurance)?
  - Does it provide an **estimated total project cost**? Is it > \$45 million?
  - Does it address if the project/study will likely be **highly controversial**, such as if there will be a significant public dispute as to the size, nature, or effects of the project or to the economic or environmental costs or benefits of the project?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Is the RP detailed enough to assess the necessary level and focus of peer review?
  - Does it address if the information in the decision document will likely be based on **novel methods, present complex challenges for interpretation, contain precedent-setting methods or models, or present conclusions that are likely to change prevailing practices?**



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP define the appropriate level of peer review for the project/study?
  - Does it state that **DQC will be managed by the home district** in accordance with the Major Subordinate Command (MSC) and district Quality Management Plans?
  - Does it state that **ATR will be conducted or managed by the lead PCX?**
  - Does it state **whether IEPR will be performed?**



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP define the appropriate level of peer review for the project/study?
  - Does it provide a **defensible rationale for the decision on IEPR**?
  - Does it state that **IEPR will be managed by an Outside Eligible Organization**, external to the Corps of Engineers?



# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP explain how ATR will be accomplished?
  - Does it identify the anticipated **number of reviewers**?
  - Does it provide a **succinct description of the primary disciplines or expertise needed** for the review (not simply a list of disciplines)?
  - Does it indicate that **ATR team members will be from outside the home district**?
  - Does it indicate that the **ATR team leader will be from outside the home MSC**?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP explain how ATR will be accomplished?
  - Does the RP state that the **lead PCX is responsible for identifying the ATR team** members and indicate if candidates will be nominated by the home district/MSC?
  - If the reviewers are listed by name, does the RP **describe the qualifications and years of relevant experience** of the ATR team members?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP explain how IEPR will be accomplished?
  - Does it identify the **anticipated number of reviewers**?
  - Does it provide a **succinct description of the primary disciplines or expertise needed** for the review (not simply a list of disciplines)?
  - Does it indicate that the **IEPR reviewers will be selected by an Outside Eligible Organization** and if candidates will be nominated by the Corps of Engineers?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP explain how IEPR will be accomplished?
  - Does it indicate the **IEPR will address all the underlying planning, safety assurance, engineering, economic, and environmental analyses**, not just one aspect of the project?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP address peer review of sponsor in-kind contributions?
  - Does the RP **list the expected in-kind contributions** to be provided by the sponsor?
  - Does it **explain how peer review will be accomplished** for those in-kind contributions?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP address how the peer review will be documented?
  - Does the RP address the requirement to document ATR and IEPR comments using **DrChecks**?
  - Does the RP explain how the IEPR will be documented in a **Review Report**?
  - Does the RP document how **written responses** to the IEPR Review Report will be prepared?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP address how the peer review will be documented?
  - Does the RP detail how the district/PCX will **disseminate the final IEPR Review Report, USACE response, and all other materials related to the IEPR** on the internet and include them in the applicable decision document?
- Does the RP address **Policy Compliance and Legal Review**?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP present the tasks, timing and sequence (including deferrals), and costs of reviews?
  - Does it provide a **schedule for ATR** including review of the Feasibility Scoping Meeting (FSM) materials, Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB) materials, draft report, and final report?
  - Does it include **interim ATR reviews** for key technical products?
  - Does it present the **timing and sequencing for IEPR?**
  - Does it include **cost estimates** for the peer reviews?<sub>24</sub>



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP indicate the study will address **Safety Assurance factors**? Factors to be considered include:
  - Where failure leads to significant threat to human life
  - Novel methods\complexity\ precedent-setting models\policy changing conclusions
  - Innovative materials or techniques
  - Design lacks redundancy, resiliency or robustness
  - Unique construction sequence or acquisition plans
  - Reduced\overlapping design construction schedule



# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP address model certification requirements?
  - Does it **list the models** anticipated to be used in developing recommendations (including mitigation models)?
  - Does it **indicate the certification/approval status** of those models and if certification or approval of any model(s) will be needed?
  - If needed, does the RP **propose the appropriate level of certification/approval** for the model(s) and how it will be accomplished?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP address opportunities for public participation?
  - Does it indicate how and when there will be **opportunities for public comment** on the decision document?
  - Does it indicate when significant and relevant **public comments will be provided to reviewers** before they conduct their review?
  - Does it address whether the public, including scientific or professional societies, will be asked to **nominate potential external peer reviewers**?
  - Does the RP list **points of contact** at the home district and the lead PCX for inquiries about the RP?<sup>27</sup>



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP address coordination with the appropriate Planning Centers of Expertise?
  - Does it state if the project is **single or multi-purpose**?
  - Does it **identify the lead PCX** for peer review?
  - If multi-purpose, has the **lead PCX coordinated the review** of the RP with the other PCXs as appropriate?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Does the RP address coordination with the Cost Engineering Directory of Expertise (DX) in Walla Walla District for ATR of cost estimates, construction schedules and contingencies for all documents requiring Congressional authorization?
  - Does it state if the decision document will require **Congressional authorization**?
  - If Congressional authorization is required, does the state that **coordination** will occur **with the Cost Engineering DX**?



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# Review Plan Checklist

- Other Considerations (not limited to):
  - Is a **request** from a State Governor or the head of a Federal or state agency **to conduct IEPR likely**?
  - Is the home district expecting to submit a **waiver** to exclude the project study from IEPR?
  - Are there additional **Peer Review requirements specific to the home MSC or district** (as described in the Quality Management Plan for the MSC or district)?
  - Are there additional Peer Review **needs unique to the project study**?



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# Questions?

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