



***asapm* Performance Rated Organization**  
**Standard for Assessing Organizational**  
**Project Management Performance**

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# Preface

This document represents the first release of the *asapm* Performance Rated Organization (*aPRO*) standard. *aPRO* provides a new benchmark for addressing organizational performance in project management. The *aPRO* standard offers a set of observable performance criteria that, taken together, provide a complete picture of organizational competence in project management.

This standard is designed for executives who want to assess their organization against an objective, independent standard. The standard applies to large and small organizations, as well as to private, public, and not-for-profit entities. It may be used in two ways:

- **Certification.** Organizations may become *aPRO* Certified through an independent, formal assessment process.
- **Improvement.** Organizations may use this standard as a guide to deciding the best way to invest in better project management.

*aPRO* is based on the idea of threshold competence. Organizations do not have to be the very best in project management to deliver useful results to their stakeholders. Instead, the standard is built around the value provided by consistent, reliable performance.

*aPRO* was presented to the global project management community as an Exposure Draft in early 2010. All of the comments received were helpful, and most have been incorporated into this first release.

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# *asapm* Performance Rated Organization

## Standard for Assessing Organizational Project Management Performance

### 1. Scope

This document contains a standard for assessing organizational project management performance. It assesses threshold competence — the ability to meet the minimum level of performance needed to reliably obtain useful results from the projects it performs.

The standard is applicable to:

- Organizations in all fields of endeavor including, but not limited to: aerospace, agriculture, architecture, biotechnology, construction, defense, design, education, engineering, entertainment, environmental remediation, events management, financial services, government, government contracting, health care, information systems, not-for-profit enterprises, pharmaceuticals, software, and telecommunications.
- All types of projects including, but not limited to: organizational change, new product development, facility or asset development, maintenance, social engineering, research, service delivery, and decommissioning.

The standard may be used by Recognized Assessors to recommend *aPRO* certification by *asapm*, by organizations to do self-assessments in support of a project management improvement program, or by organizations interested in the ability of potential contractors to perform successfully.

### 2. Performance-Based Competence Standards

#### 2.1 Key Concepts

This section provides a brief overview of key concepts for users and potential users of the standard who are not familiar with performance-based competence standards (PBCS).

*Competent* comes from the Latin root *competere* which means “to be suitable.” The term “competent” has traditionally been used to describe an individual who is sufficiently skilled to perform a specified role — a competent physician, a competent salesperson, a competent plumber. Although the term has traditionally been applied to individuals, for the past 10 years, it has also been applied to organizations.

Broadly speaking, there are two major approaches to defining and assessing competence:

- *Attribute-based* wherein specific organizational characteristics such as reporting relationships, business processes, financing methods, marketing strategies, etc. are assumed to be driven by the presence of underlying attributes. For example, an organization chart that shows managers with 5-7 direct reports would suggest an appreciation for the importance of span-of-control. Competence would be inferred based on the presence of a defined set of attributes.

- *Performance-based* wherein evidence of directly-observable outcomes and results is collected. For example, evidence of executive leadership might be provided by documentation of actions taken to address shortfalls in benefits realized. Competence would be inferred based on the demonstrated ability to provide adequate evidence to satisfy the performance criteria.

Although attribute-based competence assessment is better known in the USA, performance-based competence assessment was developed here by the US Army and is more-widely used internationally. It is also the basis for national competence assessment systems in countries such as Australia, Mexico, New Zealand, and South Africa. As well, it is being used as the basis for competence assessment in a system being developed by the European Economic Community.

The *aPRO* development team chose a performance-based approach to provide:

- Consistency with *asapm's* approach to the certification of individuals.
- A more objective evaluation of an organization's ability to reliably obtain useful results from its projects.
- Clarity on the meaning of organizational competence through the requirement that 100% of the performance criteria have been satisfied.

## 2.2 Design of the Standard

Traditionally, PBCS have three main components: units, elements, and performance criteria. These components are organized hierarchically with units consisting of elements and elements consisting of performance criteria.

