National Planning Centers of Expertise

Agency Technical Review

Charge to Project Delivery Team and Reviewers Template

US Army Corps of Engineers ®

Product of the PCX Guild

Version: 08.26.10

INTRODUCTION
ATR Charge to Project Delivery Team and Reviewers Template

This ATR Charge to Project Delivery Team and Reviewers Template (Template) was developed by a Review Team in July 2010 as per direction and support of the National Planning Centers of Expertise Guild (PCX Guild). The Template is designed to be a companion document to the previously PCX Guild approved ATRT Lead Checklist (03.12.10) and completed charges are to be attached to the respective study Review Plan document.

The National Centers are part of a Corps initiative to improve the quality and effectiveness of the planning process for water resources projects called the Planning Excellence Program (PEP). The PEP includes training and work force capability improvement, enhanced quality assurance and control efforts, process improvement and regional and national planning centers.

Support for this effort was provided by some Guild PCX members. The strategy in the development of this Template was to:

- Quickly provide a draft template that can be used immediately by current and new ATRT Leads for planning and decision documents.
- Address the current demands for ATR by providing tools to the ATR Leads and team members.
- Build upon ATR efforts and documents already completed and in use.
- Capture the experience of veteran ATRT Leads through a focused Review Team effort.
- Coordinate with other Corps Centers and Directories.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Template was to quickly provide current and future ATRT leads and team members a useful “review tool” to help ensure consistency, efficiency, and continuity of ATR reviews.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

The Template is structured to be an attachment to the Review Plan. Subsequent Charges shall be added to this Charge Attachment to provide a continuous record within the updated Review Plan. The Template is formatted to be edited (blue and red text boxes) by the ATRT Lead to meet the study and review phase of work required.

DISCLAIMER

This Template is a general planning tool and is not a replacement for leadership, planning experience, and training for ATRT Leads and team members. The Template does <u>not</u> imply formal guidance from Corps Headquarters.

AGENCY TECHNICAL REVIEW
CHARGE TO PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM AND REVIEWERS
[Study Name]
[District]
[Milestone or Review Phase]

Prepared by: [Name of ATR Lead]
Date: [Date]

Agency Technical Review Charge to Project Delivery Team and Reviewers Template, PCX Guild Approved XX XXX 2010 (See the PCX page on the Planning and Policy SharePoint site for the latest version of this template: https://kme.usace.army.mil/CoPs/CivilWorksPlanning-Policy/pcx/default.aspx)

This template may be used by ATRT Leads to assist in developing review charges. Boiler plate charge text is provided in normal black font and should not be changed. An area where review specific information must be added is shown in [bracketed blue font]. Supplemental information is shown in [bracketed blue font] and should be deleted in the final charge. Each review charge will be maintained in Attachment 5 of the study Review Plan to aid in documenting the complete review record and process.

The following tools are available at the URL above to aid the ATRT and PDT in executing this charge.

- ATRT Lead Checklist
- *Art of Review* PowerPoint presentation
- *ATR Walk-Through* PowerPoint presentation
- Submission package checklist, based on Appendix H of ER 1105-2-100

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AGENCY TECHNICAL REVIEW
CHARGE TO THE PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM & REVIEWERS

1. General. EC 1165-2-209 "Civil Works Review Policy" establishes procedures to ensure the quality and credibility of Corps documents and work products. The Corps' Planning Centers of Expertise (PCX) are generally responsible for the accomplishment and quality of Agency Technical Review (ATR) for decision documents. Reviews will be assigned to the appropriate Corps PCX based on business programs. A Review Plan (RP) describes the scope of review for the current and/or upcoming phase of work (Feasibility, Preconstruction Engineering and Design, construction, etc.) and is a component of the Quality Management Plan (QMP) in the Project Management Plan (PMP) or Program Management Plan (PgMP). This charge to the Project Delivery Team (PDT) and reviewers is an attachment to the RP and serves as the scope of work for the conduct of the PDT and ATRT for this specific review. [Note: Each review charge is maintained in a RP attachment to aid in documenting the complete review process].

