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MANAGEMENT CONSULTING FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

EXECUTIVE ADVISEMENT

QUALITY ASSURANCE

PROJECT OVERSIGHT

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION (IV&V)

RISK REDUCTION

Quality Assurance Report

for the

State of Washington

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

SC-CMS Project

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bluecrane ®

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Part 1: Executive Dashboard

Introduction

This report provides the May 2016 quality assurance (QA) assessment by Bluecrane, Inc. ("*bluecrane*") for the State of Washington Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Superior Court – Case Management System (SC-CMS) Project.

Executive Summary

The month of May began with the successful Go-Live of Snohomish County bringing the total number of counties where Odyssey has been implemented to five. The Snohomish County implementation was a significant milestone in the SC-CMS Project as the single largest county in the statewide rollout. Leading up to May, concerns were expressed by Snohomish and the implemented counties regarding several areas including legacy system data replication, financials, and reporting, but the project team was able to address the issues and coordinate a successful implementation. Although some problems were encountered during the first weeks of the Snohomish implementation, there were no critical "show-stopper" problems and most of the identified problems were resolved within the first two weeks of Go-Live. Again, we extend congratulations to everyone involved in getting the five counties operational. Especially noteworthy have been (1) the effectiveness of the training and speed with which court staff have learned to use the new system correctly to prevent data replication errors, (2) the high degree of collaboration between AOC and the counties in resolving issues and preparing for the implementation and (3) the effectiveness of the Odyssey document management functionality in meeting the needs of the courts.

The risks we noted in prior reports related to resources and "integration" of Odyssey with other AOC judicial information systems remain our primary concerns. At this point, everyone is well-aware of these risks and much is being done to mitigate the risks to the extent practicable.

Resource Constraints

With respect to resources, there continue to be more demands on the SC-CMS Project team than there are resources to fulfill the needs – despite the influx of seven additional resources through an approved legislative funding increase in March. Six of the seven resources were allocated to operational support of Odyssey, including three allocated to helping manage data replication and two to Help Desk support. Additional steps have been taken to help reduce the risk of constrained resources, including plans to off-load operational support of counties where Odyssey has already been implemented to other operational teams within AOC and beginning to execute a revised Change Management Plan with specific activities aimed at leveraging so-called "super-users," County "champions," and other stakeholders with knowledge of Odyssey and other elements (e.g., new business processes) of the SC-CMS solution to assist during upcoming county rollouts and to support each other in resolving issues and implementing business practices.

Replication Errors

With respect to the integration risk, recall that although the integration components that synchronize case and party data are working properly, replication process errors were being generated primarily due to data entry errors in the counties that had implemented Odyssey prior to the Snohomish implementation. AOC was able to address a growing backlog of these process errors through a combination of augmented staff to

correct the errors and implementation of software enhancements, configuration changes, training, and manual processes to prevent the replication processing errors from occurring. The errors peaked in early March and were reduced through the remainder of March and April. Following the Snohomish implementation, the backlog, although still higher than desired, was stable at the end of May. If resources dedicated to error correction are needed elsewhere (see previous item in this Executive Summary), then the error backlog may creep higher again. This activity will require constant vigilance by the SC-CMS Project team until the backlog is significantly reduced.

County-Specific, Unique "Integrations"

Regarding integrations in general, it is worth reminding all readers that the SC-CMS Project should be wary of taking on integration activities to support unique needs in specific counties since those activities are significant drains on resources in terms of staff, budget, and time. Non-essential integration work is a prime example of project "scope creep" and should be avoided. Counties that are in the queue for SC-CMS implementations later in 2016 and throughout 2017 should work closely with the SC-CMS Project team to ensure any identified system and application integrations are truly necessary. In addition, counties should work with the SC-CMS Project team to ensure there is a common understanding and appreciation for what will surely be on-going operations and maintenance ("O&M") costs for any integrations that are developed and implemented now. The need to maintain those integrations, once implemented, will be an unending resource burden that will extend past the SC-CMS Project and into the future indefinitely. Counties (as well as AOC) need to understand what their share of the costs of these future integration maintenance activities is likely to be.

Changes to Risk Assessment since Previous Report

The following table lists the risks we have identified and summarizes (1) those areas where risks continue from the previous report, (2) those areas of assessment for which our risk ratings have changed since our previous report, and (3) new risks identified since the previous report.

