



Department of Veterans Affairs

OFFICE OF INFORMATION SECURITY

Help Desk Plan and Procedure Guide

CLIN 0007AA

Contract Number: NNG07DA23B

September 13, 2013

Version

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	12.12.2012	Help Desk Plan and Procedures Guide	John W. Brown
1.1	12.31.2012	Updated Service Catalog Description	John W. Brown
1.2	02.28.2013	Formatting	Onitha Y. Coggins
1.3	06.19.2013	Updated based on VA feedback	John Brown
1.4	09.10.2013	Update to reflect Category Descriptions and hardware Service Tag numbers	John Brown
1.5	9.12.2013	Preparations for final	Onitha Y. Coggins

Approval:

Approvers	Role	Signed	Approval Date

Permissions:

Microsoft Corporation in its supplemental End User License agreement for the Visio product grants permission to use the stencils and shapes for personal or internal business use. EULAID:O14_RTM_VL.1_RTM_EN

Much of this document was derived from the Microsoft Operations Framework documentation Copyright © 2010 Microsoft Corporation. This documentation is licensed for use under the Creative Commons Attribution License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/us/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 543 Howard Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA. The following is the required attribution: The Microsoft Operations Framework 4.0 is provided with permission from Microsoft Corporation.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Table of Contents

1. HELP DESK PLAN AND PROCEDURES GUIDE	1
1.1 STATEMENT OF INTENT	1
1.2 OBJECTIVES OF SERVICE MANAGEMENT	1
1.3 PERIOD OF AGREEMENT	2
1.4 REVIEW PROCEDURE	2
1.5 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER DOCUMENTS	3
1.6 REPRESENTATIVES	4
1.7 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS	4
1.8 SERVICE LEVEL MONITORING	4
1.9 COMPLAINTS	5
2. HELP DESK RESPONSIBILITIES	6
2.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW	6
2.2 METHODS OF CONTACT	6
2.2.1 Self Service Portal	6
2.2.2 E-mail	6
2.2.3 Phone	6
2.3 HOURS OF OPERATION	6
2.4 CATEGORY LEVELS	7
2.5 SUB-CATEGORIES	7
2.6 PRIORITY LEVEL RESPONSE TIMES	9
2.7 SUPPORT AVAILABLE	9
3. HELP DESK PROCEDURES	11
3.1 OVERVIEW	11
3.1.1 Record Users Request	13
3.1.1.1 Record The User's Contact Information	13
3.1.1.2 Record Details of the User's Request	16
3.1.2 Classify the Request	17
3.1.2.1 Categorize the User's Request	17
3.1.2.2 Determine Supportability	22
3.1.2.3 Prioritize the Request	25
3.1.3 Resolve the Request	26
3.1.3.1 Resolve an Information Request	27
3.1.3.2 Resolve a Request for an Existing Feature or Service	30
3.1.3.3 Resolve a Request for a New Feature or Service	32
3.1.3.4 Handling a Standard Change New Service Request	33
3.1.3.5 Handling a Non-Standard Change New Service Request	37
3.1.3.6 Resolve an Incident Resolution Request	38
3.1.3.7 Troubleshoot the Incident	41
3.1.3.8 Escalate the Request	47
3.1.3.9 Apply a Fix or Workaround	49
3.1.4 Confirm Resolution and Close the Request	50
3.1.5 Ensure Good Service	53
3.1.5.1 Service Desk Quality Assurance	54
3.1.5.2 SLA Monitoring and Metrics	55
4. SUPPORTED PRODUCTS/ APPLICATIONS/SYSTEMS	58
4.1 HARDWARE SUPPORT SERVICES	58
4.1.1 Hardware Products Supported	58
4.1.2 Hardware Support Question List:	66
4.2 SOFTWARE SUPPORT SERVICES	68
4.2.1 Software Products Supported:	68

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

4.2.2	Software Support Question List:.....	72
5.	GRC SERVICES CATALOG	74
5.1	CATEGORIZATION OF SERVICES	74
5.2	LIST OF SERVICES	74
5.3	SERVICE TEMPLATE	75

Table of Tables

Table 1 - Reasons for Contacting the Service Desk and Terminology	1
Table 2 - Reference Documents	4
Table 3 - Impact Level.....	7
Table 4 - List of Subcategories	7
Table 5 - Service Desk Priority Durations	9
Table 6 - Support Available.....	10
Table 7 - Services Categories	74
Table 8 - List of Services.....	74
Table 9 - Service Catalog Template	75

Table of Figures

Figure 1 - Related Documents	3
Figure 2 - Service Level Monitoring	5
Figure 3 - Service Support Workflow.....	12
Figure 4 - Capture Contact Information	13
Figure 5 - Capture Request Details.....	16
Figure 6 - Categorize the Request.....	18
Figure 7 - Determine Supportability	23
Figure 8 - Determine Priority	25
Figure 9 - Process Information Request	27
Figure 10 - Resolve Request for Existing Service	30
Figure 11 – Resolve Request for New Service	32
Figure 12 - Process Request for a Standard New Service.....	34

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 13 - Process Request for Non-Standard New Service	37
Figure 14 - Process an Incident	40
Figure 15 - Resolve an Incident.....	41
Figure 16 - Troubleshoot the Incident	42
Figure 17 - Escalation Process.....	47
Figure 18 - Apply Fix	49
Figure 19 - Incident Closure	51
Figure 20 - Quality Review	54
Figure 21 - SLA Monitoring.....	55
Figure 22 - Hardware Asset Information.....	58
Figure 23 - Contact Information for Hardware Asset	66
Figure 24 - Software Component Information.....	68
Figure 25 - Contact Information for Software Component.....	71

1. Help Desk Plan and Procedures Guide

1.1 Statement of Intent

The aim of this guide is to provide a basis for close co-operation between Department of Veterans Affairs and the Merlin Team, for support services to be provided by Merlin to Department of Veterans Affairs, thereby ensuring a timely and efficient support service is available to Department of Veterans Affairs end users of the Merlin provided Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) System. The objectives of this agreement are detailed in Section 1.2. To be effective, the Help Desk Plan and Procedures Guide must be an evolutionary document that is part of a continuous improvement process. As lessons are learned more self-help may be available in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document and/or Knowledge Documents (KD) repository.

This agreement is contingent upon each party knowing and fulfilling their responsibilities and generating an environment conducive to the achievement and maintenance of targeted service levels.

1.2 Objectives of Service Management

This Help Desk Plan and Procedures Guide is a document which is part of the Service Management Function (SMF). As part of the SMF the Help Desk provides Customer Support Services (CSS) and is the entry point for users who need to engage VA GRC support with their questions and concerns. Although multiple roles and teams are required to interact with and support the Customer SMF, the majority of the processes and activities within it are performed by a functional team called the Service Desk.

The Service Desk is a team and, just like any other team, it can be centralized, distributed, or virtual. The team operates as a functional unit that focuses on ensuring that customer service-related activities are carried out with high quality.

The following table lists a number of reasons that users might engage the Service Desk and equates them to the terminology that is used in this guide which is based on Microsoft Operations Framework (MOF) methodology. This document will use a single term that is inclusive of all requests and that is “Service Request”

Table 1 - Reasons for Contacting the Service Desk and Terminology

Reasons for Contacting Service Desk	MOF Term
To request information on using an existing service to which the user already subscribes	Information request
To subscribe to an existing service that is being offered	Service Fulfillment request
To request a new service or feature to meet a new need	New Service request
To report a partial loss, degradation, or total loss of a service or service feature	Problem Resolution request

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

The primary goal of customer service is to provide a positive experience for users by meeting their GRC needs and addressing complaints and issues that arise during the normal course of using GRC services.

The driving vision for the Service Desk is to translate the complexities of the GRC into a one-stop shop for GRC users. The process flow defined in the Customer Service SMF provides the Service Desk with the guidance it needs to achieve its vision in an efficient, cost-effective way. The Service Desk can increase its efficiency and cost effectiveness by initiating and maintaining a self-help portal. Through this portal, the Service Desk can supply frequently requested information, automate common requests such as password resets, and provide step-by-step instructions to resolve common incidents. Additional objectives of the SMF implementation are to:

1. To create an environment which is conducive to a co-operative relationship between Merlin and Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure the effective support of end users
2. To document the responsibilities of all parties taking part in the Agreement
3. To ensure that Department of Veterans Affairs achieves the provision of a high quality of service for end users with the full support of Merlin
4. To define the commencement of the agreement, its initial term and the provision for reviews
5. To define in detail the service to be delivered by Merlin and the level of service which can be expected by Department of Veterans Affairs, thereby reducing the risk of misunderstandings
6. To institute a formal system of objective service level monitoring ensuring that reviews of the agreement are based on factual data
7. To provide a common understanding of service requirements/capabilities and of the principals involved in the measurement of service levels
8. To provide for all parties to the Service Level Agreement a single, easily referenced document which caters for all objectives as listed above.

1.3 Period of Agreement

This agreement will commence on the date specified in the **Official Order** following the acceptance by both parties and will continue until terminated.

1.4 Review Procedure

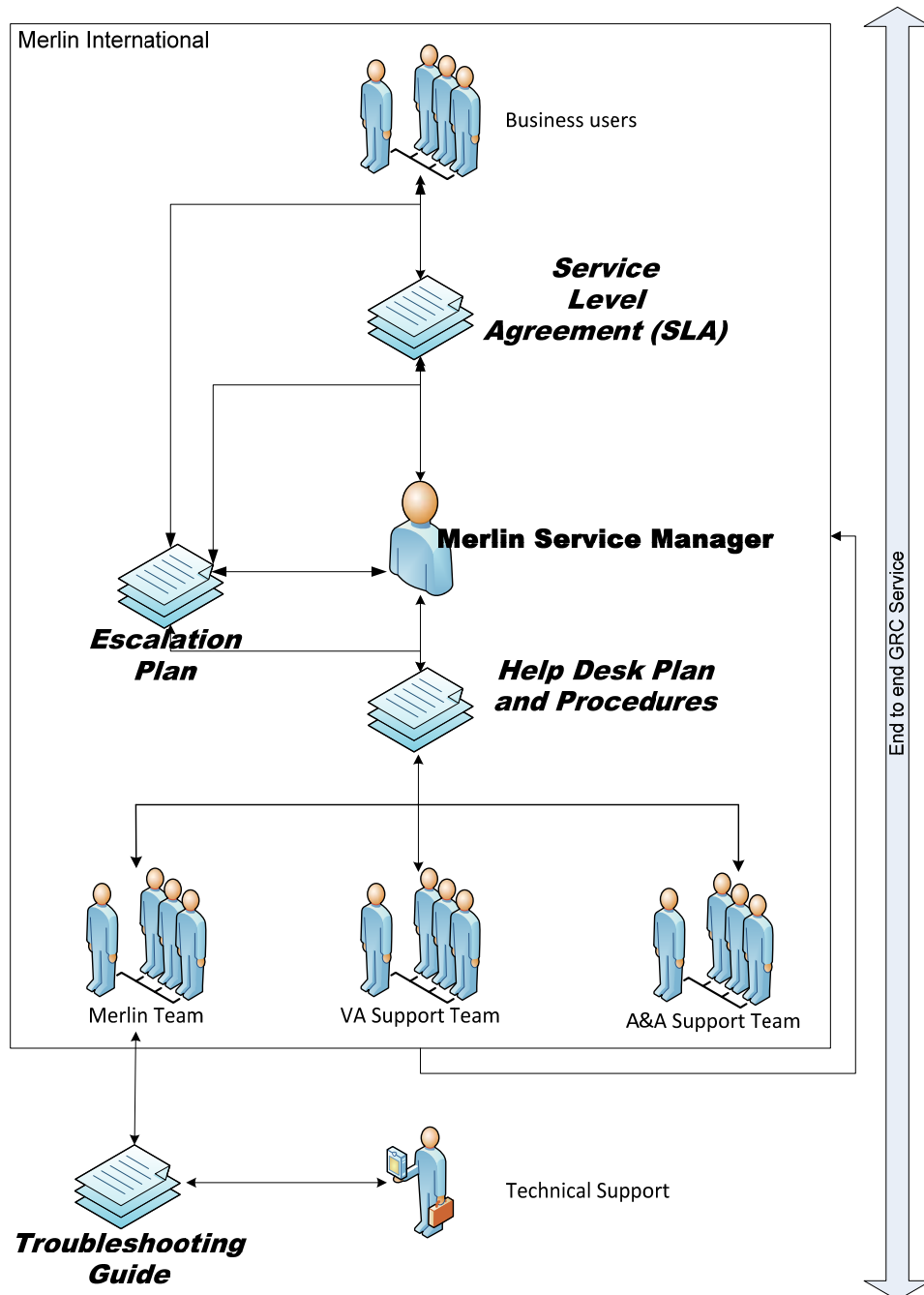
This agreement will be reviewed no less than annually, or at a mutually agreed date, by Department of Veterans Affairs and Merlin. The review will cover services portfolio, service metrics, and procedures. Changes to this agreement must be approved by both signatories.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

1.5 Relationship with Other Documents

This document is one of the documents in an overall customer service support program. The program is designed around industry best practice to provide high quality of services and support for the VA GRC program. The following diagram depicts the relationship of the documents supporting the program.

Figure 1 - Related Documents



Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

1.6 Representatives

Department of Veterans Affairs and Merlin nominate the following representatives responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the service agreement:

Department of Veterans Affairs:	Agency Representative Robert Disko Robert.Disko@va.gov
Merlin:	Company Representative Derrick Jones djones@merlin-intl.com

1.7 Reference Documents

The following documents will serve as a basis for the policies and procedures of VA GRC support operation. They will also define the support levels required and prioritization of computer faults by Department of Veterans Affairs.

