

KDP-C

How it Will Really Work

In order to provide some Goddard context for the Standing Review Board (SRB) and Key Decision Point (KDP) processes as described in the new NPR 7120.5D, I've put together a short summary which walks through the confirmation process (KDP-C, or the transition from Formulation to Implementation) for a Category 1 project. I have assumed an SMD science mission. What is described here can be extrapolated to the other KDPs. The following example represents what actually occurs along the bottom row of Figure 2-5 (see last page of this note) in the new NPR.

For a Category 1 project, the Decision Authority is the NASA AA (currently Rex Geveden) and the Governing PMC is the Agency PMC. The Technical Authority (TA) is the Center Director or his/her designee for any project category.

By the time a project is in Phase B, the SRB has long been since established. The culminating review in Phase B is the combined PDR/NAR. The SRB conducts the PDR/NAR, and reports out their findings to the project before any presentations are made to higher levels of management.

The first formal presentation of the SRB findings is at the Confirmation Readiness Review (CRR) that is conducted by the GSFC CMC. This is effectively the report out to the TA noted in Figure 2-5. At the CRR, we'd follow the usual agenda with the project summarizing their readiness and responding to the SRB findings. Based on the CRR, the GSFC CMC comes up with their "assessment" or recommendation regarding the project's readiness to proceed to the next phase. This would be in the form of the letter that is prepared for the Center Director's signature and is provided to the MDAA at the HQ Confirmation Review.

The Confirmation Review would be convened by the Mission Directorate PMC, and would consist of a presentation by the project as to their readiness, a briefing by the SRB on their PDR/NAR findings, the project response, and the Center recommendation. For a Category 1 project, the Confirmation Review is essentially a pre-briefing before going to the Agency PMC for KDP-C approval to begin implementation. This pre-brief is still called the Confirmation Review, as the project must be "confirmed" by SMD before it is taken to the Agency for final approval. ("Confirmation" is not a 7120 term - it is an SMD-invented term and always refers to SMD.) This intermediate presentation to the Mission Directorate PMC before going to the Agency PMC is not explicitly shown in Figure 2-5, but you can't get to the Agency PMC without going through the Directorate. If the Directorate PMC fails to "confirm" the project, the Agency will likely be postponed or cancelled.

(NOTE: For a Category 2 or 3 project, the MDAA is the Decision Authority, and the Mission Directorate is the Governing PMC, so that the Confirmation Review is KDP-C.

Following a successful Confirmation Review, the MDAA would send a letter to the Center Director indicating that the project in question is “approved” to move into Implementation. This is essentially the same as the process we follow now, but with slightly different terminology. A Category 1 project requires one more step – Agency PMC approval.)

The agenda of the Agency PMC “approval” meeting (KDP-C) would essentially be identical to that of the Mission Directorate Confirmation Review, except that now it includes the recommendation of the MDAA to proceed. If the Agency PMC approves the project moving into Phase C, the AA will so inform the MDAA, and the MDAA would send a letter to the Center Director indicating that the project in question has been “approved” to move into Implementation.

Note that the NPR does allow for the Decision Authority role for a Category 1 project to be delegated from the AA to the MDAA. This would result in an approval process nearly identical to what we have now, even for Category 1 projects.

If you have any questions about all of this, please let me know.

Jim Greaves

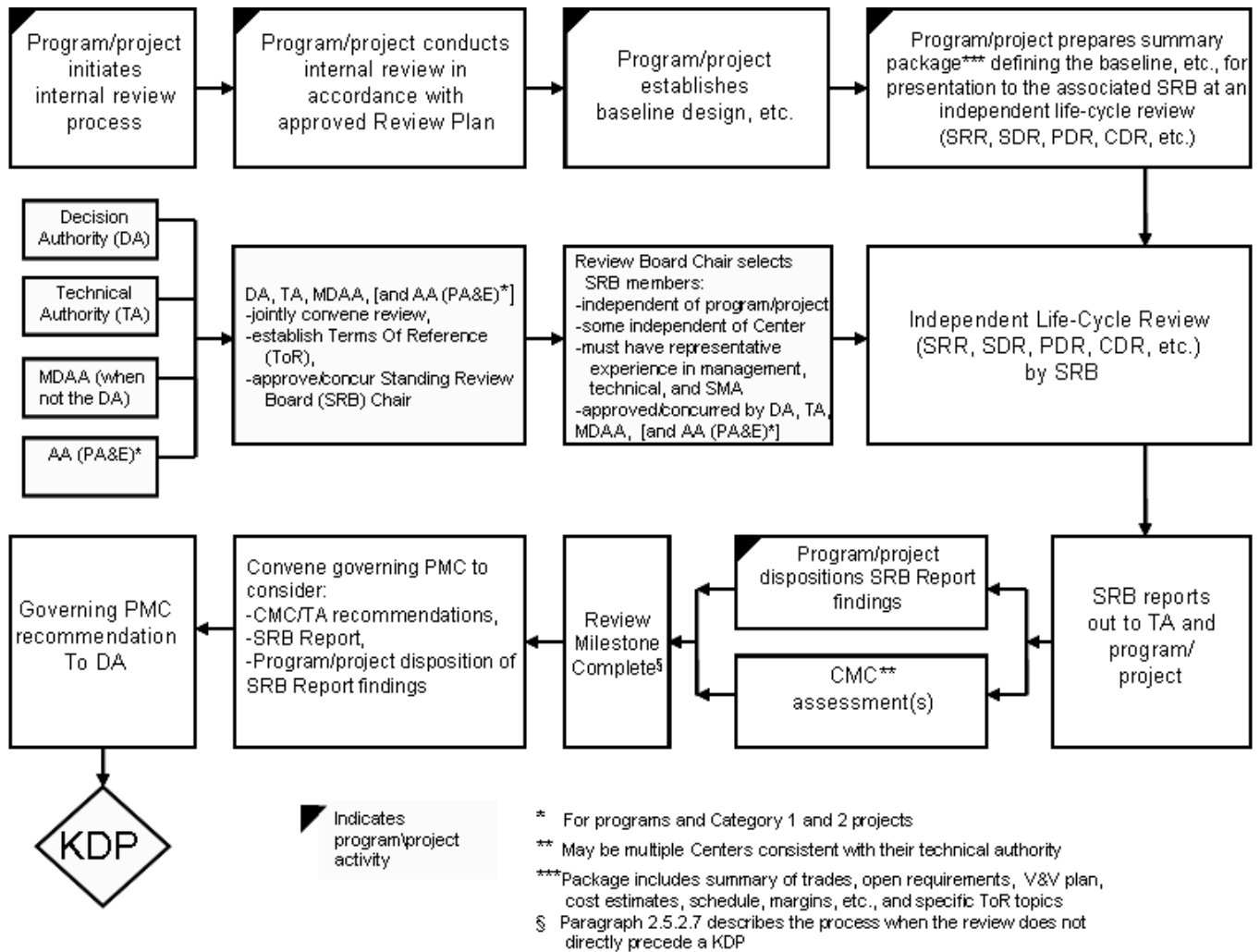


Figure 2-5 Program/Project Independent Life-Cycle Review Process