IT Dashboard Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Background

As announced at the May 27 CIO Council Meeting, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will soon be ready to launch the IT Dashboard platform. Through the IT Dashboard, Federal agencies and the public will have the ability to view details of Federal information technology investments online and to track their progress over time. The IT Dashboard will display data received from agency Exhibit 53 and 300 submissions, including general information in over 7,000 Federal IT investments, and detailed data for nearly 800 of those investments agencies classify as "major." After the launch of this site, agency CIOs will be responsible for evaluating and updating select data on a regular basis, which will be accomplished through interfaces provided on the website. These frequently asked questions (FAQs) are designed to help prepare agencies for the launch of the beta release of the IT Dashboard.

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

1. When will the IT Dashboard be available to the public?
Early this summer, the site will be launched as a "beta" release for the first 30 days, but will display actual data from the most recent agency Exhibits 53 and 300 submissions. Some features may not be immediately available during the beta phase.

2. What information will the IT Dashboard display?
Upon launch, the system will display a subset of data from agency Exhibits 53 and 300, and agencies will begin to update cost, schedule, and performance figures, agency CIO evaluations, and other collected investment information. For a comprehensive list of data elements to be made publicly available at launch, see "Data Fields to be Made Publicly Available" at the end of this document.

At launch, data (as described above) for the following agencies will be displayed on the IT Dashboard:

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Justice
- Department of Labor
- Department of State
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Department of Transportation
- Department of the Treasury
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Corps of Engineers
- Environmental Protection Agency
- General Services Administration
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Archives and Records Administration
- National Science Foundation
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Office of Management and Budget
- Office of Personnel Management
- Small Business Administration
- Smithsonian Institution
- Social Security Administration

3. Who will have access to update information in IT Dashboard?
Only agency-authorized ITWeb users will have access privileges to the IT Dashboard "My Investments" screen, where data updates are made. This screen will not be visible to those without access, or the general public.

4. Will we be able to change the portfolio structure through the IT Dashboard at this time?
No. Portfolio structure should remain exactly as released in the most recent President's Budget. Updates to the structure should only be made annually with the introduction of a newly approved Presidential Budget or through a rebaselining event.

5. Can we get access to the IT Dashboard prior to launch?
Yes. From June 11 through June 29, OMB is hosting daily Open House sessions to demonstrate and give user's hands-on access to the IT Dashboard. Open House hours are held Sunday through Friday from noon to 4 pm, and 10 am to 2 pm on Saturdays. Sessions are located at GSA headquarters at 1800 F St NW, room B300 and are available only to Federal employees. Note that contractors will be turned away at the security desk. No reservations are required, and participants are welcome to stay for any amount of time. A knowledgeable representative will be on-hand to answer any questions you have. For the most up-to-date information on Open House session, check www.cio.gov.

6. Can data quality updates be made after launch?
All agencies were given an opportunity to update existing investment data during June. The dataset is locked to any updates until launch, at which point agencies will immediately be able to edit investment data through interfaces provided by the system. Specifically, agencies will be able to update all milestone and "Evaluation by Agency CIO" data. In the weeks following the launch, the IT Dashboard will be adding capabilities to allow for updates of additional investment data elements.

Handling of Sensitive Information

7. Should we be redacting sensitive data in our submissions to OMB?

No. The IT Dashboard will not include data regarding the security or privacy investments (as reported in Section E of the Exhibit 300). Furthermore, procurement information will be provided for active contracts only (as reported in Section C of Exhibit 300) and out-year milestone costs will not be displayed. USAspending.gov will be the source of the award information for much of the procurement data. USAspending.gov pulls data from the publicly-accessible Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) every two weeks.

To prevent the exposure of potentially sensitive data, agencies should always review submissions for possible sensitive data in inappropriate data fields and proper identification of data in published fields as sensitive (e.g., avoid identifying contracts not yet awarded as "awarded" or aspects of the agency acquisition strategy.)

8. How do we prevent the release of pre-decisional information?
The final Exhibits 300 and 53 for the FY 2010 Budget Year (as submitted in April 2009, and during June updates for the IT Dashboard) should be based on Presidential Budget decisions and should not contain any pre-decisional data. Exhibit 53 and 300 data submitted by agencies to OMB this fall for the FY 2011 Budget cycle will be considered pre-decisional and will not be posted on the IT Dashboard until after release of the FY 2011 Presidential Budget.