ATR is a critical examination by a qualified agency technical review team (ATRT) whose members were not involved in the day-to-day technical work that supports the decision document. ATRT members should not work within the supervisory structure of anyone conducting the technical work. The intent of ATR is to not only ensure technical analyses meet the requirements of technical regulations, but also to ensure policy compliance. The ATR process should ensure that appropriate problems and opportunities are addressed; confirm that a reasonable array of solutions are considered; confirm that an appropriate solution is recommended; assure that appropriate costs, schedules, and risks are presented; confirm the recommended solution warrants Corps participation; is in accord with policies; can be implemented in accordance with environmental laws and statutes; and has a sponsor willing and able to fulfill the non-Federal responsibilities; and ensure that the decision document appropriately represents the views of the Administration.

The ATRT is charged with the detailed review of the materials in the submission package, both directly and indirectly related to their field of expertise. The ATRT is to review all documents in the submission package for the intent of verifying overall consistency of the report information among their respective disciplines.

ATR on decision documents should address the basic communication aspects of the submission package. Quality decision documents allow the public and stakeholders to understand the planning effort, process, and its results. The decision document should enable decision makers to reach the same conclusions and recommendations as the PDT.

2. Project Delivery Team (PDT) Responsibilities. The PDT, as identified in the RP, is comprised of those individuals directly involved in the development of the decision

document. The members of this team have the following responsibilities during the ATR process:

a. A PDT Lead from the PDT shall be designated for the ATR process. [NAME] will serve as the PDT Lead for this review. [Refer to the ATR Lead Checklist for lead responsibilities]

b. The PDT Lead shall provide the ATRT with contact information for any PDT member as required.

c. An electronic version of the submission package in Word or searchable Adobe Acrobat format shall be uploaded to DrChecks at least one business day prior to the start of the comment period.

d. Other submission documentation and technical products required by the Directory of Expertise (DX) or Mandatory Center of Expertise (MX) representative(s) on the ATRT may be submitted directly to the DX or MX. [For example, detailed cost input files for Cost DX review; cultural survey reports for MX; etc.]

e. The review shall be established in DrChecks to allow access by all PDT and ATRT members. The ATRT Lead shall be assigned the role of review manager and at the discretion of the lead PCX, have the PCX POC assigned access.

f. The Project Manager (PM) shall provide labor funding by cross charge labor codes to the ATRT as indicated below. See Table in section 3.b. [Travel funds shall be coordinated through the ATRT Lead as required. Coordinate with Table 1 in 3.b.]

g. The PDT is responsible for the ATR kick-off meeting in coordination with the ATR Lead to orient the ATRT no later than the first week of the comment period. [Kick-off meeting may be conducted virtually or onsite, as warranted by the project and phase of review.] Travel funding will be provided for a site visit if a site visit is warranted to understand the problems, opportunities and conditions of the project area.

h. The PDT will evaluate comments provided by the ATRT in DrChecks. Responses of *Concur* must include a discussion of what action was taken and provide revised text from the submission package if applicable. *Non-Concur* responses shall state the basis for the disagreement or clarification of the concern and suggest actions to negotiate the closure of the comment. PDT members shall coordinate all “Non-Concur” responses with the PDT Lead who will consolidate then discuss these “Non-Concur” responses directly with and the ATRT Lead to attempt to resolve any *Non-Concur* responses prior to submission of evaluation responses.

i. The PDT Lead shall inform the ATRT Lead when all evaluations have been entered into DrChecks.

j. The PDT Lead may conduct an in progress review to summarize comment evaluations as needed in cases of complex, interrupted, or extended reviews to facilitate the review process .

k. PDT members shall contact ATRT members or Lead as appropriate to seek clarification of a comment's intent or provide clarification of information in the submission package. These discussions shall occur outside of DrChecks, but a summary of significant discussions should be provided in DrChecks.

l. The PDT Lead shall coordinate the proposed schedule and time for the relevant milestone such as AFB and CWRB with the ATRT Lead to ensure that the ATRT Lead will be able to participate.