Area of Assessment	Urgency	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016	New or Change Since Prior Report	Comments
1. Software						
Software Integrations	**Very Urgent Consideration**	**Risk**	**Risk**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Remains but Actions Taken to Address**	A backlog of replication processing problems began to develop in late 2015 and continued to grow until the first of March 2016. Because the backlog prevents the synchronization of Odyssey data with data in other AOC and state systems, there is the potential for legal problems if court decisions are made using stale data. AOC has addressed the problem by working with Odyssey counties to improve data entry procedures and through the addition of resources to resolve the process errors. Modifications to Odyssey are being implemented that will prevent future incorrect data entry. .***For detailed assessment, see:*** #Integration

Area of Assessment	Urgency	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016	New or Change Since Prior Report	Comments
2. People						
Staffing	**Urgent Consideration**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Remains but Actions Taken to Address**	Project staffing continues to be a concern due to the increasing workload of supporting the five counties where Odyssey is now implemented while simultaneously planning and conducting implementation of Odyssey in additional counties in 2016. In April, AOC received additional funding for seven SC-CMS support positions from the legislature. Transition to AOC operational support is beginning to take place. ***For detailed assessment, see:*** #Staffing

Area of Assessment	Urgency	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016	New or Change Since Prior Report	Comments
2. People (continued)						
User Support and Operations	**Urgent Consideration**	**Risk**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Remains but Actions Taken to Address**	As noted above, support of counties where Odyssey has already been implemented, in addition to facilitating the rollout of Odyssey to other counties in the future, is stretching available resources. There have some delays in resolving issues that are occurring in Odyssey production counties. Work is underway to begin to transition support and maintenance of SC-CMS to the operational organization within AOC. ***For detailed assessment, see:*** #Support

Area of Assessment	Urgency	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016	New or Change Since Prior Report	Comments
2. People (continued)						
Stakeholder Engagement and Organizational Change Management	**Serious Consideration**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Remains but Actions Taken to Address**	Plans are moving forward to facilitate communication between counties to support each other with (1) a Washington specific area within Tyler Community for asking/answering questions, (2) automated email distribution lists, and (3) facilitated conference calls with the implemented counties. ***For detailed assessment, see:*** #OCM
Business Processes and System Functionality	**Serious Consideration**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Remains but Actions Taken to Address**	Staffing concerns extend to the ability to document business processes and complete the Odyssey configuration with quality results. ***For detailed assessment, see:*** #BusinessProcesses

Area of Assessment	Urgency	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016	New or Change Since Prior Report	Comments
3. Project Management and Sponsorship						
Project Schedule	**Serious Consideration**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Remains but Actions Taken to Address**	As noted in the Staffing area, funding for additional resources was approved by the legislature resulting in the allocation of seven resources to SC-CMS support and rollout activities. It may be necessary to decrease the scope of (or eliminate) some project and legacy system support activities. Expectations should be set accordingly with AOC and county stakeholders on the level of effort allocated to SC-CMS and legacy system activities. ***For detailed assessment, see:*** #Schedule

Area of Assessment	Urgency	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016	New or Change Since Prior Report	Comments
4. Data						
Data Preparation	**Serious Consideration**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Remains but Actions Taken to Address**	Data quality problems in the current system will be transferred to the new system during conversion unless addressed by counties prior to their Go-Live. ***For detailed assessment, see:*** #DataPreparation

Part 2: Detailed Assessment Report

Software

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Software**			
Area of Assessment:	**Software Integrations**	**Risk**	**Risk**	**Risk Being Addressed**
Urgency:	**Very Urgent Consideration**			

Observation/Risk 1: Although the integration components that synchronize case and party data between Odyssey and other AOC judicial information systems (JIS) are working correctly, replication process errors are generated if information is not entered into Odyssey in a specific sequence by the counties. Due to the resource constraints identified in the Staffing area, a backlog of replication process problems began to develop in late 2015 and continued to grow until the first of March 2016. The backlog prevents the synchronization of Odyssey data with data in other AOC and state systems. This has the potential to result in legal problems if court decisions are made using stale data.

