

NASA Independent Assessment Transition FAQ

By NASA HQ – The Strategic Investments Division

Table of Contents

Commonly used Acronyms:.....	3
NASA Independent Assessment Reorganization	4
Did NASA get rid of Independent Assessment (IA)?	4
Does this reorganization affect all NASA independent assessments?	4
Does the reorganization affect NPR 7120.5E requirement?	4
Is the SRB Handbook still validate? And if so, who owns it?	4
Is the SRB Handbook going to be updated to reflect NASA’s new independent assessment model?	4
Why did NASA adjust its independent assessment model?	4
Does NASA’s proposed change effect the independence of SRB’s?	4
Transition and New Responsibilities	5
Now that OoE/IPAO is disbanded, who owns the SRB process?	5
Who are the Convening Authorities and what does “concurrence” mean?	5
What does “concurrence” mean?.....	5
How is the Agency monitoring mission directorate transition progress?	6
What are the timeframes associated with legal counsel support for the new model?	6
What is the status of transitioning the IA functions to the mission directorates?	6
Which major projects have used the new independent assessment model?	6
If I’m a project manager, who do I contact for SRB support?.....	6
What are the current challenges for this new independent assessment model?	6
What are the anticipated or observed benefits with the new model?	7
What are any benefits and challenges reported by projects with the new model?	7
What efficiencies and synergies are expected to be gained in the new IA model?	7
Did NASA consult with the ASAP or NAC prior to implementing this change?	7
Delegation of Authority and Independence	7
How is NASA ensuring SRB personnel have adequate independence in their reporting structure while serving on an SRB?	7
Will people working in a project be used to perform IAs of that same project?.....	7
How can NASA maintain independent assessments of its programs when those responsible for the programs are closely related to those conducting the reviews?.....	8
How does NASA define "independent"?	8
What steps other steps is NASA taking to ensure that the independent assessment function becomes viewed as an integral management and oversight function?	8
Retention and Dissemination of Corporate Knowledge, Training.....	9

How does NASA plan to retain the institutional knowledge associated with the IPAO? 9

How will NASA ensure that the practices followed by individual Mission Directorates and Centers follow agency best practices? 9

What are the expectations for members for the SRB in this new model? 9

Will the standards and practices developed by the IPAO remain in place for other entities, such as the Mission Directorates and Centers, to follow? 10

What steps has the agency taken or plan to take to prevent the mission directorates from becoming “silos” of information? 10

How will NASA ensure promulgation of lessons learned throughout the agency? 10

What changes does OCFO plan to makes to cost and schedule analyses methods and standards and their implementation now that it assumed responsibility for that area? 10

Will NASA provide OMB with a copy of the findings of SRBs within 30 days of their presentation? 10

Review Boards 10

 What is the process that mission directorates will follow to ensure independence of standing review board members?..... 10

 Have OCE and OCFO set up processes to review the Terms of Reference for SRBs? If so, what specific issues are those organizations focused on during their reviews? 11

 Are there any concerns about workforce capacity (i.e. too many projects and not enough civil servants to cover the work)? 11

 Can a contractor be on an SRB or are only civil servants allowed? 11

 Does the agency anticipate that the use of civil service personnel will enhance the assessment function? If so, how?..... 11

 Are there other benefits of using consensus boards?..... 11

 Are there any concerns about SRB membership changes for ongoing programs?..... 11

 How is NASA going to find appropriate programmatic analysts to support SRBs? 11

 How is OCFO communicating with the Centers? 12

 Does the OCFO assign programmatic analysts to the SRB? 12

 Will the staff be full-time or will this be an “other duty as assigned?” 12

 Have SRB chairs requested OCE and OCFO assistance in identifying SRB members for more recent reviews?... 13

Mission Directorate-led Independent Assessment Implementation Plans 13

 Will there be further guidance from the MD’s on IA implementation plans? 13

 Is the vision that processes will be put in place that are uniform throughout the MDs, or will they each have their own unique independent assessment methodology? 13

 Is NASA going to have an external group assess the new implementation approach? 13

Agency Programmatic Analysis Capability..... 13

 Does the new restructuring affect anything else besides who owns the SRB process? 13