3. Agency Technical Review Team Responsibilities. The ATRT is comprised of individuals that have not been involved in the development of the decision document and were chosen based on expertise, experience, and or skills. The members compliment the composition of the PDT. The responsibilities of this team are as follows:

a. An ATRT Lead shall be designated for the ATR process. [Name] of the [District] will serve as the ATRT Lead for this review.

b. The ATRT Lead shall provide the PDT Lead with a roster of contact and financial information for ATRT members. Information is below:

Table 1: ATRT Roster [Example ATRT Roster & Funding Information]

Name	Role	Office Symbol	Phone	Email	Org Code	Amount
	ATRT Lead					
	Plan Formulation					
	Economics					
	Environmental					
	Cultural					
	Cost Estimating					
	Civil Design					
	Hydraulics & Hydrology					
	Geotechnical					
	Real Estate					
	Other					

c. The ATRT Lead shall provide organization codes for each team members (see above) and a responsible financial point of contact (CEFMS responsible employee) as needed to the PDT Lead for creation of cross charge labor codes. [For travel funding, the ATRT Lead will provide technical and financial POC information.]

d. The ATRT shall review the submission package documents to confirm that work was done in accordance with established professional principles, practices, codes, and criteria and for compliance with laws and policy.

e. The ATRT members shall focus on their respective disciplines, but should review other submission package sections to ensure consistency throughout the documents. Reviewers that do not have any significant comments pertaining to their assigned discipline shall provide a comment stating this.

f. Review comments shall follow the four part comment structure as stated in EC 1165-2-209:

1. The review concern
2. The basis for the concern
3. The significance of the concern
4. The probable specific action needed to resolve the concern

g. In some situations, especially addressing incomplete or unclear information, comments entered into DrChecks may seek clarification in order to then assess whether further specific concerns may exist. For these instances, the ATRT member will coordinate the comment with the ATRT Lead prior to submission into DrChecks.

h. Flagging a comment as "*Critical"* in DrChecks indicates that the concern could have significant impacts on the study schedule or results. The use of the "*Critical*" comment flag should be reserved for those comments that the reviewer feels are of high significance.

i. Grammatical comments shall not be submitted into Dr Checks. Grammatical comments should be submitted to the ATRT Lead via electronic mail as a Word document in track changes or as a separate Word document that outlines the comments. The ATRT Lead should consolidate and shall provide these grammatical comments to the PDT Lead outside of Dr Checks.

j. The ATRT shall backcheck PDT evaluations to the review comments and either closes the comment or attempt to resolve any disagreements. Conference calls shall be used to resolve any conflicting comments and responses. A summary of these discussions will be included in backcheck documentation in DrChecks. ATRT members may "agree to disagree" with any comment response and close the comment with a detailed explanation for "*Non-Critical"* comments.

k. ATRT members shall keep the ATRT Lead aware of the status of "*Critical" and* unresolved comments. If the ATRT and the PDT are not able to reach agreement on

those comments, the Review Management Organization will be engaged to provide direction and facilitate resolution of the comments. If a comment cannot be resolved, then it shall be documented and brought to the attention of the Regional Integration Team as part of the submission package.

l. The ATRT members shall regularly monitor their respective labor code balances and alert the ATRT Lead to any possible funding shortages. Additional funding requirements by the ATRT will be coordinated through the ATRT and PDT Leads in advance of a negative charge occurring.

[Note: Additional responsibilities on the part of both the PDT and ATRT may be added as appropriate for specific applications.]

4. Considerations for Review. Products will be reviewed for compliance with guidance, including Engineer Regulations, Engineer Circulars, Engineer Manuals, Engineer Technical Letters, Engineering and Construction Bulletins, Policy Guidance Letters, implementation guidance, project guidance memoranda, and other formal guidance memoranda issued by HQUSACE. As an initial guide, the ATRT should consider the Project Study Issue Checklist in Exhibit H-2, Appendix H, ER 1105-2-100 (20 Nov 07), which includes many of the more frequent and sensitive policy areas encountered in studies. [Note: Edit this section as needed for the phase of review being completed]

a. Project Specific Review Considerations:

- Include any project specific issues, concerns, or questions that the PDT or RMO has identified for particular consideration by the ATRT.

b. Key Review Considerations include:

- Are there any deviations from USACE policy documented in the submission package?
- Does the study conform to the intent of the cited study authority?
- Is the formulation and evaluation of alternatives consistent with applicable regulations and guidance?
- Was the selection of models appropriate for use in evaluations?
- Was the application of data within those models appropriate?
- Was the interpretation of and conclusions drawn from model results reasonable?
- What is the status of the certification/approval for use of the planning models used in the study?
- Are the sources, amounts, and levels of detail of the data used in the analysis appropriate for the complexity of the project?
- Do the main decision document and appendices form an integrated and consistent product?

c. Following are minimum considerations that ATR reviewers should address per ER 1105-2-100. Similar review submittal requirements will apply to In Progress Reviews (IPR) or Issue Resolution Conferences (IRC).