Table 2 - Reference Documents

VA Handbook 6500.3 Certification and Accreditation of VA Information Systems
VA Directive and Handbook 6500 Managing Information Security Risk: VA Information Security Program.
Administrator Training Materials [provided by Merlin under task 5.8]
A&A Training Materials (End User Training) [provided by Merlin under task 5.8]

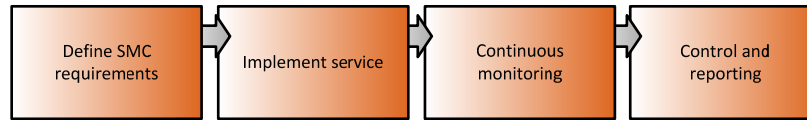
Copies of these documents will be made available to the Merlin VAGRC Program Manager as they become available to ensure compliance with Agency standards.

1.8 Service Level Monitoring

The success of the Service Management Function depends fundamentally on the ability to measure performance comprehensively and accurately with Service Management Controls (SMC) so that credible and reliable information can be provided to customers and support areas on the service provided.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 2 - Service Level Monitoring



Service factors must be meaningful, measurable and monitored constantly. Actual levels of service are to be compared with agreed target levels on a regular basis by both Department of Veterans Affairs and Merlin. In the event of a discrepancy between actual and targeted service levels both Department of Veterans Affairs and Merlin are expected to identify and resolve the reason(s) for any discrepancies in close co-operation.

Service level monitoring will be performed by Department of Veterans Affairs based on statistics provided by Merlin. Reports will be produced as and when required and forwarded to the Merlin contact.

Service level monitoring and reporting is performed on response times for faults, as specified in Section 3.4 of this agreement.

1.9 Complaints

All complaints relating to the operation of the help service, including:

1. Expected level of support
2. Actual support offered and delivered
3. Personnel responsible for providing or administering support
4. Any other issue relating to this document or the relationship between Department of Veterans Affairs and Merlin.

All complaints received by either party will be forwarded in writing and distributed concurrently to the signatories of this document. The intent is to ensure thorough, timely and open resolution of all such problems.

Merlin's goal is to have zero complaints; however, to reach this goal the Merlin team will:

- Proactively resolve issues before becoming complaints
- Report regular metrics documenting response time
- Escalate issues based on service levels
- Meet weekly via teleconference to openly discuss issues.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

2. Help Desk Responsibilities

2.1 General Overview

To provide a service for the registration, referral and resolution of all VA-GRC related issues and queries (supported products only) encountered by end users throughout the Department of Veterans Affairs. This includes the following specific responsibilities:

1. Provision of a Help Desk, Customer Support or similar capability
2. Extracting information from end users as per Merlin specified list of questions (detailed in Section 3)
3. Timely referral of faults to Merlin as per method detailed in Section 4
4. Fault resolution monitoring, and production and distribution of Service Level Monitoring reports as and when required

2.2 Methods of Contact

2.2.1 Self Service Portal

- GRC Service Desk SharePoint Site
- Ticket Creation via the GRC Service Desk
- Knowledge Documents

2.2.2 E-mail

vaGRCserviceDesk@va.gov

2.2.3 Phone

888-510-4474

2.3 Hours of Operation

The Department of Veterans Affairs GRC Service Desk will operate 24/7/365 except on federally recognized holidays, in which case alternative arrangements will be made and publicised. The Support Desk will be staffed from 7:00 a.m. EST to 8:00 p.m. EST (standard operational hours), unless call volume necessitates otherwise, and will have on-call support the remainder of the time. At all times users will be able to send emails and leave voice messages.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

The on-call staff will respond within the required SLA parameters. Tier 2 and 3 support will operate during normal business hours with designated on call staff in case of and emergency.

2.4 Category Levels

Category

The Category determines where the impact of the issue is felt, the user, the RV application or low impact. This field answers the question what/ who is affected by this request. The table below provides a detailed description for each of the three category levels captured.

Table 3 - Impact Level

Impact ID	Description
1 (User)	Tickets that impact the End Users Capability to continue assessment. (Critical Path)
2 (RiskVision)	Tickets that impact the Application and prevent the End Users ability for use.(Critical Path)
3 (Other)	Tickets that are enhancement requests, additional features, questions beyond current requirements, training

Table 3 shows the Category level assigned to request according to the perceived Impact of the reported situation. The Category assignment uses the Severity field on the Service Desk ticket new request page. This field requires the assessment of the tier 1 Service Desk staff to assess the appropriate Category level. The Category level then determines the priority of the request as assigned in Section 2.7 of this document.

2.5 Sub-Categories

The Sub-Categories identify in more detail the function or area affected by the request. The Sub-Categories use the Charge Back field in the Service Desk ticketing new request page.. The Sub-Categories are shown in the following table:

Table 4 - List of Subcategories

Account	Request involving adding/removing users from RiskVision or assigning/removing ownership roles to entities
Add Sys/Fac	Request involving adding facilities or systems to RiskVision
Agilience	Request that are initially identified as requiring Agilience to fulfill

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Assessment	Requirement involving A&A actives
Dashboard	Request involving dashboard display issues
Enhancement	Request involving capabilities that are not in the current implementation of RiskVision or the Current Use Case.
Locked Contr.	Request involving questionnaires that have been locked by another user.
Maintenance	Request that involve RiskVision or platform performance , upgrade or maintenance issues
Missing Data	Request involving user reporting the inability to view data was or should be visible by the user as part of their role and location within the workflow
Remove Facil.	Request involving the removal of facilities or systems from RiskVision
Risk Assignm.	Request involving the functionality of ERM component and the assessment of risk.
Support Doc	Request involving the ability to upload, view or create supporting documentation
System Mods	Request involving the application of patched or fixes to RiskVvision
Workflow Asm.	Request involving what particular roles are able to see at various steps in the workflow
Workflow Pro	Request involving the system or facility workflow progression in the A&A or RA workflows
EO	All request associated with the EO instance of RiskVision

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

2.6 Priority Level Response Times

Priority/Urgency

Priority definitions are used to establish the duration in which the Service Desk Technician has to resolve the request /problem or incident. The table below identifies the priorities used within Service Desk Manager and the corresponding durations.

Table 5 - Service Desk Priority Durations

ID	Noun	Description
1	Immediate	Requests/ Incidents will be resolved within 4 hours
2	High	Requests /incidents will be resolved within 2 business days
3	Moderate	Requests/incidents will be resolved within 5 business days
4	Low	Requests/incidents will be resolved within 20 business days
5	Minimal	Requests/incidents will be considered for future enhancements

Table 5 shows the required initial response times for the individual priority ratings. All times indicated represent telephone response time during operational hours of the support desk, unless otherwise indicated in this document, or otherwise agreed upon by Department of Veterans Affairs and Merlin.

The indicated telephone response time represents the maximum delay between a fault/request being reported to the GRC Service Desk and a Customer Service Representative (CSR) contacting the Department of Veterans Affairs client. The purpose of this contact with the Department of Veterans Affairs client by the CSR is to notify the client of the receipt of the fault/request and provide the client with details of the proposed action to be taken in respect of the particular fault/request.

The Tier 2 representative will immediately upon escalation of faults/request from Tier 1 assign the ticket to a Tier 2 Subject Matter Expert (SME) where the SME will respond with a receipt acknowledgement. Escalated faults/requests will require notification to the Department of Veterans Affairs client by email or telephone.

2.7 Support Available

This table shows the support available for each support level, as defined by the Recommended Computer Products list. The Recommended Computer Products document is produced by Department of Veterans Affairs as the standard for Information Management usage within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Table 6 - Support Available

Support Level	Support Available
Recommended	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Full Internal Support Available2. Internally Conducted Training Courses Available3. High Priority4. External Support/Training Available
Supported	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Full Internal Support Usually Available6. No Internally Conducted Training Available7. Medium Priority8. External Support/Training Available
Acknowledged	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Limited Internal Support Available10. No Internally Conducted Training Available11. Low Priority12. External Support/Training Available
Discouraged	<ol style="list-style-type: none">13. Product Not Recommended14. No Internally Conducted Training Available15. No Internal Support Available16. External Support/Training Available

Sourcing of external support services for computing products at the "Acknowledged" and "Discouraged" levels, or for those products not contained in the Recommended Computer Products document, will be undertaken by Department of Veterans Affairs at the expense of the Department of Veterans Affairs client. Department of Veterans Affairs will not be responsible for any costs incurred in the provision of external support for computing products under these levels.

Support services provided by Department of Veterans Affairs for products not contained in the Recommended Computer Products document or those listed at the "Discouraged" level will be limited subject to available Department of Veterans Affairs resources.

Outside of the contractor provided training sessions outlined in paragraph 5.8, Section 7 – Training of the PWS, (including all Merlin provided training materials as attached documents) external training courses will always be provided at the expense of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Internally conducted training courses may also be at the expense of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

3. Help Desk Procedures

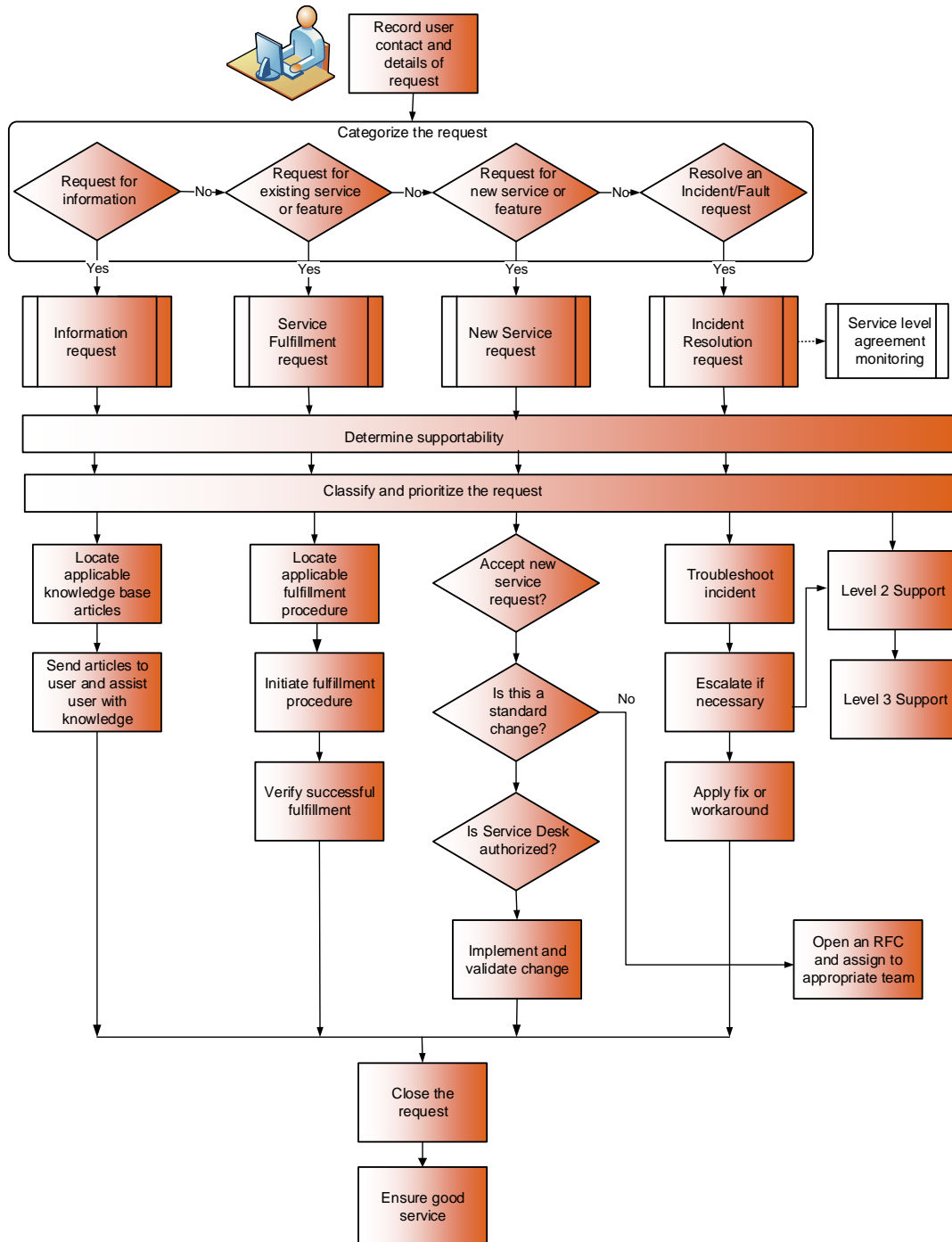
3.1 Overview

Merlin is a provider of VA-GRC computing hardware and software and it provides maintenance service and support for hardware/software to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA's GRC Service Desk will be the initial point of contact for GRC service support issues and this guide will assist the GRC Service Desk in its Triage effort.

Triage is the process of assessing the user's request/query, determining supportability, determining the priority of the request/query, assigning resources, assigning a service protocol and escalation to the appropriate level. See Section 2.4 for Category levels. See Section 2.6 for response time by priority. See Section 2.7 for support availability. The following diagram is a service support workflow drawn from industry best practices.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 3 - Service Support Workflow



Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

3.1.1 Record Users Request

3.1.1.1 Record The User's Contact Information

In any triage process, the first step upon receiving a service request no matter the media is to collect or verify the requestors contact information, by doing so the service support team can always get back with the requestor.

