



DOI Law Enforcement Reporting Investment

Accelerating Deployment of a Law Enforcement Reporting System at the Department of the Interior through TechStat

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Faisal Ahmed, Assistant Director, Office of Law Enforcement and Security

faisal_ahmed@ios.doi.gov, 202-208-4739

Executive Summary

TechStat is an evidence-based accountability review of an Information Technology (IT) investment that results in concrete actions to address weaknesses. It presents an opportunity to turn troubled programs around and to terminate failing programs sooner. As a result of the TechStat review of the Incident Management, Analysis and Reporting System (IMARS) investment, the Department of Interior (DoI) determined that it needed to develop a process to improve the performance and accountability of IT investments. The DoI iStat review process was implemented in order to bring rigor and thoroughness to DoI's investment management functions and to provide a comprehensive Departmental review of potentially troubled IT investments. The DoI iStat process is modeled after the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) TechStat review process and should be a consideration for Federal IT leaders as a process for measuring project, program and investment performance. IT reform is a critical part of the President's Accountable Government Initiative.

Prior to the TechStat review, the IMARS project was unfocused, lacked structured customer-facing deliverables and user confidence, and had minimal Department -level senior management oversight. The TechStat review was the key contributor to the path of success for the IMARS investment making it agile and oriented to structured and frequent customer-facing deliverables with appropriate senior management oversight and governance. As a result of the TechStat, investment oversight of the IMARS was transferred from the Agency level to the Departmental level, and with this newly established focus, an accelerated deployment schedule was developed generating increased customer confidence. Also investment cost avoidances were realized as a non-performing contractor was terminated, and the leadership at DoI increased commitment, ensuring that governance and oversight is an active part of the investment assessment and review process.

Challenge

IMARS development, modernization and enhancement (DME) was originally scheduled to span five years, beginning in May 2003 and ending in October 2008. By April 2010, IMARS had spent over \$15 million and was not projected to finish until December, 2012 – four years behind schedule. Furthermore, by April 2010, the total estimated cost of the project had increased by \$19 million, from \$23 million to \$42 million. Overall, the project had a history of large variance between requested and actual spending on planning and acquisition due to unattained milestones contributing to a history of spending substantially below the planned cost. This contributed to project delays as well as multiple rebaseline events to align the project with updated schedules and budget requirements.

For example, the Agency had insufficiently managed project risks and had poorly managed contractor performance in the initial attempt to procure a law enforcement records management system at the bureau level. Over the course of the project, the primary contractor voluntarily withdrew from the project, and the sub-contractor was terminated for non-performance, causing project delays. Poor planning and distribution of resources, in particular a lack of strong leadership and direction of the project staff, had contributed to cost overruns. When the Agency transferred the program to the Department level for greater efficiency and oversight, changing IT investment priorities and initiatives to implement new project management policies and review procedures at the Department level resulted in repeated delays in project progression as the IMARS investment planning and justification were re-established and approved.

Solution

On April 29, 2010, OMB and DoI conducted a TechStat session to review the investment. At the session, the key issues impacting DoI's progress were analyzed and addressed.

As a result of the session, DoI leadership committed to providing a production system to 500 users within 6 months, leveraging user feedback from that first release to inform future releases. This established the focus, engaged active senior leadership involvement, and established the structured, customer-facing deliverable model that were much needed to turn the project around toward the path to success.

The Department also evaluated potential interaction with other Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) systems such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) e-Guardian system. Finally, the Agency created a revised and efficiently staffed deployment strategy.

To monitor DoI's development of IMARS and hold DoI leadership accountable for commitments made during the initial TechStat session, OMB held a follow-up TechStat session on September 14, 2010. As a result of the session, DoI leadership committed to deploying IMARS incrementally to additional components of the Department, until full deployment of the entire system to all users is reached in December 2012. DoI also made IMARS training a part of the Department's mandatory "In-Service" training.

Results

Due to these TechStat sessions, DoI accelerated deployment of IMARS to its law enforcement officers in a structured and frequent schedule. In October 2010, six months after the initial TechStat in April 2010, IMARS successfully deployed a production system to 500 users in 5 different bureaus proving the benefit of the TechStat and the focused engagement of the DoI leadership and the project team. These 500 users were surveyed, and their feedback is being used by the IMARS program and the DoI Chief Information Officer (CIO) to execute successful future releases. DoI will continue to deploy the system to users in incremental rollouts in at least six month intervals until it is fully deployed in December 2012. Additionally, the outcome of the TechStat review provided optimum efficiency to the project and avoidance of future costs by a schedule revision to complete its deployment sooner and reducing the development lifecycle.

In addition, the Department of Interior viewed this as an opportunity to develop and create an internal review of all its investments. This new initiative is entitled iStat. The purpose of DoI "iStat Process," as stated in the July 30, 2010 iStat memorandum, is to:

[B]ring rigor and thoroughness to the Department's investment management and review functions; which are modeled on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) TechStat review process. The iStat initiative has been developed to improve the performance and accountability of Information Technology (IT) investments by providing a comprehensive Departmental review of potentially troubled IT investments as reflected on the Federal IT Dashboard.

...iStat will not only provide a means to comply with OMB requirements but will also allow the Department to effectively identify and correct performance issues to ensure DoI's IT dollars are deriving the intended results.

The iStat process integrates the iStat Performance Board with the Information Resources Management (IRM) Executive Committee, two key bodies of DoI's information technology (IT)

governance process. The creation of the iStat not only provides a means of compliance with OMB requirements but it allows the Department to effectively identify and correct performance issues to ensure DoI's IT dollars are generating intended results.

Lessons Learned

- TechStat intervention helps to identify the underlying causes of investment underperformance. It also helps projects deliver targeted results by ensuring appropriate oversight and governance by Executive management.
- The iStat process provides focused, structured, and attainable deliverables as well as transparent and traceable milestones.
- The iStat process is focused on senior IT staff ensuring the investment aligns with the IT portfolio goals and business needs.
- An iStat review requires a coordinated effort from a cross-functional team representing each A-130 program area, business and IT communities, program managers and the financial community. The oversight of executive management recommended by TechStat and the DoI iStat process ensures cost control and possible cost avoidance in the future by aligning project results and deliverables with the business mission on a regular basis.

Disclaimer

- References to the product and/or service names of the hardware and/or software products used in this case study do not constitute an endorsement of such hardware and/or software products.