



Public Works

Information Systems Planning

Overview

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Document Management

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Document names are prefixed according to their main audiences:

- ADM: Administration;
- DAT: Data, ITC specialists;
- MGT: Management Oriented, including reports and milestone;
- RES: Resources, Project Management;
- TCH: Technical Documentation, ITC specialists;
- USE: User.Oriented.

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List Of Changes

Table 1 – Quality Assurance And Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Responsible
1	30 April 2009	Draft to Chris Jefferd for review and contribution.	R. Molyneux
2	25 August 2008	Revision to include external issues	R. Molyneux

Information Planning Overview

Objectives

The objectives of the Information Planning phase are to identify the current and future information requirements and to determine how those requirements should be met. The Information Planning phase is the first phase in the systems development life cycle of conceptualising, designing, implementing and maintaining an information system. An information plan is developed to establish the direction for the organisation's information processing resources, typically for a period of three to five years.

Successful information planning projects can provide the following benefits:

Support for business objectives.

As business objectives and strategic success factors are defined during the development of strategic business plans, new information requirements are identified. An information plan helps ensure that the information systems will meet the future needs of the organisation. The plan is fundamental to the achievement of the business objectives and should be viewed as a major part of a comprehensive strategic business plan.

Improved management information

The management functions of planning, execution, evaluation and control depend on the availability, accuracy and completeness of information. The information plan identifies the information requirements to support current operations and achieve business objectives. It then defines a long-range plan to develop systems to meet those needs.

Positive organisational impact

The process of developing an information plan involves management personnel from the major functional areas of the organisation. As a result, communications and teamwork between information processing services management and the rest of executive management should develop. Participation in the planning effort permits proactive rather than reactive management of information systems by the executive team. Because management helped develop the information plan, the plan should have their support, necessary for successful implementation.

Improved use of resources

Well-planned information facilities help eliminate redundancy of data, systems, and development effort. This redundancy can occur when separate systems which require common data but address different functions are developed independently of each other. An information plan identifies opportunities for sharing data and other resources across organisational boundaries in a manner that reflects the natural integration of related business functions. In this way, an information plan ensures more effective use of information, a major organisation resource. It also supports the effective and efficient use of organisation resources for the development and operation of information processing systems.

Earlier and more precise identification of requirements

Because information systems are often developed quickly in response to critical needs, insufficient time is sometimes spent understanding information requirements. The result can be partial and / or costly solutions to problems that were much broader than recognised when the system was developed. Information planning allows information requirements to be viewed within the context of the entire organisation, thereby providing a disciplined and broad analysis of the current and future information needs.

More effective implementation of systems development strategies

Information planning provides for earlier achievement of benefits. The planning process considers benefits when setting project priorities so that high benefit projects receive high priority.

An information plan also serves as a benchmark against which the progress of systems development projects can be measured. Project management will have completion date objectives that they must meet. A documented plan helps provide both the means and incentive for effective strategy implementation.

Approach to Completing Work

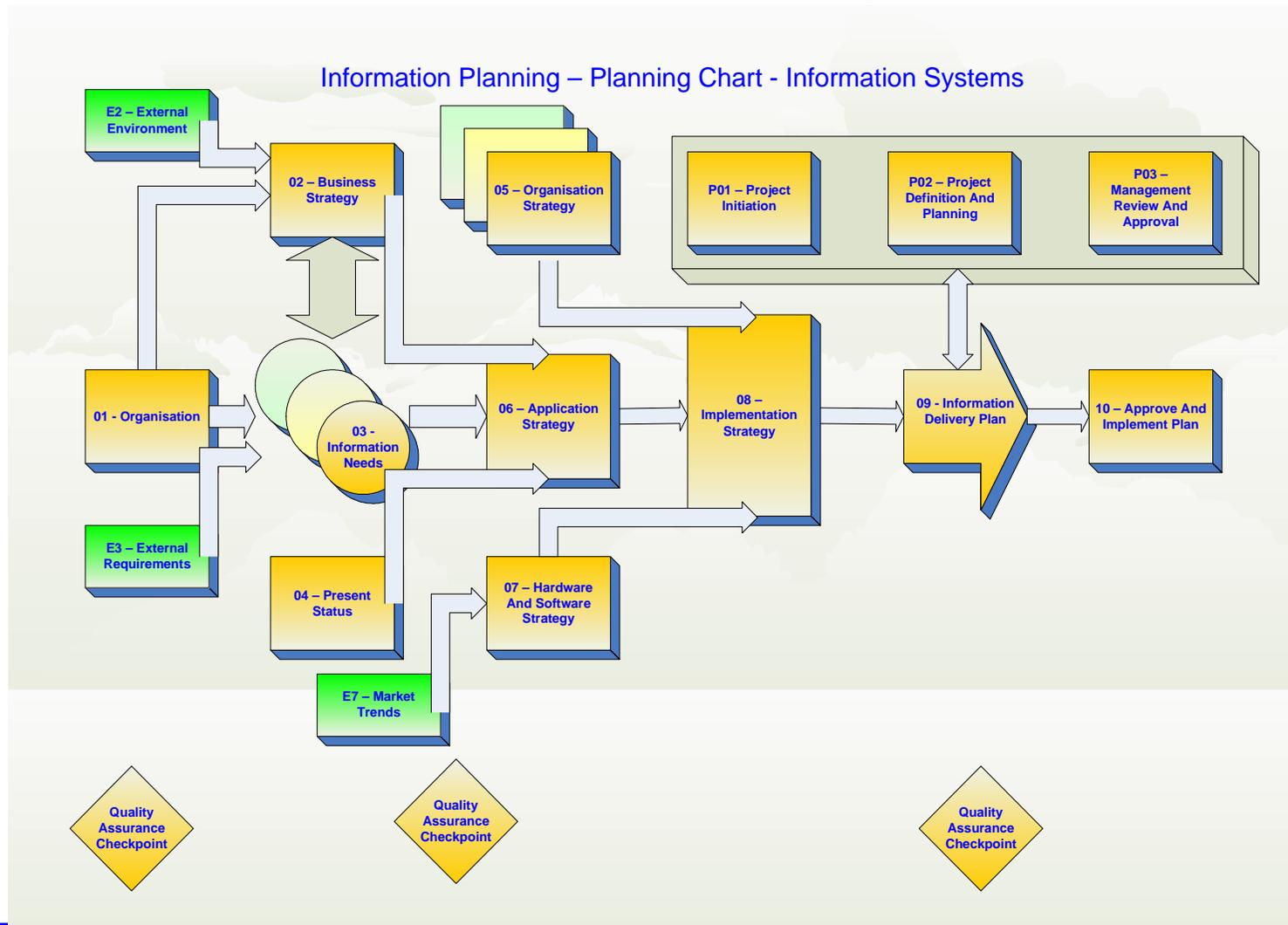
Summary of work activities

The work performed in an information planning project can be divided into the following work segments.