 What is APAC? 13

Rumors and Legends..... 14

 Does the new IA structure mean that I don’t have to have an ICE performed on my project from my Center? . 14

Works Cited..... 14

Commonly used Acronyms:

AA – Associate Administrator
APMC – Agency Project Management Council
CAD – Cost Analysis Division
CE – Convening Authority
DPMC – Directorate Project Management Council
GAO – General Accountability Office
HEOMD – Human Exploration Office Mission Directorate
IA – Independent Assessment
ICE – Independent Cost Estimate
IPAO – Independent Program Assessment Office
KDP – Key Decision Point
LaRC – Langley Research Center
MD – Mission Directorate
MDAA - Mission Directorate Associate Administrator
NPD – NASA Policy Directive
NPR – NASA Procedural Requirements
OCC - Office of Chief Counsel
OCE – Office of Chief Engineer
OCFO - Office of Chief Financial Officer
OMB – Office of Management and Budget
OoE – Office of Evaluation
PE – Program Executive
SID – Strategic Investments Division
SMD – Science Mission Directorate
SRB – Standing Review Board
STMD – Science Technology Mission Directorate
ToR – Terms of Reference

NASA Independent Assessment Reorganization

Did NASA get rid of Independent Assessment (IA)?

Absolutely no. In October 2015 the NASA Associate Administrator realigned the Agency's independent assessment function. The Office of Evaluation/Independent Program Assessment Office (OoE/IPAO) was disbanded and the execution function of performing NASA's Standing Review Boards were delegated to the Mission Directorates and Centers. As stated in the Associate Administrator's memorandum Independent Assessment of NASA Programs and Projects, "To be clear, independent assessment of NASA Programs and Projects will continue. Mission Directorates in coordination with executing Centers will be responsible for selecting the Standing Review Board (SRB) chair and recruiting the Agency's expertise to populate the board and providing that to the Decision Authority, the NASA Associate Administrator."

Does this reorganization affect all NASA independent assessments?

No, the realignment of responsibilities only affect the Standing Review Board process as captured in NPR 7120.5E.

Does the reorganization affect NPR 7120.5E requirement?

No, NPR 7120.5 requirements have not been changed. The SRB function within NPR 7120.5 has not changed with regards to roles, responsibilities, and process. The only aspect effected who is responsible for the SRB implementation. That responsibility is now on the Mission Directorates and Centers.

Is the SRB Handbook still validate? And if so, who owns it?

Yes, there will be no major structural changes to the SRB handbook. The SRB handbook will continue jointly owned by Mission Directorates, OCE, and OCFO - with OCE acting as book manager (NASA).

Is the SRB Handbook going to be updated to reflect NASA's new independent assessment model?

Yes. The initial update to the SRB Handbook is targeted for completion by the end of 2016. The initial changes to the SRB Handbook will reflect adjustments to the independent assessment transition described in the Agency Independent Assessment Principles and Approach white paper (NASA). Initial update to the SRB Handbook will provide near-term guidance and enable NASA to take advantage of additional time to gain experience in implementing the new approach before making any significant changes to the handbook. NASA will assess the timeframe for a follow-up update once the Agency acquires sufficient experience in implementing the new approach.

Why did NASA adjust its independent assessment model?

This new model aligns the Agency independent assessment function to ensure mission success and to enhance management accountability. Organizationally, Agency independent assessment has been decentralized from the OoE/IPAO to the MDs with support from the Centers. Robust independent assessment of NASA Flight Programs and projects is essential for long-term mission success and will continue under the new model. Under this model, the corporate knowledge, expertise, and rigor amassed over the many years of independent assessment performed by the IPAO is preserved, while opportunities for enhanced synergy and efficiencies are gained. The new approach will expand participation in independent assessment of talent form across the Agency. This broader participation will enhance sharing of best practices between mission areas and increase learning and synergy between in-line and independent programmatic analysis work. (NASA)

Does NASA's proposed change effect the independence of SRB's?