- **Units of Competence**  
A Unit of Competence defines a broad area of performance that is meaningful to organizational management, for example, the need to provide adequate resources for projects.
- **Elements of Competence**  
Elements of Competence describe key organizational actions within a Unit. They describe *what* is done but do not prescribe *how* it is done. For example, an organization must "shape and sustain the organization's strategic direction," but it can do so using internal resources or with assistance from a consultant, and it can use whatever tools and strategic planning approaches it chooses.
- **Performance Criteria**  
Performance Criteria set out the type and/or level of performance required to demonstrate support for each element. They describe observable results and/or actions from which satisfactory performance can be inferred, e.g., roles and responsibilities are defined. Performance criteria are written in the passive voice and are assessed on a yes/no, pass/fail basis.

In addition, key terms, elaborated upon in the column headed *Explanatory Statements*, help ensure consistent interpretation of the Elements and the Performance Criteria. The Explanatory Statements expand on critical or significant aspects of each term to enable consistent application of the standard in different contexts. Where the Explanatory Statements contain lists, the lists are generally illustrative and not exhaustive.

The Performance Criteria have been defined at the *threshold* level: the minimum level of performance needed to reliably obtain useful results from the projects the organization performs. Threshold performance, however, does *not* equate to *low* performance: Olympic athletes must meet threshold performance standards as well.

The number of Performance Criteria in a Unit or Element is not proportional to the amount of time or effort that an organization must spend to reliably produce useful results from its projects. Some Performance Criteria can be satisfied with relatively little effort while others will require a substantial commitment.

This standard includes the minimum number of Performance Criteria needed to infer organizational competence. As a result, an organization must satisfy all of the Performance Criteria in order to be viewed as a competent performer.

### 3. Using the Standard

#### 3.1 Defining the Boundaries of an Assessment

This standard may be used to assess a complete entity such as a corporation or a municipality, or a subdivision such as a department, a division, a business unit, a plant, a site, an agency, or any other bounded organization. It may be used to assess organizations that provide products or services as well as organizations whose business is project delivery.

The scope of the assessment should include all projects and subprojects managed by the organization. Projects managed by wholly-owned subsidiaries would normally be included while independently incorporated joint ventures would not be. Ongoing activities such as service-level agreements would not be included even if they are referred to as “projects.”

This standard explicitly recognizes that there are many different approaches to the management of projects, and that there are many different ways to achieve useful results from projects. An *aPRO* assessment does **not** evaluate the approach. It looks for evidence of the outputs produced by the approach. Competent organizations should be able to satisfy the performance criteria without changing any of their current practices.

#### 3.2 Conducting the Assessment

*asapm* provides instructor-led classroom training and an Assessor Guide for individuals who wish to become Recognized Assessors. Organizations that wish to become *aPRO* Certified (see Section 3.3) must be assessed by an *asapm* Recognized Assessor. Organizations may self-assess to identify areas for improvement.

The standard is designed to help an assessor infer whether an organization is *likely* to be able to obtain useful results from its future projects. An assessment must include:

- Interviews of executives, project managers, and others to verify what is done and why.
- Physical examination of documentary evidence supplied by organizational management and by other sources such as clients and team members.

As with other performance-based standards, *aPRO* requires that 100% of the Performance Criteria must be satisfied for an organization to be assessed as a competent performer. As a result, Performance Criteria have not been repeated in different Units. For example, since strategic alignment is addressed in *aPRO-01*, it is not necessary to repeat the Performance Criteria related to strategic alignment when discussing executive leadership in *aPRO-02*.

The Units, Elements, and Performance Criteria are not linear or sequential: the Performance Criteria be satisfied in any order. In addition, some Performance Criteria can be satisfied with relatively little effort while others will require a substantial commitment.

### 3.3 *aPRO* Certification

*asapm* offers *aPRO* Certification to organizations that have provided satisfactory evidence of performance to a Recognized Assessor. *aPRO* Certification is valid for a period of three (3) years as long as the terms of the certification are observed. At the time of the release of this version of the standard, details of the certification program were still under development. When complete, program details will be available on the *aPRO* website: <<http://apro.asapm.org>>.

