

IT Procurement Review Guidelines

(Date of Last Revision: March 8, 2005)

1.0 Guideline

1.1 Criteria for Reviews of Information Technology Equipment, Software, and Services

- 1.1.1 Does the procurement comply with NITC standards and enterprise architecture?
- 1.1.2 Does the procurement avoid unnecessary duplication of expenditures?
- 1.1.3 Does the procurement address opportunities for collaboration or data sharing, if applicable?
- 1.1.4 Does the procurement represent the right technology for the job?
- 1.1.5 Does the procurement require skills or resources that exceed the capability of the agency to provide or acquire?

1.2 Supplemental Information for Reviews

1.2.1 Documentation

Agencies should provide sufficient information that allows the reviewer to determine what is being purchased, the purpose being served, total cost, and a contact for additional information. This information can be provided as either a text note or an attachment to the header in the accounting system. In addition, the following types of documents are helpful, if available:

- Bill of materiel from the vendor
- Quotation from the vendor
- Copy of request for proposal

1.3 Approval Timelines

- 1.3.1 Routine purchases, such as PCs, laptops, printers, and small dollar items will be reviewed and acted upon within one workday.
- 1.3.2 Procurement requests that are more complex will be reviewed and acted upon within 3 workdays. The action may be a request for clarification or additional information. The goal is to resolve all issues and provide a final action within 10 workdays, excluding the time an agency requires to respond to requests for additional information.

2.0 Purpose and Objectives

2.1 Statutory Requirements

2.1.1 Communications Equipment

Section 81-1120.17 requires the Division of Communications to “(1) coordinate the purchase, lease, and use of communications services equipment and facilities for state government.” Subsections 4 and 5 require DOC to consolidate

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and integrate radio communications systems and services, consolidate telephone and telephone-related activities, to provide for joint use of communications services, and to “approve all purchases and contracts for such communications activities.”

Section 81-1120.20 requires state agencies to “coordinate all communications services or facilities procurement through the Director of Communications.”

2.1.2 All Other Information Management Items

Section 81-1117 (2) (e) states that “No state agency shall hire, purchase, lease, or rent any information management item listed in subsection (a) of this section without the written approval of the information management services administrator.”

2.2 Objectives

The procurement review process should serve the following objectives established in statute:

- 2.2.1 “Substantial economies can be effected by joint use of a consolidated communications system by departments, agencies, and subdivisions of state government.” (Section 81-1120.01)
- 2.2.2 “To coordinate the purchase, lease, and use of communications services equipment and facilities for state government.” [Section 81-1120.17 (1)]
- 2.2.3 “To advise departments and agencies of the state and political subdivisions thereof as to systems or methods to be used to meet requirements efficiently and effectively.” [Section 81-1120.17 (2)]
- 2.2.4 “To prevent unnecessary duplication of information management operations and applications in state government.” (Section 81-1116.02)
- 2.2.5 “To assure the most cost-effective use of state appropriations” ... and “To coordinate the state’s investments in information technology in an efficient and expeditious manner.” (Section 86-513)
- 2.2.6 To “adopt minimum technical standards, guidelines, and architectures...” [Section 86-516 (6)]
- 2.2.7 To “coordinate efforts among other noneducation state government technology agencies and coordinating bodies.” [Section 86-520 (4)]
- 2.2.8 To “work with each governmental department and noneducation state agency to evaluate and act upon opportunities to more efficiently and effectively deliver government services through the use of information technology.” [Section 86-520 (7)]
- 2.2.9 To “recommend ... methods for ... making information sharable and reusable, eliminating redundancy of data and programs, improving the quality and usefulness of data, and improving access to data...” [Section 86-520 (8)]
- 2.2.10 To “aggregate demand, reduce costs ... and encourage collaboration between communities of interest” (Section 86-524 (1) (c))
- 2.2.11 To “encourage competition among technology and service providers.” (Section 86-524 (1) (c))

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2.2.12 To coordinate the state's investments in information technology in an efficient and expeditious manner ... and avoid "cumbersome regulations or bureaucracy." (Section 86-515)

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Communications

Section 81-1120.02 includes the following definitions:

"(3) Communications system shall mean the total communications facilities and equipment owned, leased, or used by all departments, agencies, and subdivisions of state government; and

"(4) Communications shall mean any transmission, emission, or reception of signs, signals, writing, images, an sounds or intelligence of any nature by wire, radio, optical, or other electromagnetic systems."

3.2 Information Management Item

Pursuant to Section 81-1117 (1) "information management item" includes but is not limited to:

- (a) Computer equipment
- (b) Peripheral devices (such as data input, data output, data storage, or data communications)
- (c) Computer code, programs or operating systems;
- (d) Service contracts for information technology.