The requirements for independence have not changed. These requirements include: SRB members coming from a separate chain of command from the project/program under review; SRB members funded from a separate source from the project/program under review; and SRB members selected with no conflict of interest (e.g. no stake or involvement in the design, build or operation of the work reviewed). Although the requirements for vetting for conflict of interest have remained the same, under the new model the responsibility for conducting the

vetting is being updated to support the decentralized approach. The Langley Research Center’s (LaRC) Office of Chief Counsel (OCC) has provided a key role in ensuring that SRB members are appropriately vetted under the old centralized model. Continuation of LaRC’s support has been utilized during transition to assist the legal counsels assuming these responsibilities under the new distributed model to help ensure that the integrity of the Agency’s independence is not compromised during the transition. The updated vetting approach will be outlined in the update to the NASA Standing Review Board Handbook that is in work. It is expected to have the update to the SRB handbook finalized by the end of the calendar year 2016.

Transition and New Responsibilities

Now that OoE/IPAO is disbanded, who owns the SRB process?

Under this new model, the MDs with support from the Centers will own the independent assessment of their Programs and projects. It is their responsibility to organize and perform independent assessments that provide timely, accurate, and informed risks, cost and schedule assessments, and overall performance projections to the decision makers at key decision points during the life cycle of their Programs and projects.

MDs with Center support assume the functions previously performed by the IPAO for Agency-level reviews of Programs, Category 1 and Category 2 projects. These functions include the planning and manifesting of independent reviews, organizing and staffing of independent review teams, monitoring execution of the reviews, reporting results, and capturing lessons learned. (NASA)

Who are the Convening Authorities and what does “concurrence” mean?

The Convening Authority (CA) roles under the new model are shown in the table below. The Decision Authority roles remain the same under the new model. The MDs with support from the Centers will coordinate on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the reviews (including review board membership) with the OCE and OCFO personnel embedded in the MDs. The responsible organizations, MDs, report directly to the Associate Administrator (AA) whose level of insight in independent assessment is unchanged under the new model. (NASA)

Convening Authorities for Standing Review Board

	Decision Authority		Technical Authority		Chief Financial Officer **
	NASA AA	MDAA	NASA CE*	Center Director(s)	
Programs	Approve	Approve	Concur	Approve	Concur
Category 1 Projects	Approve	Approve	Concur	Approve	Concur
Category 2 Projects		Approve	Concur	Approve	Concur
Category 3 Projects		Approve		Approve	

NASA CE = NASA Chief Engineer. MDAA = Mission Directorate Associate Administrator.

* Concurrence is obtained via coordination with designated MD Chief Engineer.

** Concurrence is obtained via coordination with designated MD embedded OCFO point of contact.

What does “concurrence” mean?

Concurrence means that these organizations are actively engaged in the discussions and are coordinated via personnel from these organizations embedded within the Mission Directorates with no formal signatures being required.

How is the Agency monitoring mission directorate transition progress?

The former IPAO Director has been assigned to support the NASA Associate Administrator during the initial transition to help oversee the implementation of the new model and to ensure consistency. Additionally, personnel within OCE and OCFO will help ensure that best practices are being followed by the MDs, with support from the Centers. The former IPAO Director will be monitoring transition through calendar year 2017. Points of contact for the transition team are listed below:

ORGANIZATION	POINT OF CONTACT
ADMINISTRATOR'S SUITE	James Ortiz
OCE	Ellen Stigberg
OCFO	Cris Guidi, Charles Hunt
HEOMD	Greg Williams, Dan Hamilton
SMD	Greg Robinson
STMD	Prasun Desai, Trina Chytka

What are the timeframes associated with legal counsel support for the new model?

Currently LaRC's OCC is supporting legal counsel support. Specific implementation on legal counsel support is planned to be set before the end of the 2016 calendar year.

What is the status of transitioning the IA functions to the mission directorates?

MDs, OCE and OCFO implementation plans have been in development in parallel with Agency HQ guidance. SMD has established draft practices and policies guidance, HEOMD has completed an Independent Assessment Implementation Plan, and STMD is in the process of developing their independent assessment plan. All relevant IPAO documentation has been transferred to the appropriate MDs and OCFO. MDs have actively taken over leadership of the Standing Review Board (SRB) activities and are conducting all existing reviews. OCE has maintained its role as the technical expertise steward and is providing support consistent with legacy Agency SRB implementation policies and procedures.

