

Oversight Transformation FAQ

11/23/2022

Oversight Transformation Project Team

Table of contents

Overall Project Related2
Project Team related.....4
Customer related6

Overall Project Related

1. **Question:** What is the Oversight Transformation Project? What is the goal and the scope of it?

Answer: WaTech's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is required to approve and monitor all major IT projects within executive branch agencies, provide guidance to agencies, and track business outcomes.

The Technology Services Board (TSB) has statutory responsibility for approval and oversight of IT projects ([RCW 43.105.285](#)) and delegated that authority to the OCIO. The OCIO approves, oversees, monitors, and independently evaluates major state agency IT projects. The OCIO serves a key role in ensuring these projects align with business goals and priorities, achieve success in meeting business outcomes and are completed within approved scope, schedule, and budget. The OCIO at WaTech currently oversees nearly 80 state agency information technology projects valued at over \$1.65 billion.

The state has initiated a statewide IT project oversight transformation project, with executive level representatives from the Office of the Governor, Office of Financial Management, small, medium, and large agencies, WaTech and legislative staff participating on the Executive Steering Committee. This project refines the project oversight process to enable scalability, higher-value oversight for more complex, higher-risk projects, reduced time and cost for lower-risk projects and allocation of resources for highest value and maximum efficiency. This is a current WaTech strategic initiative.

The following goals for this initiative were established after interviewing and conducting focus group sessions with key stakeholders, including Technology Service Board (TSB) members, legislative members and staff, independent quality assurance (QA) providers, the state Chief Information Officer, staff from WaTech and 20 agencies representing small, medium and large organizations.

- Improve the IT project oversight model to focus on minimizing, mitigating, and managing project risk to deliver successful project outcomes.
- Humanize the oversight process for state agencies while making it more consistent and predictable, and ensuring transparency and fiscal accountability.
- Enable higher-value oversight for larger, more complex, higher-risk projects and reduce agency project costs related to oversight and independent quality assurance for smaller, lower-risk projects.
- Reduce the time and simplify the process to register IT investments, especially for recurring maintenance and operations.
- Allocate state agency and WaTech resources to the highest value and for maximum efficiency.

2. **Question:** What are the priority areas of focus for the project?

Answer: The Oversight Transformation Project aims to improve WaTech's OCIO project oversight program and seeks to unlock the value, engagement and expertise of the oversight consultants for agencies to maximize project success and mitigate risks for projects in the state's portfolio.

The project is currently engaged in a discovery and service design effort and is documenting the current state, personas, pain points and a proposed future-state model. This will also include prioritization of opportunities as well as action plans to implement the improvements that will span the full scope of oversight including but not limited to:

- Investment planning and registration.
- Project risk assessments.
- Integrated and right-sized oversight.
- Gated funding.
- Policy.

3. **Question:** Is the plan to right-size and be able to flex oversight to fit the project?

Answer: Yes. One of the areas for improvement that is being pursued is the opportunity to scale, tailor, and right-size the oversight processes, tools and requirements based on project risk. This will support project success by providing higher-value oversight for more complex, higher-risk projects and reduce time and cost for lower-risk projects.

4. **Question:** What are the problems that are being solved?

Answer: The project is focused on making improvements to oversight that will enable project and program success; provide the best customer experience possible through continuous improvement; and enhance the system of accountability within the authorizing environment. The various pain points and improvement opportunities can be categorized into four primary problem areas:

- The service delivery is convoluted and complex. The current process is bureaucratic, rigid and lacks the ability to flex and scale to the needs of the project and customer.
- There is a lack of awareness of the value proposition of oversight. Agencies, stakeholders, and other participants lack awareness of the value that the oversight and WaTech team can bring to project deployment. Oversight is viewed as strictly a compliance function.
- Systems and tooling challenges – Approval and budgeting tools are inefficient and drive complexity. There is a lack of comprehensive workflow management capabilities.
- Service level and performance measures not well defined.

5. **Question:** How are you going to measure success?

Answer: As a part of the Oversight Transformation Project, the intent is to identify and define meaningful service levels and performance measures that will be used to monitor and provide visibility into the timeliness and effectiveness of oversight.

As for how we will measure success for this project, we will assess how well we have achieved the following objectives through the development of metrics and ways to measure the adoption of the future-state improvements:

- Our customers trust us for being proactive, predictable and consistent.
- We engage with a consultant-based mindset that conveys an advisory, participatory and partnership intent.
- We offer multidisciplinary services (#OneWaTech).
- Our oversight process is efficient and value-add and balances the customer journey with the requirements from the authorizing environment.
- We work with agency partners to consistently mitigate project risk and support project success.
- We leverage oversight consultants as strategic project advisors.
- We embrace continuous improvement and proactively engage in the Voice of the Customer.

Project Team related

6. **Question:** How do I participate?

Answer: Engagement of impacted stakeholders is essential to the success of the Oversight Transformation Project.

Agency business and technical leadership, project sponsors, project managers, budget specialists and external quality assurance have been and continue to be involved in the discovery and service design phase of the Oversight Transformation Project. Following this phase, the project will transition to detailed design and rollout and will continue to seek input and feedback from key stakeholders via workshops, surveys and open forums (e.g., townhall meetings).

You can ask questions or provide feedback by visiting the [Oversight Transformation Website](#).

