2020 Biennial Performance Report
Project Management Practices

This report addresses section 2054.157(b) of the Government Code which requires the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) to report on state agencies' progress in developing and implementing project management practices.
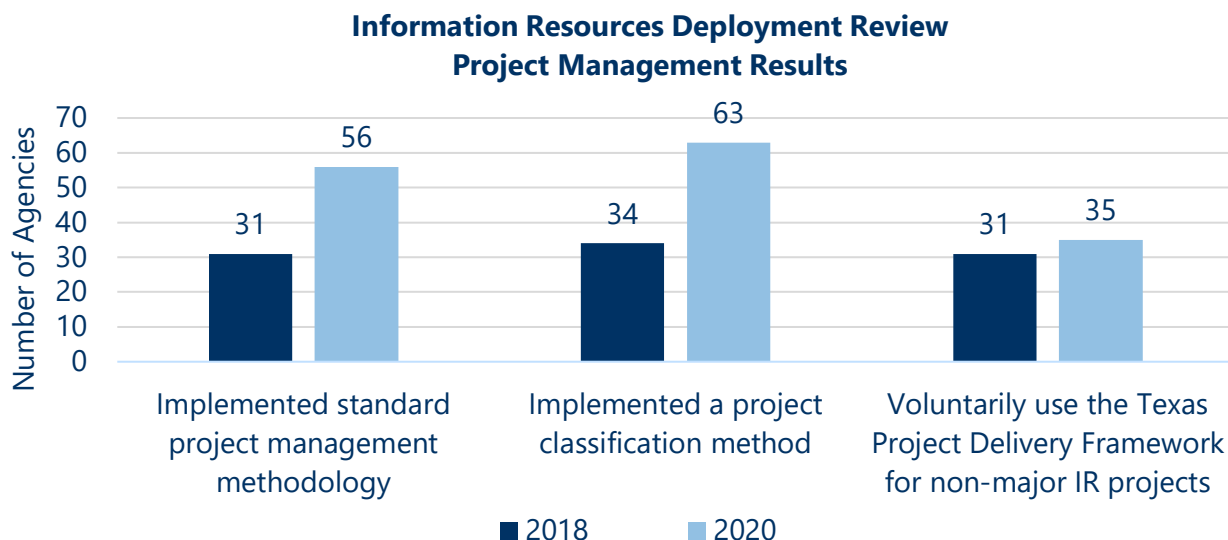
Background

The completion of Information Technology (IT) projects on time and on budget depends largely on strong project management practices and the appropriate scoping of projects. DIR has recently revised 1 TAC 216 that establishes consistent statewide requirements for IT project management practices. The revised rule sets requirements for the monitoring of state agency projects during the procurement process as required in Senate Bill 65 of the 86th Texas Legislature. In addition, major IT projects are required to use the Texas Project Delivery Framework, a consistent statewide method for project selection, control, and evaluation based on alignment with business objectives and goals.

Progress

Agency progress in the development and implementation of project management practices is reported in the biennial Information Resources Deployment Review (IRDR). Progress is measured by analyzing the differences between the two most recent reviews.

- Compliance with requirements for development of agencywide project management methodologies for IT projects, use of a project classification system, and volunteer use of the Project Delivery Framework for non-major information resources projects has increased across the board for 2020 compared to 2018. See Figure 1 below.
- DIR assists agencies in developing project management methodologies including offering a Project Classification Method tool.

Information Resources Deployment Review
Project Management Results

Figure: Bar chart titled "Information Resources Deployment Review Project Management Results." Y-axis: Number of Agencies (0–70). Categories — Implemented standard project management methodology: 2018 = 31, 2020 = 56. Implemented a project classification method: 2018 = 34, 2020 = 63. Voluntarily use the Texas Project Delivery Framework for non-major IR projects: 2018 = 31, 2020 = 35. Legend: 2018, 2020.

Status of Project Delivery Framework Initiatives

The 86th Texas Legislature passed several key bills making updates to the monitoring of Major Information Resources Projects that include increasing the monetary threshold of projects for review to $5 million and introduced contract reviews for major contracts, those $10 million and greater. DIR has worked with agencies and the Framework Change Advisory Board to refresh Project Delivery Framework templates to be published on the DIR website in Fiscal Year 2021.

Project Delivery Trends

The Quality Assurance Team Annual Report, released in December 2019, provides an overview of major IT projects and delivery trends. Agencies also report delivery trends in the biennial IRDR.

- Projects with a development schedule of less than 28 months with budgets of less than $10 million have a significantly greater chance of meeting initial cost and duration estimates.

- 30% more agencies (35 total) report using adaptive project methodologies like Agile in 2020 compared to 2018 (27 total). Of Agile approaches used, 34 agencies report using Scrum, 15 use Kanban, and five report using Open Source software development.

- The top five challenges noted by agencies in achieving IT project success are: competing agency priorities (47), lack of resources (47), changing requirements and specifications (25), technical challenges (23), and procurement challenges (19).

DIR Initiatives

DIR partnered with the federal General Services Administration to produce a workshop in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Team and Office of Attorney General (OAG) introducing de-risking strategies for the agency's new major IT project, including incorporating Agile project delivery. DIR plans to work with other agencies throughout FY21 to share de-risking strategies and Agile best practices.

Project Management Lite is a project management methodology and toolset developed by DIR for small and non-major IT Projects. It does not supersede the Texas Project Delivery Framework, but rather draws from this successful project management process to assist agencies in smaller projects. The Project Management Office at DIR developed Project Management Lite to facilitate consistent project delivery across its portfolio of projects and makes templates available to all agencies for use on non-major IT projects.

DIR's Organizational Project Management maturity is regularly evaluated by DIR executive leadership. Project performance is continuously analyzed, seeking opportunities for refinement. The goal of this continuous improvement process is to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of project delivery.

Project Management Lite processes and templates have been updated to facilitate and encourage Agile project delivery.

Next Steps

To further promote the use of project management processes within state government, DIR is committed to the following:

- Collaboration with agencies and the Framework Change Advisory Board to continuously enhance and improve the Project Delivery Framework with a focus on adapting templates to monitor Agile projects.

- Training state agency staff on Project Delivery Framework processes, procedures, and sharing Framework best practices.

- Consultation with individual agencies to improve the outcomes of project delivery from planning through implementation through sharing of best practices found across government project management.