National Planning Centers of Expertise

Agency Technical Review

ATRT Lead Checklist for Planning and Decision Documents

US Army Corps of Engineers ®

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INTRODUCTION
ATRT LEAD CHECKLIST DEVELOPMENT

This ATRT Lead checklist and supporting appendices were developed by a PCX Tiger Team in November 2009 as per direction and support of the National Planning Centers of Expertise Guild.

These National Centers are part of a Corps initiative to improve the quality and effectiveness of the planning process for water resources projects called the Planning Excellence Program (PEP). The PEP includes training and work force capability improvement, enhanced quality assurance and control efforts, process improvement and regional and national planning centers.

Funding for this effort was provided by the FRM-PCX and the individual Tiger Team PCX members respective PCXs. The Tiger Team was represented by members from the PCXs of: deep draft navigation, ecosystem restoration, water management and reallocation studies, and flood risk management. The strategy in the development of this checklist was to:

- Quickly provide a draft procedural guide document that can be used immediately by current and new ATRT Leads for planning and decision documents.

- Address the current demands for ATR by providing tools to the ATRT Leads.

- Build upon ATR efforts and documents already completed and in use.

- Capture the experience of veteran ATRT Leads from various PCXs through a Tiger Team effort.

- Targeted for Feasibility Studies, but easily adaptable to other planning efforts.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this checklist was to quickly provide current and future ATRT Leads a valued "process tool" to help ensure consistency, efficiency, and continuity of the ATRT Lead responsibilities for all PCXs. The checklist is a guide to be used as a primary tool in the ATR Lead's toolbox (see Appendices).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

The checklist is structured sequentially as per the various ATR stages from the start of the study process to the archiving of the ATR effort. The ATRT Lead may use this as a checklist or a roadmap in moving through the various requirements and milestones of ATR (see Appendix A for ATR Milestones).

DISCLAIMER

This checklist is a tool and is not a replacement for leadership, planning experience, and training for ATR Leads. It does not infer formal guidance from Corps Headquarters.

NATIONAL PLANNING CENTERS OF EXPERTISE
AGENCY TECHNIAL REVIEW: ATRT LEAD CHECKLIST

Study Name:
Study ATR Milestone (see Appendix A):
Study ATR Milestone Date:
Lead PCX:
ATRT Lead Name:

Preparation for ATR:

☐ **District contacts PCX or PCXs** with ATR support request and ensures required and approved information is available and complete (PMP, RP, funding).

☐ **ATRT Lead accepts nomination**. The PCX Manager selects the ATRT Lead. The PM is notified of the Lead selection by the PCX Manager.

☐ **ATRT Lead funding in place**. The Lead estimates funding requirements for ATR preparation – not including funding for comment, resolution, and close out. The PM establishes a cross charge labor and other funds as needed for the Lead to prepare for the ATR and is responsible for ensuring the PDT information flow to the ATRT Lead.

☐ **Assess the PMP and Review Plan**. The ATRT Lead verifies the review plan scope, schedule, and cost estimate are appropriate for the review; and verifies that all required components of the review plan are included. The review plan at every ATR needs to be reviewed by the ATRT Lead and ATR team.

☐ **ATRT Lead develops initial Scope, Schedule, and Estimated Cost of Review.**

  o Determine other PCX involvement has been identified.
  o Determine Risk Management Center involvement if Life Safety issues are identified (RMC guidance pending December 2009) by the PDT or ATRT.
  o Coordinate with the Cost Engineering Directory of Expertise (DX) to ensure a qualified ATR cost engineer and risk analyst.

☐ **ATRT Lead is responsible for the set up of the ATR Team**

  o Identify team members. The ATRT Lead will coordinate with the PCX and has the primary responsibility to identify and select team members required to conduct the review. Recommendations of

team members by the PDT or District will be coordinated and considered. The PCX has final approval.

- o PCX rosters of potential team members can be found at the PCX SharePoint site (See References)
- o Provide relevant ATRT contact, qualifications, and biographical information to PDT for inclusion in review plan for updating as needed.
- o Provide ATRT CEFMS information to PM.
- o PM establishes cross-charge labor for ATRT (and travel funding as required) and provides cross charge labor codes to the ATRT Lead.

☐ **Review/refine/monitor ATRT cost estimate/schedules**. The ATRT Lead will monitor the review progress and determine if the initial scope, schedule, and cost estimate are appropriate throughout the ATR process.

☐ **Coordinate w/ respective DrChecks^{sm} POC**. The PDT District creates the DrChecks^{sm} project and assigns the review team with authority to comment and backcheck and PDT members to evaluate and respond to comments. The ATRT Lead should be assigned as a review manager and provided authority to comment and backcheck. The purpose of the ATRT Lead authority as a review manager is to expediently modify team assignments and authorities; and not to modify the comments of other reviewers.