If you are interested in getting more involved, you can reach out to [Rachel Bryant](#) or [Brian Mark](#).

7. **Question:** What does the project team have the authority and willingness to change?

Answer: The full breadth of oversight is in scope of this improvement effort. Processes, tools, systems and training/awareness are being assessed and are targets for improvement. That said, the legislature has defined oversight requirements in Section 701 of the state's operating and transportation budgets that need to be complied with.

8. **Question:** Where can I find and review actual project-level information?

Answer: Project deliverables and artifacts will be posted to the [Oversight Transformation Website](#).

9. **Question:** What is the timeframe for completion?

Answer: The target to implement a set of improvements is Spring 2023, in preparation for the 2023-25 biennium. That said, WaTech is committed to continuous improvement and the processes, systems and tools will be monitored, assessed and improved on an ongoing basis.

10. **Question:** How will changes be communicated to project managers?

Answer: WaTech leadership, the oversight team and the project team will roll out and communicate changes to the oversight model, processes and tools to agency and project leadership and key stakeholders using a variety of methods, mediums and forums.

A few examples include:

- Regular briefings to the Business Management Council, Technology Management Council and the Project Management Community of Practice.
- Training events for agency and project leadership, including project managers.
- Tools and templates will be posted to the WaTech website.
- Special forums (e.g., townhall meetings) will be scheduled and conducted.
- Stakeholder briefings, as appropriate and needed.

11. **Question:** What has the Oversight Transformation Project team done to understand the root causes of the issues or opportunities for improvement in the Plante Moran assessment?

Answer: WaTech engaged a vendor (Slalom) to lead and facilitate a discovery and service design effort. The engagement is currently in process and has involved a review of policies, tools, templates and processes. Engagement also includes numerous work sessions with agency business and technical leadership, project sponsors, project managers, budget specialists, external quality assurance and key stakeholders, including the Office of Financial Management.

12. **Question:** How will recommendations be communicated to the Legislature and agencies?

Answer: The Oversight Transformation Project will execute on its communication plan. Note, the communication plan will be periodically reviewed and updated to support additional needs. See Question 10 for examples of how recommendations and changes will be communicated to agency and project leadership.

13. **Question:** How will feedback be reported and incorporated into action?

Answer: Stakeholder engagement, input and feedback is essential to the success of this project.

As a part of the discovery and service design work effort (current phase, in process), agency business and technical leadership, project sponsors, project managers, budget specialists, and external quality assurance have been engaged and their input and ideas incorporated in the key project deliverables. This level of engagement will continue as we transition from discovery and service design into detailed design and implementation.

When the project reaches out for broader input from agencies in the future, the feedback will be documented, discussed and incorporated into the future design and improvements as appropriate.

Throughout the discovery and service design effort, the team has briefed and provided updates to the project steering committee as well as other bodies including the Business Management Council and Technology Management Council. These briefings will continue.

Customer related

14. **Question:** How will the Oversight Transformation Project impact our agency?

Answer: The future state design as well as improvement opportunities are currently being discussed and impacts are not yet known. Once known, changes and impacts will be communicated to agencies and projects. The goal is for these changes to be positive and support program and project success. The specific impacts of the improvements will be assessed and communicated as a part of this effort.

15. **Question:** How is this going to affect processes currently in place (time, confusion, process changes, etc.)?

Answer: Processes will change. These changes are intended to be positive and support program and project success. The specific changes will be documented and communicated as a part of this effort and there will be further discovery work to understand impact as we move toward implementation.

16. **Question:** How will it impact existing projects?

Answer: The future state design as well as improvement opportunities are currently being discussed and impacts are not yet known. Once known, changes and impacts will be communicated to agencies and projects. The goal is for these changes to be positive and support program and project success. The specific impacts of the improvements will be assessed and communicated as a part of this effort.

17. **Question:** How will it change the OCIO oversight process?

Answer: The changes to the oversight model and processes have not been fully fleshed out. Discovery and service design is currently in process and, following this phase, the project will transition to detailed design and implementation. That said, the intent is to implement improvements that will span the full scope of oversight including but not limited to:

- Investment planning and registration.
- Project risk assessments.
- Integrated and right-sized oversight.
- Gated funding.
- Policy.

18. **Question:** Will it result in better clarity around the oversight process for agency project managers and project teams?

Answer: Improved understanding and clarity regarding the oversight requirements and processes for agency and project leadership is an area of focus and a critical success factor for this project.

19. **Question:** How will this help us streamline OCIO oversight?

Answer: The Oversight Transformation Project is focused on making improvements to oversight that will: enable project and program success; provide the best customer experience possible through continuous improvement; and enhance the system of accountability within the authorizing environment.

While efficiency is clearly one of our goals, there is a need to balanced efficiency with the effectiveness of oversight.

20. **Question:** How will the OCIO consultants work to understand the process the same way and be able to provide consistent direction?

Answer: There is a need for more consistency in engagement across consultants and projects. Processes and requirements will be documented and clearly communicated, training will be

developed and delivered, and performance measures will be defined, monitored and used as a basis to drive future improvements and consistency.

21. **Question:** What measures will be put in place to ensure oversight is appropriate and consultants providing oversight operate under consistent processes?

Answer: See question 20.