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Date: April 17, 2013
To: Monica Brown, Principal Legislative Analyst
From: Robert L. Cummings, Principal Legislative Analyst (IT)
Subject: **DOJ – CSEAS Modernization Project – Budget Note Recommendations**

Background

Over the past several months, the LFO has met with Department of Justice (DOJ) staff regarding the status and next steps for its Oregon CSEAS Modernization Project. I have reviewed DOJ's draft "Oregon CSEAS Modernization Feasibility Study (FSR)" and DOJ's supporting "Implementation Advance Planning Document" (which contains a summary of the feasibility study plus the proposed initial draft of the "Project Management Plan (PMP)" for managing, overseeing, and implementing the modernization effort).

The "Project Management Plan" contained some materials directly related to the key "best practices" project management documents normally recommended by PMBOK for managing and overseeing information technology projects. The Program Management Plan also identified a wide-range of deliverables that will be forthcoming in project phases after the initial "project definition" and planning phases of the Systems Development Lifecycle (SDLC). These deliverables include the "Purchase Plan Execution" (i.e. purchased hardware and software, an occupancy permit, etc.) and common Application Development deliverables.

In addition, the Program Management Plan also identified a wide range of Federal Certification and Operational Deliverables that are typically required by a project of this size, scope, costs, and complexity including a Federal Certification Compliance Demonstration; an Operations Plan, Operational Transition Plan, Customer Support Procedures, Technical Support Procedures, Help Desk Management Plan, Periodic Help Desk Reports, Periodic Operational Reports, and an Operational Transition Report.

From my review of the Feasibility Study Report and the Program Management Plan, I identified the following findings and conclusions:

1. DOJ understands the need for a quality feasibility study, options analysis, and business case;
2. DOJ has provided a very solid business case and supporting high-level schedule, budget, resource plan, and risk analysis;
3. The fact that DOJ has already stepped up and begun to identify how it is going to plan, manage, and steward this major project and the complicated system development that will be required shows clear evidence that DOJ management understand the complexity, challenges, and risks associated with a project of this size, scope, cost, and complexity;

4. The Program Management Plan provided evidence that DOJ understood the need for a wide-range of project management related foundational documents and an even greater number of critical systems development lifecycle documents (for each SDLC phase – planning, business system design, technical system design, construction, testing, implementation and maintenance); and
5. The Program Management Plan clearly showed that DOJ understood what is needed, but it did not provide finalized versions of most of the key initial project related foundational documents that must be completed prior to legislative final approval of the proposed project. For a project of this size, this is not unusual, as most agencies typically come forward to the legislature with only the business cases (POP, IRRs, etc.) and a high-level schedule, resource plan, budget, and risk analysis. Few agencies have completed the additional planning work that is evident in DOJ’s Program Management Plan. In this case, DOJ is ahead of most agencies seeking funding approval for their major IT projects.

In addition to the findings and conclusions, I also initially recommended that the following “next steps” be undertaken in order to be fully prepared for a final review of DOJ’s “readiness and ability” to execute:

1. A thorough quality control review of DOJ’s FSR, high-level work-plan, schedule, resource plan, financial plan, and risks analysis;
2. 20+ key PMBOK recommended project management related documents plans completed (with a solid quality control review by an independent quality control vendor);
3. A foundational assumptions/strategies analysis completed and approved by project stakeholders and the LFO;
4. A solid quality assurance vendor on board to provide both risk assessment and project performance reviews on both a monthly and quarterly basis;
5. A review and action plan to make sure that all “CNIC Project” lessons learned have been addressed (and risks mitigated) prior to starting the project;
6. The completion of a “self” readiness/ability assessment to verify that all major components (i.e. agency, vendor, vendor products, project management staff, oversight, etc.) are ready and able to perform effectively;
7. The completion of an LFO readiness/ability assessment to verify that all major components (i.e. agency, vendor, vendor products, project management staff, oversight, etc.) are ready and able to perform effectively;
8. The preparation of needed materials to present to the appropriate W&M budget committee to clearly communicate the business need for the new project, the consequences of not taking the needed actions, what’s been completed to date, what funds are needed for the detailed planning phase of the project, a high-level schedule (with deliverables) of the actions that will be taken in the next steps of the project approval process, etc.;
9. Evidence that the proposed project fits into DOJ’s strategic business, information technology, and enterprise architecture planning directions and goals;
10. Evidence that DOJ has researched similar projects throughout the country (including a COTS package review) and that it has leveraged the lessons learned from these other efforts. This evidence should include how project costs were estimated and how they measure up to similar projects completed elsewhere in the country; and
11. A clear description of the proposed funding mechanism for the new project including both short and long-term federal funding offsets.

I concluded my review of DOJ’s initial CSEAS deliverables (FSR & PMP) with the following statement:

“DOJ has done great to date. They need to continue along the same path with the same focus on quality project management and SDLC planning documentation. Long-term, this will pay huge dividends in allowing them to avoid many common problems.”

Recommendations

In support of this conclusion, I would clarify my earlier initial recommendations by suggesting that a budget note be developed for the CSEAS Project which contains the following requirements:

1. Implement the recommendations/needs for PMBOK-based program management documentation (i.e. charters, schedules, communication plans, etc.) identified in DOJ’s CSEAS Project - Project Management Plan;”
2. Develop the 50+ foundational project management documents already identified in DOJ’s Project Management Plan;
3. Hire a highly experienced QA/QC vendor(s);
4. Conduct a full quality control review of all documents identified in #1 and #2;
5. Re-validate the business case cost estimates and total cost of ownership;
6. Document foundational assumptions/strategies and risks, including risk mitigation approaches;
7. Update the project requirements document and develop an initial traceability matrix;
8. Document CSEAS Project success measures to clearly identify how DOJ is going to measure the success and value of the CSEAS Project;
9. Hire a Senior Project Manager and/or System Integrator;
10. Conduct a CNIC “lessons learned” review;
11. Conduct a quality review of the initial “fit-gap” analysis between the high-level CSEAS requirements and the capabilities of the three state “donor” software options – update the project work-plan, schedule, costs, etc. based upon the findings of this “fit-gap review;”
12. Work with the DAS and LFO to conduct a “readiness/ability” assessment once the PMP identified key PMBOK documentation is completed (ideally during the November/December timeframe - in anticipation of the 2014 Legislative Session);
13. Meet regularly with the DAS/LFO to discuss progress on all items identified above; and
14. Report budget note progress to the JCLAIMT throughout the 2013 Interim. Possibly meet with the JCLAIMT in December 2013 to review progress and readiness for the 2014 Legislative Session.

cc: Ken Rocco
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