The following table lists the activities involved in recording the user's contact information. These include:

- Opening a Service request and recording the user's contact information
- Receiving an automated Service Request generated by a system alert
- Receiving an automated Service Request generated by a user-initiated request from a link in an application or a Web site, or from a self-help portal.

Figure 4 - Capture Contact Information



Activities	Considerations
Open a Service request and record the user's contact information	<p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the caller an internal employee, a contractor, or a service provider?• What is the user's contact information: call back number, e-mail address, and physical address?• Is the call regarding a new Service Request?• Does the caller have an existing Service request still open?• Is the caller reporting an issue for another user?• Can the caller provide full details of the request, fault or incident <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information provided by the user• List of Authorized users• User contact list <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An SDM Service Request ticket with a unique number provided to the user that records basic information about the request. This should include the time of the initial contact so

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<p>that CSR time can be tracked</p> <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture a call-back number and other user contact information immediately. In some scenarios, the user may have just endured a long time on hold to reach a CSR. If a phone error occurs and the user is disconnected, the CSR should call the user back instead of requiring the user to get back in the call queue. • Keep call routing systems simple. After more than three layers of questions, user frustration will grow exponentially. The flow of the questions should be changed as infrequently as possible since users who call often will memorize the sequence. If a change is made in the sequence, an announcement should inform the user at the beginning of the call. • Make good use of pre-recorded messages. For example, if IT knows that the network is down for an entire building, the Service Desk is not going to add value by starting a Service Request for every person affected. Instead, a front-end message should be recorded and played to all Service Desk callers informing them of the scope of the incident, its current status, an estimate of the time it will take to fix it, and the time that the front-end message will be updated next. • These concepts should extend to self-help portals as well. When there is a known service failure, it should be posted on the portal site. Use patterns and traffic statistics should be tracked for the portal to demonstrate its value.
<p>Receive a Help request automatically generated by an alert</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the information in the request complete and accurate? • Does the request include user contact information? • Can the recorded symptoms be correlated to other events to provide the CSR with suggested incident causes? • Is there sufficient data to set an initial classification and priority? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System alerts from monitoring sources <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic contact information and a description of the incident • The name of the service or feature affected by the incident

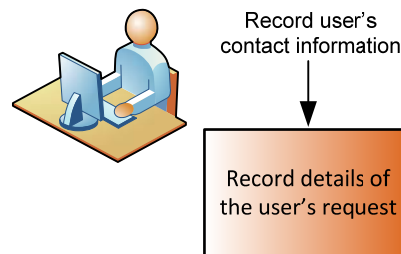
Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
<p>Receive an automatically generated Service Request resulting from a user-initiated self-service request</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the information in the request complete and accurate? • Does the request include user contact information? • Can the recorded symptoms be correlated to other events to provide the help desk representative with suggested incident causes? • Is there sufficient data to set an initial classification and priority? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail templates from embedded support links • Templates from self-help portals <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic contact information for the user experiencing the incident and a description of the incident • The name of the service or feature affected by the incident <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use templates with a limited number of free-form fields. This drives consistency in the data collected and simplifies the process, in turn improving the user experience. • Make it quick and easy for users to report non-critical incidents from within applications and Web pages by embedding links to automatically generate Help requests. This creates the opportunity to capture data about the system state during the incident and automatically populate it into the request. • When a request is generated from a self-help portal, the automation routine should capture a list of the knowledge base articles or FAQs that the user reviewed prior to opening the Help request. This can later be reviewed and used to improve the self-help content. • Where possible, a confirmation message should be sent to the user (for e-mail and portal-generated help requests) that notifies the user of help desk representative response time for incidents raised in this manner. The confirmation should also provide a unique incident record reference number. • Users must be informed of available self-help tools and be educated on when and how to use them effectively if available.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

3.1.1.2 Record Details of the User's Request

Figure 5 - Capture Request Details



Once the CSR has collected the basic user contact information, the next process is to record some details of the user's request. This information ensures that critical information is captured up front so that in the event that the user is disconnected from the CSR, he or she does not have to repeat the details.

The following table lists the activities involved in recording the details of the user's request. These include:

- Recording the details of the user's request.
- Validating the data contained in an automated Help request.

Activities	Considerations
Record details of the user's request	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What technology or service is the request concerning?• Has the user made this request before?• What can't the user do or what does the user want to achieve?• What does the user consider to be a successful outcome of his or her request?• If the user is reporting a failure, what does the failure look like?• How should the service or feature be performing?• If the user is reporting an incident, what evidence exists to confirm the incident?• If the user is reporting an incident, what are the steps to recreate the incident? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information provided by the user• Review of previous user requests• The user's description of what a failure looks like• The user's understanding of how the service or feature should be performing• If the user is reporting an incident obtain the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence provided by the user to confirm the incident

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The steps provided by the user to re-create the incident• Direct experience by re-creating the incident on another system or by witnessing the incident through a remote control tool• Event logs or monitoring tools <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service request ticket updated with the details of the user's request, which should provide input for classifying, prioritizing, and resolving the request <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a tracking tool, such as SDM, that provides customizable templates and question trees to help the CSR record the details of the request consistently. However, do not restrict the CSR to the point that it affects the quality of information captured.• The tracking tool should use drop-down lists to drive this activity; avoid free-form fields. Each drop-down list should contain an "I don't know" choice. It is more valuable to record the number of times a CSR cannot properly categorize a request than to force the CSR to guess and choose incorrectly.• The CSR should be accustomed to speaking in user terms. Complex or technology-specific language should be avoided.
Validate the data included in an automated service request	<p>Key Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the information in the automated Service request accurate? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• User information records, if available, from contact lists, authorized users list, or configuration management systems• If necessary, contact the user directly to verify information• Service requests created from system alerts should be validated by reviewing the alert data and checking logs from the originating system

3.1.2 Classify the Request

After obtaining the user's contact information and some details of the user's request, the next process is for CSR to determine what type of request the user needs assistance with by performing the following tasks:

- Categorize the user's request. This helps the CSR to determine which solution will best benefit the user.
- Determine if the request is supportable.
- Prioritize the request.

3.1.2.1 Categorize the User's Request

The first process is to determine whether the user has:

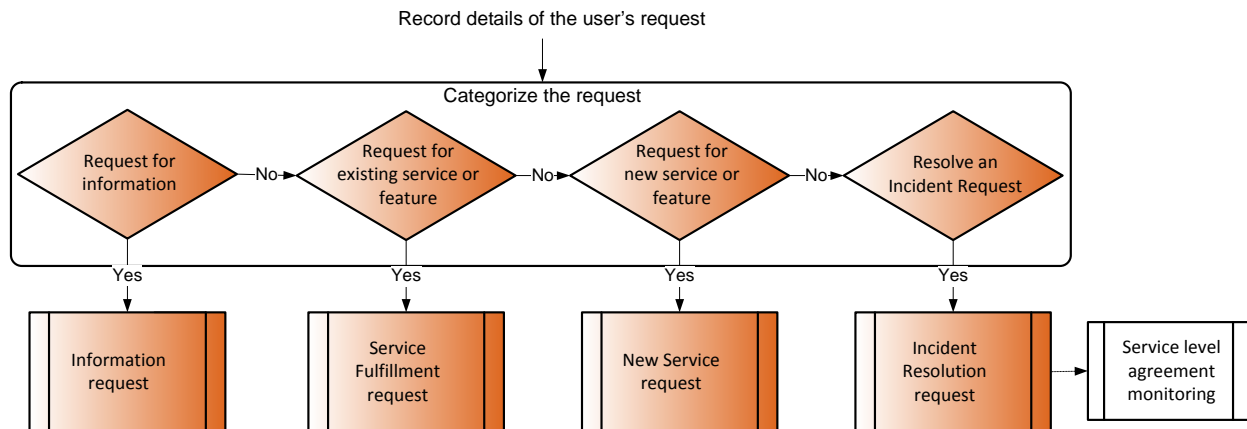
- An Information request.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

- A Service Fulfillment request.
- A New Service request.
- An Incident Resolution request.

The resolution of the request is different depending on the category into which it falls.

Figure 6 - Categorize the Request



Categorizing the user's request allows the CSR to identify the solution that will best benefit the user. The following table lists the activities involved in categorizing the user's request. These include determining:

- If this is an Inquiry regarding the A&A workflow, Risk Assessment workflow, ATO approval process, POA&M Management, A&A artifacts, or Risk Assessment Dashboard.
- If this is an Enhancement to the A&A workflow, Risk Assessment workflow, ATO approval process, POA&M Management, A&A artifacts, or Risk Assessment Dashboard. an existing service or feature
- If this is a Performance issue resulting in latent execution of the A&A workflow, Risk Assessment workflow, ATO approval process, POA&M Management, A&A artifacts, or Risk Assessment Dashboard.
- If this is a Maintenance or Upgrade request to improve the A&A workflow, Risk Assessment workflow, ATO approval process, POA&M Management, A&A artifacts, or Risk Assessment Dashboard.

Some Service Desk tracking tools make it possible to establish a set of questions and to trigger a workflow based on the responses to those questions. The tool should use drop-down lists and avoid free-form fields, and each drop-down list should contain an "I don't know" choice.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Determine if the request is an Information request	<p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the user asking a “how to” questions?• Is the user already using an existing service but has concerns about not getting the desired results or wants to learn how to use a particular feature? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information provided by the user• GRC Service Catalog <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determination that this is an information request (if not, continue to the next activity)• Updated Help request to reflect additional details about the request• Attempt to fulfill the request or send the request to determine supportability Section 3.2.2.2 <p>Best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The CSR should have easy access to a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. This document should include frequently reoccurring information requests expressed in user-friendly terms.• Categorizing requests by type (Information, Service, or Incident) and by area (Technology or Service) provides important metadata that can be used to identify trends and to locate possible requests for inclusion in the FAQ document.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
<p>Is this a request for an existing service or feature?</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the user want to gain access to a service or feature that is already available in the GRC Service Catalog to be provided by Merlin • Does the user already use the service and want additional features? • Is this a service or feature that the user has used in the past? • Will the user have any additional service or system abilities after the request is fulfilled? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information provided by the user • GRC Service Catalog <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination that this is a Service Fulfillment request (if not, continue to the next activity) • Updated Service Request ticket to reflect additional details about the request • Attempt to fulfill the request or send the request to determine supportability Section 3.2.2.2 <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, try to determine if the request is for service fulfillment or incident resolution. Users often say such things as “I can’t access the monthly reports.” This kind of statement can lead the CSR to attempt incident resolution, such as determining if the report site is down, only to find out later that the user didn’t have access to the site. If, instead, the CSR had asked a few additional questions at the beginning of the call, he or she may quickly have determined that an account needed to be created for the user on the report site. • Ensure that the organization understands the difference between a request for a new service (New Service request) and a request for an existing service (a Service Fulfillment request). A New Service request requires modifying a service or system into a configuration for which it was not originally designed, or involves creating a service that doesn’t already exist. A Service Fulfillment request involves enabling or extending an existing service or system in a manner for which it was designed, tested, and certified. It may also require SCR workflow (to be provided by VA) approval for a project. • The best way to avoid confusion is to maintain a list of Service Fulfillment requests and a brief explanation of how to identify them.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Is this request for a new service or feature?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the user seeking functionality not provided by an existing service or feature? • What new service or feature is the user requesting? • What is the justification for the request? • When does the user want it completed? • Does this request fit the profile of a standard change? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information provided by user • GRC Service Catalog • Existing Requests for Change (RFCs). For more information about change control and RFCs, see the <i>Change Management Plan and VA SCR process</i>. <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination that this is a New Service request (if not, continue to the next activity) • Attempt to fulfill the request or send the request to determine supportability Section 3.2.2.2 <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a fine line between a request for an existing service or feature and a new service request. Requesting an existing service or feature requires enabling it to perform in a manner for which it was designed, tested, and deployed. For example, if a Web server was designed, tested, and deployed to host 500 Web sites, then activating sites 1 through 500 requires requests for an existing service or feature. A request to add a 501st site would be a New Service request, which would have to be reviewed for feasibility and impact. It might even result in an additional New Service request to add more hard disk space to accommodate the extra site or new licenses. <p>The dividing line isn't just about capacity, though. If the Web server was built to host only static Web sites and a user submits a request to enable active server pages, this would also require a New Service request.</p>
Is this request about a failure with an existing service or feature?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What service or feature was the user trying to access? • Were there any error messages returned. • Did the user have access to the service and then lose it? • When was the last time the user successfully used this service or feature? • Are others in the user's work function able to successfully use this service or feature? • Has anything changed since the user last used the service successfully? Has the user moved offices, changed roles, installed new software, or received a new computer? <p>Inputs:</p>

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information provided by user• GRC Service Catalog Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determination that this is an Incident Resolution request• Updated Help request to reflect additional details about the request• Attempt to fulfill the request or send the request to determine supportability Section 3.2.2.2 Best Practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In some organizations, up to 80 percent of failures are attributable to changes in users' environments. It is a good idea to check this possibility right away. It is also possible that an intentional change was made to remove a service or feature from the user's computer. In this case, if the user requests that the service or feature be returned, approval from Change Control might be required, and this should be addressed through a Service Fulfillment request.• Obtain screenshots to help identify the specific issue.• Attempt the actions of the user to determine if the problem is repeatable.