☐ **Charge to reviewers (PCX & PDT assistance).** The ATRT Lead, in coordination with the PM and PDT shall prepare and coordinate with each reviewer their respective charge. The charge will be based on information in the review plan and the PMP and will specifically identify the scope of review. ATRT Lead shall provide charge to reviewers. Reviewers should focus on their field of expertise and should also review all related review documents for consistency. The PCX has final approval.

☐ **Verify the project has been created in DrChecks^{sm}**. Ensure reviewers and evaluators have been assigned to the project and that the review time frame is appropriate.

☐ **ATRT Lead shall:**

- o Inform the PM / PDT with review team information and updates.
- o Verify complete package of documents are ready for review: RP, DQC documentation, Policy Guidance Memos, IPR Memos, etc.

Kick-off of ATR:

☐ **Facilitate ATRT kickoff meeting.** The PDT is responsible for the arrangements and logistics of the Kickoff Meeting. The ATRT Lead shall

coordinate with the PDT on the facilitation of the Kick-off Meeting at the start of the comment period.

- o The purpose of the meeting is to:
  - Introduce the ATRT to the PDT
  - Provide any additional documents and information
  - Provide overview of project
  - Discuss project issues
  - Discuss the scope, cost , and schedule of review
    - o List specific products to be reviewed
    - o List funding breakout by discipline
    - o Present schedule for review
  - Refresh ATRT on the Art of Review
    - o The ATRT Lead shall present a summary of the Art of Review via Power Point presentation or discussion. At a minimum, the ATRT Lead should make the reviewers aware of the Four Part comment structure.
    - o At the ATRT Lead's discretion, the ATR Walk-through presentation may be presented or provided as a tool for the team.
  - Agree on communication protocol for the review period
    - o For example, "Should all communications go through the ATRT Lead?" Or "Can ATRT members call PDT members directly?"
    - o For all projects it is recommended that at a minimum the ATRT Lead and PM be copy furnished on communication.
  - Ensure the ATRT understands where the project stands in the planning process.
  - Ensure throughout the process that the ATRT has all necessary updated documents, guidance, and regulations to conduct a thorough review.

- o It is recommended that the ATRT Lead and the PDT discuss the possibility of a site visit or on-site kickoff for complex projects. If an on-site kickoff is not possible due to funding, staff availability, time, or not deemed necessary, the PDT may host a webinar, net meeting, or teleconference. It is essential that the PDT provide photographs (site and aerial), maps, or video clips to orient the team to the site.

- o The meeting should be scheduled to allow maximum participation of the ATRT and the PDT. It is recommended that the products to be reviewed be available prior to the kickoff meeting.

- o Upon the conclusion of the meeting the ATRT Lead should ensure that:

- ATRT members have a clear overview of the project, issues, and planning process status.
- ATRT and PDT agree on the scope, cost, schedule, and communication plan for the review.

ATR Comment:

☐ **Ensure the comment period start and end dates are identified (from PMP/RP/PM) and communicated to the ATRT**. The duration of the review may be variable depending on the complexity and readiness of the study/project.

☐ **Monitor ATR comments (using DrChecks^{sm}) for consistency, professionalism, conflicts, etc**. The ATRT Lead may ask the ATRT to delete comments that are non-substantive in nature. It is important to note that comments will be a permanent record.

☐ **Maintain periodic communication with ATRT on progress of review (email/phone/tele-con)**. ATRT Lead should be aware of any delays by ATRT as early as possible.

☐ **Ensure ATRT adherence to review schedule**. Any delays from the ATRT must be coordinated with the PM/PDT as this will impact the overall project schedule.

☐ **ATRT Lead should provide a summary of critical ATRT comments to the PDT addressing technical specifics identified by the ATR.**

  o ATRT to use DrChecks^{sm} critical button to identify critical issues to the ATRT Lead and PDT.

ATR Evaluation:

☐ **Ensure the PDT evaluation period start and end dates are identified (from PMP/RP/PM)**. The duration of the PDT evaluation may be variable depending on the complexity of the study/project.

☐ **Maintain communication with PM and PDT on progress**. The ATRT Lead ensures that the ATRT is provided ample lead time for resolution of identified issues, including any required meetings/webinars.

☐ **Notify ATRT when evaluation is complete (email/phone) after PM/PDT notification of comment evaluation completion**.

ATR Resolution:

- ☐ **Ensure the resolution period start date is identified (from PMP/RP/PM)**. The duration of the evaluation may be variable depending upon the complexity of the study/project.