For an FSM Submission Package (Exhibit H-3):

- Does the Submission present a complete outline of the anticipated decision document (see ER 1105-2-100 Appendix G, Exhibit G-4,"Items to be addressed in the Feasibility Scoping Meeting Documentation")?
- Does the Submission include preliminary drafts of report text for all items in the outline from item 1 through item 4.c. (4) in Exhibit G-7?
- Are the analyses for items 4.c. (2), (3), and (4) complete through the preliminary screening of alternatives, i.e.; a tentative identification of the plans for more detailed analysis?
- Has the District described the future work that will be accomplished to develop and evaluate preliminary plans?
- Has the District included draft text for item 8 that covers the results of the NEPA Scoping Meeting and the results of other preliminary coordination and public involvement efforts?
- Has the District identified any information gaps in the above items and noted the status of pending analyses and results?
- Do the draft document sections address the respective general evaluation guidelines presented in Appendix G, Exhibit G-1 to the extent possible at this stage of the study?
- Has the District prepared all of the required components of an FSM submission as outlined in Exhibit H-3 item 2 (i.e., Project Study Checklist, Project Schedule, most recent PGM, Compliance Memorandum(s), and any other pertinent information)?

For an AFB Submittal:

- Does the Submission present a complete outline of the anticipated decision document (see Appendix G, Exhibit G-7, Feasibility Report Content)?
- Does the Submission include drafts of report text for outline items 1 through 5, 6.b, 6.c, and 7 in Exhibit G-7?
- Except for items 7.c and 8, are the supporting analyses in the document complete?
- Does the Submission indicate that the sponsor and agencies views are preliminary, pending the upcoming public review?
- Does the draft text for item 8 cover the results of the NEPA Scoping Meeting and the results of other coordination and public involvement efforts to date?
- Does the outline identify any information gaps in the above items and note the status and expected results of any pending analyses?
- Has the District prepared all of the required components of an AFB submission as outlined in Exhibit H-4 item 2(i.e., Project Study Issue Checklist, status of Environmental Compliance, Status of Engineering Activities, Status of Legal Review, Status of Real Estate, Project Schedule, PGMs, Compliance Memorandum(s), and any other pertinent information)?

- Does the document address items identified in the AFB (see Appendix G, Exhibit G-5, and "Items to be addressed in the Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB) documentation")?

For a Draft Report Submittal:

- Has the District provided the draft decision document and the preliminary draft NEPA document in its entirety? Reference ER1105-2-100, Exhibit G-.
- Are both documents and the appendices essentially complete, except for the results of the pending public review?
- Does the report address the general evaluation guidelines presented in Exhibit G-1? (Suggest including entire table for reviewers if this is included in charge)
- Does the report indicate that the sponsor and agency views are preliminary, pending the upcoming public review?
- Does the report text for public and agency involvement cover the results of the NEPA Scoping Meeting and the results of other coordination and public involvement efforts to date?
- Are all supporting analyses complete?
- Has the District prepared all of the required components of a Draft Document review as outlined in Exhibit H-5 item 2 (i.e., Project Study Issue Checklist, status of Environmental Compliance, Status of Engineering Activities, Status of Legal Review, Project Schedule, PGMs, Compliance Memorandum(s), and any other pertinent information)?

For a Final Report Submittal:

- Have all issues in previous reviews been resolved?
- Has District clearly identified significant changes (such as a document in Track Changes) to Draft document based on Draft review, Independent External Peer Review, and Public comment?

5. Schedule.

Table 2: ATR Schedule [Example review schedule with approximate durations]

Task	Date
Kickoff Meeting / Review Begins	[No Later than Week 1]
ATRT Comments due	[Week 3]
PDT Responses due	[Week 5]
Backcheck	[Week 6]
Resolution of Comments (if required)	[Week 7]
Review Report/Certification	[Week 8]
After Action Report	[Week 10]