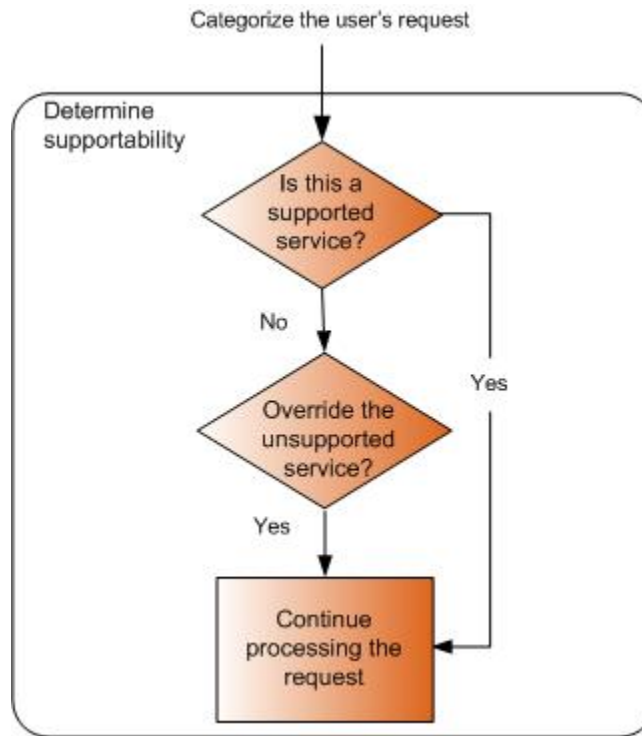
3.1.2.2 Determine Supportability

Before you can move on to resolving the request, you must also perform the following processes:

- Determine the supportability of the request.
- Determine whether to override an unsupported request.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 7 - Determine Supportability



The second process in categorizing a request is to determine its supportability. Answering the fundamental question, “*Do we support this?*” is a common problem for support teams.

The following table lists the activities involved in determining supportability. These include:

- Determining if this is a supported service.
- Determining whether to override an unsupported request if this is not a supported service.

Activities	Considerations
Is this a supported service?	<p>Key Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the requested service listed in the GRC Service Catalog? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GRC Service Catalog• Help request• User comments <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SLAs applicable to the supported service• Target times for escalation and resolution <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build a GRC Service Catalog that lists the supported services and provides a pointer to the SLAs that define the goals of the services. It may also be helpful to have the support of a configuration management system (CMS) in order to cross

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

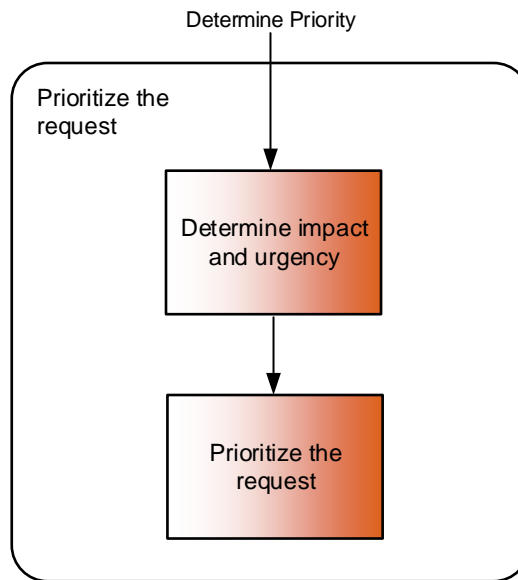
Activities	Considerations
	<p>reference individual components to the services they provide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CSR should have full access to the GRC Service Catalog and configuration management system (CMS). If possible, the ability to make services and components use SLAs should be built into the tracking tool.
<p>Override the service's unsupported status?</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the service is not supported in the GRC Service Catalog, who has the authority to approve GRC resources to work on it? What is the overall impact of working on this unsupported service? Is this unsupported service in violation of GRC security policy and does it need to be shut down? Is the override a temporary or long-term decision? Who can authorize a shutdown or removal of an unsupported service? Has authorization been granted to override the unsupported status and support the service? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorization to override the unsupported status of the service Target times for escalation and resolution <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision to override an unsupported service status or to decline support of the unsupported service Help request flagged as unsupported service, but overridden Metrics to track support time for unsupported services Flags, such as RFCs, to capture undocumented services that should be supported and refer back to the GRC contract PM and COR through the Service Manager <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerable time can be lost in researching unsupported services. Even if a business unit procures a service or system not provisioned by the GRC, users expect to receive the same level of support as for a supported service because they perceive that all services are owned by the GRC. CSRs need a consistent means to determine if the service is supported. Unauthorized services can have a negative effect on GRC service. For example, a store-bought wireless router can allow non-secure connections to the public network or can cause network failures. CSRs need a means to address these issues and a path to escalate them to the appropriate levels of management. The Service Manager should review the data from this process to capture trends and to identify services that are missing from the GRC Service Catalog.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

3.1.2.3 Prioritize the Request

Once you know that a request is supportable, you need to prioritize its importance in order to make the best use of the Service Desk's available resources.

Figure 8 - Determine Priority



A key success factor in reducing the time required to resolve a request is the ability to match requests against known errors, workarounds, and knowledge base articles. This can only be effective if requests are consistently classified using predetermined metadata.

The following table lists the activities involved in prioritizing the request. These include:

- Determining the impact and urgency of the request.
- Prioritizing the importance of the request.

Activities	Considerations
Determine impact and urgency	Key Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What services are affected or potentially affected?• What is the likely impact?• Are any business critical services likely to be affected? Inputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SDM Service categories• Help request• User comments• Investigation into the request• Information from the GRC Service Catalog.• The configuration management system (CMS). For more

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<p>information about a CMS, see the <i>Change Management Plan</i>.</p> <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Metadata added to the Help request to assist with locating resolution suggestions and priority selection
Prioritize the request	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the criticality of the business process that is affected?• What SLAs are in place?• How many people are affected?• What groups are affected: back office support, external users, or upper management? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GRC Service Catalog• SLAs• Section 2.4 for support levels. See Section 2.5 for response time by priority. See Section 2.6 for support availability. <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determination whether work on other requests should stop in order to address a new, higher priority request• Determination of how long the CSR should work on the request before escalating it to a higher tier of support• Determination whether a special communication should be sent to inform users or GRC managers of this request <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instead of asking the user to prioritize his or her request, ask the user to address specific business impact questions. The user will be more likely to provide good data to help establish the priority.• Deferring priority assignment to the service manager• When possible, priorities should be preset by service, feature set, and business area affected. This should be captured in the SLA. The classification selected for the service should also assist in the priority selection. It may be possible to build logic into the request tracking tool to set the priority automatically, based on the request classification. See Section 2.4 for support levels. See Section 2.5 for response time by priority. See Section 2.6 for support availability.

3.1.3 Resolve the Request

The path to resolving a request is different depending on the category of the request. The categories are:

- **Information request:** This is usually a request for information about an existing feature or service.
- **Service Fulfillment request:** This is a request to gain access to a feature or service offered through the GRC Service Catalog.
- **New Service request:** This is a request to provide a new feature or service.

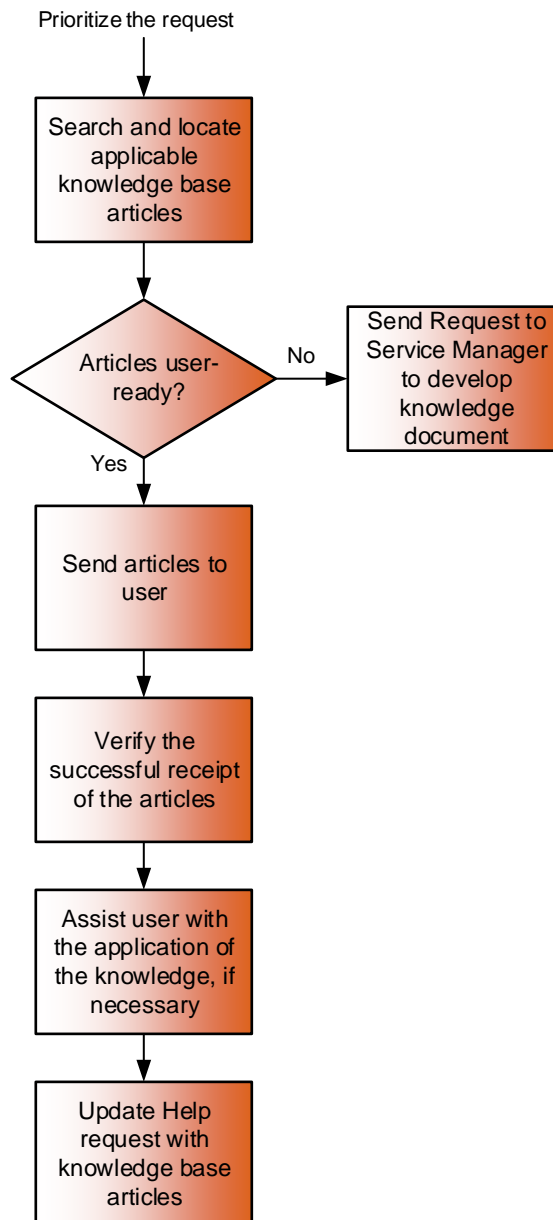
Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

- **Incident Resolution request:** This is a request to resolve the failure of a service or component to provide a feature that it was designed to deliver.

After categorization and prioritization of the user's request is completed, the CSR should be prepared to resolve the user's request or escalate to the appropriate SME.

3.1.3.1 Resolve an Information Request

Figure 9 - Process Information Request



Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Resolving an information request involves using the Knowledge Documents (KDs) to find the information that the user needs.

Searching for existing knowledge is an important part of fulfilling Information requests. The following table lists the activities involved in resolving an Information request. These include:

- Searching for and locating applicable knowledge base articles.
- Determining if the articles are user-ready and sending them to the user, if appropriate.
- Verifying the successful receipt of the articles and assisting the user with the application of the knowledge, if necessary.
- Updating the Help request with the knowledge base articles that were shared with the user.

Activities	Considerations
Search for and locate applicable knowledge base articles	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What information is the user trying to obtain?• Is the user's question on the FAQ list?• Is the question regarding something in the GRC Service Catalog?• What knowledge bases are available• Is this request likely to have been made before?• Are there external vendor-supplied knowledge bases that could add value? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service request ticket• Service request classification data <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of the best-fit knowledge base article• If an applicable knowledge base article cannot be located, the CSR should provide the user with a best-effort attempt to answer his or her inquiry• Escalate to SME if necessary <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and maintain a single interface to search for knowledge base articles. The articles should be flagged with metadata to organize the search results by category (Information, Service Fulfillment, New Service, or Incident Resolution) and by area (SDM Knowledge Management Technology or Service)• Usage statistics should be recorded to track the usefulness of the articles. This helps identify articles to retire or enhance, or, in some cases, to publish directly to users through a self-help portal.• Each knowledge base article should contain a list of Help requests for which it was successfully used. This provides the CSR with a better way to assess the applicability of the article.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

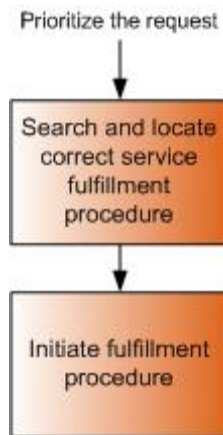
Activities	Considerations
<p>Determine if the articles are user-ready and send the appropriate articles to the user</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can this information be shared directly with the user? • Does the article contain detailed technical information that must be interpreted? • Is the user authorized to see all of the information contained in the article? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge base articles, SME's and CSR's experience <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision on how to proceed to best assist the user • Escalate to SME if necessary <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge Documents should follow a standard template format. The template should ensure that confidential or restricted access articles are marked as such. • A review of the article should determine if it is appropriate to share the article directly with the user. • Sending documents and files directly to users should be avoided. Whenever possible, a link to a knowledge base article should be provided. This is important because the article might be updated or retired in the future. Users should not refer to outdated information stored locally on their systems.
<p>Verify receipt of the links to the articles and assist the user with application of the knowledge, if necessary</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the user receive the links to the articles? • Does the user need assistance with the application of the knowledge? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the article <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of whether the user needs assistance in order to gain benefit from the article <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When possible, CSR should send links to the appropriate knowledge base articles immediately and remain on the phone while the user attempts to access the links. This can save frustration and delays if the user cannot access the articles and then has to call back and wait on hold again • It is beneficial to provide CSR with access to the technology solutions that are in popular use throughout the organization. This enables them to step through knowledge base articles locally and see the results, thus making it easier for them to explain the steps to the user • Alternatively, CSR should have remote access to users' systems to help them demonstrate the knowledge in action.
<p>Update the Help request with the knowledge base</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which articles were shared with the user?

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
articles that were shared with the user	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was more than one article required to resolve the request?• Did using any of the articles cause problems for the user?• Did some of the articles seem to apply to the request, but actually not assist the user? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge base articles• User feedback <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Metrics to detect the success rate of knowledge management and problem management articles• Triggers to capture inaccurate information that is delaying service resumption efforts <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help requests and knowledge base articles should maintain a two-way association• Usage statistics should be recorded to track the usefulness of procedural documents. The statistics help identify documents to retire or to enhance and, in some cases, documents to be published directly to users through a self-help portal.

3.1.3.2 Resolve a Request for an Existing Feature or Service

Figure 10 - Resolve Request for Existing Service



Resolving a request for an existing feature or service in the GRC Service Catalog involves identifying and initiating the correct service fulfillment procedure.

