

The background features large, stylized letters. A large blue 'R' is on the left, and a large blue 'D' is on the right. The letter 'R' has a green shadow or outline. The letter 'D' has a green shadow and an orange circle is positioned near its bottom right. The text 'A Guide to Conducting Integrated Baseline Reviews' is overlaid on the blue 'R' and 'D'.

A Guide to

**Conducting Integrated  
Baseline Reviews**

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# 1

## Introduction

An integrated baseline review (IBR) is the process of performing a technical and [schedule](#) review to establish a balanced understanding of the [planning](#) maturity of the project. The IBR will review:

- the project management plan;
- the methods and metrics used to measure contract performance or progress;
- the management control processes that operate during the project's execution;
- the technical merits of the schedule;
- the risk associated with the baseline.

The purpose of the IBR is to achieve and maintain a project and understanding of the risks inherent in the [performance measurement baseline](#) (PMB) and the management control processes that will operate during its execution.

The process involves a review of documentation, an on-site review of the project's proposed planning and management systems, and identifies follow-up actions as necessary to ensure that the baseline has matured to an acceptable level.

Integrated baseline reviews are not to be confused with audits. An audit looks in depth for conformance to a standard or procedure, whereas an IBR is looking for assurance that your baseline is robust, the entire process is operating as it should and you are in control. The IBR should be seen as a precursor to successful project delivery.

The guidance within this document is geared around an initial full review. It is also applicable to subsequent reviews such as demonstration and surveillance reviews [2, 4]. It is expected, however, that subsequent reviews will generally be of smaller scale than the initial, and the guidance within this handbook should be tailored as required.

Self-assessment is an important part of any pre-review [activity](#), and this guide should be used in support of that process. It contains what could be called 'the exam questions', and the project manager should use these to identify the potential findings or gaps to determine if the project is 'ready' for the review. The *EVM Compass* [1] is recommended as a good practice process to support

## A Guide to Conducting Integrated Baseline Reviews (IBR)

self-assessment. The self-assessment should be shared with key [stakeholders](#) before the review starts because this may raise areas the review team may wish to focus on. A gap analysis between the two should be part of the post review activities.

It is important to agree [terms of reference](#) for the review, which are approved by the [review sponsor](#) in advance of the review.

An IBR is not an opportunity to give a colleague a grilling or criticise someone's work. Reviews should be constructive and independent. The review team constitutes a fresh set of eyes looking at a project, confirming what the project manager should have already known through self-assessment, and is characteristic of the good culture all projects should embrace. IBRs provide an opportunity to further improve the project baseline and control processes, giving the project a greater chance of success and promoting the characteristics of good project management culture.

# 8

## Preparation

### 8.1 Step 2.1 Identify required competencies and identify review team

The IBR lead and project manager should identify the review team members. It is required that the review team include (where possible) personnel independent of the project and ideally have cross-functional representation.

Reviews should be led by a suitably qualified representative to ensure that a comprehensive evaluation of the performance measurement baseline (PMB) is performed and that all project control aspects have been addressed and captured.

Review team members should comprise project control specialists, with support from the project's engineering and technical staff. Project staff should be knowledgeable on the subject matter being examined. All team members will be allocated specific areas of responsibility ideally associated with their field of expertise.

The following areas of discipline and/or experience are required:

- project management;
- planning;
- scheduling;
- project control;
- business management;
- sub-contract management;
- technical management;
- contract management;
- risk management;
- resource management.

The size of the team and duration of the review should be proportionate and aligned with the project size and complexity. This should be agreed by the review sponsor, IBR lead and the project lead with reference to the terms of reference.

## **8.2 Step 2.2 Produce draft IBR handbook**

A draft IBR handbook covering all aspects from within this guide that are applicable to the review in question should be produced and distributed. This will ensure that everyone involved has a clear understanding of the expectations, how it will be undertaken and the timing of the review.

## **8.3 Step 2.3 Train teams as required**

Joint training sessions should be held wherever practicable for all personnel involved in the review, either as a review team member or project team member. The intent of the training is to provide enough information for the team to mutually understand both the IBR process and the cost, schedule, technical and management processes that should be used on the project. When necessary, it may be appropriate to bring in external personnel for training and facilitation.

Training should be designed and delivered to support the objectives of the review as agreed by the IBR lead and project lead. The essential elements of the training should include the following:

- communication skills (interview/discussion techniques, active listening etc.);
- performing the review (data traces, collecting evidence, dealing with conflict etc.);
- recording and reporting (how to document findings and issues, i.e. being clear, concise and consistent).

## **8.4 Step 2.4 Project conduct self-assessment**

To assist in the preparation of a review, a self-assessment should be conducted, using *APM EVM Compass* [1] or this guide. This may completely replicate the entire scope of the IBR, or may just focus on particular areas of concern raised by the review sponsor. The self-assessment will identify areas that require further development, the current and target system maturity and establish actions to address any issues prior to the IBR.

In order to prepare for the IBR and to ensure all participants fully understand the process and [benefits](#) of the IBR, coaching should be arranged by the project lead or review sponsor.

The project should undertake data tracing as part of a self-assessment to identify any potential problem areas that subsequently can be briefed to the review team members.

## 8.5 Step 2.5 Agree the IBR timetable including interview schedule

The draft IBR handbook should be updated to include a timetable. This will show the major IBR activities, which shall include:

### In-brief

- In-brief for the review team members explaining the purpose of the review and providing the opportunity for the introduction of both review and project team members.
- An overview of the project – to familiarise the team with the project scope, content and context; to gain an understanding of the [project controls framework \(PCF\)](#) and its maturity.

### Data traces

- The review of project planning data, including system [data traces](#) and review of the PCF or equivalent and any associated project directives or instructions that support the PCF.

### Discussion

- Discussions with [control account managers \(CAM\(s\)\)](#) identifying the basis on which the plan was established, ensuring that resources have been allocated and that appropriate earned value techniques have been identified.
- Typically discussions will also be held with project management, [programme management office \(PMO\)](#), finance, commercial, senior management and other significant stakeholders.



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