

VHA Office of Informatics and Analytics
Strategic Investment Management
Business Process Architecture



Guiding Principles

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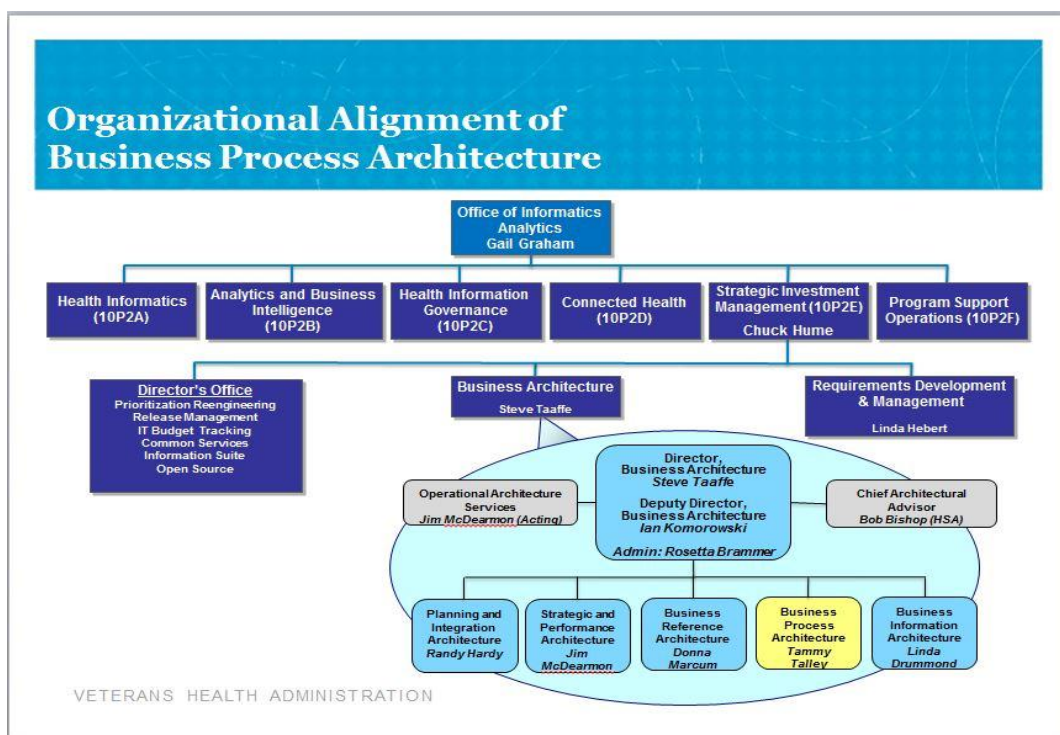
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1. INTRODUCTION

Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Office of Informatics and Analytics (OIA), Strategic Investment Management Office (SIM), Business Architecture (BA) is made up of 5 Units: Operations Architecture Services (OAS), Planning and Integration Architecture (PIA), Business Reference Architecture (BRA), Business Information Architecture (BIA), and Business Process Architecture (BPA).

Figure 1 - BPA Organizational Alignment



The Business Process Architecture (BPA) Unit acts as a process modeling center of excellence for the VHA. BPA provides business process modeling and guidance for communicating business process needs.

BPA's intent is to build a long-term process modeling capability and act as a primary point of contact for process modeling across VHA. Our goal is to improve the understanding of business processes, which will allow our customers to make better informed decisions.

BPA provides the following services:

- Oversee and establish business process modeling as a core business practice
- Identify, capture, and communicate business needs and process enhancements through the development of process models utilizing standard Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN)
- Provide Business Process Reengineering (BPR) expertise

- Assist in providing technical understanding and solution delivery
- Act as core members of project teams by providing leadership and execution support
- Support the development of governance strategy and processes for interagency initiatives
- Provide facilitation, training and consultation services for model-led requirements elaboration
- Assist with formalizing processes, templates, and governance for integrated and internal VA efforts

1.1 Background

BPA has identified the need to establish a set of guiding principles to develop and maintain process models and modeling artifacts, which are used to capture specific business needs. These guiding principles ensure that process modeling practices are consistent, effectively communicate business needs, increase collaboration and guide information standardization across the modeling community.

1.2 Purpose and Scope

The key to the efficient, safe and appropriate management of health information systems is a coordinated approach that supports and encourages continuity in all areas of the development community and health care sector.