- Organise the project.
- Determine the business strategy.
- Evaluate the present status.
- Determine the information requirements.
- Develop the application strategy.
- Develop the hardware and software strategy.
- Develop the organisation strategy.
- Develop the implementation and security strategy.
- Complete the conceptual designs and define work plans for high priority projects.
- Finalise and draft the information delivery plan.
- Obtain management approval and initiate the first design project.

The specific tasks and steps to be executed in performing the activities of each segment are described in this manual.

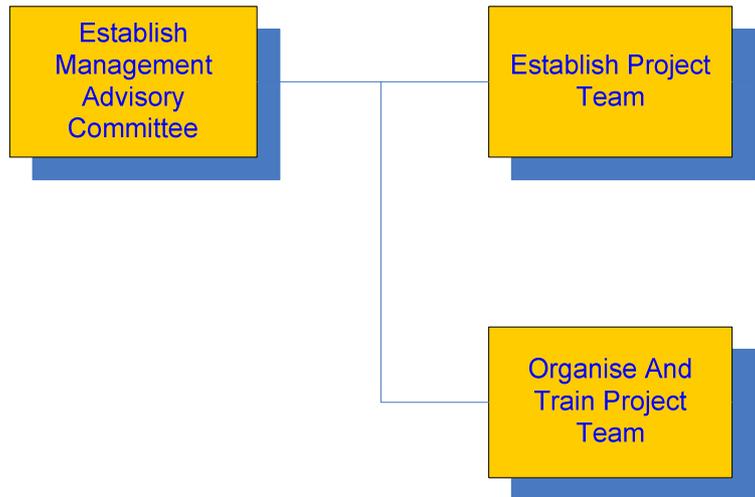
The following diagram provides an overview of the entire Information Planning processes.



The following sections briefly explain each segment.

Organise the project

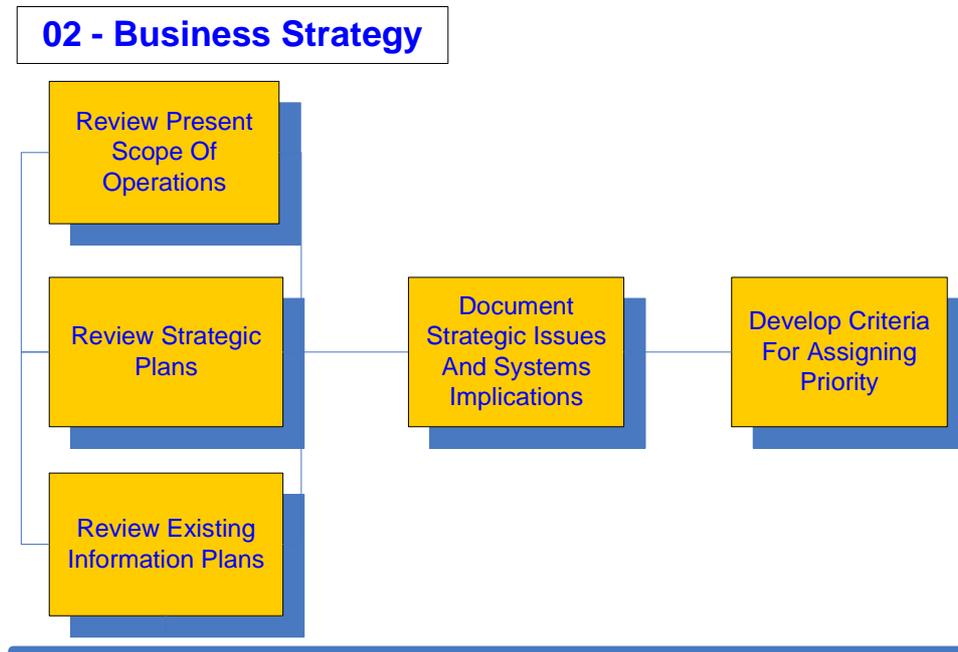
01 - Organisation



A successful information planning project requires senior management commitment to and involvement in the project. Their involvement can be assured by forming a Management Advisory Committee with senior management members. A successful project also requires a properly trained, oriented and organised project team. The Organisation segment ensures that these prerequisites are met and that the project's scope and products are defined before the major work of the project begins.



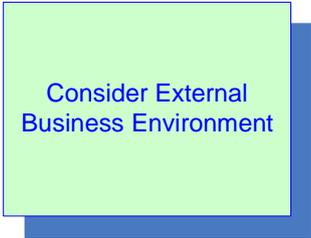
If management commitment, effort and resources cannot be obtained, it is better not to proceed any further.

Determine the business strategy.

In the Business Strategy segment, the project team acquires an understanding of the strategic success factors, business environment and strategic plans. Analyses of performance strengths and weaknesses are conducted, and business strategies are discussed in interviews with senior management. The implications for current and future information requirements are assessed, and existing information policies and objectives are reviewed. A major result is the identification of specific issues to be resolved during the planning process.

The project team also develops a framework for assigning priorities to systems development projects in this segment. It is used to evaluate alternative systems investment opportunities later in the Information Planning phase.