## 4. Terms and Definitions

Terms in this standard are used with their dictionary definitions. Where the dictionary definition alone might not provide adequate guidance for assessment, Explanatory Statements have been provided. Terms with Explanatory Statements are displayed in bold type. The Explanatory Statement is given the first time a term is used within a Unit of Competence and is displayed in bold type with each subsequent use. For ease of reference, the Explanatory Statement is repeated in each Unit where the term is used. The Explanatory Statements in most Units are word-for-word identical. In cases where they are not, the Explanatory Statements are conceptually identical.

## 5. Overview of Units, Elements, and Performance Criteria

The table below provides a summary of the Units of Competence while the table on the following page provides an overview of the Units, Elements, and Performance Criteria. Details for all are provided in Section 6.

<b>Unit Number</b>	<b>Unit Title</b>	<b>Unit Descriptor</b>
<i>aPRO-01</i>	Align Projects with Organizational Strategy	This Unit defines the Elements required to align projects with organizational strategy. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in using projects to help move the organization toward its desired future state.
<i>aPRO-02</i>	Provide Executive Leadership to the Management of Projects	This Unit defines the Elements required to provide executive leadership to the management of projects. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in ensuring that projects and project management receive effective direction from the organization's senior management.
<i>aPRO-03</i>	Ensure Adequate Resources for Projects	This Unit defines the Elements required to ensure adequate resources for projects. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in staffing, funding, and supporting projects.
<i>aPRO-04</i>	Develop Project Management Staff	This Unit defines the Elements required to develop project management staff. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in developing skills that can be applied on future projects.
<i>aPRO-05</i>	Ensure a Reliable Framework for Project Management	This Unit defines the Elements required to ensure a reliable framework for project management. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in defining and implementing effective project management methods.