These guiding principles provide guidance to Business Architecture (BA), BPA, and partnering process modeling organizations across the health care continuum. The guiding principles are a useful baseline for standard operating procedures and complement BA's mission to:

“Honor Veterans by driving VHA healthcare business transformation and optimization of information system utilization, through identification, classification, and modeling of business strategies, functions, processes, information and services, to support the needs of Veterans, providers, and sharing partners.”

The scope of this document is to provide BPA's philosophy and outlook concerning service offerings and standards of practice with respect to process modeling activities and established operations that support these activities. The guiding principles cover both overarching guiding principles that apply to the unit as a whole and business process guiding principles that direct our daily operations. These guiding principles have broad implications not only for members of the VHA and VA management teams, but also, for business and IT decision-makers, strategic partners, project managers, initiative owners, staff, and other stakeholders. This document is designed to provide the foundational guidance to ensure consistency across work efforts and to demonstrate greater efficiency in gathering business requirements. The BPA Guiding Principles have been categorized according to the descriptions provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Guideline Categories

Category	Description
Operational	Groups together guidelines that apply across all BPA services
Modeling	Covers processes to develop and manage BPA artifacts

2. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The operational guidelines apply to BPA as a unit and drive the decisions in determining our scope of work and the manner in which BPA manages expectations and fosters work effort satisfaction.

2.1 Align Modeling Efforts with VHA Strategic Plan & OIA Priorities

The process modeling work efforts should support and provide traceability to the VHA Strategic Planning Guidance (SPG) and OIA and other BA priorities to enable cross-coordination and a purpose that is consistent with the overall organization.

Table 2: Implications - Align Modeling Efforts with VHA Strategic Plan & OIA Priorities

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with Health Systems Portfolio Management (HSPM) and Strategic Investment Management (SIM) to ensure alignment to the SPG• Work with BA units to ensure process modeling efforts connect and synchronize with all BA work products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensures that funding and resourcing of service requests are aligned to the VHA SPG and OIA Priorities• Ensures that the modeling team resources are applied to efforts that contribute to realizing the SPG• Ensures process modeling efforts align with SPG and SIM priorities (such as the Business Function Framework) so that business objectives and stakeholder needs drive IT development efforts

2.2 Maintain the VHA Segment Architecture Line of Sight

The ability to map Business Architectural products throughout the team will assist management in identifying the greatest concentration of effort and gaps.

Table 3: Implications – Maintain the VHA Segment Architecture Line of Sight

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Map to the Business Function Framework• Traceability to the Normalized Data Objects and Information Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to identify and leverage processes across BA for re-use

2.3 Proactively Prepare for BPA Support

By planning and forecasting engagement needs, BPA can meet urgent requests as they arise. Leveraging existing process and organizational knowledge contributes to the ability to forecast and reliably estimate results. BPA should foster both short- and long-term horizons while predicting workloads and priorities.

Table 4: Implications – Proactively Prepare for BPA Support

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan work effort engagement timelines and expected outcomes Provide weekly status updates and an overview of near-term responsibilities Re-use existing artifacts (i.e., BASR, process models) Prioritize work efforts and establish resource assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlines and standardizes business process activities Eliminates duplication of efforts/artifacts Sets appropriate customer expectations Improves forecasting ability

2.4 Maintain a Customer-Centric Focus

BPA fosters a customer-centric focus where constructive feedback leads to innovation and internal improvements.

Table 5: Implications – Maintain a Customer-Centric Focus

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in defining the scope, specifics, and impact of processes being modeled Iteratively produce and solicit feedback on artifacts and deliverables Utilize customer feedback Facilitate customer consensus during engagements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the implications of BPA actions upon the business Activities are measured in terms that are relevant to the business Enables us to understand our strengths and weaknesses to proactively improve our service offerings

2.5 Coordinate with Internal and External Groups

BPA closely collaborates with internal and external groups to effectively engage with SMEs. During the course of a modeling engagement, there will be unified collaboration between HSPM, Requirements Development Management (RDM), BA units, and other external entities to deliver consistent messages and ensure artifacts reflect a team perspective.

Table 6: Implications - Coordinate with Internal and External Groups

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up communication and collaboration tools to share information Incorporate lessons learned Represent BA in architectural standards and governance activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and promotes working relationships and ground rules Ensures the most efficient use of Stakeholder and Subject Matter Expert (SME) time Ensures adherence to a single vision and scope for the effort

Activities	Benefits
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts and promotes standards and practices Strengthen BA influence

2.6 Establish and Meet Performance Goals

BPA meets goals and performance measures by delivering timely and quality work.

