Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

VA Directive 6052
Transmittal Sheet
April 23, 2009

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: This Directive establishes policy for the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Information Technology (IT) strategic planning process in accordance with Federal mandates that require Agencies to develop and publish an IT Strategic Plan. Agencies must comply with the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the E-Government Act of 2002, and the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) implementation guidance to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of IT strategic planning.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES: This Directive provides information necessary for governing and implementing IT strategic planning at VA. The Directive provides the framework for developing an IT Strategic Plan that supports VA's strategic business needs while also establishing roles and responsibilities for IT management that ensure accountability throughout the planning process.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology (OI&T) (005), Office of IT Enterprise Strategy, Policy, Plans and Programs (005E).

4. RELATED HANDBOOK: None

5. RESCISSIONS: None

CERTIFIED BY:

/s/
Stephen W. Warren
Acting Assistant Secretary for
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BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:

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Distribution: Electronic Only

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. PURPOSE: To establish a clear and repeatable IT strategic planning process within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

2. POLICY

a. IT strategic planning is mandated by the following regulations: the Government Performance Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) (Public Law 103-62, 5 U.S.C. Chapter 3), May 1993; the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-11, Part 7, Planning, Budgeting, Acquisition, and Management of Capital Assets, June 2008; the E-Government Act of 2002 (E-Gov Act) (Public Law 107-37, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 36), April 2003; and OMB Memorandum M-06-02, Improving Public Access to and Dissemination of Government Information and Using the Federal Enterprise Architecture Data Reference Model, December 2005.

b. All agencies are required to: (1) establish a clear and repeatable strategic planning process that provides the overarching strategy and priorities to guide the IT capital, budget, operations, and tactical planning requirements; (2) disseminate the IT strategic plan on the agency's public website; (3) review the performance and results of the agency information dissemination program and describe the review in the IT Strategic Plan; and (4) provide annual updates to OMB on the implementation of the provisions of OMB Circular A-11, Part 7 and OMB Memorandum M-06-02, and other reporting requirements as requested.

c. The IT Strategic Plan will align to the VA Strategic Plan and will include at a minimum:

(1) a comprehensive mission statement covering the major functions and operations of the Office of Information and Technology (OI&T);

(2) a desired vision that defines the future state of the IT strategic direction;

(3) one or more IT strategic goals;

(4) IT strategies and objectives for meeting the administrations', staff offices' and Chief Information Officer's (CIO) business needs;

(5) outcome oriented IT performance measures;

(6) an identification of those key factors, internal and external to the agency and beyond its control that could significantly affect the achievement of the general IT goals and objectives; and,

(7) a description of the program evaluations used in establishing or revising general IT goals and objectives, with a schedule for future program evaluations.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **The Secretary of Veterans Affairs has delegated authority to the CIO for carrying out the agency's information technology activities to improve agency productivity, efficiency and effectiveness.**

b. **The Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology / CIO is responsible for**:

(1) Providing the IT mission and vision.

(2) Recommending IT goals and priorities for Executive Leadership Board concurrence and approval.

(3) Submitting VA's IT Strategic Plan to the Secretary for approval and issuance to the public.

c. **The Deputy CIO for IT Enterprise Strategy, Policy, Plans and Programs (DCIO, SPP) is responsible for developing VA's IT strategy and objectives to support administrations', staff offices', and CIO's business needs.**

d. **The Office of IT Strategy is responsible for:**

(1) Developing an IT planning framework that supports VA and IT core missions, vision, goals, objectives, priorities, initiatives and strategies.

(2) Developing IT strategic planning policy and associated planning guidance.

(3) Advising the CIO and the DCIO for SPP of the impact of current or planned legislative or regulatory requirements on executing IT planning goals.

(4) Aligning the IT Strategic Plan with the business goals and objectives presented in the VA Strategic Plan.

(5) Developing and publishing an annual IT Management Accountability Report (IT MAR). *(See Section 5, Definitions. Note: Expanded version of the Performance Accountability Matrix).*

(6) Managing the IT strategic planning cycle (Appendix A).

(7) Providing support and consultation to IT offices in the development of IT strategic and program / operational plans.