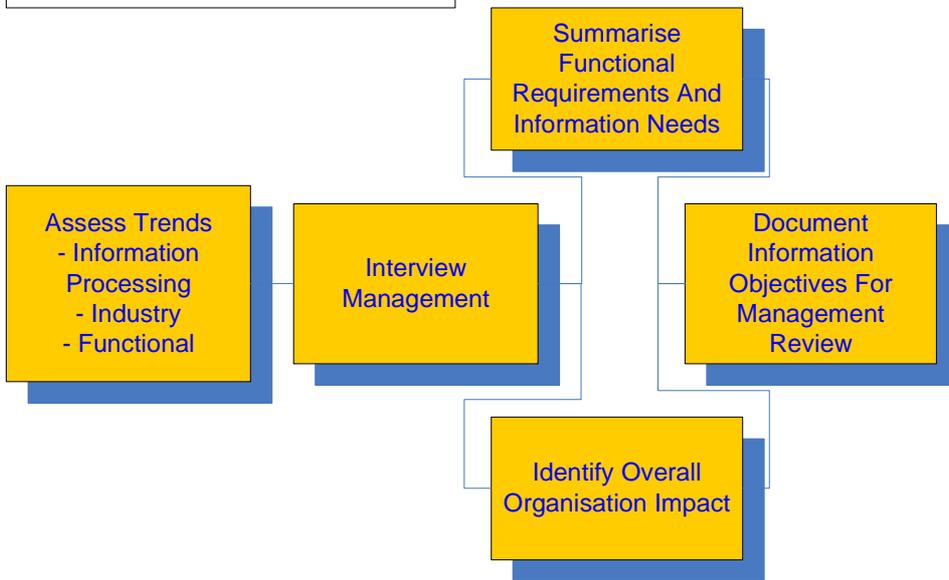
E2 – External Environment



The project team also considers the external business environment for relevant opportunities and threats. For example potential mergers between organisations and / or the gain and / or loss of major lines of business might be considered.

Determine the information requirements.

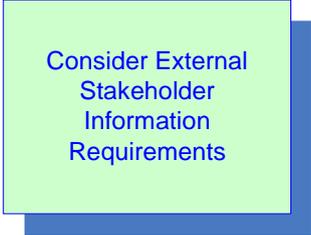
03 - Information Needs



In the Information Needs segment, the project team gathers the products of the Business Strategy segment and the concurrent Present Status segment to use in the development of

user requirements. The major products of this segment are the definitions of information needs, major functional requirements and information objectives.

E3 – External Requirements



Consider External
Stakeholder
Information
Requirements

The project team also considers the information needs of external stakeholders including customers and service providers. Government agencies and statutory authorities may impose reporting requirements that must be addressed regardless of their value to the organisation. Potential information sharing partners may need to be consulted.



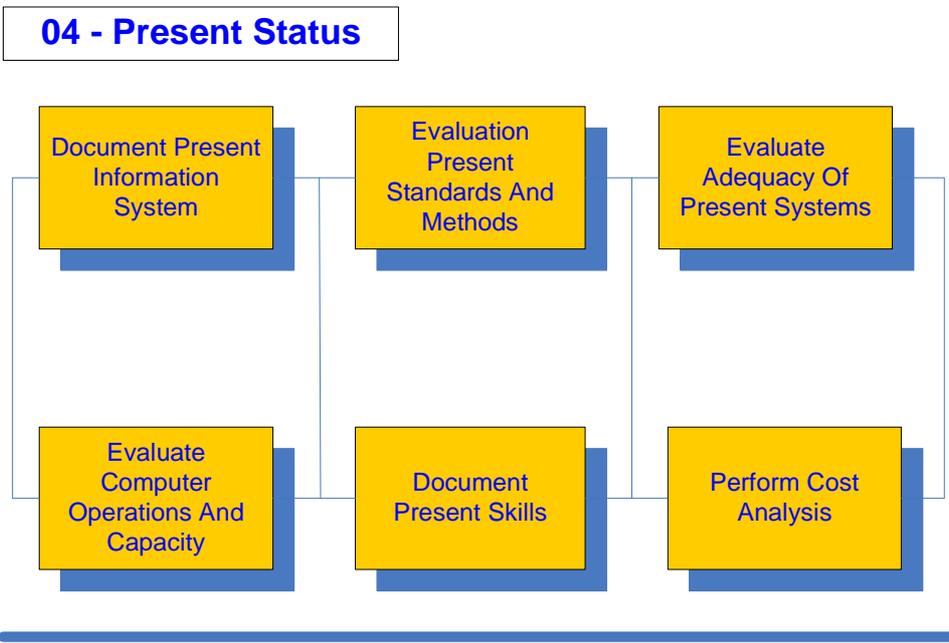
Quality
Assurance
Checkpoint

The end of this segment marks an important project checkpoint. Management must approve the results of the work performed up to this point as the products become the basis for the upcoming strategies. Because the products serve as a link between the information needs and the eventual systems that will meet those needs, special care must also be taken to ensure that those needs are consistent with the business strategies.

The major source of the information requirements and objectives are interviews with management. Prior to the interviews, the project team develops a going-in position by

reviewing key background information. They assess industry, functional and information processing trends to evaluate the impact of changing technology and business practices on the information system. The project team should research available technologies to identify new directions for the information system. Information requirements and new technology opportunities should include areas such as office automation, computer-aided design, etc., as well as the traditional accounting or administrative systems. The project team should estimate whether the overall impact of prospective systems is manageable before developing detailed strategies in subsequent segments.

Evaluate the present status.

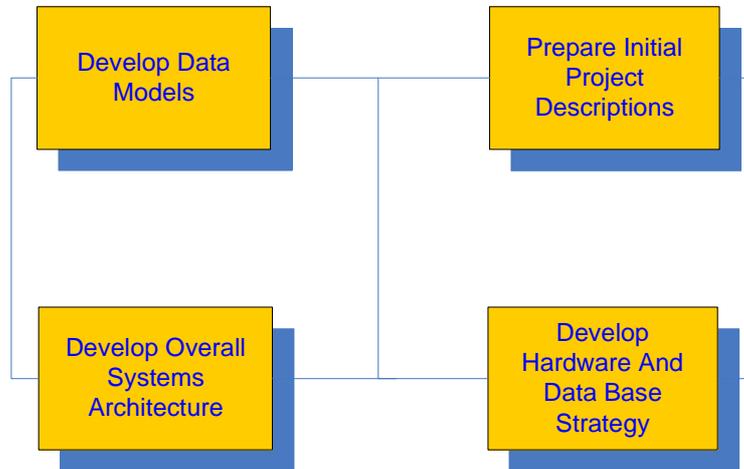


The current information processing environment must be understood before recommendations for future activities can be formulated. Reviews of current systems, computer operations, information processing services team processes and personnel skills are conducted. The present status review is performed concurrently with the determination of information needs.