From a programmatic perspective, OCFO is working closely with the MDs and each new SRB to make sure all programmatic transition efforts run as efficiently as possible. The programmatic personnel that have supported the SRBs following the transition have been coordinated with OCFO by the MDs. The legacy IPAO programmatic Standard Operating Procedure manual is being utilized to ensure consistency and rigor with regard to the analyses.

Which major projects have used the new independent assessment model?

Several reviews have been completed under the new independent assessment model. All projects currently in review are utilizing the new independent assessment model.

If I'm a project manager, who do I contact for SRB support?

The appropriate entry point would be by your HQ Program Executive (PE).

What are the current challenges for this new independent assessment model?

NASA recognizes the main challenges of properly populating each review with the appropriate skill sets while maintaining consistent independent analysis. MDs, Centers, OCE, and OCFO are all working implementation details to ensure that this challenge is successfully addressed. Another key area of opportunity and challenge deals with expected cultural shift by which MDs and Centers take enhanced ownership of independent assessment. The agency is monitoring this closely with MDs and Centers responding well during the initial implementation.

What are the anticipated or observed benefits with the new model?

Under this model the corporate knowledge, expertise, and rigor amassed over the many years of independent assessment performed by the IPAO is preserved, while opportunities for enhanced synergy and efficiencies are gained. The new approach will expand participation in independent assessment by drawing from the wealth of talent across the Agency. This broader participation will enhance sharing of best practices between mission areas and increase learning and synergy between in-line and independent programmatic analysis work. NASA recognizes the main challenges of properly populating each review with the appropriate skill sets while maintaining consistent independent analysis. MDs, Centers, OCE, and OCFO are all working implementation details to ensure that this challenge is successfully addressed. Another key area of opportunity and challenge deals with expected cultural shift by which MDs and Centers take enhanced ownership of independent assessment. The agency is monitoring this closely with MDs and Centers responding well during the initial implementation. (NASA)

What are any benefits and challenges reported by projects with the new model?

It is too early in the implementation period to report realized benefits and challenges.

What efficiencies and synergies are expected to be gained in the new IA model?

There are two areas of tangible improvement we are expecting to see from a programmatic perspective. First, by utilizing a larger cross-section of personnel, along with their in-line duties, the utilization of the community is likely to improve. Second, the new model further facilitates the communication and dissemination of the Agency's programmatic best practices and state-of-the-art programmatic techniques.

Did NASA consult with the ASAP or NAC prior to implementing this change?

No consultation took place with ASAP or NAC prior to this change.

Delegation of Authority and Independence

How is NASA ensuring SRB personnel have adequate independence in their reporting structure while serving on an SRB?

Delegation of Independent Assessment responsibility and accountability is delegated to the MDs. Centers support the MDs in carrying out this function. Organizationally, the Agency independent assessment has been decentralized from the Office of Evaluation/Independent Program Assessment Office (OoE/IPAO) to the MDs with support from the Centers. Under this new model, the MDs with support from the Centers will own the independent assessment of their Programs and projects. Independent Assessment of Programs and projects continue under the responsibility and accountability of the MD with support from the Centers. The level of insight of the AA in Independent Assessment under the new approach remains the same as the MDs having responsibility and accountability for IA report directly to the AA. The responsible organizations, MDs, report directly to the Associate Administrator (AA) whose level of insight in independent assessment is unchanged under the new model. MDs report to AA for Independent Assessment (no change in AA level of insight). SRBs continue to report independently of the project/program under review and present their findings to the Center Management Council (CMC), Directorate Project Management Council (DPMC), and Agency Program Management Council (APMC) level when required by Agency policy. There has been no change to the SRB reporting structure. Additionally, the former IPAO Director, currently assigned to the NASA AA, has visited with all the NASA Centers to discuss the new IA approach and while paper and has emphasized the above points in his visits.

Will people working in a project be used to perform IAs of that same project?

No, they will be pulled out to provide independent assessments on other projects, not their own. This is similar to the way that SRB membership is conducted currently.

How can NASA maintain independent assessments of its programs when those responsible for the programs are closely related to those conducting the reviews?

Robust independent assessment of NASA Flight Programs and projects is essential for long-term mission success and will continue under the new model. The new independent assessment model clarifies Mission and Center management responsibility and accountability for independent assessment and also expands participation in independent assessment of talent from across the Agency. This broader participation will enhance sharing of best practices between mission areas and increase learning and synergy between them.

