



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

PLANNING BULLETIN

No. PB 2012-04

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Subject: 3x3x3 Rule Exemption Process

Applicability: Guidance

1. Any feasibility study with a Chief's Report scheduled for completion after December 2014 and scoped for greater than three years until completion, or that costs more than an additional \$3 million to complete starting from the rescoping, requires a Senior Leaders panel review and DCG-CEO exemption from the rule and approval to proceed. The Senior Leaders Panel that will consider requests for exemptions from the 3x3x3 rule and make recommendations to the DCG-CEO includes the Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (HQUSACE) Chiefs of Planning and Policy Division, Engineering and Construction, Real Estate, and Civil Works Program Integration Division. The Director of Civil Works will participate in the Senior Leaders Panel at his or her discretion. Approval of requests for exemptions is expected to be rare.

2. Exemptions will be requested in writing by the district Commander and endorsed to the Senior Leaders Panel by the MSC Commander. The exemption package will be provided to the Regional Integration Team (RIT) and includes the following:

- a. An electronic copy of the presentation that the district Commander will use to brief the Senior Leaders Panel. The presentation is expected to be succinct; it will describe the effort taken to reduce the scope and schedule, the tasks that are the high risk schedule and budget drivers, and the vertical team involvement;
- b. Report Synopsis that gives a short background on the need for the study, sponsor support, and the factors driving the request for exemption, e.g., project type, size, cost, and/or complexity. (Reference template on Planning SMART Guide).
- c. The Risk Register will identify and evaluate the potential risks of a study plan that complies with 3x3 constraints. The register will show which risks were deemed unacceptable and what changes were made to study scope, schedule, and budget to reduce these risks.
- d. A SMART Project Management Plan (PMP) that describes the path to completion of the study (Reference template on Planning SMART Guide);
- e. A table that displays the original study budget (by work breakdown structure) and the current rescoped study budget;
- f. A table that displays the original study milestones and the rescoped SMART Planning milestones;

3. The RIT will log requests for exemptions into the Office of Water Project Review's (OWPR) review database as a means of tracking exemption requests programmatically. The RIT Planner will be the review manager for the exemption request. After ensuring the completeness of the exemption request package, the RIT will schedule a meeting of the Senior Leaders Panel at the earliest possible opportunity. The exemption request package will be circulated to HQUSACE members of the vertical team that were involved in the rescoping and provided concurrently to the Senior Leaders Panel. HQUSACE vertical team members will concur with the MSC endorsement or non-concur with MSC endorsement and indicate additional measures that could be taken within acceptable risk to lower study costs and/or shorten the study schedule.
4. The Senior Leaders Panel will be convened virtually. Expected participants also include the district Commander, the project manager, the district Chief of Planning, the MSC Director of Programs, the MSC Chief of Planning and Policy, and HQUSACE members of the vertical team that were involved in the rescoping. Other functional Chiefs at the district and MSC levels will also participate as necessary. Following the district Commander's presentation, the Senior Leaders Panel may ask questions of the district Commander and the vertical team as needed to ensure that the study is focused and scoped to the appropriate level of detail, utilizes rigorous management controls, and takes full advantage of existing and readily available information.
5. Based on the exemption package and the outcome of the Senior Leaders Panel meeting, the Senior Leaders Panel members will either concur with the MSC endorsement or non-concur with MSC endorsement and indicate additional measures that could be taken within acceptable risk to lower study costs and/or shorten the study schedule. The Panel findings are not required to be unanimous and will be provided via a Staff Action Summary to the DCG-CEO for consideration. If the exemption is denied, the study must be rescoped in accordance with the SMART Planning procedures (reference PB 2012-03).
6. The DCG-CEO will indicate on the Staff Action Summary either concurrence with the MSC endorsement or provide other direction. The RIT will use this information to develop a Memorandum from the DCG-CEO to the MSC Commander with actions as required. An electronic copy of the DCG-CEO Memorandum will be provided to the Chief, OWPR to close the action in the review database.
7. Point of contact for the exemption process is Mr. Wesley Coleman, 202-761-4102.



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