Develop the organisation strategy.**05 - Organisation Strategy**

An information plan can be effectively implemented only with the cooperation of properly staffed, structured and trained Information Systems & Technology (ITS) services teams. Elements of the ITS team that are addressed in the information plan include the organisation structure, skill requirements, training needs and the methods and procedures by which the ITS team operates. The requirements placed on the ITS team by the information plan are identified through review of the other information strategies. Strategies and projects to meet the requirements are then identified.

The impact of the Information Delivery Plan on the user organisation is also evaluated. For example, users will assist in plan implementation. They must have the skills needed to use the new systems. The new systems may change their organisation's structure and the way they perform their work. These requirements and the action needed to prepare the users for Information Delivery Plan implementation are described.

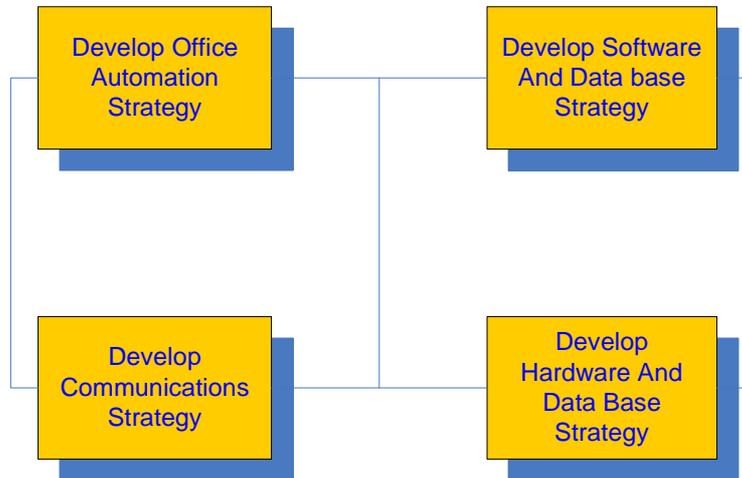
Develop the application strategy.**06 - Application Strategy**

In the Application Strategy segment, the project team develops an overall approach to application systems development. This work includes describing data, application systems, processing architectures and establishing the portfolio of projects and methods of implementing them. The work performed in this segment defines the major requirements that the hardware, software and organisation strategies must meet.

The project team defines the general data that will be maintained in the information system to meet the information requirements. Data management requirement application systems data relationships are described. The project team also develops a portfolio of application system projects to be addressed within the planning horizon. Finally, they define the probable methods to be used in implementing each application and the resources required.

Develop the hardware and software strategies.

07 - Hardware and Software Strategy



Based on the information objectives and application strategy, the future hardware and software requirements can be determined. These requirements include not only the computer and systems software, but also office automation equipment, peripheral hardware, data management software, and communications networks. The requirements are assessed in view of the available technology, and the overall strategies for hardware and software are formulated. Finally, project descriptions are written to define how the desired hardware and software environment may be reached.

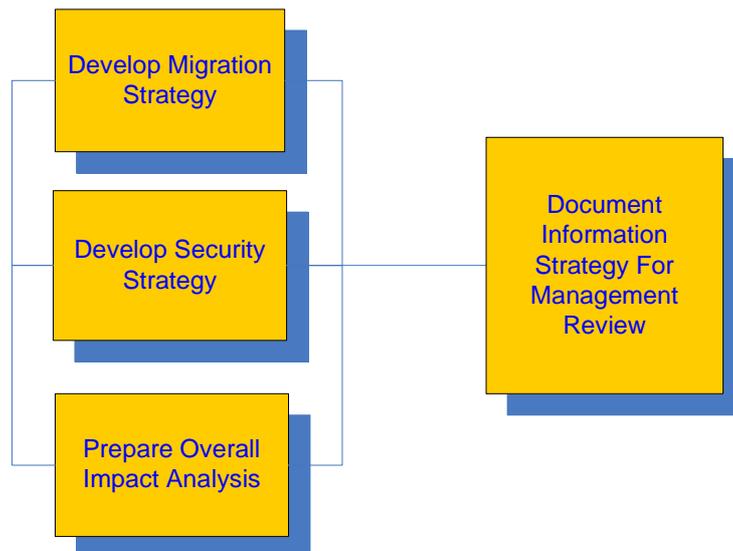
E7 – Market Trends

Consider Emerging
Hardware And
Software Trends

Emerging hardware and software trends that potentially change the preferred system platform need to be considered from time to time. Examples of platforms include mainframes versus minicomputers versus personal computer networks, operating systems, and database management systems. Adoption of a particular platform has major implications, so that adoption of an alternate platform is a major decision.

Develop the implementation strategy.