At this point, future spending, defined as beyond the budget requested year and as provided in the Summary of Spending table in Section B of the Exhibit 300, will not be displayed on the IT

Dashboard. Future milestones (as provided in Section C of the Exhibit 300) are not considered pre-decisional and will be displayed by the IT Dashboard, with the exception of the associated cost data (see also Question #13.)

9. What about procurement-sensitive information?
Upon launch, the IT Dashboard will display no procurement-sensitive information from Exhibit 300. Additional acquisition data associated with contracts identified in Exhibit 300 (e.g. contractor name,) will be pulled from publicly available USAspending.gov (see Question #7.)

10. Will you be publishing security information on the individual investments?
Upon launch, the IT Dashboard will display no security-related information. Any decisions related to publication of security data beyond the launch date will be done in coordination with submitting agencies and reflected in future guidance.

11. How will you protect private data?
The IT Dashboard will only display information that has been authorized to be released via application and database controls. As always, it is incumbent upon the agencies to review their submissions for the inadvertent inclusion of private data in an inappropriate field.

12. Will Program/Project Manager information be displayed to the public?
The IT Dashboard will provide only the name of the Program/Project Manager of an investment. There are no plans to release contact information at this time.

13. Will IT Dashboard display cost data for each milestone, including future ones?
No. Cost data associated with individual milestones occurring beyond the current President's budget will not be released, but will be displayed at the aggregate level. However, schedule data for future milestones should not be considered procurement sensitive and will be displayed.

14. Will the dashboard display performance metrics beyond the current execution year?
All performance metrics will be displayed on the IT Dashboard for all years reported in Exhibit 300.

Submitting Data to the IT Dashboard

15. How do we submit data to the IT Dashboard?
For the beta version of the IT Dashboard, cost and schedule data and Evaluations by Agency CIOs (Evaluations) will be entered through a built-in interface available via the application. Data entry interfaces will be visible only to users with valid MAX credentials after login.

16. Will there be an ability to feed data via XML as an alternative to data entry screens?
As part of our ongoing efforts to improve usability and functionality of the IT Dashboard, we are exploring XML submission capabilities with the user community for future releases.

17. Will monthly reporting also apply to financial data for non-major investments reported on the Exhibit 53?
In the beta version of the IT Dashboard, monthly cost and schedule reporting will only be required for major investments. At this time, there are no plans to enable monthly updates to Exhibit 53 data.

18. How do we update information regarding the agency CIO?
Agency CIOs' biographical information, photos, and contact information available on IT Dashboard will be supplied via data feeds from www.cio.gov.

CIO Ratings

19. What is the "Evaluation by Agency CIO" (Evaluation) rating?
Evaluations are one of three component ratings driving the overall investment score; the other two are "Cost" and "Schedule." The agency CIO should rate each investment based on his or her best judgment, using a set of pre-established guidelines (see Question 19.) As a rule, the Evaluation should reflect the CIO's assessment of the risk of the investment's ability to accomplish its goals. While cost and schedule reflect past and current performance, the Evaluation should consider these as only two of several key indicators of future investment success. CIOs should consult with appropriate stakeholders in making their evaluation, such as Chief Acquisition Officers, program managers, etc.

20. What factors does a CIO use to rate an investment?
The following factors and supporting examples should be used to inform the Evaluation:

Evaluation Factor	Supporting Examples
Risk Management	▪ Risk log is current and complete ▪ Risks are clearly prioritized ▪ Mitigation plans are in place to address risks
Requirements Management	▪ Requirements are complete, clear and validated ▪ Appropriate stakeholders are involved in requirements definition
Contractor Oversight	▪ Agency receives key reports, such as earned value reports, current status, and risk logs ▪ Agency is providing appropriate management of contractors such that the government is monitoring, controlling, and mitigating the impact of any adverse contract performance
Historical Performance	▪ No significant deviations from planned cost and schedule

Evaluation Factor	Supporting Examples
Human Capital	▪ Qualified management and execution team for the IT investments and/or contracts supporting the investment ▪ Low turnover rate
Other	▪ Other factors that the CIO deems important to forecasting future success

21. When do I apply the Evaluation by Agency CIO to a particular investment?

CIOs will be able to apply the Evaluation immediately upon the launch of the IT Dashboard and will be expected to update ratings as soon as possible, but no later than July 31. The rating will be entered in the My Investments section of the IT Dashboard, which will be visible upon login by authorized users.