(8) Developing planning assumptions based on information gathered from environmental scans.

e. **OI&T Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Chief Information Officers and Executive Directors are responsible for**:

(1) Formulating strategies to accomplish the IT goals and submitting them for approval by the Assistant Secretary of Information and Technology (including out of cycle requirements);

(2) Ensuring that IT services are responsive to VA's business needs and requirements;

(3) Providing strategic performance measures that can be used to determine success in meeting established objectives and strategies;

(4) Ensuring that plans are aligned with IT financial goals, objectives and strategies and are incorporated (as appropriate) into IT budget submissions;

(5) Providing subject matter experts to represent VA's interest in IT strategic planning;

(6) Gathering stakeholder input for their respective program(s); and

(7) Developing IT program or operational plans to implement the IT Strategic Plan.

f. **OI&T Managers and Directors** are responsible for developing subordinate plans and managing the activities designed to meet DCIO's, DAS' and Executive Directors' IT goals, initiatives and performance targets.

4. REFERENCES

a. Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996.

b. E-Government Act of 2002.

c. Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA).

d. Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) of 1998.

e. Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) of 1993.

f. OMB Circular A-11, Part 7.

g. OMB Circular A-130.

h. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

i. U.S.C. 44 Section 3506.

5. DEFINITIONS

a. **Environmental Scan.** Environmental scan is an ongoing internal and external customer feedback and assessment process conducted at all levels of the organization for use in developing vision, goals, and objectives.

b. **IT Initiative.** The proposed solution to a business need.

c. **IT Management Accountability Report (IT MAR).** The IT MAR is an annual report that provides OI&T performance information (i.e., strategic goals, objectives, fiscal year performance goals and outcomes). The IT MAR is a management tool that will provide a basis for assessing the organization's effectiveness.

d. **IT Mission.** A mission statement is brief, defines the basic purpose of the organization, and corresponds directly with the organization's core programs and activities. An organization's program goals should flow from the mission statement. The mission defines the approach and means IT will take to fulfill the mission of VA as a whole.

e. **IT Strategic Goals.** A goal is a statement of aim or purpose included in a strategic plan (required under GPRA). The strategic goal defines how an agency will carry out a major segment of its mission over a period of time. The goal is expressed in a manner which allows a future assessment to be made of whether the goal was or is being achieved. Most strategic goals will be outcomes and are long-term in nature. IT goals define the forward-thinking and transformational outcomes IT pursues to achieve its mission over a period of time.

f. **IT Strategic Objectives.** Strategic objectives are strategy components or continuous improvement activities that are needed to create value for the customers. IT objectives further define intended program outcomes to achieve IT goals.

g. **IT Vision.** The vision defines the ideal state for IT. What an organization desires to accomplish in the future.

h. **Performance Measures.** Performance measures are valid and reliable metrics for evaluating the extent to which goals and objectives are achieved. The measures should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-oriented, Time-limited).