Table 1. Units and Unit Descriptors

# Units, Elements, and Performance Criteria

Units	Elements	Performance Criteria
<p><i>aPRO-01</i> Align Projects with Organizational Strategy</p>	<p>1.1 Shape and sustain the organization's strategic direction.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Strategic direction is documented and distributed to pertinent stakeholders. 1.1.2 Internal and external environments are monitored for circumstances that may require changes to strategic direction. 1.1.3 Strategic direction is reviewed periodically and confirmed or updated as appropriate.</p>
	<p>1.2 Manage the organization's overall portfolio of projects.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Project selection criteria and project prioritization criteria are derived from the current strategic direction, documented, and used. 1.2.2 Guidance for maintaining balance within the overall portfolio of projects is derived from the current strategic direction, documented, and applied. 1.2.3 Revisions to the organization's overall portfolio of projects are documented and distributed to pertinent stakeholders.</p>
<p><i>aPRO-02</i> Provide Executive Leadership to the Management of Projects</p>	<p>2.1 Support effective project governance.</p>	<p>2.1.1 Policy statements enabling project governance are documented, distributed, maintained, and championed. 2.1.2 Roles and responsibilities are defined, documented, distributed, maintained, and followed. 2.1.3 Information about project status is current, accurate, and distributed. 2.1.4 Terminology involved in the management of projects is used with shared understanding.</p>
	<p>2.2 Respond to project management results.</p>	<p>2.2.1 Project management success criteria are documented and distributed to pertinent stakeholders on all significant projects. 2.2.2 Interim project management results are monitored, and project direction is confirmed or modified as appropriate. 2.2.3 Interim and final project management results are evaluated against project management success criteria. 2.2.4 Lessons learned are shared and applied.</p>
	<p>2.3 Evaluate benefits realized.</p>	<p>2.3.1 Expected benefits are measurable, documented, and agreed to by pertinent stakeholders. 2.3.2 Plans for evaluating benefits are developed and implemented. 2.3.3 Responsibility for evaluating benefits is assigned and accepted. 2.3.4 Variances in benefits realized are addressed.</p>
<p><i>aPRO-03</i> Ensure Adequate Resources for Projects</p>	<p>3.1 Provide adequate staffing for approved projects.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Project staffing forecasts are reflected in organizational staffing plans. 3.1.2 Project staffing needs are agreed to as part of the project approval process. 3.1.3 Staff are made available to projects as agreed. 3.1.4 Staffing plans and staff needs are updated in response to changes in project plans or project results. 3.1.5 Staffing inadequacies are identified and addressed.</p>
	<p>3.2 Provide adequate funding for approved projects.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Forecasts for project funding are included in organizational budgets. 3.2.2 Expected project funding needs are agreed to as part of the project approval process. 3.2.3 Funding needs are updated in response to changes in project plans or project results. 3.2.4 Funds are made available to projects as agreed. 3.2.5 Funding inadequacies are identified and addressed.</p>
	<p>3.3 Provide other necessary support for approved projects.</p>	<p>3.3.1 Forecasts of other necessary support needed by projects are included in organizational plans. 3.3.2 Other necessary support needed by projects is agreed to as part of the project approval process. 3.3.3 Other necessary support needed by projects is provided as agreed. 3.3.4 Other necessary support needs are updated in response to changes in project plans or project results. 3.3.5 Inadequacies in other necessary support are identified and addressed.</p>
<p><i>aPRO-04</i> Develop Project Management Staff</p>	<p>4.1 Develop project managers.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Project manager selection criteria are documented, distributed, and followed. 4.1.2 Knowledge and skill needs for project managers are documented and distributed. 4.1.3 Project managers are evaluated against performance metrics that they can influence. 4.1.4 Good project manager performance is recognized, and poor performance is addressed.</p>
	<p>4.2 Develop staff in project management support roles.</p>	<p>4.2.1 Knowledge and skill needs for project management support roles are documented and distributed. 4.2.2 Individuals in project management support roles are evaluated against performance metrics that they can influence. 4.2.3 Good performance in project management support roles is recognized, and poor performance is addressed.</p>
<p><i>aPRO-05</i> Ensure a Reliable Framework for Project Management</p>	<p>5.1 Shape and sustain project management practices.</p>	<p>5.1.1 Project management practices are defined for each major category of product or service. 5.1.2 Project management practices are documented, followed, and distributed to pertinent stakeholders. 5.1.3 Project management practices are reviewed regularly, and improvement opportunities as well as deficiencies are identified and addressed.</p>
	<p>5.2 Shape and sustain project life-cycle definitions.</p>	<p>5.2.1 Project life-cycles are defined for each major type of product or service. 5.2.2 Project life-cycle definitions are documented, followed, and distributed to pertinent stakeholders. 5.2.3 Project life-cycle go/no-go decisions are based on current, realistic business cases. 5.2.4 Project life-cycles definitions are reviewed regularly, and improvement opportunities as well as deficiencies are identified and addressed.</p>

Table 2. Units, Elements, and Performance Criteria

## 6. Details of Units, Elements, and Performance Criteria

The following pages detail the Units, Elements, and Performance Criteria of the *aPRO* Standard. They are presented using the format illustrated below in Table 3. Table 3 uses descriptive comments in place of actual content.

<b>aPRO-0x Unit Title</b>	
<b>Unit Descriptor</b>	A Unit of Competence defines a broad area of performance that is meaningful to organizational management.
<b>aPRO-0x List of Elements in this Unit</b>	
x.1	Elements of Competence describe key organizational actions within a Unit of Competence.
x.2	Elements of Competence describe <i>what</i> is done but do not prescribe <i>how</i> it is done.
<b>aPRO-0x Performance Criteria and Explanatory Statements for each Element</b>	
x.1 Elements of Competence describe key organizational actions within a Unit of Competence.	
<b>Performance Criteria</b>	<b>Explanatory Statements</b>
x.1.1 <b>Performance Criteria</b> set out the type and/or level of performance required to demonstrate support for each element.	a. Explanations are provided for key words and phrases in the elements or the <b>performance criteria</b> .
x.1.2 They describe observable results and/or actions from which satisfactory performance can be inferred.	b. The explanatory statements provide guidance for both <i>aPRO</i> Assessors and for the organization being assessed.