Table 7: Implications – Establish and Meet Performance Goals

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and align BPA goals to BA and VHA strategic goals Report on progress of goals Maintain the model repository 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides awareness into BPA work activities

2.7 Maintain a Transparent Environment

BPA demonstrates stakeholders' return on investment and enables understanding of BPA services through a transparent environment.

Table 8: Implications – Maintain a Transparent Environment

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide quarterly and annual status briefs Provide quarterly Health Information Performance Measurement Report updates Provide input into the BA Work Effort Database Track the number of models/model artifacts produced per quarter/fiscal year Track non-modeling engagements and level of effort expended Update the BA Intranet site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a method for capturing pertinent data and monitoring engagement on a regular basis Establishes an action-oriented and reporting culture Enables the measuring of BPA unit and engagement goals established

3. MODELING GUIDELINES

The business process guidelines describe how BPA should follow the application of process modeling, process improvement, and business process reengineering.

3.1 Apply a Standardized Process Modeling Methodology

By consistently following a methodology for developing BPA artifacts, BPA can reliably predict the cycle and timeline that a work effort will require. The characteristics of each methodology step depend on the scope and the nature of the service engagement. This document focuses on the components of the process modeling cycle that are critical to achieving continuity across the development of model-led requirements. The BPA User Guide provides a representative methodology that most work efforts should follow.

Table 9: Implications – Apply a Standardized Process Modeling Methodology

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage stakeholder to provide input on which modeling steps are necessary for a given work effort• Capture required information cascading from the highest level down to progressively greater detail• Work Product Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholders understand the progression of activities that lead to the development of models and model artifacts• Improved planning during engagements involving integrated project teams• Process improvement opportunities can be easily identified and incorporated

3.2 Adhere to Standard Process Modeling Notation

Based on a variety of criteria and industry best practices, the BPA team has selected Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN) version 2.0 as the most effective object-oriented notation for decomposing business goals and objectives. A standardized notation promotes streamlined training, improved understanding, and effective change management. The BPA User Guide provides an overview of BPMN.

Table 10: Implications – Adhere to Standardized Process Modeling Notation

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide BPMN element overview describing the purpose and use of each symbol• Updates occur when the Object Management Group (OMG) publishes a new BPMN version• Select the core set of BPMN elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Controls for differences in modeling among team members• Effective asset and configuration management is in place• Provides modeling products that are easily understood by internal and external stakeholders

3.3 Perform Quality Control

The quality of process models directly impacts the quality of related products including requirements and information models. BPA employs several measures to ensure and improve the quality of our services to the end user.

Table 11: Implications – Perform Quality Control

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Document lessons learned and feedback from each work effort• Perform research and benchmarking against the guiding principles and best practices to stay abreast of the evolving industry• Implement Work Product Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fosters a culture of change among BPA• Ensures consistency among models across teams which facilitates process improvement and object re-use across organizational boundaries

3.4 Manage Process Models

The management of process models provides the ability to retrieve and report on historical artifacts. Maintaining the model repository and document library offers a centralized source for model information and provides a means to measure BPA performance, access for ad-hoc reporting, re-use of models, and historical research.

Table 12: Implications – Manage Process Models

Activities	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track model names and locations in the model repository• Store modeling artifacts for future reference and re-use to the document repository	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can integrate our repository with other services that use or provide model related information• Ability to provide near real time reporting of quarterly activities and models by work effort• Track process models and associated information developed for historical engagements• Ability to identify previously developed process models that can be leveraged for new efforts

APPENDIX A *ACRONYMS*

BA: Business Architecture (Team)
BAPM: Business Architecture Process Modeling (Team)
BASR: Business Architecture Specification Report
BFF: Business Function Framework
BPA: Business Process Architecture (Team)
BPR: Business Process Reengineering
BPMN: Business Process Model and Notation
IT: Information Technology
HSPM: Health Systems Portfolio Management
NSR: New Service Request
OIA: Office of Informatics and Analytics
OMG: Object Management Group
PMSR: Process Model Summary Report
RDM: Requirements Development Management
SIM: Strategic Investment Management
SPG: Strategic Planning Guidance
SME: Subject Matter Expert
VA: Department of Veterans Affairs
VHA: Veterans Health Administration

Acceptance

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