3.3 Information Technology

Section 86-507 defines "information technology" as the "computing and telecommunications systems and their supporting infrastructure and interconnectivity used to acquire, transport, process, analyze, store, and disseminate information electronically."

4.0 Applicability

This standard shall apply to all state agencies, boards, and commissions, excluding the University of Nebraska.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 The Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) will adopt the Enterprise Architecture for State Government, including technical standards, based on recommendations from the Technical Panel and State Government Council. The NITC will establish an exception process. Under the exception process, the Technical Panel may approve exceptions recommended by the State Government Council, unless the NITC has reserved for itself the authority to grant exceptions for specific standards.

5.2 The State Government Council will have responsibility for developing and recommending the enterprise architecture for state government and related standards to the Technical Panel and the NITC. The State Government Council will review

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requests for exceptions to the Enterprise Architecture, pursuant to an exception process established by the NITC.

5.3 The Office of the CIO will coordinate and document the enterprise architecture and ensure that enterprise goals and objectives are met. The Office of the CIO will coordinate requests for exceptions to the EA and standards adopted by the NITC. The CIO will review the effectiveness of the EA Program.

5.4 DAS (IMServices, DOC, and Materiel) will develop procurement policies and procedures and link them to the enterprise architecture, including standards, and guidelines. DAS may recommend technical standards to the State Government Council and issue voluntary guidelines as advisories to agencies, prior to going through the standard-setting process. DAS will manage the compliance process and prepare recommendations for exceptions to the EA and standards adopted by the NITC. The review process should solicit information regarding compliance with the enterprise architecture and related standards and the potential impact and opportunities on implementing enterprise goals.

IMServices and DOC with assistance from the Office of the CIO will develop a process that will allow project leaders to request advice on architectural issues at any stage of a project. The purpose of assistance is to identify and resolve potential architectural problems, before they become barriers.

5.5 Technical architects of major applications and systems will provide assistance and advice to the State Government Council and Office of the CIO regarding the relationship of those systems to the enterprise architecture. Technical experts will also assist with the compliance / exception process.

5.6 Agencies must make a proactive effort to coordinate major projects with other affected entities and identify data sharing or enterprise opportunities. Informing the Office of the CIO, DOC, and IMServices about major projects early in the planning phase is important to achieving the statutory goals and requirements for information technology.

6.0 Exemptions and Extensions

Architecture Exception Process. IMServices and DOC (IMS/DOC) will review purchase requests for compliance with the Enterprise Architecture and related standards. Non-compliant requests will be discussed with the submitting agency. If there is agreement to request an exception, IMS/DOC will refer the exception request to the Office of the CIO for consideration by the State Government Council and Technical Panel. Agencies may submit an exception request, without the need for concurrence by IMS/DOC, if non-compliance with the Enterprise Architecture or standard is the only reason for rejecting a purchase request. Waivers to formal standards adopted by the NITC may need approval by the NITC, but the State Government Council or Technical Panel should be empowered to handle most exceptions. The goal is to reach consensus on a request, before submitting it for consideration. Successful exceptions should be considered for adoption into the enterprise architecture. Reasons for an exemption include, but are not limited to: statutory exclusion; federal government requirements; or financial hardship. Requests may

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be submitted to the Office of the CIO via e-mail (info@cio.state.ne.us) or letter (Office of the CIO, 521 S 14th Street, Suite 301, Lincoln, Nebraska).

7.0 Related Documents

- 7.1 Direct Market Purchase Authority (DAS Materiel Memo dated July 1, 2004):
<http://www.das.state.ne.us/materiel/purchasing/dpa.htm>
- 7.2 NIS Procurement Manuals, "Document Flows and Menu Selections": Exception Order Purchases for Communication Equipment (page 8) and Information Management Items (page 16). (undated draft copy, February 2005)
http://www.das.state.ne.us/materiel/purchasing/nis_procurement/menus_and_flows.doc
- 7.3 Draft Nebraska Enterprise Architecture for State Government
- 7.4 NIS Final Level of Approvals
http://www.das.state.ne.us/materiel/purchasing/nis_procurement/final_level_approvals.xls
- 7.5 Entering a Purchase Requisition (Including Information Management Items)
http://www.das.state.ne.us/materiel/purchasing/nis_procurement/entering_purchase_req.doc
- 7.6 Entering a Purchase Requisition for OT Equipment (Communications Equipment)
http://www.das.state.ne.us/materiel/purchasing/nis_procurement/entering_req_for_ot equip.doc