NASA maintains robust independent assessment of its programs and projects under the new model as described in the following:

- Requirements for independent assessment of spaceflight Programs and projects at life-cycle reviews, including required assessment products, are specified in NASA Procedural Requirements (NPR) documentation and these requirements have not changed under the new model.
- Standing Review Boards (SRBs) will continue performing independent assessments at life-cycle reviews.
- The following important characteristics of SRBs are maintained under the new model.
 - SRBs are composed of technical and programmatic experts who have relevant and current experience, are independent from the Program and projects under review, and are free from organizational and personal conflicts of interest.
 - SRBs engage with the Programs and projects through their life cycles to provide continuity.
 - SRBs perform their assessments in accordance with the charter issued by the Convening Authorities for the review and report their results and recommendations to the Decision Authority independent of the Program and project under review.
- The staffing, chartering, and reporting processes for SRBs contain built-in checks and balances provided by the Office of the Chief Engineer for technical matters and by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer for programmatic (cost and schedule) matters. These organizations are part of the Convening Authorities for the reviews but are separate from the Mission Directorates and Centers.

How does NASA define "independent"?

The parameters that ensure the independence of the review teams are not altered by the new model. SRB independence is ensured by selecting SRB members who (1) are not in the chain of command of the Program or project under review and with the SRB chair being independent of the performing Center or institution; (2) funded by a source that is separate from the Program or project under review; and (3) free from any personal or organizational conflict of interest such that they have no stake or involvement in the design, build, or operation of the work being reviewed. These parameters have not changed with the new model. Vetting of SRB civil servants and non-civil servant members or consultants to ensure their independence will continue per guidance provided in the NASA SRB Handbook.

What steps other steps is NASA taking to ensure that the independent assessment function becomes viewed as an integral management and oversight function?

In addition to the series of Center visits currently underway by the Independent Assessment Transition Team, MDs have been working very closely with the programs and projects in the development of MD best practices and approaches for independent assessments. From a programmatic perspective, guidance for SRB programmatic support is being readdressed to help facilitate and enable this new culture shift.

Retention and Dissemination of Corporate Knowledge, Training

How does NASA plan to retain the institutional knowledge associated with the IPAO?

Preservation of the lessons learned and recommended best practices from many years of experience conducting independent assessment of NASA flight Programs and projects by IPAO is a key part of the new model. We are focusing our efforts in the following key areas:

- **Review Guidance:** IPAO has captured guidelines based on best practices and lessons learned for the conduct of independent assessments in the SRB Handbook. The OCE will assume ownership of the SRB handbook. The SRB handbook will be updated as needed to reflect the changes implemented as part of the new model and to capture best practices from lessons learned going forward.
- **Cost and Schedule Analysis Methods and Standards:** IPAO has developed methods and standards for the performance of cost and schedule analyses in support of independent reviews performed by SRBs. As part of this change, the NASA OCFO is assuming the role as the programmatic analysis capability leader for the agency including assuming ownership over cost and schedule analyses methods and standards. OCFO will work with the Mission Directorates and Centers to examine, adjust, and broaden the applicability of these methods and standards to address both in-line and independent assessment work.
- **Competency stewardship:** Consideration has been given to preserve the competencies previously maintained by IPAO in: cost and schedule analysis; review management; and for preparing new SRB members for service. New organizational stewards have been designated for maintaining these competencies, leveraging on IPAO developed training, tools, processes and other infrastructure.
- **Involvement from experienced personnel:** Direct transfer of corporate knowledge has taken place assisted by former IPAO personnel that have transferred to Mission Directorates and Centers and from personnel already in those organizations that have participated in SRBs as members or Chairs. These individuals are helping guide the implementation of the new model.
- **Training Activities:** Planning is underway to conduct pause-and-learn activities led by the Mission Directorates and involving former IPAO personnel to discuss lessons learned and best practices that apply to the new model.

How will NASA ensure that the practices followed by individual Mission Directorates and Centers follow agency best practices?

IPAO has captured guidelines based on best practices and lessons learned for the conduct of independent assessments in the SRB Handbook. The former IPAO Director will support the NASA Associate Administrator during the initial implementation to help oversee the implementation of the new model and to ensure consistency. Additionally, embedded personnel from OCE and OCFO will help ensure best practices are being followed by the Mission Directorates with support from the Centers.