Table 3. Illustration of Presentation Format

## aPRO-01 Align Projects with Organizational Strategy

**Unit Descriptor** This Unit defines the Elements required to align projects with organizational strategy. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in using projects to help move the organization toward its desired future state.

### aPRO-01 Elements

- 1.1 Shape and sustain the organization's strategic direction.
- 1.2 Manage the organization's overall portfolio of projects.

### aPRO-01 Element 1

- 1.1 Shape and sustain the organization's strategic direction.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>1.1.1 <b>Strategic direction is documented and distributed to pertinent stakeholders.</b></p> <p>1.1.2 <b>Internal and external environments</b> are monitored for circumstances that may require changes to <b>strategic direction.</b></p> <p>1.1.3 <b>Strategic direction</b> is reviewed <b>periodically</b> and confirmed or updated as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Strategic direction</b> is the course of action intended to allow the organization to achieve its desired future state. Strategic direction will normally be supported by at least the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-level guidance such as vision, mission, goals, and values</li> <li>• Analysis of trends in the organization's environment</li> <li>• Assessment of the need for organizational change management</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. <b>Documented</b> means that the information is available electronically or on paper. Information may be documented without being distributed.</li> <li>c. <b>Distributed</b> means that information is proactively disseminated to and accessible by decision-makers and others within the organization when and as needed.</li> <li>d. <b>Stakeholders</b> include those whose interests may be affected by actions of the organization, and they may be internal or external to the organization. Internal stakeholders may include stock holders, executive management, department heads, project managers, project team members, and others. External stakeholders may include clients, customers, vendors, suppliers, elected officials, government regulators, media representatives, the general public, and others. Stakeholders may support a project or oppose it.</li> <li>e. The <b>pertinence</b> of a stakeholder may be affected by the impact of the organization's actions on the stakeholder, by the impact of the stakeholder's actions on the organization, and by cultural or ethical considerations. Different stakeholders are pertinent in different situations.</li> <li>f. <b>Internal and external environments</b> include factors that may affect the organization's ability to achieve its desired future state. Internal factors may include capacity for change, financial health, staffing levels, skills, and short-term results. External factors may include the economy, technology, regulations, and market conditions.</li> <li>g. <b>Periodically</b> may vary based on industry or application area. In general, strategic direction should be reviewed at least semi-annually.</li> </ul>

## aPRO-01 Element 2

1.2 Manage the organization's **overall portfolio of projects**.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements	
1.2.1 <b>Project selection criteria</b> and <b>project prioritization criteria</b> are derived from the current <b>strategic direction, documented</b> , and used.	a. The organization's <b>overall portfolio of projects</b> may consist of all of the organization's active projects or may be limited to a subset that includes only the largest and most strategically important. The overall portfolio of projects may also include programs, proposed projects, approved-but-not-yet-started projects, and completed-but-not-yet-closed-out projects. The project portfolio management process may be broadly-framed or highly-detailed. It may be managed by individuals assigned full-time to the role, or by individuals with other responsibilities.	
1.2.2 <b>Guidance for maintaining balance</b> within the <b>overall portfolio of projects</b> is derived from the current <b>strategic direction, documented</b> , and applied.		b. <b>Project selection criteria</b> and <b>project prioritization criteria</b> may vary across different components of the organization to reflect the different needs of each component.
1.2.3 Revisions to the organization's <b>overall portfolio of projects</b> are <b>documented</b> and <b>distributed</b> to <b>pertinent stakeholders</b> .		c. <b>Guidance for maintaining balance</b> may address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project size, cost, and duration</li><li>• Technical or management complexity as well as other types of risk</li><li>• Financial return, timing of benefits, and other outcomes</li></ul>

## aPRO-02 Provide Executive Leadership to the Management of Projects

**Unit Descriptor** This Unit defines the Elements required to provide executive leadership to the management of projects. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in ensuring that projects and project management receive effective direction from the organization’s senior management.

