



CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

Technical Review Board Charter

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TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD CHARTER

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Technical Review Board (TRB) contributes to the agency’s Information Technology (IT) success in three distinct but related roles: Strategy, Guidance, and Execution.

1.1 Strategy

The TRB, chaired by the Chief Technology Officer (CTO), assists the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) with strategic and advisory support during IT Investment Selection including input to the portfolio budgeting process. This includes identifying synergies across agency IT efforts.

1.2 Guidance

The TRB provides technical intellectual continuity of high-level architectural decisions and direction. These decisions are documented and communicated in the Technical Reference Architecture (TRA) and its supplements, which are maintained by the TRB.

1.3 Execution

The TRB serves as the governing body responsible for performing governance level reviews defined in the CMS Expedited Life Cycle (XLC). The XLC directly supports key CMS responsibilities for "developing, maintaining, and facilitating the implementation of sound and integrated information technology architecture." The TRB, in project-level IT reviews, applies uniform and repeatable review practices in achieving enterprise-wide systems integration.

2. REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

This charter defines the role of the TRB in the XLC. The TRB Executive Committee is a member of the Business Architecture and Technology Solutions (BATS) Board and an advisory resource to the Information Technology Investment Review Board (ITIRB). Familiarity with the XLC and the corresponding Board Charters shown in the following table provides context for understanding the TRB Charter.

Table 1: Referenced Documents

Document Name	Document Number	Issuance Date
CMS Expedited Life Cycle Process: Detailed Description		September 8, 2011
Business Architecture and Technology Solutions Board Charter		August 30, 2011



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Document Name	Document Number	Issuance Date
Information Technology Investment Review Board Charter		February 26, 2009

3. PURPOSE

The TRB provides oversight to ensure that IT investments are consistent with CMS' IT strategy, assists the agency in ensuring the TRA supports the IT strategy, and assists projects by ensuring solutions are technically sound and on track to deliver promised capability on time and on budget. These activities directly support two of the four Office of Information Services (OIS) Vision Goals:

- Provide technology leadership to deliver business value and anticipate change to meet the current and long-term needs of CMS programs.
- Implement and communicate a CMS IT governance program that ensures and secures cost effective, sustainable systems to support the agency's business.

3.1 Vision

The TRB provides timely strategic advice and counsel; provides reasonable, achievable technical guidance; and enables cost effective, innovative implementation. TRB work in these domains identifies opportunities for reuse, consolidation, and integration. The TRB facilitates information sharing of all CMS IT projects to deliver high-value health care to key stakeholders of the CMS programs.

3.2 Mission

The TRB helps ensure:

- The agency's IT investments are positioned for success and adhere to the CMS architecture, standards, and guidance.
- The agency gets the most value out of its IT investments by maximizing opportunities for reuse and information sharing.
- The agency's compliance with Federal IT laws and regulations.

3.3 Benefits

The TRB provides the following benefits to CMS:

- Contributing to leading edge discussions on Business Architecture
- Sharing technical knowledge with the ITIRB for IT investment decisions
- Promoting effective systems integration across the agency
- Advocating the strategic IT direction for CMS



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- Providing a single structured governance board that provides a consistent level of guidance; ensuring integrity, uniformity and repeatability of the investment life cycle review process
- Reducing the ad-hoc processes and reviews
- Developing secure applications
- Maturing CMS IT practices
- Enhancing visibility of IT projects to allow proactive planning of required IT resources
- Accelerating responses to individual IT project needs
- Improving system integration within CMS's Approved Architecture including shared services
- Improving alignment with CMS's strategic vision of innovation.

4. SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

4.1. Scope

The TRB has three related areas of scope: strategic advice at the portfolio planning level, technical guidance at the agency level, and technical governance at the project level. The TRB support described in the following sections corresponds to these areas of scope.

4.1.1 CTO Strategic and Advisory Support

The TRB provides strategic advice and council including:

- Guiding the technical architecture direction of the agency
- Seeking opportunities for synergies across the agency
- Leveraging the TRB body of knowledge more broadly by participating in the concept phase of the XLC with the BATS board, the IT Budget process with the ITIRB, and the appropriate Executive Steering Committee (ESC)
- Strengthening CMS' Enterprise Architecture program
- Establishing and maintaining IT enterprise-wide strategies.