08 - Implementation Strategy

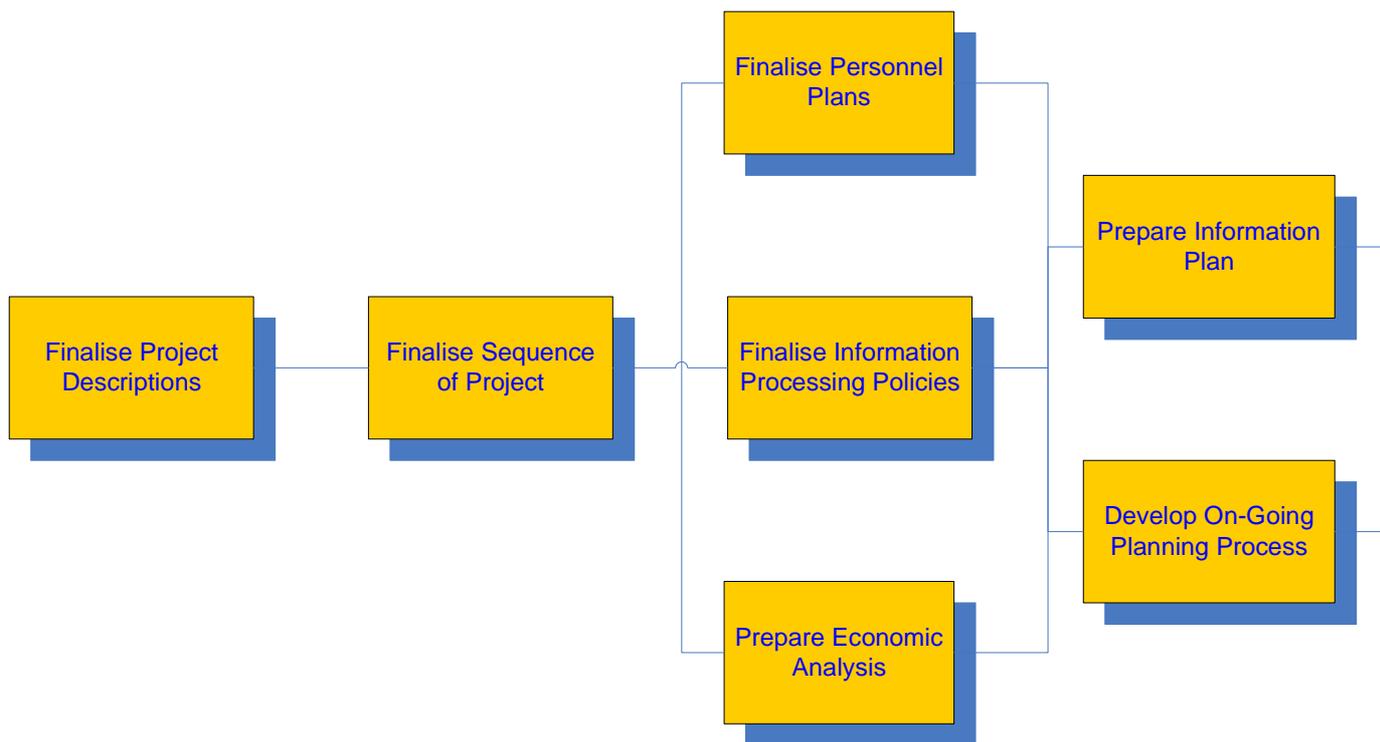


After the application, hardware, software and organisation strategies are developed, the project team determines how they will be implemented. The implementation strategy focuses on the approach to migrating from the current environment, as reviewed in the Present Status segment, to the proposed environment. Any of the strategies may be modified to achieve a feasible migration plan.

In consideration of all other strategies, a security strategy is also developed to define procedures for controlling and protecting information and information systems. The project team analyses the organisational and cost impact of the strategies and systems. Approximate costs and benefits are determined for each strategy and system.

Finalise and draft the Information Delivery plan.

09 - Information Delivery Plan



The Information Delivery Plan segment completes and refines the work performed in prior segments. Earlier, strategies were defined only in enough detail to obtain management

approval. Management may have modified the strategies at that time. Now, the project team implements those modifications and performs any remaining work.

Specifically, the work performed includes more detailed planning of the preliminary systems design effort for high priority projects (described below). Other major tasks include completing the project sequencing and personnel plans, establishing the information policies, and preparing an economic analysis. In addition, the ongoing information planning process, plan implementation, and a means of monitoring implementation are defined. Responsibilities to affect the plan are assigned.

Define work plans and impact for high priority projects.

As part of finalising the overall Information Delivery Plan, the project team estimates the required preliminary systems design effort for high priority projects. To do this, they use the conceptual design to determine estimating parameters and assumptions in the Project Definition and Planning segment. The major products prepared are the preliminary systems design work plan, cost/ benefit analysis and the organisational impact assessment. With them, management evaluates project and system scopes, costs, and benefits, and approves the preliminary systems design projects. This reduces any delay in implementing the Information Delivery Plan.

Obtain management approval and initiate the design project.

10 - Approve and Implement Plan



The findings and recommendations of the Information Delivery Plan are presented to the Management Advisory Committee for approval in the Approve and Implement Plan segment. This presentation is usually accomplished in two stages: the preliminary Information Delivery Plan report, and a formal presentation.

After each member of the Management Advisory Committee reads the preliminary version of the Information Delivery Plan report, a formal presentation is conducted during a meeting of the entire committee. This presentation stresses the key elements of the plan, and the first steps required to implement the plan. After the committee's approval has been obtained, the final version of the Information Delivery Plan report is prepared and published. To avoid unnecessary delays, approval for the Preliminary Systems Design phase of the high priority projects are obtained at this time, if possible.



Major Products

The major products of the information planning project are the Management Summary Report and the Information Delivery Plan report. The following elements are usually included in these reports:

- Overall objectives for information within the organisation;
- Identification of the current and future information requirements;
- Definition of overall strategies relating to hardware, software and the organisation of the information processing services team required to support the implementation of the Information Delivery Plan;
- Objectives and policies for the information processing services team;
- Identification of the specific projects to be undertaken during the years covered by the plan affecting application systems, hardware, software and the organisation.

Major Inputs

- The organisation's strategic business plans.

The Information Delivery Plan is intended to maximise the use of the information processing services resources for support of the business objectives. The strategic business plans represent the major inputs to the information planning project. The information strategies developed in this phase must be consistent with the objectives and strategies developed during the organisation's strategic planning process.

When completed, the Information Delivery Plan should be viewed as an integral part of the overall strategic business plans. That is, there may well be iteration between the strategic business plans and the Information Delivery Plan as opportunities are recognised from the application of information systems and technologies to enabling and / or refining business strategies.

Project Control

One key requirement for effective project control in an information planning project is the participation of senior management in all stages of the planning process. Senior management must review and approve all the major elements of the plan as they are

developed. Frequent progress meetings and presentations with senior management are scheduled to keep them informed of the work being performed and the recommendations being developed. The establishment of a Management Advisory Committee, comprised of senior executives from each major part of the organisation, is an effective way to ensure the required management participation.

Relationship with Other Work

Information Planning is the first phase in the process of systems conceptualisation, design, implementation and operation. During this phase, all the major information needs of the organisation are considered. Based on these needs, the requirements and priorities for systems projects are defined and plans are developed for proceeding with the subsequent systems development phases. The subsequent phases are the Preliminary Systems Design, Systems Installation and Production Systems Support.