Status: The following measures have been taken or are underway at AOC to address the replication process problems:

1. Provide upcoming and implemented Odyssey counties with additional education and work guides to prevent the incorrect data entry.
2. Allocate additional resources to address the backlog of replication process errors both short-term to “burn down” the backlog of process errors and long-term to prevent another backlog from occurring.
3. Implement modifications to Odyssey that will prevent future incorrect data entry, thus preventing the generation of replication process problems.
4. Remove restrictions from the SCOMIS legacy case management system that requires that data be entered in a specific sequence.
5. Communicate alternatives for viewing data to Odyssey counties.

Observation 2: AOC is working with counties and other stakeholders to develop a strategy to determine how best to implement the Odyssey e-Filing functionality.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Software**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**
Area of Assessment:	**Software Development and Configuration**			
Urgency:	**N/A**			

Observation Configuration of Odyssey for Snohomish was successfully completed for the May 2016 implementation. Configuration for Event 5 Counties that will be implemented in late 2016 is underway. It is anticipated that modifications to statewide and local configurations will be made for the Odyssey implemented counties as they become more familiar with the new system in the coming months. Significant changes to the configuration will be approved by the CUWG and will be processed through the Change Management process.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Software**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**
Area of Assessment:	**Information Retrieval and Reporting**			
Urgency:	**N/A**			

Observation: Requirements gathering, analysis, and development of SC-CMS reports has been on-going since the early stages of the project. A minimum set of reports was made available for the Pilot and Early Adopter Counties. Additional reports have been developed as needed to fulfill requirements as they have been identified for the upcoming and implemented counties. The project conducted an analysis to determine legacy system reports that can be replaced by Odyssey standard reports and those legacy reports which will require new reports developed using the Enterprise Custom Reports (ECR) tool.

The Odyssey Portal has been implemented to provide case information access to selected members of the public, including attorneys and title companies. There was a backlog for registration of access to the Portal for the Pilot and Early Adopter counties. Pre-registration activities prevented a similar backlog for the Snohomish implementation. Currently multiple Portal access IDs are required for those that need access to case information and documents from multiple counties. Alternatives to remediate this problem are being developed.

The public will continue to use JIS-Link to access case information for counties where Odyssey has yet to be implemented.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

People

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**People**	**Risk**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**
Area of Assessment:	**Staffing**			
Urgency:	**Urgent Consideration**			

Observation/Risk: There has been significant effort by the SC-CMS Project Team and other AOC management and staff to facilitate and complete the implementation readiness activities for upcoming Counties and ***at the same time*** provide adequate support to the counties that have implemented Odyssey. The rollout of upcoming counties and support of counties that have implemented Odyssey requires sharing the limited AOC, Tyler, and County resources that (1) are knowledgeable and proficient in Odyssey functionality, and (2) have experience with deployment of the system. Some of the resource deficit can be attributed to increasing of the initial scope of the project with document management, financials, and other functionality while having to hold project staffing to align with approved legislative funding levels.

Odyssey support and operational needs have been increasing over the past year since the Pilot County (Lewis County) implementation with the rollout of Early Adopter and Snohomish counties and will continue to increase over the next several years as Odyssey is implemented in the remaining counties. These needs include first and second level Help Desk support, configuration support, business process support, on-going training, release testing and deployment, AOC system integration support, county system integration support, and infrastructure support. The SC-CMS rollout will create a “bubble” of demand for support and operational resources that should eventually subside as court personnel increase their knowledge and skills in utilization of Odyssey and as AOC and county resources are redirected from support of legacy systems to support of SC-CMS. If the support “bubble” is not addressed, counties may experience delays in obtaining support from AOC, and the quality of the SC-CMS rollout to the remaining counties may be affected as the project team attempts to participate in both rollout and operational support activities.

Status: In April, AOC received additional funding for SC-CMS support and implementation positions from the legislature. Seven additional positions were added to several areas at AOC to support SC-CMS including a Portal Administrator, three positions to support the integration with AOC systems, a Business Analyst, and two Help Desk positions.