A Service Fulfillment request is focused on providing the user with services or features from the existing GRC Service Catalog. This can be as simple as granting access to existing sites or tools.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Resolving a request for an existing feature or service is focused on providing guidance and “how to” information to users to help them extract the full value from the services and features they are already using. These sub-processes are both heavily dependent on knowledge management.

If the CSR determines that the user has a Service Fulfillment request, this portion of the flow guides the CSR to locate the appropriate directions and satisfy the user’s needs.

The following table lists the activities involved in resolving a request for an existing feature or service. These include:

- Searching for and locating the correct service fulfillment procedure.
- Initiating the fulfillment procedure.

Activities	Considerations
Search for and locate service fulfillment procedure	<p>Key Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the correct service fulfillment procedure for this request? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Help request information required to locate the appropriate fulfillment procedure <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of the correct service fulfillment procedure• If a procedure has not been documented, the request category should be converted to a New Service request. See “Resolve a Request for a New Feature or Service” in this guide for more information <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and maintain a single interface to search for procedural documentation. The documents should be flagged with metadata to organize the search results by category: Information, Service Fulfillment, New Service, or Incident Resolution (NSD service). Usage statistics should be recorded to track the usefulness of procedural documents. The statistics help identify documents to retire or to enhance and, in some cases, documents to be published directly to users through a self-help portal.
Initiate the fulfillment procedure	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can this procedure be executed at any time?• Are there any prerequisites?• Is there an authorization required to proceed? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service fulfillment procedure <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Estimation of the time and effort required to complete the request• Start of the fulfillment procedure which may require escalation to the appropriate SME <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every fulfillment procedure should follow a consistent template that ensures that information such as required authorization, prerequisites,

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

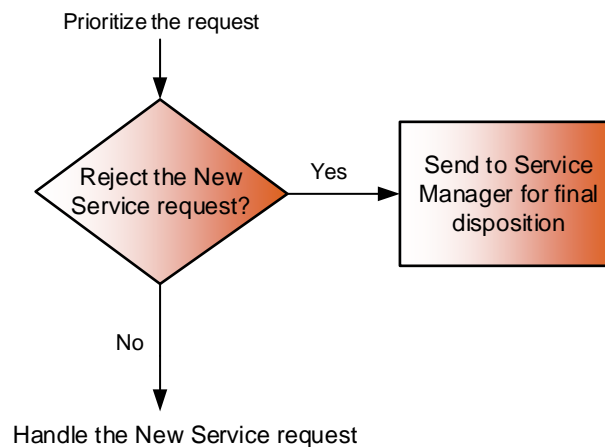
Activities	Considerations
	license requirements, and financial impacts are documented. Additionally, every procedure should have an expiration date to ensure that it is reviewed and updated regularly. The template should also list a primary and secondary owner to contact if difficulty is encountered when executing the procedure.

3.1.3.3 Resolve a Request for a New Feature or Service

Resolving a request for a feature or service that is not included in the GRC Service Catalog involves:

- Filtering the new service request to determine whether it should be accepted or rejected.
- Deciding whether to handle the request as a standard change New Service request.
- Deciding whether to handle the request as a non-standard change New Service request.

Figure 11 – Resolve Request for New Service



The first process in handling a request for a new service or feature is to filter it and decide whether to accept or reject the request (SCR workflow).

When a user requests a new feature or service that is not included in the GRC Service Catalog, the request is documented and its appropriateness is determined. If it is determined to be inappropriate, it is rejected. For example, there may be a departmental policy stating that only qualified managers can access specific data, such as Sensitive Personal Information (SPI). Therefore, a request to provision a new report containing that data by someone without the permissions should be rejected. However, the request should still be recorded for trending and analysis.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

The authorization for the change must adhere to an organization's established Change Management process. For more information about Change Management, read the *Change Management Plan*. The Service Desk should have a list of Change requests that are marked for automatic rejection.

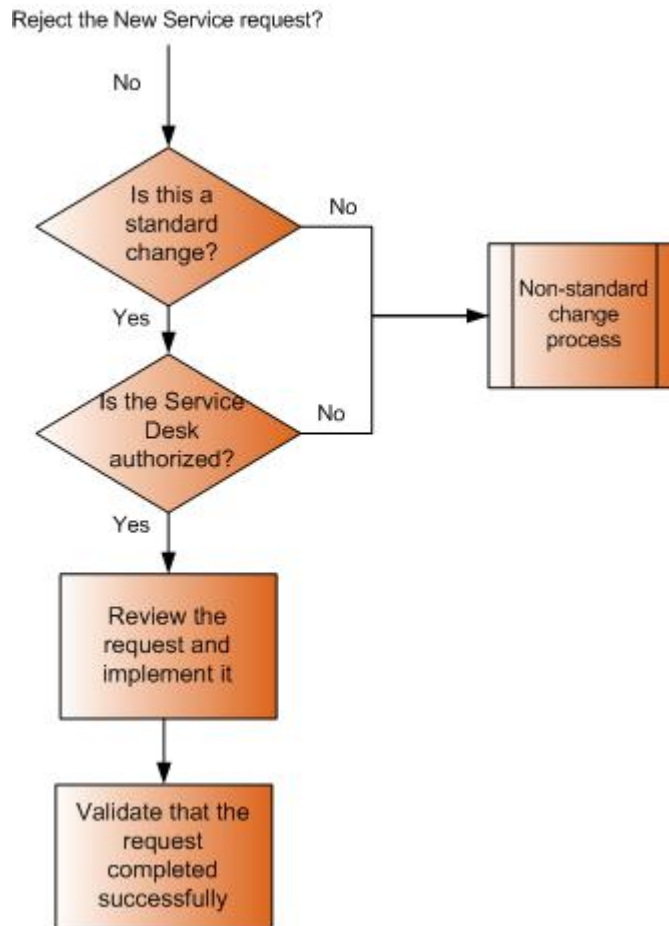
Activities	Considerations
Filter the New Service request and determine whether to reject it	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has Change Management placed a cease and desist on this type of New Service request?• Is this a duplicate request? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change Management processes• Existing requests for new services <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision to accept or reject the request <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moving the filtering process for new requests to the Service Desk, instead of through the Change Manager, allows for more efficient use of resources.• Enabling the Service Desk to record New Service requests helps expand the span and reach of Change Management. Allowing the Service Desk to capture these requests can improve the performance of the change process by formalizing it early on.

3.1.3.4 Handling a Standard Change New Service Request

The next process is to determine if this is a standard change New Service request and to implement the change if it is.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 12 - Process Request for a Standard New Service



A standard change New Service request is a change that has been executed before, is well documented, and has been proven to be consistently successful. In other words, it has been determined to be very low risk to the environment. For more information on standard changes, see the *Change Management Plan (provided by Merlin)* and the VA SCR workflow (provided by VA)

Standard changes, even though low risk, can range from simple to moderately complex. The Service Desk can be authorized to implement those that are simple and do not require in-depth technology knowledge. This continues to drive efficiencies and reduce costs.

The Service Desk should also have a different set of activities for handling non-standard changes or standard changes that they are not authorized to implement. This allows the Service Desk to maintain itself as a central point of contact for its users. See “Handling a Non-Standard Change New Service Request” in this guide to learn about these activities.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

The following table lists the activities involved in handling a standard change New Service request. These include:

- Determining if this is a request for a standard change
- Determining if the Service Desk is authorized to implement the change
- Reviewing the request and implementing it
- Validating that the request completed successfully.

Activities	Considerations
Is this request for a standard change?	<p>Key Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a Standard Change template to fulfill this request? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Management processes • Existing New Service requests • VA SCR workflow <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination to fulfill the request as a standard change or to handle it as a non-standard change • Standard change document <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change can only be declared a standard change if it has been implemented previously and is fully documented. After this has been completed, Change Control can be requested to review and approve the change as a standard change. • Documentation for all standard changes should be centrally located and secured with appropriate permissions. The GRC Service Desk and a built-in Configuration Management Database (CMDB) which could be used by the GRC team. The Service Desk should be granted full access to all standard changes that they are authorized to implement. • Like any other important IT Operations document, standard change documents should be managed in line with knowledge management practices. This means that a CSR should be able to search for and locate appropriate standard changes based on input from the user. • Each standard change document should have two parts: a Standard Change template that will pre-populate fields within the Request for Change (RFC) record and the implementation instructions and follow the VA SCR workflow.
Is the Service Desk authorized to implement this request?	<p>Key Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Service Desk been authorized to implement this specific standard change? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard change document <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination to handle the request or to handle it as a non-

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

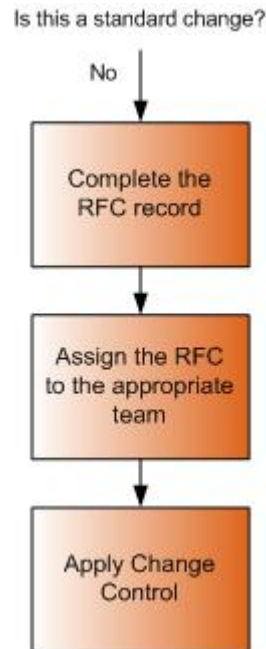
Activities	Considerations
	standard change
Review the request and fulfill it	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the details of this change? • Are there prerequisites? • Is the user authorized to receive the outcome of this change? • Can this change be implemented now, or should it be scheduled for later? • Can this change be implemented remotely, or will it require a physical presence? • What determines when the change is complete? • Are there any post-change activities required? • Is there testing and acceptance required <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard change document <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of how and when to implement this change • Completed change <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All standard change documents should follow an identical format to make answering the above questions simpler and quicker. • Part of this activity should include setting the user's expectations about the time required to complete the change.
Validate that the request completed successfully	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the change be validated with a monitoring tool? • Can the user verify that the goal of the change has been achieved? • Did anything unexpected occur? • Was the standard change document completely accurate? • Was the change completed in the expected amount of time? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User input • Standard change document • Change results <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance that the change has delivered its intended value • Assurance that the Help request is accurate • Opportunities for improving the standard change document

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

3.1.3.5 Handling a Non-Standard Change New Service Request

Follow this process if the New Service request is for a non-standard change.

Figure 13 - Process Request for Non-Standard New Service



The Service Desk needs a set of activities to handle non-standard change New Service requests as well as any standard changes that they are not authorized to implement.

Large and complex non-standard changes often start as projects and not as changes. These changes are handled through the Project Management process.

The process of handling a non-standard change New Service request begins when the CSR creates a Request for Change (RFC). An RFC is a standard document in which all relevant information about the proposed change is recorded. For more information on RFCs and the Change Management process, see the *Change Management Plan*.

Non-standard change New Service requests are then routed to a central processing queue where the Change Manager or a delegated reviewer will process the RFC following the change control process per the VA SCR workflow.

The following table lists the activities involved in handling a non-standard change New Service request. These include:

- Completing the RFC record.
- Assigning the RFC to the appropriate team.
- Handing off to VA SCR team via the Help Desk Service Manager.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Complete the RFC record	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What exactly is the user requesting?• How does the user want it delivered?• Is this similar to an existing service?• Can the user provide any documentation or references?• How will the user use this change? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• User input• Previous RFCs <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RFC with as much meaningful information about the change as possible to enable Change Control to evaluate the merits of the request <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some tracking tools allow the creation of change templates to help guide CSR in gathering a consistent set of information based on the category of the change.
Assign the RFC to the appropriate team	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is this a standard change that needs higher authority to implement?• Is this a non-standard change that requires additional review? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previous RFCs• Updated RFC <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the change cannot be implemented by the Service Desk, the RFC is escalated to the correct team; if this is a standard change that requires additional authority to implement, the Service Desk can retain ownership of the RFC, open a work order, and then send it to the team authorized to complete the work• If this is a non-standard change, the RFC is routed to a central processing queue where the Change Manager or a delegated reviewer will process it following the change control process <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some tracking tools allow the creation of change templates to help guide the CSRs in gathering a consistent set of information based on the category of the change.