An information planning project identifies certain high priority projects that are immediately carried forward into the Project Definition and Planning segment, where they are defined in greater detail. The work involved in these projects can begin immediately, while the facts and issues are current.

Projects may also arise from outside the scope of the information planning process. A production systems support group or management may identify other high priority projects that require immediate attention. In this situation, there is insufficient time to perform a complete Information Delivery Plan. Therefore, these projects will begin in the Project Definition and Planning segment.

The Preliminary Systems Design phase is most directly affected by the work done during information planning. The general descriptions of application systems projects developed in this phase provide the basis for the design work in the Preliminary Systems Design phase. During the preliminary systems design, the project definitions developed in the Information Delivery Plan are expanded into more precise systems specifications that provide a basis for the systems installation. Cost and benefit approximations developed in information planning are refined into more accurate estimates during the preliminary systems design.

The Information Delivery Plan also establishes the direction for other required information processing services team activities. The hardware, software, office automation, communications and security strategies formulated during this phase frequently result in the initiation of major projects to implement those strategies. Similarly, the organisation structure, organisation plan and

personnel plan identified in the Information Planning phase may require further definition and planning before being implemented.

Finally, an Information Delivery Plan may identify a need for improvements in the operating processes of the information processing services team. In this case, the detailed definition of required process modifications is usually treated as an individual project rather than as part of the information planning project.

Staffing Considerations

The development of a comprehensive plan requires that the project team understand all aspects of the organisation's operations and apply a good mix of analytical, technical, communications and business skills throughout the planning process. Staffing the project team with the proper mix of skills is a difficult, but necessary task. A successful information planning project requires a qualified project team. Ideally, the project team should be committed to full-time participation.

Part-time participation, though less desirable, may be acceptable for some project team members. The trade-off between project continuity (provided by full-time members) and the special abilities of part-time participants should be evaluated to determine whether a part-time staffing approach may be used. This approach should be used only if highly desired project participants cannot be fully removed from their regular duties and the competence that they would bring to the project is otherwise unavailable.

A second consideration for project staffing concerns the engagement of specialised personnel for some of the more technically-oriented tasks of the information planning process, such as formulating hardware and software strategies or developing data models. Since the primary emphasis in information planning is placed on business rather than technical skills, technical specialists usually do not participate in the entire information planning process. If the project team does not have the required skills, the participation of non project team members is encouraged, and should be reflected in the project work plans.

Critical Mass And The Tyranny Of Distance

For Councils in Remote and Rural Areas, staffing is a critical area. Finding, recruiting and retaining skilled staff is extremely difficult. Maintaining a concerted effort for strategic planning, and then implementing the plan, is extremely difficult. Retaining and passing on corporate knowledge is extremely difficult.

The geographic extents of some Councils poses additional logistical problems with regard to travel time and telecommunications at every stage of planning, implementation and operation of systems.

Associations of Councils and the use of expert consultancies to address information systems planning is one approach. However, this risks making the information gathering and planning much more complicated, as more stakeholders become involved.

The use of technology such as telecommunications (email, teleconferencing, electronic sharing of documentation) should be considered as part of setting up the project team.

Guidelines

Even with a proven methodology, planning for future information needs in today's changing economic, social and regulatory environments is a difficult task. The following are overall guidelines to be considered.

Project objective

The primary objective of the information planning project is to develop an action plan, NOT a report. The plan should stimulate and direct the action of the organisation towards its information objective. Describing the information systems needed by the organisation within the planning horizon is an important effort. However, the project will only be successful if it plans and causes action to carry out the organisation's high priority strategies.

Customise the planning approach.

Just as each business situation and approach to planning are unique, the information planning approach varies among different organisations and from year to year within one organisation. The planning approaches and techniques described in this manual should be modified and supplemented as necessary to integrate information planning with the strategic planning process and to satisfy the unique requirements of their particular planning environment.

In customising the approach, important factors to consider are the size and complexity of the organisation, the degree of commonality across the various operating units, the status of the existing information plans, and the nature of their strategic planning process.

Obtain executive management commitment and participation.

Information processing services competes with other investment opportunities for resources. The resources committed to information processing must serve all parts of the organisation in an environment where demand often exceeds supply. For these reasons, executive management must decide both on the appropriate level of spending for information processing services and on the priorities for commitment of these resources. Setting overall spending and priority guidelines early in the planning effort will reduce the risk of developing an unrealistic plan.

Senior management involvement in information planning is also required to gain visibility for the planning effort. Middle and lower management support for the plan can be gained through senior management commitment to the planning project.

Obtain management involvement.

Functional and line managers are often the key users of systems, particularly those systems that provide transaction processing, operational control reporting and strategic planning support. Through direct experience or feedback from their subordinates, the managers are familiar with inadequacies and problems of existing systems. These managers can judge the adequacy of those systems and identify those areas most needing improvement. Their involvement in the information planning project through membership on the project team or through participation in interviews is essential.

Define the scope of the plan.

The scope of the effort to be undertaken in an information planning project must be clearly defined early in the project to ensure that no effort is spent performing work that is not directed toward management's overall objectives. The scope of an Information Delivery Plan has three dimensions: coverage, content and horizon.

Coverage

Coverage of the Information Delivery Plan refers to those parts of operations that are to be included in the plan. In a complex organisation, the divisions, functions and geographical areas to be included should be defined in the early stages of the planning effort. While the definition of a comprehensive Information Delivery Plan normally requires the inclusion of all areas of operation, practicality may require a more restricted coverage. Factors to be considered in making this determination include:

- The degree of centralised control over the strategic planning process.
- The degree of diversity within the organisation. For example, a highly diverse organisation may require the development of separate but coordinated plans.
- The structure of the information processing services team. For example, if each division has its own information processing services team, the development of separate, coordinated plans may be appropriate.
- The status of current Information Delivery Plans. For example, if no Information Delivery Plan exists, an approach focusing on broad corporate needs may be required. Or, if a corporate plan exists, the development of more detailed plans recognising unique divisional or functional needs may be appropriate.
- Known areas of need. For example, if certain business units or functions are better served than others by existing information systems, the planning project approach may be designed to focus on the areas of greatest need.
- Thrust areas of business. For example, if some divisions or product lines are undergoing significant organisation or directional changes, these areas may warrant closer attention during development of the plan. Conversely, an Information Delivery Plan may not be justified for operations about to be divested or that are of declining importance to the future of the organisation.