22. How is the Overall Rating calculated before an initial Evaluation by Agency CIO has been entered?

Because the Evaluation comprises at least one third of the Overall Rating for an investment, the lack of the rating will not adversely impact the Overall Rating for an investment until the CIO has rated the investment. Until July 31, Cost and Schedule ratings will each comprise 50% of the investment's Overall Rating until the Evaluation has been entered. Immediately upon entry, the Evaluation, Cost, and Schedule ratings will each represent one third of the Overall Rating for the investment. Where the CIO's Evaluation is lower than both Cost and Schedule ratings, it will entirely override those ratings and represent 100% of the Overall Rating.

Beginning August 1, any investment not yet rated will default to an Evaluation rating of "1" and Overall Rating will be impacted accordingly. The CIO may correct such a rating at any time by entering the Evaluation.

23. How often should a CIO enter the Evaluation for an investment?

The Evaluation can and should be updated at any time throughout the life of the investment. CIOs should update the rating as soon as new information becomes available that would impact the assessment of a given investment. Evaluation scores will be assessed on a five-point scale, as follows:

1 = High risk
2 = Moderately high risk
3 = Medium risk
4 = Moderately low risk
5 = Low risk

Cost, Schedule, and Performance

24. What is the difference between an IT investment and an IT project?
An IT investment can be made up of one or more IT projects. Each IT investment should be a discrete line item in the agency's Exhibit 53. Projects are generally reflected as individual items in level 1 of an investment's work breakdown structure (WBS). IT contracts are not necessarily IT investments but are generally used to support IT investments and IT projects.

25. At what level of the WBS should information be reported to the IT Dashboard?
To provide an adequate level of detail to accurately reflect cost and schedule variance for the IT Dashboard, agencies should provide at a minimum milestones at WBS level 2, but preferably at level 3. Milestones at WBS level 1 generally lack sufficient detail to accurately characterize investment performance. Agencies are asked to provide data at one consistent WBS level in their milestones for a given investment. In other words, agencies should not provide a mix of multiple levels of milestones in any investment.

26. How will the IT Dashboard calculate Cost and Schedule ratings?
Cost rating is the degree to which the aggregated actual costs of an investment's completed milestones deviate from their aggregated planned costs for those milestones. At launch, Schedule rating will be the deviation, in days, between aggregated planned and actual costs for completed milestones. Future calculations will change as new data elements are collected from IT investments after launch.

<u>**Cost Rating**</u>

For the beta version of the IT Dashboard, the following data elements will be used for the Cost rating:

Data Element	Source
Cost/Schedule: Total Planned Cost	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table
Cost/Schedule: Total Actual Cost	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table & System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Actual Completion Date	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table & System (input)

Using the above variables, the following calculation will be used to compute the Cost rating for each investment:

Using only investment milestones where an Actual Completion Date is available,

[Sum (Total Planned Cost) - Sum (Total Actual Cost)] ÷ Sum (Total Planned Cost)

Schedule Rating

For the beta version of the IT Dashboard, the following calculations will be used for the Schedule rating, until the agency populates the newly required data fields to provide for more accurate computations:

Data Element	Source
Cost/Schedule: Planned Completion Date	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table
Cost/Schedule: Actual Completion Date*	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table & System (input)

*Note: For Actual Completion Dates missing for milestones past due, the system date will be used for calculations.

Using the above variables, the following two-step calculation will be used to compute the Schedule rating for each investment:

1. *Using only investment milestones where the Planned Completion Date is on or before the system date. For each milestone,*

   Actual Completion Date *(if missing, system date)* ***– Planned Completion Date = Days Overdue or (Early)***

2. *Then,*

   (Total Days Overdue + Total Days Early) ÷ Count of Milestones used in step 1

Immediately upon launch, the IT Dashboard will require three additional data elements for each milestone to improve cost and schedule variance calculations. For each milestone with actual costs included, the IT Dashboard will require:

- Planned Start Date
- Actual Start Date
- Budgeted Cost of Work Scheduled (to date)/Planned Value

As this new data is added for each investment the IT Dashboard will start displaying an earned value management calculation. As part of this update, “percent complete” data should be updated as necessary to represent the earned value percent complete (where applicable.)

27. Will there be a process for requesting and/or approving baseline changes within the IT Dashboard?

The beta version of the IT Dashboard will not have an enabled approval workflow function. Only baselines approved in accordance with agency policy should be entered into the IT Dashboard by an authorized user.

