

FSA Proposed Business Justification

Initiative Name

Solution Lifecycle (SLC) – CIO #15.1

Contact Information

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Strategic Plan Information

Initiative Type (Operations, Enhancement, Modernization): Operations, Enhancements	
FSA Priority (Number): Baseline Operations	Total \$ Amount Requested: \$ 450,000

1. Please indicate a general description of the initiative and related scope of work:

The Solution Life Cycle (SLC) is a model for solution acquisitions across FSA. FSA acquires business solutions in order to meet program needs. The solution could consist of a system, software, hardware, services, etc. The SLC is designed to be the process framework used by FSA to acquire the solution. The SLC is composed of processes, tools, templates and standards that enable individual projects to align, integrate and facilitate successful solution delivery.

Previous task orders covered the initial development and deployment of six Key Process Areas (KPAs) and a toolkit to assist in the training and utilization effort. This initial development did not include the contracting component, which is needed for conclusion of the SLC development. However, this proposed effort would move the SLC closer to its target state of standardized acquisition processes, which will address the contracting component in the life cycle. This effort is also directly aligned to the FSA FY'03 Performance plan – action item #12. The CIO organization is partnering with the Acquisition Organization to accomplish this objective of creating standardized, enterprise-wide contracting processes.

This initiative has the following goals:

- Institutionalization of standardized, predictable, repeatable, measurable processes that help FSA meet its performance objectives
- Deployment of a Measurement Process Framework to capture evidence that, through the utilization of SLC processes, projects can deliver higher quality work products and solutions
- Coordinated project tasks that work towards a successful business solution

Initiatives:

- 1. Obtain directional confirmation – gain sponsorship of FSA leadership**
Confirm with COO, CIO and the FSA Acquisition Organization that all processes and templates within the SLC are endorsed as the FSA enterprise standard.
- 2. Develop the Solicitation, Evaluation, and Contract Tracking and Oversight Key Process Areas**
Create and document the processes and templates to be used for FSA solicitation activities
- 3. Roll out the SLC and provide training to FSA and Contractor resources**
FSA SLC coaches will provide training and support to project teams helping them to use and achieve SLC compliance
- 4. Enhance the change request process using the Rational tool.**
Formalize the SLC change request process and process all change requests using Rational

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2. What business problem or opportunity is this initiative intended to address and what are the benefits?

Initiatives:

1. Obtain directional confirmation – gain sponsorship of FSA leadership

Confirm with COO, CIO and the FSA Acquisition Organization that all processes and templates within the SLC are endorsed as the FSA enterprise standard.

Problem:

One set of processes and tools has not been established as the enterprise standard. Therefore, little to no consistency exists among project teams.

Benefits:

- Provides for consistent, repeatable processes and continually improves acquisition planning and project management activities
- Defines specific process improvement steps, such as enterprise change management and enterprise configuration management

2. Develop the *Solicitation, Evaluation, and Contract Tracking and Oversight* Key Process Areas.

Problem:

A gap regarding contracting practices currently exists in the SLC.

Benefits:

- Provides supplemental processes and work products to assist in solution delivery
 - Improved predictability of acquisition initiatives
 - Clarified scope, requirements and delivery commitments
 - Greater visibility of project progress for business owners
- Helps FSA consider all aspects of a solution before embarking on the effort, which further reduces poor investments before they are started
- Provides additional streamlined, predictable, repeatable, measurable processes that help FSA meet performance objectives.
- Supplies evidence of continued compliance to corrective actions resulting from the OIG audit reports (ED-OIG/A11-A0011 Audit Report).
- Supplies evidence of compliance with the Clinger Cohen Act of 1996.
- Improves program, project and contract management
- Provides effective oversight, financial management and internal controls.
 - Standard, reusable reporting, monitoring and tracking tools assist leadership in gaining understanding of current project status
- Ensures a single place of reference for all acquisition activities – from start to finish

3. Roll out the SLC and provide training to FSA and Contractor resources

Problem:

The SLC has not been fully deployed, accepted or institutionalized by FSA

Benefits

- FSA SLC coaches will provide training and support to project teams helping them to use and achieve SLC compliance
- Through the utilization of SLC processes, projects can deliver higher quality work products and solutions
- Coordinated project tasks that work towards a successfully business solution

4. Enhance the change request process using the Rational tool.

Problem:

Lack of a standardized SLC change request process

Benefits:

- A standardized environment will make it easier to track, control and monitor changes
- Utilization of the Rational Tool which is already been procured by FSA

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3. What core business area does this initiative address?

This initiative affects all new and select existing acquisition projects.

4. What action items are addressed by this initiative?

This initiative addresses Performance Plan Item #12 and Action Item CIO#15

5. How does this initiative contribute to achieving a clean audit?

This initiative provides a set of standardized tools and processes for solution acquisition activities. This is in direct alignment with Action Item # 12 of the FSA FY'03 Performance Plan. Clearly defined/standardized contracting tools and processes will assist FSA with consistent documentation of costs, resources, requirements and all other project related information.