Content

An Information Delivery Plan can vary in the degree to which it plans for the various information system components. Every Information Delivery Plan should contain application strategies and project descriptions. However, the plan should also include hardware, software, organisation, and security strategies. The detail of each strategy will depend on the importance of each of these components to the organisation's information system and need for planning.

Horizon

The horizon of the Information Delivery Plan represents the anticipated time span of the plan. Factors to be considered in selecting a planning horizon include:

- The planning horizon used for strategic planning.
- The stability and maturity of the organisation, including the likelihood of an acquisition, divestiture, regulatory changes or reorganisation.
- The extent of known requirements.

Three to five years is usually an appropriate period for an information planning horizon. A period of this length is usually consistent with the strategic planning horizon and is short enough to allow a reasonably accurate prediction of requirements.

Understand the business.

An understanding of the business environment, objectives and plans is a prerequisite for understanding the types of information that should be provided by the information systems. Ideally, this business background is provided by selecting project team members with significant positions, experience and responsibilities. When less experienced and knowledgeable personnel are assigned to the project team, significant orientation may be required to ensure that the Information Delivery Plan developed reflects those business requirements.

Plan at the proper level of detail

Developing an Information Delivery Plan with too much detail should be avoided. Failure to recognise the appropriate level of detail and degree of accuracy may result in a project taking too long to complete and a loss of management attention and credibility.

Information planning activities that are frequently performed at an inappropriate level of detail include:

- Interviewing to determine information needs;
- Developing application systems project descriptions c. Formulating hardware and software strategies;
- Planning the organisation of the information processing services team.

If there is a need to define a project or plan in more detail than normally associated with an Information Delivery Plan, the definition should become the objective of a subsequent

project. Such detailed definition should not be included in the plan unless senior management has approved the change in scope and effort.

Develop the plan in stages.

As each portion of the planning effort concludes, a draft of the specific sections of the final report should be prepared. The outline of the report is defined early in the Organisation segment and serves as a guide for determining which sections and deliverables will be included. Building the plan in this way provides for greater flexibility in the later stages of the project and helps maintain summary levels of the results for use in presentations to management.

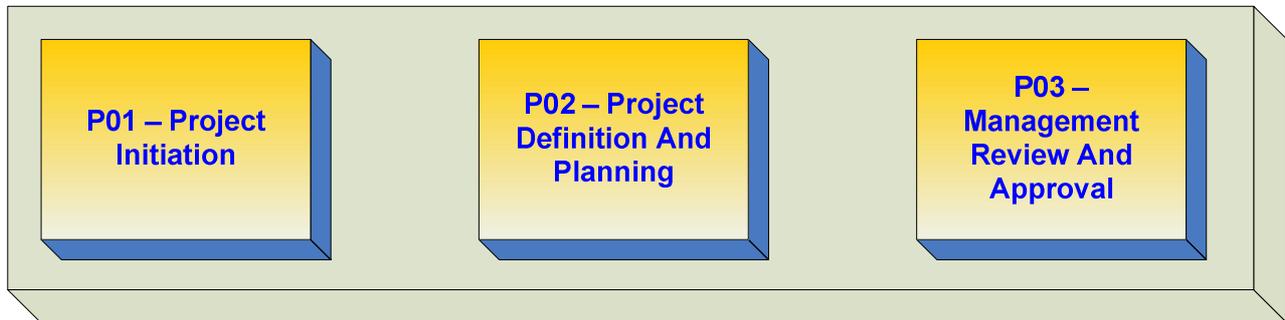
Recognise that the plan will change.

An important characteristic of a successful Information Delivery Plan is its flexibility. Just as strategic plans are re-evaluated and updated over time, the Information Delivery Plan, which is based on the requirements of the strategic plans, should undergo periodic amendment.

Periodic revision of the Information Delivery Plan is most effectively accomplished when information planning is integrated with the strategic planning process. Under these conditions, business objectives and strategies defined in the strategic plan can be immediately assessed in terms of their systems implications and requirements. Project definitions and priorities can be developed for review and approval by management as part of the strategic plan approval process. At a minimum the appropriateness of the Information Delivery Plan should be assessed whenever a major change in business direction or strategies takes place.

Amendment of the Information Delivery Plan may not require performing the complete planning process again. The scope of the revision effort may be restricted to those parts of the operations that have undergone substantial changes in direction or requirements. Similarly, reformulation of strategies for hardware, software or organisation are usually required less frequently than revisions to application strategy. For these reasons, annual (or less frequent) updating of the plan between major replanning efforts usually requires significantly less effort than completely developing an Information Delivery Plan.

Project Definitions & Planning Overview



Objectives

The primary objective of Project Definition and Planning is to provide a basis for approving and initiating an information system development project. Supplemental objectives include:

- To identify the major business and information needs the information system should meet.
- To develop a conceptual design of the proposed system for use in project evaluation and in approximating the development effort.
- To describe how the system will be developed, the benefits of the system, and to estimate the costs of the preliminary systems design.

Depending on the issues and questions to be resolved in a project, and the available technology, different approaches can be adopted. For example, research and development might be required, including the construction of prototypes, to select a preferred solution. This might include running Expressions of Interest to look for best practice options from industry experts. The end result is generally not a built system, but rather proof of feasibility and advisability to feed through into the high-level plans.

Approach to Completing Work

Summary of work activities

The work activities performed during project definition and planning consist of the following:

- Initiate the project definition;
- Define requirements and develop a conceptual design;

- Obtain Management Advisory Committee approval.

The specific tasks and steps performed are described below.

Initiate the project definition.