4.1.2 Engineering Architecture Support

The TRB ensures agency-wide, technical, architectural integrity by:

- Leading high-level architectural discussions for the major CMS IT initiatives
- Engaging the Senior Technical Advisors (STAs) and Technical Advisors (TAs) from across CMS to participate as appropriate
- Establishing consistency on architectural and engineering practices
- Expanding the establishment of Shared Services, both business and technical



- Ensuring alignment between the TRA and the agency’s strategic goals and major IT initiatives
- Continuing TRA refinement including the review and approval of new technical standards
- Reviewing, assessing, and deciding on new information technology proposals and recommendations
- Providing advisory services to major CMS initiatives.

4.1.3 Project Level XLC Support

CMS is committed to improving its system development life cycle processes. With the increasing need to respond quickly to business demands, CMS created the XLC to help coordinate and develop IT projects. A high-level depiction of this process is show in Figure 1 below.

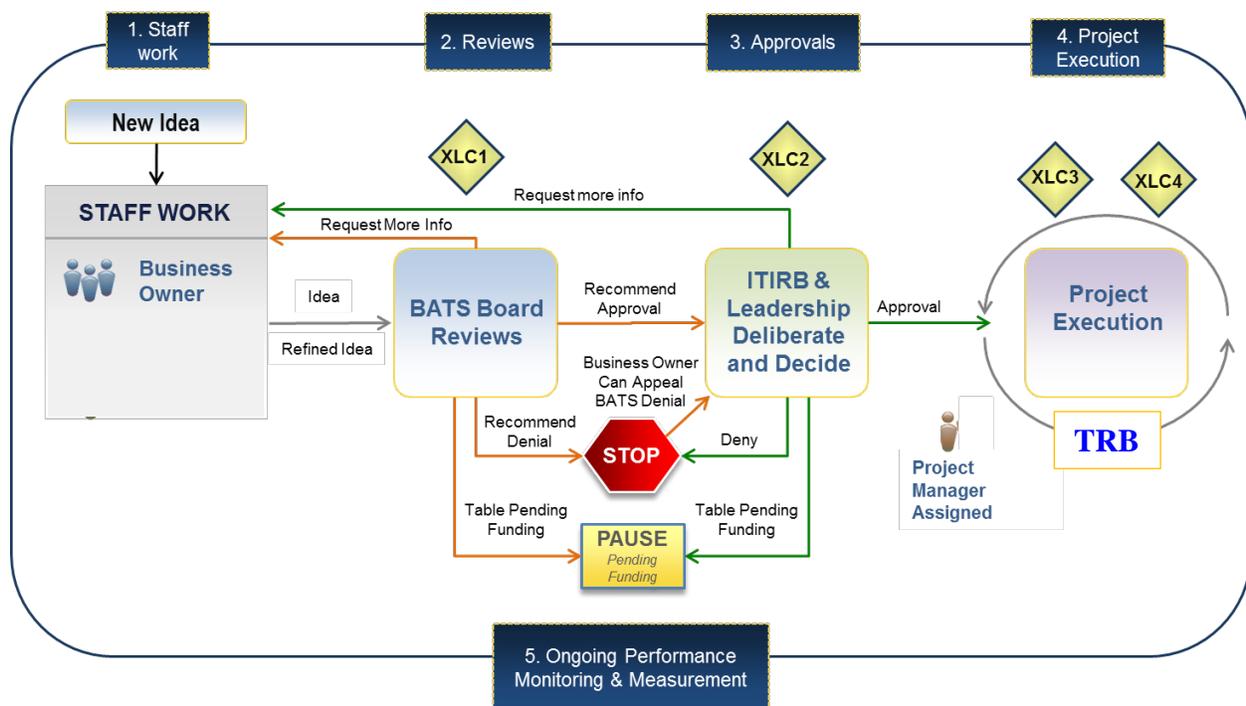


Figure 1: Expedited Life Cycle (XLC) Process

Once a project has been approved as an investment, the TRB supports the “Project Execution” of the Lifecycle by conducting Governance Reviews as appropriate. These reviews may include a Preliminary Design Review (diamond XLC3 in Figure 1) and Operational Readiness Review (diamond XLC4 in Figure 1). In its oversight role, the TRB is agnostic of the software development methodology (Agile, Lean, etc.) and further enhances the agency by:



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- Collaborating with other CMS governing bodies as appropriate
- Serving as a forum for adjudicating Technical compliance questions and issues as well as sharing lessons learned
- Creating opportunities for leadership, professional development and increased responsibility/visibility
- Integrating various departments in the review process by expanding the TRB membership to be inclusive of other CMS components: Office of Financial Management (OFM), Center for Program Integrity (CPI), Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS), and Center for Clinical Standards and Quality (CCSQ).
- Introducing new perspectives and thinking through new members
- Fostering enterprise-wide solutions and promoting reusability.