3.1.3.6 Resolve an Incident Resolution Request

An incident is an event that results in a service or feature failing to fulfill a documented goal, which is established using the Service Level Management process and documented within a service level agreement (SLA). Without this SLA, users can declare almost anything an incident, thereby causing GRC to research and respond to every complaint.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

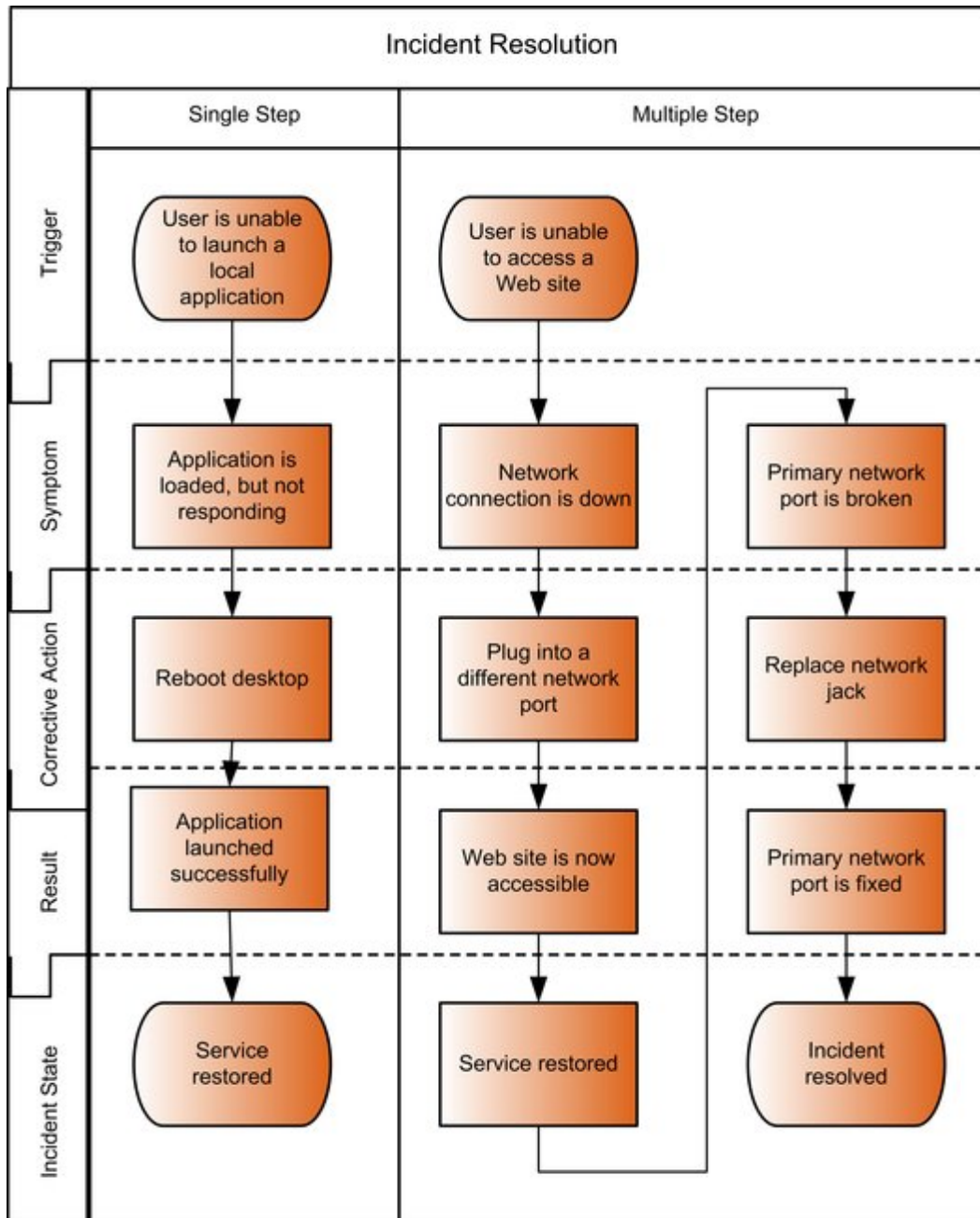
For example, a user may contact the Service Desk and complain that a Web application is “loading too slowly.” If the Web application has a defined goal to load within 10 seconds, the CSR can measure the user’s experience and accurately determine whether this is an incident.

Incident resolution is a process that is specifically focused on rapidly restoring a service to a state from which it can fulfill its documented goals. The resolution can involve a single step or multiple steps, as the example in the following figure illustrates.

The multiple-step approach addresses situations in which, for example, you might restart a database back-end server and assume that the service has been resumed. However, the client component could also require a restart, so the service is still down according to the user’s perception.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 14 - Process an Incident

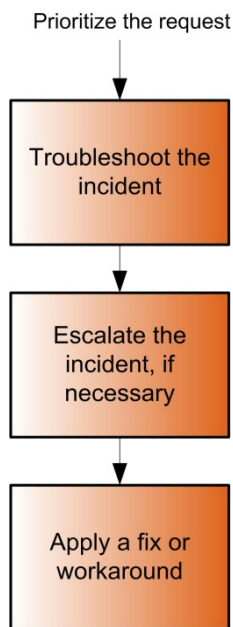


Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

The process flow for incident resolution consists of the following processes:

- Troubleshooting the incident
- Escalating, if necessary
- Applying a fix or workaround

Figure 15 - Resolve an Incident



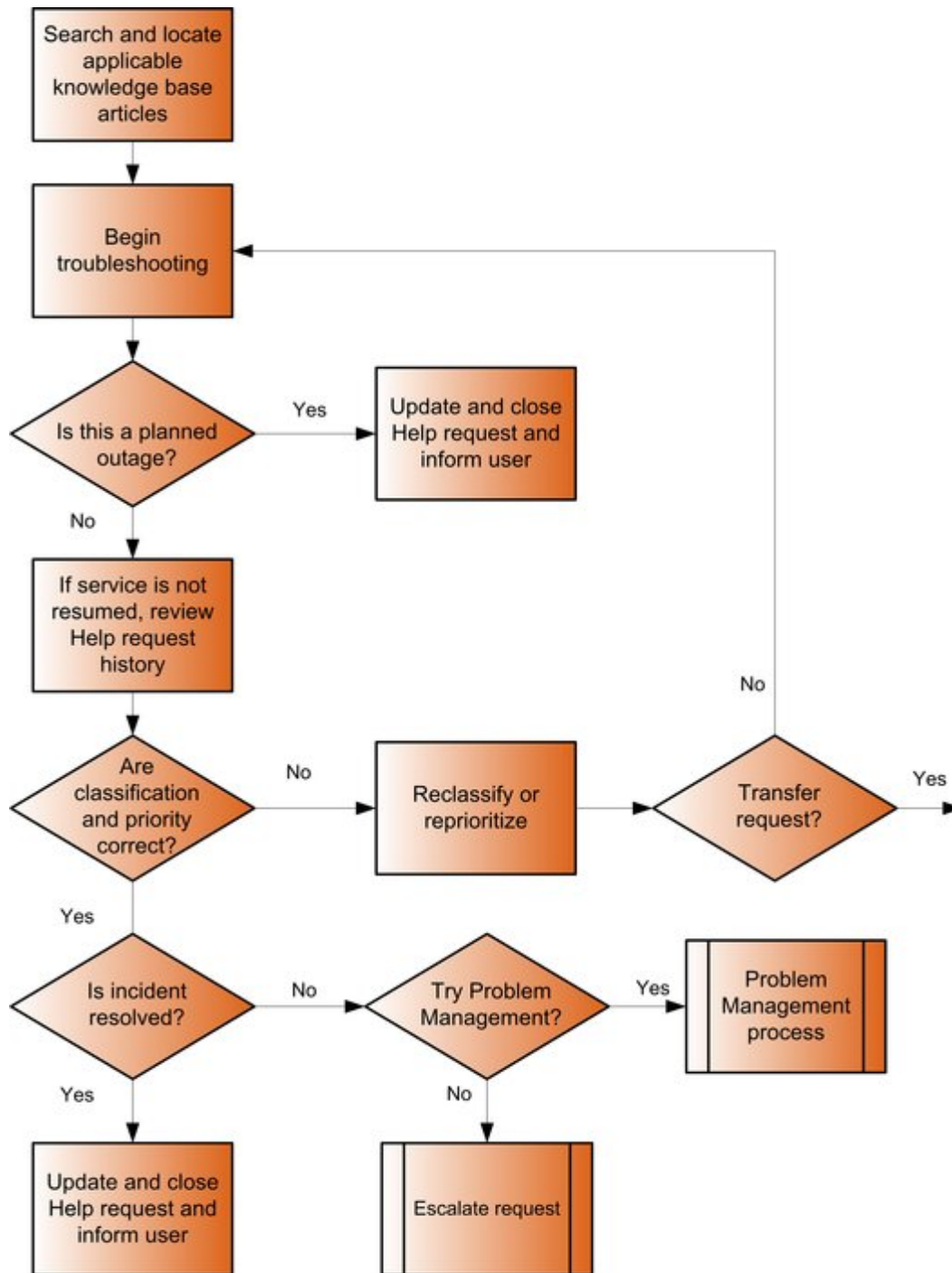
The following figure illustrates the incident resolution process flow.

3.1.3.7 Troubleshoot the Incident

The first process in incident resolution is to troubleshoot the incident.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 16 - Troubleshoot the Incident



After a request has been determined to be an Incident Resolution request, you should first check the knowledge base and known error documentation to see if a solution for the problem has

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

already been discovered. If you don't find any information that helps, you can begin troubleshooting.

You must find a balance between the amount of time you spend researching the problem and troubleshooting it. Over time, you can fine tune this process. Documenting the results of research provides input to Knowledge Documents which are used by the Service Desk to help automate the resolution of incidents.

The incidents resolved in this process count toward a very important incident resolution metric: First Call Resolution. Efficiency gained in this area can improve user satisfaction, reduce the burden on technology resources, and drive down the cost of support.

The following table lists the activities involved in troubleshooting an incident. These include:

- Searching and locating applicable knowledge base articles or known error documentation.
- Beginning troubleshooting, re: the GRC Troubleshooting Guide.
- Determining if the incident is a planned outage.
- If service is not resumed, reviewing the Help request history.
- Determining whether the classification and priority of the incident are correct.
- Determining if the incident has been resolved.
- If necessary, beginning Problem Management.

Activities	Considerations
Search for and locate applicable knowledge base articles or known error documentation	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What information is the user trying to obtain?• Is the user's question on the FAQ list?• Is the question regarding something in the GRC Service Catalog? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Help request should provide the information required to locate applicable knowledge base articles <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of the best-fit knowledge base article• If an applicable knowledge base article cannot be located, the CSR should provide the user with a best-effort attempt to answer his or her inquiry <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and maintain a single interface to search for knowledge base articles. The articles should be flagged with metadata to organize the search results by incident type• Usage statistics should be recorded to track the usefulness of articles. This helps identify articles to retire or enhance or, in some cases, to publish directly to users through a self-help portal.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Begin troubleshooting	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs to be fixed? • Is this a new, unique incident that no applicable knowledge base articles or known errors can correct? • Can a CSR effectively troubleshoot the incident? • Will the fix require a change? • Can the fix be executed now or should it be scheduled for later? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help request • User comments <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Help request with answers to the above questions <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entire effort should focus on the resumption of the service or resolution of the incident. If moving a user's network connection from port A to port B will get that user working again, even though port A is still broken, then this should be pursued. • Troubleshooting should be a science and not an art. Small methodical steps should be taken, changing one variable at a time. Each step should be documented in the Help request along with its results. For more information on troubleshooting, see the GRC <i>Troubleshooting Guide</i>. • Although there are training opportunities and workshops on troubleshooting, sometimes the best education is peer-to-peer. Consider establishing an internal mentoring program to partner employees with advanced troubleshooting skills with newly hired CSRs.
Is this a planned outage?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the outage on the <i>Forward Schedule of Change</i>? This is a schedule that contains details of all the changes approved for implementation and their proposed implementation dates, where is this maintained? • Is this service outside of its standard operating hours? • Is the user being migrated to a new service? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward Schedule of Change (part of CMP) • Release plans • Automated maintenance records <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Help request <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this is a planned outage, the Help request should be updated and closed with a reason code to note that it was a planned outage. This data can later be used to track the effectiveness of communications around changes and maintenance activities.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Review the Help request history	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the details of the incident? • What has been attempted already? • Has the service been resumed? • Is the information complete and correct? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help request <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of what has already been attempted to resolve the incident <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Help request should capture all of the details so that anyone encountering the request can gain a full understanding of the efforts previously taken. Help requests may move between several teams before being resolved. Word-of-mouth reassignment will lead to misinformation or lost facts, prolonging the troubleshooting efforts and often resulting in contacting the user to answer the same questions again.
Are the classification and priority correct?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should this Help request be assigned to a different team? • Did the Service Desk check the wrong categories in the knowledge base and known error records? • Is the priority correct? • Has the scope of the request been expanded? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help request <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision to continue working on the request or transfer it to another team for additional effort • Properly updated Help request <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The insights used to correct the classification should be captured in the Help request—including how it was discovered to be the wrong classification and what information was used to classify it correctly. • When possible, a phone call directly to the CSR who misclassified the Help request can help to ensure that the CSR knows that the request is being returned and that the CSR is prepared to accept it and resume working on it. • The Service Desk needs to stay informed of any significant changes in the status of an incident. Changing the priority of a request can have a major impact on SLAs. Additionally, if the incident has moved up in priority, it could require special notification and communication procedures.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Is the incident resolved?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has the service returned to its normal operating state?• Can the user confirm that the service is working correctly?• Are there additional steps required to resolve the incident?• Were modifications made to the environment in order to resume the service that need to be backed out?• If no further action is taken, will the service fail again soon?• Were spare parts or standby systems used to resume service? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring tools• User comments <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional actions to resolve the incident• RFCs to correct additional faults discovered during service resumption's <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use monitoring and diagnostic tools correctly. For example, confirming that a desktop is connected to the network after rebooting it does not ensure that it has restarted correctly and is ready for the user to log on to it. However, starting a remote session to see what is displayed on the user's screen will tell a more accurate story (such as VA's remote assistance).• Once the user is able to resume his or her business function, attention should turn to any outstanding activities that need to be performed to completely correct the incident. In some events, it might be necessary to transfer the Help request to a separate group to address the outstanding activities• Know the difference between resolving an incident and creating a change. Placing a system back into an operating state is a resolution activity. Modifying the configuration, setup, design, or appearance of a system or service by placing it in a new state is a change.