What are the expectations for members for the SRB in this new model?

The qualifications for Review Managers, SRB Chairs, and SRB members (including programmatic analysts) will remain the same. Review Managers will be assigned by the Mission Directorates or their supporting Centers. As part of the transition to the new model, the training infrastructure developed by IPAO is being transferred to the Mission Directorates for training new Review Managers. Under the new model experienced personnel with the pre-requisite qualifications performing in-line programmatic work in other projects or mission areas will be assigned to SRBs by the Mission Directorates and their supporting Centers in consultation with the OCFO. As part of their new role as programmatic analysis capability lead, OCFO is leveraging on IPAO training products to create training materials specifically for programmatic SRB support as well as developing a programmatic training curriculum. OCFO already has an established infrastructure for training: The OCFO University. All training will be available to Center and Mission Directorate personnel through the OCFO University.

Will the standards and practices developed by the IPAO remain in place for other entities, such as the Mission Directorates and Centers, to follow?

Yes. IPAO standards and practices are continuing to be used in the performance of independent assessment by SRBs and have been captured and documented for transfer to the organizations assuming responsibility for independent assessment.

What steps has the agency taken or plan to take to prevent the mission directorates from becoming “silos” of information?

Agency governance documents and the SRB handbook will continue to provide centralized guidance. NASA staff offices, OCE and OCFO, are providing stewardship for technical and programmatic support. Specifically, from a programmatic perspective, OCFO is providing consistent guidance to the SRB analysts regardless of which MDs they are supporting. Furthermore, all programmatic data produced in support of the SRB will be collected and archived within OCFO to ensure future best practices can be honed and existing issues can be identified and mitigated.

How will NASA ensure promulgation of lessons learned throughout the agency?

From a programmatic perspective, OCFO is collecting lessons learned from each review so that best practices can be honed and existing issues can be identified and mitigated. In addition, NASA MDs intend to archive all lessons learned from each SRB consistent with former IPAO practices. Cross-pollination of each MD's lessons learned will be conducted periodically to prevent stove-piped implementation efforts. Discussions on implementation are underway within the Independent Assessment Transition Team.

What changes does OCFO plan to make to cost and schedule analyses methods and standards and their implementation now that it assumed responsibility for that area?

OCFO's primary objective is to maintain the consistency and rigor of SRB programmatic support. The assumption is that all governing documents (e.g., NPRs and NPDs) will be evaluated in a consistent manner as previously evaluated by the IPAO. To that end, OCFO is working on updating the Standard Operating Procedure Instruction (SOPI) manual to better facilitate communication of expectations to the broader population of eligible analysts. It is not anticipated that any cost and schedule analysis methods will be changed and any adjustments to standards will be completed to provide clarifications to guidance where necessary.

Will NASA provide OMB with a copy of the findings of SRBs within 30 days of their presentation?

As requested by OMB, and consistent with the release of SRB information outside the Agency, NASA will release the briefing provided to the governing council for spaceflight projects/programs (Directorate Project Management Council (DPMC) or Agency Project Management Council (APMC) per agency policy) containing the findings of SRBs and the project/program responses to those findings. These will be released after they have been presented to the governing board and the governing board has concluded its deliberations regarding the program/project lifecycle review that in some cases includes the completion of actions given by the board to the project and/or SRB (as it was the case for SLS PDR/KDP-C). The intent of NASA is to provide OMB with a more complete context for the SRB findings and its disposition.

Review Boards

What is the process that mission directorates will follow to ensure independence of standing review board members?

The standards for SRB member independence remained unaltered with the new independent assessment model. Steps for selecting SRB membership have not substantively changed from what is documented in the current

version of the SRB handbook. While select tactical updates may be necessary (e.g., responsible Chief Counsel for independence vetting), no broad changes are anticipated due to this new independent assessment model.

Have OCE and OCFO set up processes to review the Terms of Reference for SRBs? If so, what specific issues are those organizations focused on during their reviews?