4.2 Authority

The CTO envisions the TRB as a collaborative team of SME's leveraging their industry knowledge and subject matter expertise to assist the CMS in its governance of IT management and technology solutions. The TRB operates under the leadership of the CTO with membership drawn from all groups within OIS and across CMS.

The TRB is the governing body at key project decision points throughout an IT Project's life cycle. The TRB will arbitrate compliance questions and concerns as well as render decisions and make exception recommendations to the CMS stakeholders.

Approval determination is made by the TRB based upon the compliance with the CMS IT XLC; CMS Enterprise Architecture principles; and CMS policies, procedures, standards and guidelines.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the TRB will be rotated on an as needed basis. Members of the TRB possess the following characteristics:

- Motivation to solve problems not just at the individual project level, but also able to determine solutions at the enterprise level
- Willingness to be constantly challenged to produce innovation
- Ability to learn and advance their breadth and depth of knowledge and experience in the preparation and performance of their review function
- Willingness to be open and seek the advice of more STAs and TAs or when expertise is outside of OIS
- Excellent oral communication and writing skills



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- Ability to work collaboratively with diverse communities in the agency and with the agency's stakeholders and business partners
- Personal initiative to support the TRB functions and overall XLC process.

The TRB consists of four types of members – TRB Executive Committee, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), STAs and TAs, and Core Team Members – which are described in the following sections.

5.1 TRB Executive Committee

The TRB Executive Committee provides CTO Strategic Support and is made up of:

- TRB Chair: CTO (voting),
- TRB Vice-Chairs (voting), and
- TRB Program Manager (non-voting).

The TRB Vice-Chairs will act on behalf of the TRB Chair in the TRB Chair's absence.

The TRB Chair, on an as-needed basis, can appoint TRB Vice-Chairs.

5.2 Subject Matter Experts

The TRB SMEs will act as a collaborative team to provide technical expertise in all aspects of the more technical standards, processes and practices specific to CMS and the healthcare sector. When invited, SMEs will be an integral part of the team by providing input that assists the TRB when evaluating projects. Otherwise, SMEs are not a permanent part of the TRB. The TRB chair will identify the need for subject matter expertise on a project-by-project basis and request support from OIS as needed. SMEs will be invited by the TRB chair or Vice-Chairs to join the TRB.

5.3 Senior Technical Advisors and Technical Advisors

The TRB will engage OIS STAs and TAs to participate on major IT initiatives for finite time periods. Other STAs and TAs can be drawn from other components such as CMCS, OCSQ, and OFM. STAs and TAs will be invited by the TRB Chair or Vice-Chairs to join the TRB.

5.4 Core Team Members

The TRB will engage Core Team members to participate in XLC Project Level Oversight. This includes contributing to governance level reviews and TRB Consults. Core Team members can be drawn from other CMS components (e.g., OFM, CPI, CMCS, CCSQ, etc.) These TRB members can be rotated on a yearly basis. Core Team members will submit a formal application



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to join the TRB and be interviewed. Those accepted will be invited by the TRB chair or Vice-Chairs to join the TRB.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Technical Review Board

Initial responsibilities of the TRB and TRB members include the following activities:

- Active participation at the TRB sessions
- Offer constructive feedback
- Work as an integrated team
- Provide timely review of materials and artifacts
- Serve as TRB Team Lead to develop written TRB review opinions, recommendations and approvals and communicate back to the project teams
- Garner and share experiences and lessons learned with the TRB and respective organizational groups
- Respond to questions from project teams regarding the interpretation of technical standards as stated in the TRA, or clarification of guidance provided in response letters.

Note: TRB Review letters may be drafted or composed by TRB members and/or designated TRB SMEs.

6.1.1 CTO Strategic Support

The TRB Chair and Vice-Chairs will perform the following activities and functions:

- Provide overall leadership and guidance to the TRB
- Ensure proper expertise is represented at reviews
- Ensure transparency of the TRB process
- Review and filter new membership requests for the TRB
- Ensure timely and accurate communication with customers
- Communicate status to management
- Ensure IT Projects align with the Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA)
- Ensure IT Projects align with the TRA
- Assist business owners with XLC strategy
- Provide input to the XLC steering committee as needed
- Support the CTO in consultation with projects that may need technical assistance in an area not specifically addressed by the XLC
- Provide input and guidance on CMS TRA



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6.1.2 Subject Matter Expert Support

The TRB SME Support team will perform the following activities:

- Attend XLC Project Oversight reviews
- Determine, via a vote, if an IT Project is compliant with the XLC Framework and technical standards and guidelines
- Provide input to final TRB Decisions
- Draft decision letters communicating the findings and recommendations to the project team/owner
- Make recommendations for further reviews
- Support the CTO in consultation with projects that may need technical assistance in a manner not specifically addressed by the XLC
- Support strategic and enterprise architecture TRB work as a secondary focus

TRB SMEs do not perform the following activities:

- Support strategic and enterprise architecture on major IT initiatives for finite time periods as requested.

