

NOAA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REVIEW BOARD (NITRB)

Charter

A. PURPOSE

This establishes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Information Technology Review Board (NITRB) and prescribes policy and responsibilities for NOAA's information technology (IT) capital planning and investment control process. The NITRB acts as an advisory board for NOAA management on critical IT matters. The NITRB ensures that proposed investments contribute to NOAA's strategic vision and mission, employ sound IT investment methodologies, comply with NOAA systems architectures, and provide the highest return on the investment with acceptable project risk. Establishment of the NITRB supports IT management improvement goals of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (CCA), the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), and related implementing regulations and guidance.

B. BACKGROUND AND AUTHORITY

The CCA requires agencies to establish an effective and efficient capital planning and investment process for selecting, controlling, and evaluating the results of all major investments in information technology. The process is to be integrated with the processes for making budget, financial, and program management decisions within agencies. The process also supports requirements for the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to provide advice regarding information technology and information resources management to the agency head as required by the CCA and the PRA.

The NITRB was formed at the direction of the Deputy Under Secretary in his memo of March 5, 2001.

C. SCOPE

This charter applies to the evaluation of new and base IT system investments. Systems selected will meet one or more of the following criteria: systems meriting special attention due to their sensitivity, mission criticality, or risk potential; NOAA-wide systems; systems which have been designated for Departmental review; and systems with life cycle costs over \$2.5 million.

D. POLICY

The NITRB provides for coordinated risk management, review, and advice to NOAA management regarding IT investments meeting the criteria identified in section C above. This includes recommendations for approval or disapproval of funding for new or base investments. It also includes recommendations for continuation or termination of projects under development at key milestones or when they fail to meet performance, cost, or schedule criteria. The NITRB will ensure that IT investments are aligned with strategic plans, support mission requirements, comply with sound IT security practices, architecture goals, minimize project risk, and demonstrate a positive return on investment. Activities of the NITRB will satisfy risk management requirements of the Clinger-Cohen Act and consider guidance from the CIO Council, Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council, General Accounting Office, Office of Management and Budget, or other government-wide advisory bodies that address capital planning and IT investment management.

E. PROCESSES

The NITRB is chaired by the NOAA CIO and is composed of:

Deputy NOAA CIO
Chief Information Officers from NOAA's Line and Staff Offices
Chief Financial Officer or a designated representative
Acquisition and Grants Office
Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation

In the event that a NITRB member is unable to attend a board meeting, an alternate may be designated by the principal only with the approval of the chair. As determined by the chair, additional participants, such as operating unit project managers, may be invited to attend and advise the NITRB.

The NITRB will use uniform decision-making criteria for comparing and ranking projects. It is expected that Line Office processes for the selection, control, and evaluation of major information technology investments will generate the principal documentation for NITRB consideration. Line Offices will forward only their internally approved initiatives to the Board for review. Office of Management and Budget Capital Asset Plan and Justification documentation will provide baseline information. Program staff may be called upon as necessary to provide additional supporting documentation. The NITRB will meet regularly on a schedule that complements the planning and budget formulation processes and aligns with specific project time lines.

The evaluation process in Board meetings will follow the outline below:

1. Presentation by the project sponsors, followed immediately by a group discussion among Board members.
2. Independent evaluation and scoring by Board members.
3. Compilation of comments and scores.
4. Independent re-evaluation by Board members, if needed.
5. Group meeting to discuss the second evaluation and consensus ranking, if needed.
6. Preparation and submission of the summary assessment and any specific recommendations to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. Other interested parties, including the project sponsors and the CIO and head of the operating unit in question, will receive copies.

The process may be altered to adjust to the needs of a particular project or during the annual budget review when many investments will be reviewed in a short time frame.

All pre-decisional materials, including background information, notes, rating and ranking sheets, compiled scores, and draft documents, will be the property of the Board and will not be released to non-Board members except at the discretion of the chair. Presenters will be provided feedback on board decisions in sufficient detail to promote improvement.

F. RESPONSIBILITIES

The NOAA CIO serves as chair of the NITRB. The Director of the Office of Planning, Policy, and Analysis serves as Executive Secretary for the NITRB. The Executive Secretary ensures that staff is assigned to:

Circulate background materials to facilitate decision-making by Board members.
Organize meetings.
Prepare decision memoranda.

Revised: April 5, 2007