P01 - Project Initiation

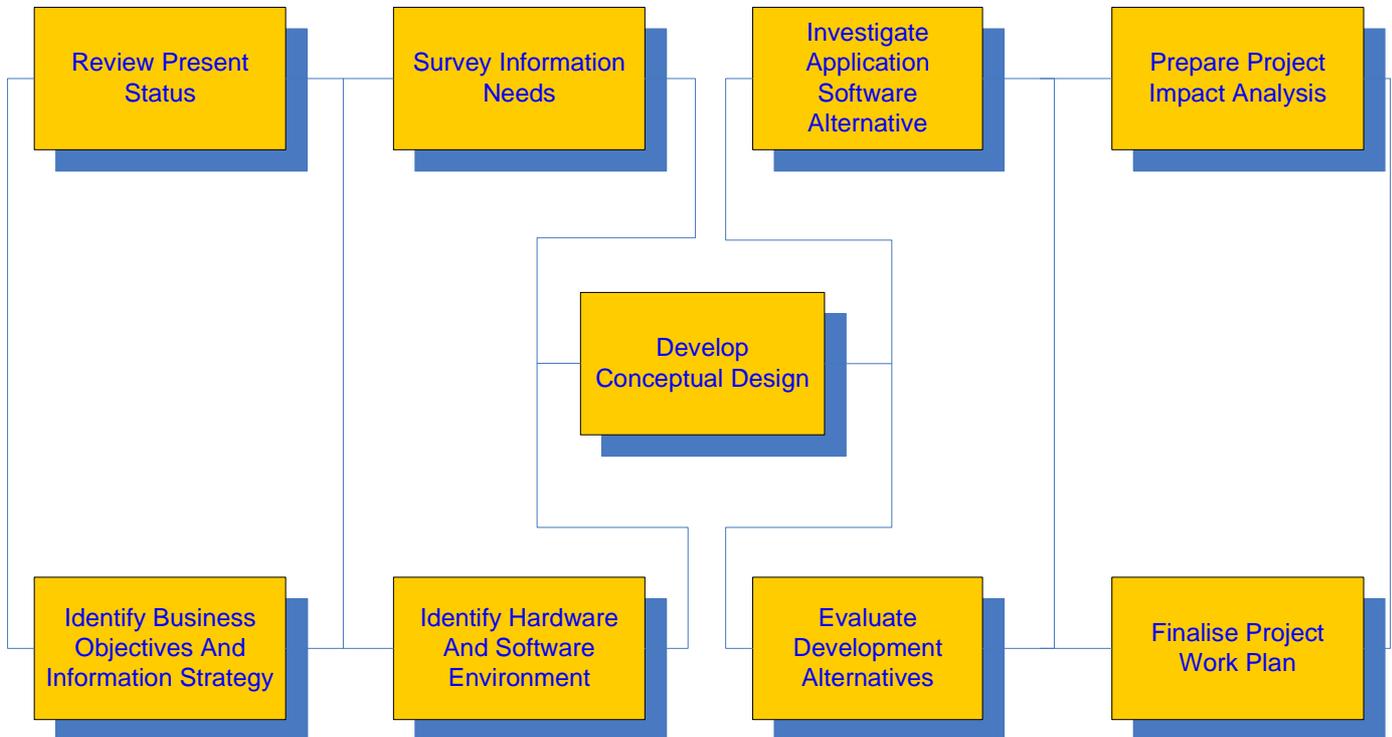


Initiate Project And
Organise

This segment includes the work required to obtain management approval for this project and plan the work effort. This involves defining project scope and specific outputs, developing the work program, and organising and training the project team. The degree of effort involved will vary, depending on project size, project approval procedures, and whether the project resulted from an Information Delivery Plan.

Define requirements and develop a conceptual design.

P02 - Project Definition And Planning



In the first four tasks of this segment, the project team develops the specifications for the system's conceptual design. This requires understanding the business needs of the users that the system will serve, the existing information strategy, the related existing systems, and the probable future technical environment. The specifications include a summary of the users' information needs, a project data model, business functions to be served, and system performance requirements and features. If the project arises from a formal Information Delivery Plan, this information should already be available and may only require updating.

Next, the project team takes the specifications and develops a conceptual design of the new system. The design is an overview of the systems architecture. The systems architecture identifies major inputs and outputs, user and systems interfaces, system data,

major functions and features, and the physical environment needed to support the systems architecture. The conceptual design will be used to evaluate the system and estimate its costs.

The objective of the last four tasks is to produce the preliminary system design work plan and an analysis of the system's financial and organisational impact. The project team first determines how the system will be developed (i.e., use of development aids, prototyping) and the potential for using purchased software. These factors affect the work and time required to design the new system. The assumptions made and the conceptual design provides the parameters needed to develop the work plan and estimate project costs.

Obtain Management Advisory Committee approval.

P03 - Management Review and Approval



Obtain Management
Advisory Committee
Approval

In this segment, the project team presents the project definition and planning outputs to the Management Advisory Committee. Included in the presentation are the conceptual design of the proposed system and the scope, timing, cost and work plan of the subsequent preliminary systems design.

If the committee approves the work performed based on the presentation and the project definition report, authorisation is obtained to continue into the Preliminary Systems Design phase.

Major Products

The major product of project definition and planning is the project definition report. The major elements of this report include:

- A high-level description of the proposed systems inputs, outputs, functions and features
- Benefits of the proposed system
- Work plans and costs to implement the system
- The impact of the system on the organisation
- List of software packages to be evaluated (if application software will be used)
- Hardware, software, and personnel requirements of the proposed system

Major Inputs

The organisation's strategic business and information plans.

Relationship with Other Work

The need to define a preliminary systems design project may arise from several situations. The production systems support group or management may identify projects to resolve problems or weaknesses of existing systems. Management may require projects to meet an immediate need due to a business or environmental change. Projects would arise outside the formal Information Delivery Plan and would typically re completion of all tasks in this phase.

Projects may also have been identified during the information planning process. High priority projects may be further defined in the Develop Conceptual Design task and sequent tasks. The work completed in these tasks can facilitate the approval and implantation of the Information Delivery Plan. Other projects may be defined further after the IS Plan is completed, when they are ready for initiation. These may require completion of Project Definition and Planning tasks, depending on the age of the Information Delivery Plan the possibility that requirements may have changed.

Project definition and planning outputs are vital to the Preliminary Systems Design phase. The working papers developed here provide a basis for organising that phase. Conceptual design helps define project scope and becomes the foundation for a detailed system design.