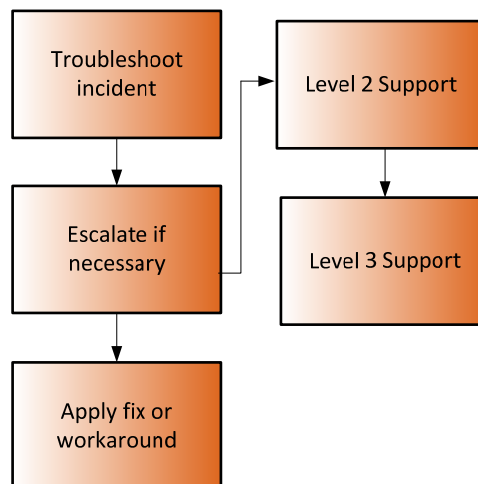
Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
If the incident is still not resolved, try Problem Management	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does solving this incident require more research and testing?• Would solving this incident benefit from root cause analysis? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help request• Troubleshooting Guide <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional actions to resolve the incident <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem Management is a separate process that involves documenting and filtering a problem, then systematically performing research, developing and testing hypotheses, performing root cause analysis, and determining if a fix or workaround has been discovered. It is a very important process that should be pursued if an incident resists normal troubleshooting efforts. When this happens the problem is escalated to Tier 3 who is responsible for fully documenting Knowledge Documents.

3.1.3.8 Escalate the Request

If the service has not been restored or if the incident has not been resolved after troubleshooting, it is time to escalate the request.

Figure 17 - Escalation Process



The Service Desk should only escalate the request if it cannot resolve it within the SLA or if it requires specialized knowledge. Escalation brings new knowledge and new people into the resolution process.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

It is a best practice for each tier and focus area to have a dedicated Help request queue for storing and organizing the requests currently assigned to their team. Although the CSR and Service Desk are accountable for overseeing the request throughout its lifecycle, they cannot stay fully engaged with every request. It is the responsibility of the team receiving the request to help ensure quality control.

Screening reassigned requests is critical to validate that the information in the request is correct and that all required information has been gathered and recorded. Any time someone makes an adjustment to key elements of a request, such as priority or classification, the Service Desk should be notified. The Service Desk initially provides user information such as the priority of the incident and an estimated service resumption time. If these factors are modified, the Help Desk Representatives need to realign user expectations. The GRC Service Desk is considered Tier 1 support which is staffed by Merlin and VA personnel. Tier 2 is staffed by Merlin and SecureForce subject matter experts (SME). The Tier 2 support team will provide more in-depth knowledge of the VA GRC solution and its application within the VA. Tier 3 support will be provided by Agilance

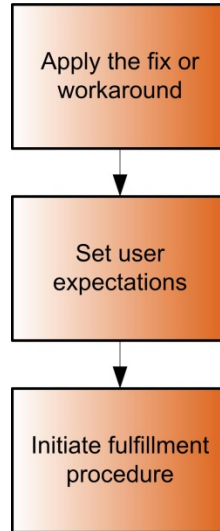
Activities	Considerations
Escalate or transfer the Help request	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is additional technology expertise required to resume the service? (Escalate)• Is there a different technology focus required? (Transfer)? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help request <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A determination of which additional areas to involve in resolution attempts <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support organizations should classify team members by their depth of expertise. This is often referred to as tiered support. The higher the tier, the greater the specialization or expertise and, often, the expense. Therefore, it is always desirable to resolve incidents at the lowest tier of support.• All requests and incidents addressed CSR should be counted toward the First Call Resolution metric. Efficient IT organizations are able to achieve 80 percent and higher first call resolution rates.• Within each tier, resources should be grouped by area of focus. The focus could be on a particular technology or a specific line of business.• The first tier, and broadest area of focus, is the Service Desk. The Service Desk should maintain a level of ownership for the Help request even if it is assigned to different areas and tiers. This provides continuity in communication between the user and the IT organization. In addition to SLA monitoring, this also provides a layer of protection to keep things from “slipping through the cracks.”

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

3.1.3.9 Apply a Fix or Workaround

Once a fix or workaround for the incident has been discovered, it should be applied immediately.

Figure 18 - Apply Fix



Applying a fix or workaround discovered during troubleshooting is an important process in resolving an incident.

The following table lists the activities involved in applying a fix or workaround. These include:

- Applying the fix or workaround
- Setting user expectations
- Initiating the service fulfillment procedure

Activities	Considerations
Apply fix or workaround	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there any prerequisites for the fix or workaround?• Will it take effect immediately?• Are there follow-up actions? Is a reboot needed?• Will the service resumption efforts be more disruptive than the current incident?• Does the CSR have the permissions required to apply the fix or workaround? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated Help request <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision to attempt resumption, defer until later, or engage different resources to take action• Results of resumption efforts

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

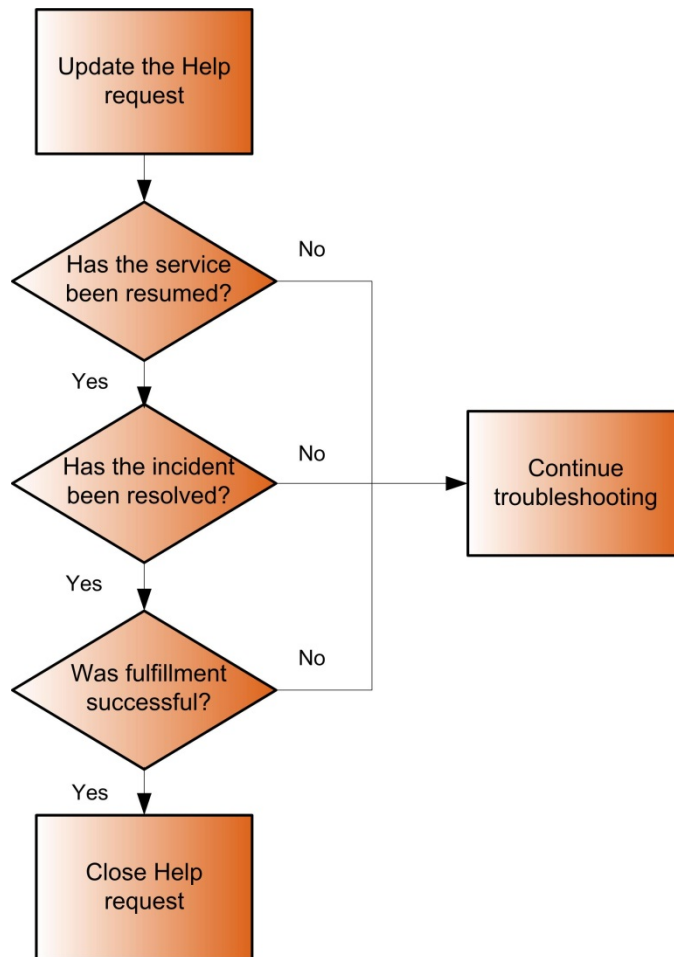
Activities	Considerations
	Best Practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep focused on the service and the business impact of applying a fix or workaround. Although it is in GRC's interest to fix any malfunctioning component, sometimes the timing of a fix can have a major impact on the business. Rebooting a report server during an OMB reporting cycle in order to correct a performance issue could result in dropping active calls and losing new users.
Set user expectations	Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> User informed of the expected time required to complete the Help request Request updated with an estimated time of completion Best Practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If possible, the request should be completed immediately. This saves time that might be consumed with follow-up activities if the user has to be contacted later. Ensure that there is a method to track incomplete Help requests and assign Help Desk Representatives to follow up until they are completed.
Initiate the service fulfillment procedure	Key Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can this procedure be executed at any time? Are there any prerequisites? Is there an authorization required to proceed? Input: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service fulfillment procedure Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimate of the time and effort required to complete the Help request Begin the fulfillment procedure Best Practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fulfillment procedures (provided by Merlin) should follow a consistent template that ensures that information such as required authorization, prerequisites, license requirements, and financial impacts are documented.

3.1.4 Confirm Resolution and Close the Request

After the Help request has been fulfilled, you must confirm that the Help request has been resolved and then close the request in this process.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Figure 19 - Incident Closure



The following table lists the activities involved in confirming resolution and closing the request. These include:

- Updating the Help request.
- Determining if the service has been resumed
- Determining if the incident has been resolved
- Verifying successful fulfillment
- Closing the Help request

Activities	Considerations
Update the Help request with the knowledge base articles and known errors that were reviewed or applied	Key Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which articles or known error records were applied?• Was more than one article or known error record required to resume the service?• Did any article or known error record used, make the incident worse?

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did some articles seem to apply but have no effect? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help request • Knowledge base articles <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triggers to capture inaccurate information that is delaying service resumption efforts <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help requests should maintain a two-way association with knowledge base articles and known error records.
Has the service been resumed?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the service returned to its normal operating state? • Can the user confirm that the service is working correctly? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring tools • User comments <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional actions to resume the service • Updated Help request
Has the incident been resolved?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there additional steps required to resolve the incident? • Were modifications made to the environment in order to resume the service that need to be backed out? • If no further action is taken, will the service fail again soon? • Was the contingency plan used? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring tools (SDM help desk reports and RV administration) • User comments <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional actions to resolve the incident • RFCs to correct additional faults discovered during service resumption

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Verify successful fulfillment	<p>Key Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Is the user receiving the intended benefit of the service requested? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">User feedback <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated Help request that indicates the outcome of the service fulfillment procedure <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">When possible, a CSR should contact the user directly to verify that the request was completed correctly. Direct contact can be in the form of a phone call or a personalized e-mail. The key to success for e-mail communications is to ensure that the message includes the Help request's unique reference number and that replies to the e-mail are routed to a live person for a timely response.
Close the Service request	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Was the request fulfilled successfully?Are there any post fulfillment requirements or actions?Was the procedure easy to follow and accurate?Could the procedure have been executed by the user?Is there a way to improve the procedure? <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Key data points to generate improvements in the service fulfillment process and improvements to fulfillment procedures <p>Best Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Service request should have specific fields dedicated to capturing closure data. Each field should be tied to a specific outcome with well understood values. All such fields should be mandatory and driven by drop-down lists to ensure consistency in data for reporting and evaluation.Over time, it may become necessary to add fields or new classifications. Providing regular training to new and existing staff is critical to disseminating this information and continuing to drive consistency in the execution of the process.

3.1.5 Ensure Good Service

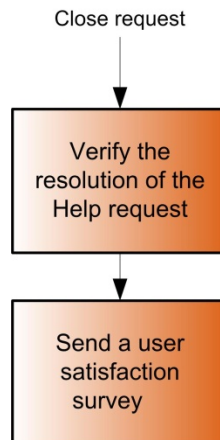
The final process in customer service is ensuring that the Service Desk has provided good service to the user. This is done through Service Desk quality assurance and SLA monitoring and metrics.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

3.1.5.1 Service Desk Quality Assurance

The first process involved in ensuring that good service has been provided is performing Service Desk quality assurance.

Figure 20 - Quality Review



Service Desk quality assurance is an extremely important part of ensuring good service. Good customer feedback can help to justify continued Service Desk staffing and funding, as well as help with the continuous improvement of the customer service process.

The following table lists the activities involved in Service Desk quality assurance. These include:

- Verifying the resolution of the Help request.
- Sending a user satisfaction survey via SDM.

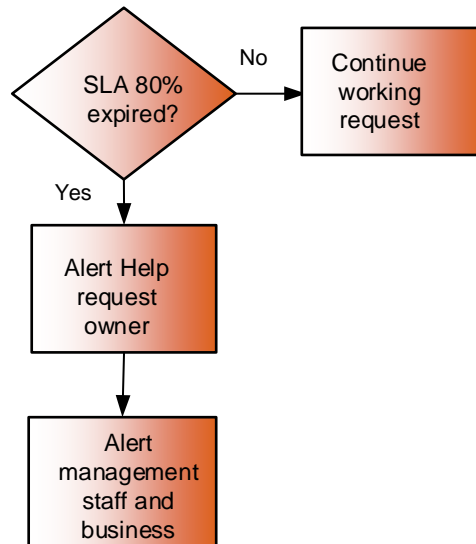
Activities	Considerations
Verify the resolution of the Service request	Key Question: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has the user been contacted directly and did he or she confirm the resolution of the Service request? Input: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service request Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determination to close the Service request or to continue troubleshooting Best Practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As part of the end-to-end ownership of a Service request throughout its lifecycle, the Service Desk is accountable for ensuring that the user is able to do his or her job. However, there is a fine line between providing customer service and annoying a user. If another group has provided clear evidence in the Service request that the user has confirmed resumption and resolution, then no additional follow up is required.
Send user satisfaction survey	Input:

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">User satisfaction survey Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Feedback and data for continuous improvement Best Practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Keep the survey short and to the point. The survey should be tailored to the type of request and should generate metrics that link directly to key performance indicators. A 4-question survey that users answer 80 percent of the time is more useful than a 10-question survey that they answer only 25 percent of the time.

3.1.5.2 SLA Monitoring and Metrics

Figure 21 - SLA Monitoring



In this process, you determine the status of the SLA and report any SLA breaches.

Although SLAs have traditionally focused on measuring technical services, it is important that support services also be measured and monitored. Help request volumes can be significant and GRC operations managers cannot manually monitor queues and select incidents that need additional attention. SLA monitoring for Support Services takes over this task. SLA monitoring should be weighted based on criticality and priority. See **Sections 2.5** and **2.5**. The response time listed in **Section 2.5** is the CSR first response time not the return to service. See the *SLA document* for the details

The following table lists the activities involved in SLA monitoring and metrics. These include:

- Determining if the SLA is 80 percent expired.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

- Alerting the Help request owner.
- Alerting management staff and the business.