- ☐ **Initiate issue resolution with ATRT and PDT, as needed.**
    - o On-site
    - o Virtual (Tele-con, Webinar or VTC) – Contact ACE-IT for set up.

- ☐ **Facilitate resolution of ATRT comments with PDT**. ATRT Lead should seek to resolve any outstanding issues and document the results.

- ☐ **ATRT Lead works with PM/PDT to resolve any comment disputes** as per EC 1165-2-209, Appendix C.

ATR Close:

- ☐ **Prepare ATR Review Report (as per EC 1165-2-209, Appendix B & C)**. The ATRT Lead is responsible for compiling the required document in the form of a Review Report for ATR closure in coordination with the ATRT and PDT. Each milestone of the ATR (including any interim reviews performed prior to the milestone review) shall be documented with a Review Report. The final Review Report will include a summary of all previous ATR Milestone Review Reports. The following minimal documents to be included are:
    - o Disclosure of the ATRT name/organization/credentials/relevant experiences of each reviewer
    - o Charge to reviewers
    - o Define the nature of their review and finding/conclusions
    - o Summary of each unresolved issue
    - o Attach DrChecks^sm Comments/Responses/Discussion/Backcheck
    - o Cost DX certification

- ☐ **Prepare ATR After Action Report**. The ATRT Lead is responsible for developing an informal or formal AAR with the ATRT and PDT after each milestone that will become a part of the project record. (ER1110-1-12, Chapter 9)
    - o Identify top lessons learned
    - o Assess effectiveness of review / reviewers
    - o The cost and duration of the review

- ☐ **Archive ATR documentation**. The PM has the primary responsibility for study documentation archiving. The ATRT Lead shall ensure all reviewed

documents are archived also in DrChecks^{sm} and coordinated as per respective PCX SOP's for document management.

- o PM - Primary
- o DrChecks^{sm}
- o PCX – Per PCX SOPs

<u>Vertical Team Meeting Participation</u>. The ATRT Lead should coordinate with the PM / PDT on meeting dates and attend (on-site or virtually) a minimum of the below study milestones listed. Additional meetings may be required as per study needs and complexity, and shall be coordinated as scope is developed.

- ☐ FSM
- ☐ AFB
- ☐ IPR/IRC
- ☐ CWRB
- ☐ Others as required

APPENDIX A: STUDY MILESTONES FOR ATR

ATR Checklist: Study Milestones

Feasibility Study Begins

District Quality Control (DQC) Review #1

Agency Technical Review (ATR) of FSM package *

Feasibility Scoping Meeting (FSM): FSM Guidance Memo Issued

District Quality Control (DQC) Review #2

ATR of AFB package *

Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB)

AFB Policy Guidance Memo Issued

District Quality Control (DQC) Review #3

ATR of Draft Report *

Independent External Peer Review (IEPR) as required

Public Review of Draft Report

District Quality Control (DQC) Review #4

ATR of Draft Final Report *

Civil Works Review Board (CWRB)

State/Agency Review of Draft Final Report

Final Report Submission to Corps Headquarters

Final Headquarters Review – Chief of Engineers Report Completed

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASACW) Review

* ATRT Lead checklist shall be used for each of these milestones. A Review Report and ARR shall be completed after each ATR milestone.

APPENDIX B: ATRT LEAD CHECKLIST REFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

References:

- ER 1105-2-100, Chapter 4, paragraph 4-4: Planning Guidance Notebook, http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/waterresources/docs_wr/11052100.pdf.

- EC 1105-2-412: Assuring Quality of Planning Models, http://140.194.76.129/publications/eng-circulars/ec1105-2-412/entire.pdf.

- EC 1105-2-407: Planning Model Improvement Program: Model Certification, http://140.194.76.129/publications/eng-circulars/ec1105-2-407/entire.pdf, http://www.usace.army.mil/CECW/PlanningCOP/Documents/models/protocols_cert_7-02-07.pdf

- EC 1110-1-105, After Action Review, superseded by ER 1110-1-12, Engineering and Design, Quality Management, http://140.194.76.129/publications/eng-regs/er1110-1-12/entire.pdf.

- EC 1165-2-209, Civil Works Review Policy, 31 Dec 2009 http://140.194.76.129/publications/eng-circulars/ec1165-2-209/toc.htm

- Public Law 106-554: The Data Quality Act, http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/info-quality/pl106-554.pdf.

- Executive Order 12866 – Regulatory Planning and Review, http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/eo12866.pdf.

- OMB Circular A-130: Appendix I, Federal Register 6428, http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a130_a130trans4/.

- Office of Management and Budget: Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review, 2005, http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/omb/memoranda/fy2005/m05-03.pdf.