Concerning acquisition a recent General Accounting Office report found that the Department of Housing and Urban Development's acquisition management contains weaknesses that limit the department's ability to identify and correct contractor performance problems, assure that it is receiving the services it pays for, and hold contractors accountable for results. The report showed that:

*HUD does not employ processes and practices that could facilitate effective monitoring
HUD has not ensured that individuals responsible for managing and monitoring contracts have the appropriate workload, skills and training to enable them to effectively perform their jobs;*

(FedNews OnLine <http://www.fpmi.com/FedNews/DailyNews.html>)

The Solution Lifecycle is FSA's framework that is evolving toward the capability of answering these questions and gaps called out by the GAO in their review of HUD. This initiative will also help to demonstrate responsiveness to the ED-OIG/A11-A0011 Audit Report which states: "The Federal Records Act (FRA)(44 U.S.C. 3101) requires that federal agencies "make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency.""We determined that the Department has not established adequate policies and procedures in this area."

The Department has begun to express an active interest in FSA's SLC. A number of meetings have occurred and discussions have focused upon potential Department adoption and utilization of the SLC.

6. How does this initiative contribute to reducing high-risk status?

The SLC framework contributes to the reduction of high-risk status by providing the process, procedures, training and governance oversight for all activities associated with a solution acquisition effort. Quantitative measurements are made available through the utilization of a previously developed SLC compliance matrix (which assesses high versus low risk areas of compliance). This process of compliance validation will be expanded to the three new contracting Key Process Areas.

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7. What objectives and strategies are supported by this initiative? (Please “x” those applicable)

Objectives	
O1	X
O2	X
O3	X
O4	
O5	X

Strategies			
S1		S8	
S2	X	S9	X
S3		S10	X
S4	X	S11	
S5		S12	X
S6	X	S13	
S7		S14	X

8. What are the Enterprise dependencies? (IT, Non-IT, Workforce, Within ED or External to ED, etc.)

All FSA Technical Enterprise Stakeholders are affected. Standardizing the Solution Acquisition process via the SLC across the enterprise will help to minimize potential rework, the continuous redevelopment of tools and processes to perform solution acquisition activities.

The success of this initiative will require a cooperative effort from the FSA Acquisition Organization for assistance in the development of the contracting Key Process Areas. The Acquisition Organization, along with CIO, FSA University and the Career Zone should become active sponsors and participants in the training and deployment activities for the SLC, which will contain the contracting acquisition Key Process Areas.

Also, a Department of Education’s CIO Office Representative has expressed an interest in the SLC and discussions are on going as to a possible expansion of the SLC model with some additions to the entire Department of Education.

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9. What are the total costs and savings of the initiative?

	<u>Modernization</u>	<u>Ops Gaps</u>	<u>Total</u>
Requested Funding:			\$ -
IRB Approved Funding:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
IRB Approval Date:			

<u>REQUESTED FUNDING</u>						
<u>MODERNIZATION</u>						
	Amount Requested	Actual IRB Amount Approved	Budget Owner	Contract to be provided funds	Purpose	Category (for OMB Exhibit 53 & 300 prep.)
1						
subtotal:	\$ -	\$ -				
<u>OPERATIONAL GAPS</u>						
	Amount Requested	Actual IRB Amount Approved	Budget Owner	Contract to be provided funds	Purpose	
1	\$ 150,000				Development of additional Key Process Area - Contract Tracking and Oversight	
2	\$ 150,000				Development of additional Key Process Area - Evaluation	
3	\$ 150,000				Development of additional Key Process Area - Evaluation	
4						
subtotal:	\$ 450,000	\$ -				

<u>PLEGGED OPERATIONAL FUNDS</u>					
	Amount	Budget Owner	Contract to be provided funds	Purpose	Have funds been planned & budgeted for this Purpose?*
1					

10. What is the immediate funding need?

The funding need is \$450.00K of fixed spending for development of a complete SLC framework (including three additional KPAs).

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11. What will be the initiative measures of success?

The purpose of this task is to realize the value of the SLC institutionalization. As such, the measures of success for this initiative are:

- FSA /enterprise-wide awareness, buy-in, and participation in the SLC process
- Mandated usage of the SLC by FSA and its contractors
- Successful transition of the SLC solution from Integration Partner to FSA resources
- Usage of the SLC compliance tool across all FSA acquisition projects
- Reduction of rework among Project Teams

12. What are the impacts of not funding this initiative?

Not fully developing the SLC, through the addition of the contracting Key Process Areas, would reduce the overall effectiveness of the contracting compliance objectives attached to the SLC enterprise framework. Funding this effort would enable FSA to solicit the necessary contractor support to compliment FSA development and deployment efforts, as well ensure the transition of these roles and responsibilities to FSA staff for full ownership and operations.