AOC continues to mitigate the risks of constrained resources using the following approaches:

- AOC is beginning to transition operational support for the implemented SC-CMS counties to the groups in AOC that are responsible for operational support of the legacy systems. Due to the support bubble identified above, the level of operational support for legacy systems including SCOMIS will decrease as non-Project resources at AOC take on the operational support of SC-CMS. This approach is very typical

of new system implementations and necessary to ensure adequate resources are allocated to rollout and support of the new system. Support needs for legacy systems fall off sharply as a new replacement system is implemented since there is typically little value in allocating more than the minimum resource to keep the legacy system operating. Other support needs such has Help Desk and on-going training are not required because of the in-depth knowledge of the legacy system in the counties. This allows the remaining counties to be nearly self-supporting during the rollout of the new system.

- AOC is preparing “Power Users” in the counties where Odyssey will be implemented in 2016 to become very proficient in the use of Odyssey so that they can assist other staff during the ramp-up following Go-Live;
- Engaging upcoming county staff to assist with readiness activities;
- Engaging county staff from the four counties where Odyssey has now been implemented to assist each other and to help with future county implementations;
- Temporarily allocating staff from other areas of AOC to the SC-CMS project;
- Leveraging Tyler resources where possible;
- Leveraging business processes and Odyssey configurations from the implemented counties for the upcoming counties where Odyssey will be implemented; and
- Utilizing “Lessons Learned” from the Lewis and Early Adopter County implementations in order to help ensure that it will be unnecessary to repeat “course adjustments” made during those implementations.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Category:	People	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Area of Assessment:	User Support and Operations	Risk	Risk Being Addressed	Risk Being Addressed
Urgency:	Urgent Consideration			

Observation: Project resources are being stretched for support and operations of counties where Odyssey has already been implemented in addition to facilitating the rollout of Odyssey to the remaining counties. As a result, there have been delays in resolving issues that are occurring in Odyssey production counties. Work is underway to transition support and maintenance of SC-CMS to the operational organization within AOC. Additionally, as identified in the Staffing area, funding for additional resources was provided by the legislature. However, even with these mitigations, it is likely that a resource deficit will exist during the rollout timeframe.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**People**			
Area of Assessment:	**Stakeholder Engagement and Organizational Change Management**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**
Urgency:	**Serious Consideration**			

Observation/Risk: Although stakeholder engagement and organizational change management activities have been utilized to help prepare AOC and county staff for the transition to the new system, resource constraints have limited efforts in this area primarily to training activities. The project team continues to conduct periodic meetings with the counties that have implemented Odyssey to discuss operational issues and activities. The project team also meets with the next several counties who will implement Odyssey to discuss implementation activities. Although these meetings along with periodic Town Hall meetings and Odyssey training provide information to the counties, communications and engagement with stakeholders are limited. Additional organizational change management activities would help smooth the transition to the new system and business processes.

Recommendation: Additional resources should be allocated to stakeholder engagement and organizational change management activities using the SC-CMS Communication Plan as a guide to help smooth the transition through increased communication and awareness activities. These stakeholder activities should be coordinated with the business process activities identified in the Business Process / System Functionality area.

Status: The SC-CMS Project Manager and OCM/Training Lead are beginning to allocate more time to strategic planning and engagement activities with stakeholders. In February, the OCM/Training Lead began implementing the Stakeholder Engagement Plan that was developed in January. Plans are moving forward with to facilitate communication between counties to support each other with (1) a Washington specific area within Tyler Community for asking/answering questions, (2) automated email distribution lists, and (3) facilitated conference calls with the implemented counties.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**People**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**
Area of Assessment:	**Business Processes / System Functionality**			
Urgency:	**Serious Consideration**			

Observation/Risk: The resource risk described above under "Staffing" has business process implications as well. Although the effort to review, revise, and document the business processes of the Early Adopter Counties was sufficient for the initial roll-out of SC-CMS, it is anticipated that additional effort will be needed to work with counties, both where Odyssey has already been implemented and those where implementation is planned, to complete the full analysis of the business processes.

Additionally, as the counties where Odyssey has already been implemented become more familiar with the solution in the months following their Go-Live events, modifications to business processes may be desired or required to improve efficiencies of the processes. For example, as the counties come to "trust" the system more, reliance on paper copies and forms may be reduced, along with any associated duplicate data entry.