The ToR review process is managed by the NASA Review Manager assigned to the SRB. The Review Manager coordinates with the NASA Convening Authorities for review and obtains approval/concurrence of the ToR. The Convening Authorities are the management officials responsible for convening the program or project independent reviews performed by a SRB. The NASA Convening Authorities include the NASA AA, Mission Directorate AA, Center Director, OCFO, and OCE. Per the SRB Handbook, the NASA Review Manager assigned to the SRB is responsible for coordinating with all of the Convening Authorities to review the ToR, reconcile comments, and obtain approvals/concurrences. OCE and OCFO review the ToR to ensure appropriate technical and programmatic cost and schedule analysis objectives are aligned with NASA policy, within the scope of the program/project as part of the SRB independent assessment.

Are there any concerns about workforce capacity (i.e. too many projects and not enough civil servants to cover the work)?

There is concern that the availability of civil servants will not always align with the demand of future reviews. Gaps will be mitigated tactically by supplementing, as needed, additional contracted support, and strategically by readdressing the foundational resource pool of qualified programmatic analysts.

Can a contractor be on an SRB or are only civil servants allowed?

There is no stipulations against a contractor serving on an SRB, however intent is to utilize the NASA Civil Servant workforce as much as possible¹.

Does the agency anticipate that the use of civil service personnel will enhance the assessment function? If so, how?

Yes. Enhanced participation of civil servants in SRBs enables the objective under the new independent assessment model to broaden involvement of talent from across the agency. This broadened involvement opens the door for enhanced learning and synergies across diverse mission areas and for providing the independent teams with a greater diversity of perspectives to augment the overall assessment. In addition, there are also cost efficiencies involved with the use of civil servants in SRBs.

Are there other benefits of using consensus boards?

Senior Civil Servants that are tapped to participate in/chair SRBs tend to have a more current understanding and command of the agency project management policies, practices, and issues that could affect project performance. Also, because they are not dedicated reviewers, they tend to better focus the assessments.

Are there any concerns about SRB membership changes for ongoing programs?

Once the new assessment model is in place, NASA does not expect any more volatility to SRB membership than under the legacy model.

How is NASA going to find appropriate programmatic analysts to support SRBs?

NASA will be utilizing the full programmatic pool of analysts within the Agency to help support SRBs. OCFO is actively working with each MD to understand the anticipated review manifest. Review manifest has been augmented by anticipating needed programmatic skill sets, amount of programmatic support needed for each review, and anticipated personnel commitment levels. The manifest represents the SRB demand function for the

¹ This includes NASA's FFRDC—JPL.

community. The manifest is being communicated to each Center on a quarterly basis, via the OCFO chain of command, for each Center to respond with eligible personnel. OCFO will work with the Centers and MDs to determine the most efficient allocation of provided Center resources for the Agency SRB manifest. Efficient allocation will take into account: Availability and timing, skill sets, balancing of experience levels, conflict of interest constraints, and continuity to SRB support throughout the lifecycle. Any gaps in SRB programmatic support will be supplied by contracted support. OCFO can help facilitate and orchestrate appropriate support, but MDs and Centers would have authority to choose support (as long as support is consistent with conflict of interest policies). OCFO will orchestrate between Centers and SRBs any issues that arise (e.g., realized skill gaps, availability issues due to review dates moving or due to analysts moving out of the community/Agency, additional resources become available, etc.).

How is OCFO communicating with the Centers?

OCFO is communicating with Center’s via its new Agency Programmatic Analysis Capability framework. The APAC framework is similar to the NASA Engineering Safety Center structure in many ways, in that it will take advantage of the Agency-wide programmatic capabilities as they reside at each center and NASA Headquarters. Governance of the APAC flows through the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) chain of command.

SRB programmatic support is being implemented by Headquarters’ Strategic Investments Division (SID) staff.

People, Policies, Tools, Guidance, Working Group Leadership

Coordinates the application of programmatic resources to support programmatic analysis work (both in-line and independent assessment), including knowledge services and lessons learned, standards, trend evaluation, access to programmatic information. Center CFOs have identified a Center Programmatic Analysis Capability (CPAC) point of contact to coordinate center/MD programmatic resources (analysts and tools). Refer to the table below for your local CPAC representative.