6.1.3 Senior Technical Advisor and Technical Advisor Support

TRB STAs and TAs will support the TRB by performing the following activities:

- Participate in TRB Strategic and Advisory/ Engineering Support activities as requested
- Provide topic area expertise to the TRB to assist in determining compliance
- Provide input and recommendations to final TRB Decisions and Review Letters as necessary
- Support strategic and enterprise architecture on major IT initiatives for finite time periods as requested

TRB STAs and TAs do not perform the following activities:

- XLC oversight support
- Vote on gate review approval.

6.1.4 Core Team Support

TRB Core Team will support the TRB by performing the following activities:

- Attend TRB Reviews as requested
- Vote on gate review approval
- Provide topic area expertise to the TRB to assist in determining compliance
- Provide input and recommendations to final TRB Decisions and Review Letters as necessary
- Provide input and guidance on CMS Technical Reference Architecture.



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6.1.5 TRB Program Manager Support

The TRB Program Manager (PM) will support the TRB by performing the following functions:

- Coordinate ad hoc requests to come before the TRB
- Coordinate and schedule TRB review sessions
- Distribute official TRB letters and artifacts
- Notify all required TRB members and Project level personnel of upcoming Reviews Scheduled
- Coordinate, prepare and post all TRB materials, i.e. Agendas, briefing materials from participants, minutes, and final letters of the TRB
- Distribution of all materials, both hard and soft copy to all required TRB members.
- Provide project teams with review template

TRB PM does not perform the following activities:

- XLC oversight support
- Vote on gate review approval

7. OPERATING PROCEDURES

7.1 Meetings

The TRB will schedule and conduct weekly planning, project review, and post review meetings. A description of each follows:

- Planning Meetings
 - Executive Committee will be in attendance
 - Review and prepare for upcoming reviews and sessions
 - Schedule reviews and sessions as needed
 - Assign TRB team lead for Project Reviews and preparation of Final TRB Letters
 - TRB members and SMEs may be in attendance as well
- Project Reviews
 - TRB Core Team and invited SMEs and CMS project team will be in attendance
 - The project team will brief the TRB on the salient information pertinent to the review. A formal outline and guidelines will be provided in advance of the reviews outlining the information and the level of information, which should be presented.



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- Post Reviews
 - TRB Core Team and SMEs in attendance at the review will discuss the presentation, accuracy of the materials provided and adherence to CMS IT governing standards, etc.

7.2 Voting

- All voting members will vote on project decisions.
- The TRB uses a consensus process.
- The TRB chair or a vice-chair is required to be in attendance.
- In any case where no consensus is reached, the TRB chair or vice-chair (when acting on behalf of the TRB chair) will work with the appropriate CMS Senior Leadership to render the final decision.

7.3 Reporting

- TRB Team Lead will gather input from all TRB participants and prepare a final letter for review by the TRB team. Once approved by the TRB, the final letter will be distributed by the TRB PM to all participants.
- The TRB PM will be responsible for the preparation, distribution and posting of TRB agendas, briefing materials from participants, minutes, and final letters of the TRB.
- All TRB participating members will be responsible for providing all necessary materials to the TRB PM so that information sharing is available in a timely manner.

7.4 Repository

- All working documents will be posted on the TRB designated repository for members review and are available for comments and sharing.
- All Final Letters will be posted in the TRB repository.
- All posting will be completed by the TRB PM or by his/her designated representative.

7.5 Communications and Notifications

- All official TRB communications and notifications will be maintained in the TRB repository.



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- It is the responsibility of the members of the TRB to ensure that their contact information is current.



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9. ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
BATS	Business Architecture and Technology Solutions
CHIP	Children's Health Insurance Program
CMCS	Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services
CMS	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
CPI	Center for Program Integrity
CTO	Chief Technology Officer
ESC	Executive Steering Committee
FEA	Federal Enterprise Architecture
IT	Information Technology
ITIRB	Information Technology Investment Review Board
CCSQ	Centers for Clinical Standards and Quality
OFM	Office of Financial Management
OIS	Office of Information Services
PM	Program Manager
SME	Subject Matter Expert
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
TA	Technical Advisor
TRA	Technical Reference Architecture
TRB	Technical Review Board
XLC	Expedited Life Cycle