- Memorandum, Headquarters, United States Army Corps of Engineers (HQUSACE) (CECW-HS), subject: Levee Safety Program Implementation, 16 Nov 07. http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/nfrmp/docs/Levee Safety_Prgm_Implementation_16Nov2007_memo.pdf.

- Paper, MG Don T. Riley, subject: Improving Public Safety – From Federal Protection to Shared Risk Reduction, 10 Oct 07. http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/nfrmp/docs/FloodPolicyWhitePaperfEB08.pdf.

- Memorandum, HQUSACE, CECW-HS, subject: USACE National Flood Risk Management Program Initial Guidance, 5 Oct 09.

- DrChecks^{sm} User Permissions and Assigned Roles, from the Projnet^{sm} Users Manual available at: www.wbdg.org/tools/projnet.php.

- Agency Technical Review Guidance, Cost Engineering Directory of Expertise (DX) 15 June 2009.

- Agency Technical Review Guide for Ecosystem Restoration Projects, August 2008.

- Cost Engineering Directory of Expertise (DX) http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/ed/c/default.asp

- Charge to Project Delivery Team and Reviewers Template, National Planning Centers of Expertise: Agency Technical Review   (Date)

Power Point Presentations:

- Peer Review Training (February 2009) K. Claseman

- Agency Technical Review Responsibilities (19 March 2009) C. Knollenberg

- Agency Technical Review Walk-Thru (21 October 2009) G. Steele

- Art of Review

Share Point Sites:

ATR Rosters – https://kme.usace.army.mil/CoPs/CivilWorksPlanning-Policy/pcx/default.aspx

ATR Timeline & Costs - https://kme.usace.army.mil/CoPs/CivilWorksPlanning-Policy/pcx/default.aspx

APPENDIX C: ATRT LEAD CHECKLIST ACRONYMS

Acronyms:

AAR – After Action Review
AFB – Alternatives Formulation Briefing
ASA (CW) – Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
ATR – Agency Technical Review
ATRT – Agency Technical Review Team
CoP – Community of Practice
CEFMS – Corps of Engineers Financial Management System
CWRB – Civil Works Review Board
DST – District Support Team
DQC – District Quality Control
DX – Directory of Expertise
EC – Engineer Circular
ER - Engineer Regulation
FSM – Feasibility Scoping Meeting
FRM – Flood Risk Management
IPR – In Progress Review
IRC – Issue Resolution Conference
HQ – USACE Headquarters
HQUSACE – Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
IEPR – Independent External Peer Review
MSC – Major Subordinate Command
OMB – Office of Management and Budget
PCX – Planning Center of Expertise
PDT – Project Delivery Team
PEP – Planning Excellence Program
PM – Project Manager
PMP – Project Management Plan
PSCX – Planning Sub-Center of Expertise
RP – Review Plan
RMC – Risk Management Center
RR – Review Report
RTS – Regional Technical Specialist
QA – Quality Assurance
QC – Quality Control

APPENDIX D: PCX SPECIFIC ATRT LEAD REQUIREMENTS

This appendix acknowledges that there are specific PCX, DX, and Center ATR requirements for their respective policies and technical information needs. This appendix serves as a place to capture those specific aspects for ATRT Lead use and reference.

General Process Items to Note:

1. Planning models certification status check.
2. Coordinate with the Risk Management Center for life safety issues

National Planning Centers of Expertise
http://www.usace.army.mil/CECW/PlanningCOP/Pages/plan_cx.aspx

Coastal Storm Damage Reduction PCX

Deep Draft Navigation PCX

Deep Draft Navigation Review Guide
http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/ddncx/reviewguide.asp

Small Boat Harbors PSCX

Ecosystem Restoration PCX

Note: Refer to PCX specific guidance. Agency Technical Review Guide for Ecosystem Restoration Projects, August 2008.

Flood Risk Management PCX

Note: Coordinate with respective flood risk manager as part of PDT and ATR team. Memorandum, HQUSACE, CECW-HS, subject: USACE National Flood Risk Management Program Initial Guidance, 5 Oct 09.

Inland Navigation PCX

Water Management & Reallocation Studies PCX

Note:
Coordinate with the Hydropower Analysis Center for questions concerning operational and economic impacts of storage reallocation related to hydropower.

Directory of Expertise

Cost Engineering Directory of Expertise (DX)
http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/ed/c/default.asp

Note:
Cost DX ensures a standardized cost product review is completed in accordance with current regulations and guidance.

Cost DX provides a separate certification presenting the certified costs for the study documents.

Refer to existing DX specific guidance.   Agency Technical Review Guidance, Cost Engineering Directory of Expertise (DX) 15 June 2009.

Risk Management Center (RMC)
http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/inside/products/rmc/aboutRMC.cfm