



# **NASA Standard Operating Procedure**

## **Procedures for Updating and Managing NASA's Plan of Actions and Milestones**

**ITS-SOP-0009**

**Effective Date: 2/06/2007**

**Expiration Date: 2/06/2008**

**Responsible Office: OCIO**



# **Updating and Managing NASA's Plan of Actions and Milestones**

## **Objective:**

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides requirements for the timely and accurate updating of NASA's Plan of Actions and Milestones (POA&M). The Agency relies on the automated CATS II application to meet NASA and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) directed Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) POA&M action tracking and reporting requirements. The Centers' input and update of the NASA CATS II system is critical in meeting those requirements.

## **References:**

1. Security of Information Technology (NASA Procedures and Requirements (NPR) 2810.1A)
2. Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) of 2002

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The NASA Deputy CIO for IT Security and Center CIOs or his or her designated representative are responsible for entering initial data and update milestone status in the CATS II system in the required time frame.

## **Process:**

All weaknesses identified as part of an external or internal audit or review and any other known weaknesses with any NASA system are to be input into the CATS II system.

A weakness is any recommendation made as part of a final Office of Inspector General (OIG) or Government Accountability Office (GAO) audit report and any NASA 3<sup>rd</sup> party review recommendation. Any weaknesses that are corrected or mitigated during a review or audit and are identified as being closed in the final report are still required to be entered into CATS II.

In the CATS II system you are expected to identify the POC, Resources (estimate) required to correct or mitigate the weakness, schedule of completion, the date by which the weakness will be corrected/mitigated, all Milestones and dates associated with major steps (critical milestones) when you have a multi-step process for correcting the weakness that spans a period longer than 6 months. If you have any delays or changes that affect the established schedule/milestones then any change in dates are to be entered as a Change to milestones, briefly explaining the change. Include audit or review number if it exists and include status if the actions are ongoing or date if the action is complete.

Each Center is expected to validate that they have entered and updated the status information one week prior to the OMB FISMA reporting Date. OMB requires NASA to report September 1<sup>st</sup>, December 1<sup>st</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

1. All weaknesses will be entered into the CATS II system within ten working days of the issuance of the final report that identifies the weakness.
2. The CIO should make use of their Audit Liaison Representative (ALR) to the greatest extent practicable to assist in using CATS II to track weaknesses.
3. Agency, Center, or system personnel seeking to close a weakness identified by the NASA OIG or GAO, should provide the supporting information necessary for the OIG to concur. Weaknesses identified by the OIG or GAO must receive concurrence from the OIG before they can be designated as closed. Only the OIG or GAO has the official ability to close out a weakness identified in an audit initiated by the OIG or GAO. After OIG or GAO acknowledges that the recommendation is closed then the Agency, Center, or system personnel seeking to close a weakness identified can close the recommendation in CATS II. All documentation needed to gain the OIG concurrence shall be maintained by the Center CIO for a period of three years from the closing date of the weakness.
4. Agency, Center, or system personnel seeking to close an ITS weakness identified by an organization other than the NASA OIG or GAO should provide the supporting information necessary for the Center CIO to concur.
5. After the proper coordination and approve has been accomplished and documented, closing the entry in CATS II is the responsibility of Senior Agency Information Security Official (or designee) or the Center IT Security Manager (or designee).



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S. Scott Santiago  
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Information Technology Security

2/06/2007

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Date

**Definition:**

Closed Weakness: A weakness that has been eliminated or mitigated to the satisfaction of the OIG and/or the Center CIO and has been closed by the Agency, Center, or system.

Final Report: Only the final report from an audit or review organization should be utilized to identify open weaknesses that need to be entered into the CATS II application. The final report should identify open weaknesses and closed weaknesses.

IT Security Weakness: Any weakness germane to IT security that is discovered during the process of internal or external reviews, audits, certifications, and/or penetration tests with the stated purpose of uncovering IT security risks.

Open Weaknesses: Weaknesses that are documented in an audit or review organization's final report as not being mitigated or eliminated.

Plans of Action and Milestones (POA&M): A document that identifies tasks needing to be accomplished. It details resources required to accomplish the elements of the plan, any milestones in meeting the tasks, and scheduled completion dates for the milestones.