28. Will the dashboard differentiate between development, modernization, and enhancement (DME) and steady state (SS) costs when calculating Earned Value Management (EVM) metrics?

In the beta version, the IT Dashboard will not distinguish between DME and SS (as collected in Exhibit 53) for Cost and Schedule ratings. The planning and acquisition, and operations and maintenance (O&M) milestones (from Exhibit 300) will be used for Cost and Schedule calculations. EVM-based calculations will be introduced soon after launch, as new data fields are populated by agencies.

29. Since EVM is only required for planning and acquisition, should we include O&M milestones?

Although A-11 does not require EVM on O&M milestones, Section C of Exhibit 300 does require the inclusion of O&M milestone information. At launch, the IT Dashboard will use data from the planning/acquisition and O&M milestones to calculate cost and schedule variances.

Contracts

30. Should interagency agreements be included, even if they cannot be found in FPDS/USA Spending?

The exhibit 300 has a field in the contracts table to identify interagency agreements and agencies should continue to report this data. Since this type of spending is not collected in FPDS, the IT Dashboard will not identify these contracts as invalid procurement IDs. OMB recognizes there is no authoritative source to validate these agreements at this time.

31. How will the IT Dashboard handle contract numbers that do not match the FPDS database?

The IT Dashboard will clearly indicate an invalid procurement ID for those contracts for which a matching contract number cannot be found in FPDS, and there will be no link available for further contract information. Each contract line item that is not matched by the agency with FPDS (or USAspending.gov) will be clearly indicated with a red “x” symbol in the IT Dashboard as an invalid procurement ID.

32. What data structure should we use to help identify contract numbers in FPDS?

To assist in the linkage of Contract/Task Order Numbers from the Acquisition Strategy table to FPDS, agencies should provide the following information for “Contract/Task Order Numbers” based on the FPDS-NG data requirements (as specified in the FPDS-NG Data Element Dictionary-http://www.fpdsng.com/downloads/FPDS-Data-Dictionary-Version1.3.pdf):

Part of Indefinite Delivery Vehicle (IDV)?	Procurement Instrument Identifier	Example
Yes	Data Element 1A (NTE 50 characters)	“00063200203DNBCHC020042”
No	Data Element 1A, and the Referenced PIID, Data Element 1C (NTE 100 characters)	“GS09Q08DN0165-IDV-GS10F0216N”

Data Fields to be Made Publicly Available at Launch

Data Element	Source
Unique Project Identifier (to identify investment to update)	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section A
Date of Submission	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section A
Investment Name	Exhibit 53
Investment Description	Exhibit 53
Agency CIO Name	CIO.gov
Agency CIO Email	CIO.gov
Agency CIO Photo	CIO.gov
Agency CIO Bio	CIO.gov
Project Manager Name	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section A
Qualitative Benefits	Exhibit 300, Part II: Section A
Summary of Spending: Historical spending through BY 2010	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section B
Summary of Spending: Spending from the Total column	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section B
Awarded Contracts: Contract Number	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section C
Awarded Contracts: Award Date	USAspending.gov
Awarded Contracts: Total Value of Contract/Task Order	USAspending.gov
Awarded Contracts: Interagency Agreement	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section C
Awarded Contracts: Competitively Awarded	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section C
Awarded Contracts: Performance Based Award	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section C
Awarded Contracts: Vendor Name	USAspending.gov
Awarded Contracts: Start Date of Contract	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section C/USAspending.gov
Awarded Contracts: End Date of Contract	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section C/USAspending.gov
Performance Information: Strategic Goal Supported	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section D
Performance Information: Measurement Area	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section D
Performance Information: Measurement Indicator	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section D
Performance Information: Baseline	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section D
Performance Information: Actual Results	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section D
Performance Information: Target	Exhibit 300, Part I: Section D
Performance Information: Rating (not activated at launch)	System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Milestone Description	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table
Cost/Schedule: Percent Complete	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table & System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Planned Completion Date	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table
Cost/Schedule: Actual Completion Date	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table & System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Planned Start Date {NEW}	System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Actual Start Date {NEW}	System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Budgeted Cost of Work Scheduled (to date)/Planned Value {NEW}	System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Total Planned Cost	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table
Cost/Schedule: Total Actual Cost	Exhibit 300, Cost/Schedule table & System (input)
Cost/Schedule: Cost Variance	Calculated
Cost/Schedule: Schedule Variance	Calculated