As identified in the Staffing area, funding for one Business Analyst position was provided the Legislature. However, five Business Analysis positions remain unfunded.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**People**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**
Area of Assessment:	**Contract Management / Deliverables Management**			
Urgency:	**N/A**			

Observation: The list and schedule of vendor deliverables are identified in the Tyler contract and are being managed by the project team. Vendor deliverables required for Early Adopter Counties Go-Live events were completed in time for the implementations.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Project Management and Sponsorship

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Project Management and Sponsorship**			
Area of Assessment:	**Schedule**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**
Urgency:	**Serious Consideration**			

Observation/Risk: The resource risk described above under “Staffing” has schedule implications as well. As noted above, the SC-CMS Project is mitigating the resource risk through careful scheduling and execution of readiness activities for the remaining Odyssey counties while supporting the five counties where Odyssey has been implemented. In some areas, activities are limited to the minimum necessary to continue with the county implementation schedule. For example, business process and configuration work has been limited and some project management activities have not been performed to the full extent. Although work on project activities related to future county implementations is progressing on schedule, concerns remain with over-allocation of resources and the potential for problems related to quality of deliverables, including the possibility of incomplete deliverables.

Status: AOC conducted a planning exercise to assign priorities to the work that must be completed over the next two years to identify allocations of AOC, Tyler, and county resources to planned activities. As noted in the Staffing area, funding for additional resources was provided by the legislature while other positions remain unfunded. Additionally, it may be necessary to decrease the scope of some activities, postpone activities, or eliminate some of them all together. This reduction applies to both project and legacy system support activities. Expectations should be set accordingly with AOC and county stakeholders on the level of effort allocated to SC-CMS and legacy system activities.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Project Management and Sponsorship**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**
Area of Assessment:	**Governance**			
Urgency:	**N/A**			

Observation: Governance is defined in the Project Charter and is being executed effectively by the Project Leadership, Executive Sponsors, Steering Committee, and JISC.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Project Management and Sponsorship**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**
Area of Assessment:	**Scope**			
Urgency:	**N/A**			

Observation: Scope is being managed effectively through the Requirements Traceability Matrix, Tyler contract deliverables, and the Project Change Management process.

It may be necessary to decrease the scope of some implementation activities to more effectively utilize the limited project resources allocated to the project.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Category:	Project Management and Sponsorship	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Area of Assessment:	PMO Processes: Change, Risk, Issue, Quality Management	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified
Urgency:	N/A			

Observation: The project is performing project management and tracking processes at a minimum level.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Category:	Project Management and Sponsorship	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Area of Assessment:	Budget	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified
Urgency:	N/A			

Observation: As noted in the Staffing section of this report, funding was approved by the legislature for additional AOC resources to support the Odyssey implemented counties and to support the continued rollout of the remaining counties.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Data

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Data**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**	**Risk Being Addressed**
Area of Assessment:	**Data Preparation**			
Urgency:	**Serious Consideration**			

Observation/Risk: The AOC Data Quality Coordinator will coordinate preparation of data in AOC and local court applications. One of the preparation activities is the development of a data profiling report which will identify anomalies in data stored in the Judicial Information System (JIS) that will be used by counties to clean the data. The preparation of data for conversion is typically a long, tedious activity that should be started as early as possible since the county resources that are allocated to data clean-up also have daily operations responsibilities.

If counties do not allocate sufficient resources to data preparation activities, data problems will be transferred to the new system. Data quality issues may affect the synchronization and replication processes which could indirectly (or directly) impact court operations.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

		Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Category:	**Data**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**	**No Risk Identified**
Area of Assessment:	**Data Conversion**			
Urgency:	**N/A**			

Observation: Conversion readiness activities including validation of converted data converting documents for incorporating into Odyssey are underway for Snohomish and Spokane Counties.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Infrastructure

Category:	Infrastructure	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Area of Assessment:	Statewide Infrastructure	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified
Urgency:	N/A			

Observation: The project continues readiness preparations to ensure sufficient capacity on the state network for the estimated volume of Odyssey and document management system transactions that will occur as counties are migrated into the production environment.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Category:	Infrastructure	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	May 2016
Area of Assessment:	Local Infrastructure	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified	No Risk Identified
Urgency:	N/A			

Observation: The SC-CMS project team is working with counties where Odyssey will be implemented in the future to ensure that the local county workstations have been configured correctly, and the county servers and network are appropriately sized to handle the volume at Go-Live. Purchases of additional workstation and server hardware are being made as needed to fulfill infrastructure requirements.

