



MEMORANDUM

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TO: Members, Joint Committee on Information Technology
FROM: Scott Frank, Legislative Post Auditor
DATE: February 6, 2012
SUBJECT: Comparison of IT Project Oversight Structures in Kansas, Colorado and Virginia

During my January 19 testimony on systems implementation audits and Senate Bill 254, committee members requested more information on the IT project oversight infrastructure in Colorado and Virginia—two states that I highlighted in my testimony. We contacted officials from both states to understand how IT projects are overseen. The attached figure compares the oversight structures in those states to the oversight structure in Kansas.

Please note that this memo focuses on oversight of IT projects for Kansas, Colorado and Virginia within executive branch agencies—projects within the legislative and judicial branches in these states may or may not follow the same processes.

Oversight From Within the Executive Branch

General oversight of IT projects includes high-level functions such as strategic planning, project approval, and progress monitoring. All three states have individuals or agencies in place to provide general oversight of IT projects. In Kansas this is the responsibility of the Executive Branch Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO). In Colorado this function is provided by the Office of Information Technology (OIT), and in Virginia it is provided by the State Chief Information Officer (CIO) who works for the Secretary of Technology.

Project monitoring involves tracking the project and its deliverables against key milestones to determine if it is on schedule and within budget, and to identify projects that are at risk of failure. This monitoring can be either passive or active. With passive monitoring, the reviewers rely on self-reported status reports that are prepared by the manager for each project. That information is then evaluated to determine where the project stands. With active monitoring, the reviewers participate in project meetings, directly gathering information on a frequent basis, and looking for signs that a project might be at risk.

Both Kansas and Colorado rely on passive monitoring of IT projects. In Kansas this is done through the Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) and in Colorado it is conducted by eight Executive Governance Committees (ECGs) that work with logically grouped agencies. In general, the staff track the progress of the projects. That tracking relies heavily on self-reported, periodic status reports submitted by the project managers.

Joint Committee on Information Technology
February 9, 2012
Attachment 1

On the other hand, Virginia is considered a leader in IT project monitoring. The Property Management Division (PMD) within the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) performs active project monitoring by imbedding staff within key IT projects. This allows them to continuously monitor and evaluate the real-time status of these projects, and make recommendations for continuing, suspending, or correcting projects.

Oversight By the Legislative Branch

All three states have some form of general oversight provided by their legislatures. In Kansas this comes from two sources—the Legislative CITO and the Joint Committee on Information Technology (JCIT). In Colorado the Joint Budget Committee and the Legislative Audit Committee oversee IT projects. In Virginia, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) oversees projects.

Both Colorado and Virginia have active project monitoring performed by their independent audit offices. In Colorado, staff from the Office of the State Auditor perform one-time systems implementations audits of active IT projects they have identified as at risk. In Virginia, staff from the Auditor of Public Accounts conduct ongoing systems audits throughout the life of project. The results from these audits are provided to the general oversight committees within each state's legislature. Kansas does not have any legislative project monitoring at this time.

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Comparison of Information Technology Project Oversight and Monitoring Infrastructure

	Kansas		Colorado		Virginia	
	Executive Branch	Legislative Branch	Executive Branch	Legislative Branch	Executive Branch	Legislative Branch
GENERAL OVERSIGHT						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic planning Project review and approval High-level progress monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive CITO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative CITO Joint Comm on Info Tech (JCIT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Info Tech (OIT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Budget Comm Legislative Audit Comm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sec of Tech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Leg Audit and Review Commission (JLARC)
PROJECT MONITORING						
Tracking the project against key milestones to determine if it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On schedule Within budget At risk of failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enterprise Project Mgt Office (EPMO) (a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NONE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Governance Committees (EGCs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of State Auditor (b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Va Info Tech Agency (VITA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditor of Publ Acts (c)
Passive Monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and evaluate self-reported status reports 	<i>Passive Monitoring</i>	<i>No Monitoring</i>	<i>Passive Monitoring</i>	ACTIVE MONITORING	ACTIVE MONITORING	ACTIVE MONITORING
Active Monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend planning meetings/directly collect information 						
(a) In addition to project monitoring, Kansas' EPNO also consults with agencies for plan development, approval, and assistance in closing out a project. (b) Colorado's Office of State Auditor conducts a <u>one-time</u> systems implementation audit of any IT project it identifies as high risk. (c) Virginia's Auditor of Public Accounts conducts <u>ongoing</u> systems implementation audits of any IT project it identifies as high risk.						