

Independent Program and Cost Evaluation

Cost Analysis Division Charter

The Cost Analysis Division (CAD), within the Office of Independent Program and Cost Evaluation (IPCE), has the responsibility for establishing and maintaining cost estimating policy, cost estimating methodologies (with an emphasis of cost risk techniques), tools, and databases. The CAD is also responsible for communicating cost policy to both internal and external stakeholders. The CAD develops estimates and analyses for NASA organizations on an as-needed basis. CAD's primary goal is to improve the quality of NASA cost estimates that are used to support budget requests.

To accomplish this goal, the CAD identifies cost estimating issues with the NASA community, sponsors research to resolve estimating weakness and/or data, promulgates cost estimating guidance and best practices by publishing and maintaining a Cost Estimating Handbook, demonstrates and disseminates cost estimating approaches, develops requirements for requisite training and education, and assists in developing estimates and analyses where appropriate. The CAD also measures the quality of cost estimates and develops appropriate strategies to correct weakness in estimating methodologies, data, or management processes.

More specifically, the CAD:

- Identifies cost methodology and data weaknesses within the NASA community;
- In close coordination with the Independent Program Assessment Office (IPAO), jointly sponsors, coordinates, and disseminates research on cost and schedule estimating methods, models and data;
- Recommends and approves use of appropriate estimating methodologies and tools;
- Recommends, coordinates and promulgates cost estimating policies and best practices in a Cost Estimating Handbook
- Ensures cost estimate policies and best practices are followed by assessing cost estimates at Key Decision Points;
- Initiates, coordinates, and sponsors an agency wide program to collect and disseminate cost, schedule, and technical project data;
- Establishes training requirements and oversees the education and training of the Agency cost estimating community;
- Provides Independent Cost Assessments or other ad-hoc cost estimates or analyses for the IPAO upon request;
- Assists Strategic Investment Division, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, in assessing program and project budget requests for cost and schedule realism;
- Provides cost estimating support to IPCE Studies and Analysis Division;
- Develops estimates and analyses for other NASA stakeholders;
- Coordinates with other NASA offices to ensure policies and procedures are in place for effective cost management of projects;
- Communicates and coordinates cost policy to internal stakeholders; and
- Communicates and educates NASA's cost policies to external stakeholders including Congress, OMB, the Government Accountability Office, the Department of Defense, the contracting community, and the international and intelligence space cost estimating community.