To return to Executive Dashboard, click: #ExecDashboard

Part 3: Review of *bluecrane* Approach

We began our Quality Assurance engagement for the AOC SC-CMS Project by developing an understanding of the project at a macro level. We started by analyzing the following five "Project Areas":

- ***Project Management and Sponsorship***
- ***People***
- ***Application***
- ***Data***
- ***Infrastructure***

It is not our practice to duplicate Project Management activities by following and analyzing each task and each deliverable that our clients are tracking in their project management software (such as Microsoft Project). Rather, we identify those groups of tasks and deliverables that are key "signposts" in the project. While there are numerous tasks that may slip a few days or even weeks, get rescheduled, and not have a major impact on the project, there are always a number of significant "task groups" and deliverables which should be tracked over time because any risk to those items – in terms of schedule, scope, or cost – have a potentially significant impact on project success.

We de-compose the five Project Areas listed above into the next lower level of our assessment taxonomy. We refer to this next lower level as the "area of assessment" level. The list of areas of assessment grows over the life of the project. The following list is provided as an example of typical areas of assessment:

- ***Project Management and Sponsorship***
  - Governance
  - Scope
  - Schedule
  - Budget
  - PMO Processes: Change, Risk, Issue, Quality Management
- ***People***
  - Staffing
  - Stakeholder Engagement and Organizational Change Management
  - Business Processes / System Functionality
  - User Support and Operations
  - Contract Management / Deliverables Management
- ***Software***
  - Software Integrations
  - Software Development and Configuration

  - Information Retrieval and Reporting
- ***Data***
  - Data Preparation
  - Data Conversion
- ***Infrastructure***
  - Statewide Infrastructure
  - Local Infrastructure

For each area of assessment within a Project Area, we document in our QA Dashboard our observations, any issues and/or risks that we have assessed, and our recommendations. For each area we assess activities in the following three stages of delivery:

- **Planning** – is the project doing an acceptable level of planning?
- **Executing** – assuming adequate planning has been done, is the project performing tasks in alignment with the plans the project has established?
- **Results** – are the expected results being realized? (A project that does a good job of planning and executing those plans, but does not realize the results expected by stakeholders, is a less than successful project. Ultimately, r*esults are what the project is all about!*)

Assessed status is rated at a macro-level using the scale shown in the table below.

Assessed Status	Meaning
Extreme Risk	**Extreme Risk:** a risk that project management must address or the entire project is at risk of failure; these risks are "show-stoppers"
Risk	**Risk:** a risk that is significant enough to merit management attention but not one that is deemed a "show-stopper"
Risk Being Addressed	**Risk Being Addressed:** a risk item in this category is one that was formerly red or yellow, but in our opinion, is now being addressed adequately and should be reviewed at the next assessment with an expectation that this item becomes green at that time
No Risk Identified	**No Risk Identified:** "All Systems Go" for this item
Not Started	**Not Started:** this particular item has not started yet or is not yet assessed
Completed or Not Applicable	**Completed/Not Applicable:** this particular item has been completed or has been deemed "not applicable" but remains a part of the assessment for traceability purposes.

We recognize that simultaneously addressing all risk areas identified at any given time is a daunting task – and not advisable. Therefore, we prioritize risk items in our monthly reports as:

1. Very Urgent Consideration
2. Urgent Consideration
3. Serious Consideration

Given the current phase of the SC-CMS Project, these priorities translate to:

1. Very Urgent Consideration – Potential Impact to Configuration of the System
2. Urgent Consideration – Potential Impact to Project's Readiness for Implementation
3. Serious Consideration – Potential Impact to the Successful Management of the Project

Rating risks at the macro-level using the assessed status and urgency scales described above provides a method for creating a snapshot that project personnel and executive management can review quickly, getting an immediate sense of project risks. The macro-level ratings are further refined by describing in detail what the risk/issue is and what remedial actions are being taken/should be taken to address the risk/issue. The result is a framework for AOC SC-CMS management to evaluate project risks – in terms of business objectives and traditional project management tasks.

We summarize the *bluecrane* QA Dashboard in Part 1 of our monthly report for review with client executives and project management. Part 2 of our monthly report provides the detailed QA Dashboard with all of the elements described above.