Activities	Considerations
Is the SLA 80 percent expired?	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the SLA time measured? • What is the target time? • What is the target action? • What is the appropriate SLA expiration threshold for initiating action to meet the SLA? • What SLA objective has been missed? • How is it measured? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLA <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert trigger <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be default measurements for each priority of Service requests. However, this should be overridden by documented targets within an SLA.
Alert the Help request owner	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is currently working on this Help request? • Is the current owner of the request now available? • Should an alternate person be alerted? • Is there an on-call or duty manager? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help request tracking tool • Support schedule • IM presence <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert trigger <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alerts should be consistent and agreed upon. Where possible, visual cues should flag Help requests within the tracking tool. However, not all teams will visually monitor the tracking tool at all times. In these cases, alerts should be sent via e-mail or Short Messaging Service (SMS) devices or provided to VA by Team Merlin.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
Alert management staff and business	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who needs to know about this SLA breach?• How can the breach be explained in business impact terms?• What roadblocks exist to resuming service? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SLA <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informed and engaged management <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If an SLA is missed, GRC management should not find out from a phone call from a displeased user. Likewise, users need to be informed that GRC management is engaged and working toward an expedient resumption of service Team Merlin should contact the VA PM and COR

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

4. Supported Products/ Applications/Systems

4.1 Hardware Support Services

4.1.1 Hardware Products Supported

Figure 22 - Hardware Asset Information

Server Details: PowerEdge R620 W2K8 R2 64 Bit	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC1_ESXi Physical
		VACWEELAGRC1_SVR Logical
	Service Tag#	5DCKDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.134 Physical
		10.234.121.133 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 18 & 19
	Function	Apache Web Server

Server Details: PowerEdge R620 W2K8 R2 64 Bit	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC2_ESXi Physical
		VAGWEELAGRC2_SVR Logical
	Service Tag #	5DCJDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.136 Physical
		10.234.121.135

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

		Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 20 & 21
	Function	Report Server

Server Details: PowerEdge R620 W2K8 R2 64 Bit	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC3_ESXi Physical
		VAGWEELAGRC3_SVR Logical
	Service Tag #	5DBKDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.138 Physical
		10.234.121.137 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 23 & 24
	Function	RiskVision Tomcat Server

Server Details: PowerEdge R620 W2K8 R2 64 Bit	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC4_ESXi Physical
		VAGWEELAGRC4_SVR Logical
	Service Tag #	5DBJDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.140 Physical

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

		10.234.121.139 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 25 & 26
	Function	Connector Manager Server

Server Details: PowerEdge R620 RHEL 6.2	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC5_ESXi Physical
		VAGWEELAGRC5_SVR Logical
	Service Tag #	5DCHDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.142 Physical
		10.234.121.141 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 28 & 29
	Function	Oracle Database Server

Server Details: PowerEdge R620 W2K8 R2 64 Bit	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC6_ESXi Physical
		VAGWEELAGRC6_SVR1 Logical

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

	Service Tag #	5DDHDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.166 Physical
		10.234.121.165 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 30 & 31
	Function	Dev App Server

Server Details: PowerEdge R620 RHEL 6.2	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC6_ESXi Physical
		VAGWEELAGRC6_SVR2 Logical
	Service Tag #	5DDHDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.166 Physical
		10.234.121.165 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 30 & 31
	Function	Dev App Server

Server Details:	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC7_ESXi Physical
-----------------	--------------	-------------------------------

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

PowerEdge R620 W2K8 R2 SP1		VAGWEELAGRC7_SVR1 Logical
	Service Tag #	5DBHDX1
	IP Address	10.234.121.168 Physical
		10.234.121.167 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 33
	Function	Test App Server

Server Details: RHEL 6.1	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC7_ESXi Physical
		VAGWEELAGRC7_SVR2 Logical
	IP Address	10.234.121.168 Physical
		10.234.121.171 Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 33
	Function	Test Database Server

Server Details: Dell PowerConnect	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC SWITCH1

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

PCT8132F,32 Max Prts,10Gb	IP Address	192.168.1.24 Physical
		None Logical
	Service Tag #	9FFZT51
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 13
	Function	iSCSI Network

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Server Details: Dell PowerConnect PCT8132F,32 Max Prts,10Gb	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRCSWITCH2
	Service Tag #	5FFZTS1
	IP Address	192.168.1.24
		Physical
		None
		Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 14
	Function	iSCSI Network

Server Details: Dell PowerConnect PCT8132F,32 Max Prts,10Gb	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRCSWITCH3
	Service Tag #	BFFZTS1
	IP Address	192.168.1.24
		Physical
		None
		Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 15
	Function	iSCSI Network

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Server Details: Dell PowerConnect PCT8132F,32 Max Prts,10Gb	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC SWITCH4
	Service Tag #	7FFZTS1
	IP Address	192.168.1.24
		Physical
		None Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 16
	Function	iSCSI Network

Server Details: Dell EqualLogic PS6510X	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRC STORAGE1
	Service Tag #	43G6FX1
	IP Address	iSCSI
		Physical
		None Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 6, 7 and 8
	Function	Storage Array RAID 10

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Server Details: Dell EqualLogic PS6510X	Server Name:	VAGWEELAGRCSTORAGE2
	Service Tag #	3 PS6510X,5Q8S1
	IP Address	iSCSI Physical
		None Logical
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2 Cage 2-61 Rack 38 Elevation 9, 10 and 11
	Function	Storage Array RAID 10

(Repeat the above table for each server supported by the Contact)

Figure 23 - Contact Information for Hardware Asset.

Contact Details:	Name:	Service Desk
	Phone:	888-510-4474
	Mobile:	TBD
	Fax:	TBD
	Email	<u>GRCserviceDesk@va.gov</u>

4.1.2 Hardware Support Question List:

Activities	Considerations
Server is not responding	Key Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture the Name, section, street/building address

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<p>and telephone number of Agency contact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain details of problem equipment - type, make, model and serial number. • Obtain details of package in use - name, version and installer. • Obtain details of operating environment - LAN, WAN, operating system, user interface etc. • Obtain complete description of the fault/request. • If installation of new or replacement hardware is requested obtain complete details of hardware/software to be installed. • Obtain the Purchase/Emergency Order Number (where applicable). <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLA • Server Log records • Diagnostic test results <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert trigger • Email/text message • Escalation notice if required <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be default measurements for each priority of Service requests. However, this should be overridden by documented targets within an SLA. • Priority assignment as assigned by the Department of Veterans Affairs fault matrix in Section 2.3 of this document. This response time is to indicate the initial telephone response by the CSR as described in Section 2.4 of this document, to the client as detailed on the Department of Veterans Affairs Fault Report Form.
Alert the Help request owner	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is currently working on this Help request? • Is the current owner of the request now available? • Should an alternate person be alerted? • Is there an on-call or duty manager? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help request tracking tool • Support schedule • IM presence <p>Output:</p>

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert trigger <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As assigned by the Department of Veterans Affairs fault matrix in Section 2.3 of this document. This response time is to indicate the initial telephone response by the CSR, as described in Section 2.4 of this document, to the client as detailed on the Department of Veterans Affairs Fault Report Form.
Alert management staff and business	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who needs to know about this SLA breach? How can the breach be explained in business impact terms? What roadblocks exist to resuming service? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLA <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed and engaged management <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If an SLA is missed, GRC management should not find out from a phone call from a displeased user. Likewise, users need to be informed that GRC management is engaged and working toward an expedient resumption of service.

4.2 Software Support Services

4.2.1 Software Products Supported:

Figure 24 - Software Component Information

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	Agilance RiskVision Application
	Version Number	6.5
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Primary GRC Server

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	Oracle Database Application
	Version Number	11g
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Database Server

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	Red Hat Enterprise Linux
	Version Number	
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Operating System for the Oracle Server

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	Windows 2008 Server
	Version Number	R2
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Operating system for the RiskVision applications

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	Apache
	Version Number	
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

	Function	Web server front end
--	----------	----------------------

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	RiskVision Report Server
	Version Number	
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Reporting Server

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	JasperReports Server
	Version Number	
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Jasper reporting server

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	TEM Connector
	Version Number	
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Connector to the Tivoli Endpoint Manager Reporting Server

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	AD Connector
	Version Number	R
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

		2
	Function	Connector to Active Directory for authentication

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	Email Connector
	Version Number	
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Connector to the email server

Software Component Details:	Software Name:	Nessus Connector
	Version Number	
	Location	Sterling Hosting Center 2
	Function	Connector for Nessus reports

(Repeat the above table for each server supported by the Contact)

Figure 25 - Contact Information for Software Component

Contact Details:	Name:	Service Desk
	Phone:	888-510-4474
	Mobile:	TBD
	Fax:	TBD
	Email	GRCserviceDesk@va.gov

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

4.2.2 Software Support Question List:

Activities	Considerations
Server is not responding	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capture the Name, section, street/building address and telephone number of Agency contact.• Obtain details of problem application, function.• Obtain details of package in use - name, version and installer.• Obtain details of operating environment - LAN, WAN, operating system, user interface etc.• Obtain complete description of the fault/request.• If installation of new or upgraded software is requested obtain complete details of hardware/software to be installed.• Obtain the Purchase/Emergency Order Number (where applicable). <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SLA• Server Log records• Screenshots <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alert trigger• Email/text message• Escalation notice if required <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There should be default measurements for each priority of Service requests or documented targets within an SLA.• Priority assignment as assigned by the Department of Veterans Affairs fault matrix in Section 2.3 of this document. This response time is to indicate the initial telephone response by CSR, as described in Section 2.4 of this document, to the client as detailed on the Department of Veterans Affairs Fault Report Form.
Alert the Help request owner	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who is currently working on this Help request?• Is the current owner of the request now available?• Should an alternate person be alerted?

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Activities	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an on-call or duty manager? <p>Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help request tracking tool • Support schedule • Escalation process <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert trigger <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As assigned by the Department of Veterans Affairs fault matrix in Section 2.3 of this document. This response time is to indicate the initial telephone response by Tier 1, as described in Section 2.4 of this document.
Alert management staff and business	<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who needs to know about this SLA breach? • How can the breach be explained in business impact terms? • What roadblocks exist to resuming service? <p>Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLA <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed and engaged management <p>Best Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an SLA is missed, GRC management should not find out from a phone call from a displeased user. Likewise, users need to be informed that GRC management is engaged and working toward an expedient resumption of service.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

5. GRC Services Catalog

ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) is the most recognized set of Best Practices for the IT Service Management and is used by organizations world-wide to establish and improve capabilities in Service Management. One of the important recommendations given by ITIL is the need to build and maintain a Service Catalog. The Service Catalog provides a central source of information on the IT services delivered by the service provider organization and in this case the GRC service support. It demonstrates to the customers the value that GRC services are able to provide to the business.

5.1 Categorization of Services

Categories to organize services are shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**

Table 7 - Services Categories

Service Categories
Assessment & Authorization Services
Risk Management Services
Vulnerability Management Services (TBD)
Asset Management Services (TBD)
Incident Management Services (TBD)

5.2 List of services

The services that are currently provided are listed in **Error! Reference source not found.**

Table 8 - List of Services

Services	Component	Type
Information System Registration	Content Manager	Questionnaire
FIPS 199	Change Manager	Questionnaire

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

5.3 Service Template

In order to add new services to the catalog, a template must be defined to ensure a uniform view of the services. The template for doing so is shown in **Table 13. Service Template**. Substitute text in the second column for the real text when instantiating a new service. Another template

Table 9 - Service Catalog Template

Service Name	The agreed name for the service.
Service Description	A brief description of what the service does, and the expected outcomes.
Features	Briefly outline the main features and functionalities of the service.
Service Category	Classify the service into one of the categories previously agreed. Categories are important to provide the Service Catalog with a hierarchical view of services.
Service Type	Customer-facing service or supporting service. A customer-facing service is an IT service that is visible to the customer. Typical data to be recorded are those connecting to the business, although information from the supporting layer can be recorded as well for internal use by the IT service provider. A supporting service is an IT service that is not directly used by the business, but is required by the IT service provider to deliver customer facing services (for example, a directory service or a backup service). Supporting services may also include IT services only used by the IT service provider. Typical information to be recorded are from the supporting layer.
Service Owner(s)	Name and contact information of the person(s) with this role.
Business Service Catalog	
Business Owner(s)	Name and contact information of the person(s) with this role.
Business Unit(s)	Business unit(s) to which the service is provided
Business Impact	Describe the positive impact of having the service available and/or the negative impact of the opposite. The impact can be quantified by the number of users affected, the impact on each user, and the cost to the business.

Help Desk Plan & Procedures Guide

Business Priority	Select from a previously agreed scale like Critical/None-critical or High/Medium/Low.
Business Contacts	Name and contact information of the key business person(s) to be contacted.
Service Level Agreement (SLA)	It is usually better to provide a link to the document with the SLA encompassing the IT service.
Service Hours	Write here the agreed time period when the IT service should be available.
Escalation Contacts	Name and contact information of the person(s) to be contacted when an escalation procedure is triggered.
Service Reports	A list of the operational reports available for the IT service.
Service Reviews	Frequency of the service level review meetings.
Security Rating	Classify according to the security level of the IT service.
Request Procedures	Describe how the service should be requested.
Pricing and Chargeback	Establish how customers are charged.
Policies	Describe any policies governing the use of the service.
Technical Service Catalog	
Supporting Services	List any supporting services on which the IT service depends.
Services Supported	List any service this service is supporting.
Configuration Items (CI)	List of other CI supporting the IT service, including hardware, software, application and data.

Table 13. Service Template