

## September 2009 Newsletter

### Time to Get Project Management Plans in Place for ARRA Funded Projects

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Cash strapped state and local governments (SLGs) are finally beginning to see stimulus money flowing into their coffers. In the scramble that took place earlier this year as SLGs hurried to respond to American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding opportunities, some may not have had adequate time to develop detailed plans for the allocation of funds, benchmarking of project successes, meeting the unprecedented oversight and transparency requirements that are attached to the stimulus, and long term management of the project once ARRA monies are exhausted. Thoughtful planning and tracking and expert project management are absolute requirements, and those that fail to tick all of those boxes will find themselves with huge headaches down the road.

In the September 1 issue of *Government Technology*, "Stimulus: Integrated Project Teams Are Best Management Option (Analysis)," author Bill Damaré offers some excellent recommendations for ARRA funded project success:

- A review of the business case with all stakeholders to ensure that the expected project outcomes can be realized in a relatively short time. It's recommended that this review include key stakeholders from the project, acquisition, finance and management departments. All assumptions, estimates and requirements need to be reset before finalizing the project plan. Remember that only a good beginning makes a good ending.
- Creation of a communication plan to ensure that the project reporting requirements described in the ARRA legislation are completely satisfied. All stakeholders should be updated periodically to make sure the project is delivering its planned value.
- Development of an acquisition strategy, which helps to determine the most appropriate type of contracting process and method of procurement. The best contracting vehicle may assign all or some of the reporting and tracking of the project's status to the successful bidder or contractor.
- Application of a disciplined project management methodology, both internally and externally.
- Creation of a comprehensive risk plan that mitigates the expectation that the resulting higher levels of service may become the expected norm after funding is exhausted.



In addition to these very important steps, hiring an independent, PMI Certified, expert project manager to take on the responsibility of managing the internal project teams, vendors, contractors, and other agencies participating in the project is key. SLGs unaccustomed to the extraordinary requirements attached to ARRA funded projects need 100% visibility to the progress of the project and the expertise necessary to ensure that the project is delivered on time, on budget, and in total compliance. The risk SLGs face in not fully adhering to the ARRA funding requirements can be disastrous on several fronts, not the least of which is castigation in the media and by taxpayer watchdog groups. It is in everyone's best interest to ensure that someone highly qualified is 100% responsible for effectively managing the project.

As far as selecting the right project management, there has never been a better time for SLGs to negotiate a great deal and still get the very best. Performance based contracts can go a long way to help make sure that every dollar is spent wisely and that your project management team lives up to its contract, meets its project milestones, and provides the metrics and accountability required.

PROGGEX is in one business and one business only: Expert project management. Our team has been proven again and again in getting highly complex projects done on time and on budget as well as coming to the rescue to get stalled or troubled projects back on track.

We would be happy to assist you with any questions you have about project management requirements for ARRA funded projects. Call us at 727-538-0830 or visit our web site at [www.proggex.com](http://www.proggex.com) today.

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