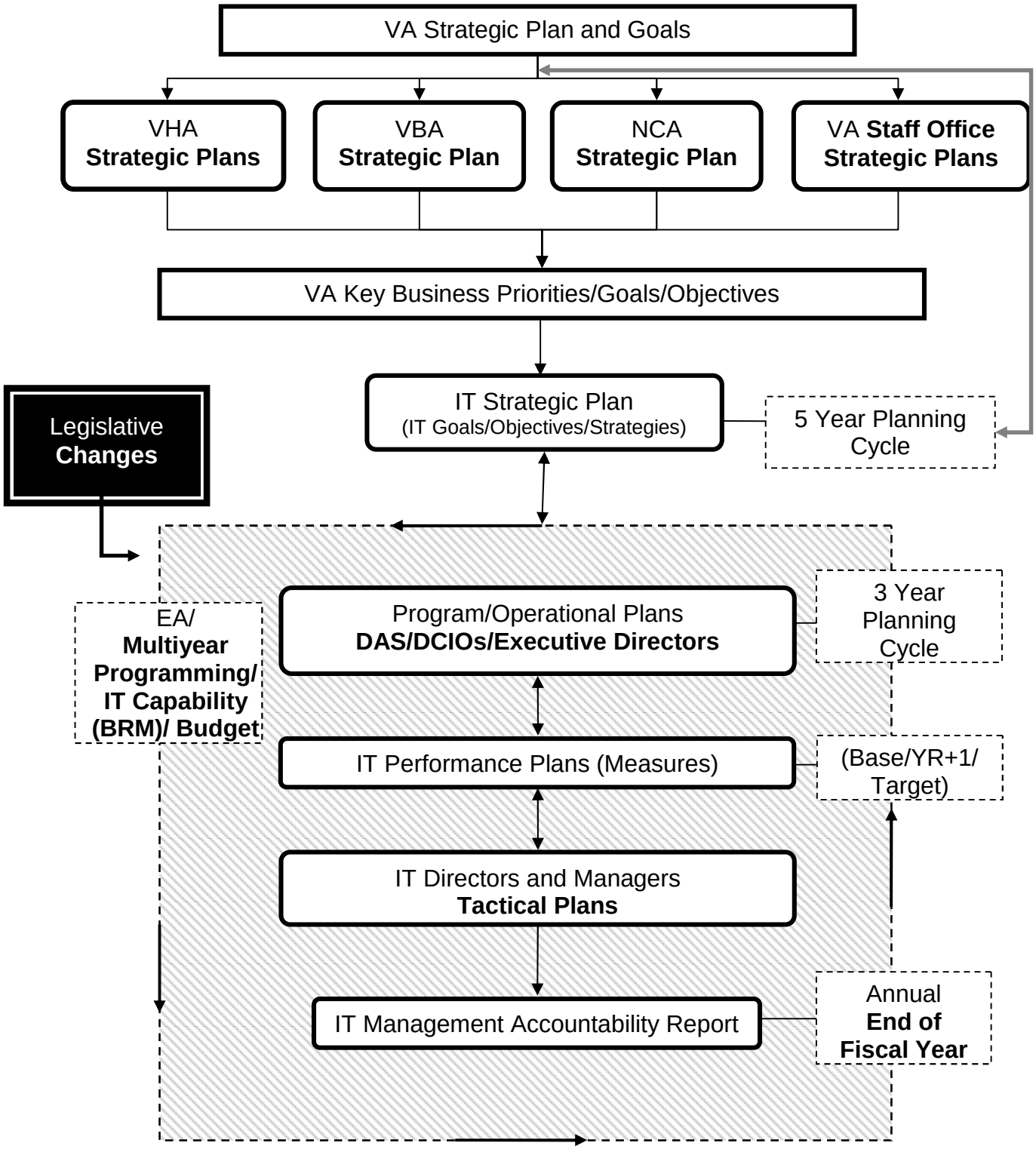
i. Program Plan. A program plan consists of planned activities or related projects managed in a coordinated way to include an element of ongoing work products or projects. A program plan is designed to accomplish a predetermined objective or set of objectives.

j. **Operational Plan.** An operational plan is a detailed action plan to accomplish the specific objectives. The plan is a derivative of the strategic plan describing short-term business strategies; showing how the strategic plan will be put into operation and serving as a basis for an annual operating budget. An operational plan may comprise a 3-year rolling plan to be completed by a small sub-group of people with expertise and/or a stake relating to a major goal.

k. **Strategic Planning.** Strategic planning is a continuous process by which IT determines direction and operational focus over the next 3 to 5 years consistent with priorities established by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs as expressed in the Departmental Strategic Plan. There is one IT Strategic Plan; however, strategic planning involves all parts of VA Administrations and Staff Offices.

APPENDIX A

Office of Information Technology IT Strategic Planning Cycle



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Information Technology Strategic Planning Cycle

1) VA Strategic Plan and Goals which flows to
2) 4 Administrative Strategic Plan which flow to VA Key Business Priorities/Goals/Objects
    a) VHA Strategic Plans
    b) VBA Strategic Plans
    c) NCA Strategic Plans
    d) VA Staff Office Strategic Plans
3) VA Key Business Priorities/Goals/Objects which flow to
4) IT Strategic Plan (IT Goals/Objectives/Strategies) which flows in and out to Program/Operational Plans
    a) 5 to 10 year planning cycle flows back into the 4 Administrative Strategic Plan
5) The Legislative Changes is a Cycle of the following:
    a) EA/Multiyear Programming/IT Capability (BRM)/Budget
6) Program/Operational Plans DAS/DCIOs/Executive Directors which flows in and out to IT Performance Plans (Measures)
    a) 3 year planning cycle
7) IT Performance Plans (Measures) which flows in and out to IT Directors and Managers
    a) Base/YR+1/Target
8) IT Directors and Managers Tactical Plans which flow to
9) IT Management Accountability Report
    a) Annual End of Fiscal Year