CENTER	CPAC REP
AFRC	LaVonne Bour
ARC	Tommy Paine
GRC	Bob Sefcik
GSFC	Sherri Corbo
JPL	Fred Doumani
JSC	Sid Schmidt
KSC	Terry Lambing
LARC	Chuck Brooks
MSFC	Rhega Gordon
SSC	James Bevis

Does the OCFO assign programmatic analysts to the SRB?

No. OCFO is recommending programmatic support based off of orchestration between the Center’s available personal and the SRB needs (timeline and skill set). A programmatic analyst will still need approval from their management to support an SRB, as well as support from the MD and SRB Chair.

Will the staff be full-time or will this be an “other duty as assigned?”

Time commitments will be dependent on the type and scale of the review. While it is anticipated that there will be times when an analyst is working full-time on a review, it is NOT anticipated that analysts will be supporting reviews full-time.

Have SRB chairs requested OCE and OCFO assistance in identifying SRB members for more recent reviews?

OCFO has been requested to help facilitate finding appropriate programmatic expertise by most reviews thus far. OCFO is also actively reaching out to SRBs, via the MDs, to assist as well. OCE has maintained its role as the technical expertise steward and is providing support consistent with legacy Agency SRB implementation. The technical experts/engineers are well known throughout the Agency through daily working relationships with the programs, projects, MDs, and Centers. The MDs and Centers can readily identify the technical candidates for SRB membership, and rarely have to consult OCE for an input. OCE is available to assist as needed to help identify technical SRB member candidates.

Mission Directorate-led Independent Assessment Implementation Plans

Will there be further guidance from the MD's on IA implementation plans?

Yes; SMD has produced a set of draft practices and policies guidance for the transition period and an implementation plan, similar to HEOMD's, is under works that is planned to be finished by the end of the 2016 calendar year.

Is the vision that processes will be put in place that are uniform throughout the MDs, or will they each have their own unique independent assessment methodology?

Each MD is still bound by NASA's NPD and NPR documents as well as the SRB handbook. It is recognized that processes may differ as each MD implements their independent assessment methodology, but differences will be monitored and communicated between MD's, OCFO, and OCE to maintain cohesion on rigor and consistency.

Is NASA going to have an external group assess the new implementation approach?

The NASA AA has asked GAO to assess the IA implementation as part of their 2017 quick look activities and GAO is already engaged.

Agency Programmatic Analysis Capability

Does the new restructuring affect anything else besides who owns the SRB process?

Yes. The other functioning office within OoE, the Cost Analysis Division (CAD), transitioned to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. On March 16, 2016, the NASA OCFO announced that the Cost Analysis Division would be absorbed within the Strategic Investments Division (SID) and SID would assume the responsibility of implementing Agency programmatic expertise on behalf of OCFO. SID is the steward for the Agency Programmatic Analysis Capability (APAC).

What is APAC?

The objective of the APAC function is to improve the programmatic performance across the Agency by developing and maintaining programmatic best practices and working with appropriate NASA personnel to hone and enhance current practices. The goal is that the entire programmatic community within the Agency has the appropriate knowledge and toolsets at their disposal to support mission success. In addition to the enhancing the broader NASA programmatic community, APAC's will provide, when needed, consulting support to Programs, projects, Mission Directorates, and SRB's.

The NASA HQ OCFO will assume the role of Agency Programmatic Analysis Capability (APAC) Leadership and will oversee the implementation of two programmatic services:

1. **Programmatic Standards and Policies Owner:** Ownership of NASA cost and schedule policies and key Agency programmatic standards, processes, and tools to maintain the quality and independence of Agency programmatic assessment capability. This includes assessing the adequacy, quality, and

effectiveness of programmatic in-line assessment work and recommending or directing improvements in these areas where appropriate.

2. **Programmatic Capability Steward:** Service provider to the Mission Directorates and programs/projects as the steward of key Agency programmatic capabilities by building the capability for programmatic analysis. This functions to cultivate the human network of analysts across NASA and connecting them to high-quality tools and training and foster insight through communication with them.

Implementation of all OCFO APAC related activities will be conducted by SID.

Rumors and Legends

Does the new IA structure mean that I don't have to have an ICE performed on my project from my Center?

No. New structure does not directly affect any internal Center review process.

Works Cited

NASA. "NASA Independent Assessment Principles and Approach." 2016. NASA AA Memo.