### aPRO-02 Elements

- 2.1 Support effective project governance.
- 2.2 Respond to project management results.
- 2.3 Evaluate benefits realized.

### aPRO-02 Element 1

- 2.1 Support effective **project governance**.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>2.1.1 Policy statements enabling <b>project governance</b> are <b>documented, distributed</b>, maintained, and championed.</p> <p>2.1.2 <b>Roles and responsibilities</b> are defined, <b>documented, distributed</b>, maintained, and followed.</p> <p>2.1.3 Information about project status is current, accurate, and <b>distributed</b>.</p> <p>2.1.4 Terminology involved in the management of projects is used with <b>shared understanding</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Project governance</b> is the combination of principles, rules, and structures implemented by management to inform, direct, manage, and monitor the activities of projects. Project governance is a subset of corporate governance. Policy statements provide guidance to support the development of more detailed methods and procedures.</li> <li>b. <b>Roles and responsibilities</b> should address both project needs and organizational needs related to the management of projects. Roles may include project sponsor, project funder, project manager, team member, customer, client, user, team lead, supplier, contract administrator, scheduler, and others. Roles and responsibilities, as well as the terms used to identify them, may vary by application area.</li> <li>c. <b>Documented</b> means that the information is available electronically or on paper. Information may be documented without being distributed.</li> <li>d. <b>Distributed</b> means that information is proactively disseminated to and accessible by decision-makers and others within the organization when and as needed.</li> <li>e. <b>Shared understanding</b> requires that different definitions used by different organizational components are identified and resolved. Resolutions may be permanent or project-by-project.</li> </ul>

**aPRO-02 Element 2**

2.2 Respond to project management results.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>2.2.1 <b>Project management success criteria</b> are <b>documented</b> and <b>distributed</b> to <b>pertinent stakeholders</b> on all <b>significant</b> projects.</p> <p>2.2.2 Interim project management results are monitored, and project direction is confirmed or modified as appropriate.</p> <p>2.2.3 Interim and final project management results are <b>evaluated</b> against <b>project management success criteria</b>.</p> <p>2.2.4 <b>Lessons learned</b> are shared and applied.</p>	<p>a. <b>Project management success criteria</b> include one or more measures of realistic and acceptable results for cost, schedule, scope or quality, and stakeholder satisfaction with the project management process. “Realistic and acceptable” may vary based upon industry, application area, strategic direction, or other factors. Expected benefits are established separately from project management success criteria.</p> <p>b. <b>Stakeholders</b> include those whose interests may be affected by actions of the organization, and they may be internal or external to the organization. Internal stakeholders may include stock holders, executive management, department heads, project managers, project team members, and others. External stakeholders may include clients, customers, vendors, suppliers, elected officials, government regulators, media representatives, the general public, and others. Stakeholders may support a project or oppose it.</p> <p>c. The <b>pertinence</b> of a stakeholder may be affected by the impact of the organization’s actions on the stakeholder, by the impact of the stakeholder’s actions on the organization, and by cultural or ethical considerations. Different stakeholders are pertinent in different situations.</p> <p>d. <b>Significant</b> projects would generally include any project with a separately-defined budget, or any project that is identified by name within any project portfolio. Some projects may be too small or too short to benefit from documented project management success criteria.</p> <p>e. <b>Evaluation</b> of project management results includes comparison of plans to actuals and definition of acceptable levels of variance. Acceptable levels of variance may differ by application area, organization size, or other factors. Variances may be positive or negative.</p> <p>g. <b>Lessons learned</b> may be positive or negative, and may be identified through a process that is broadly-framed or highly-detailed. They may be identified at any point during the project, and should be identified at the end of each project life-cycle phase. Formal lessons learned sessions may also be called after-action reviews, post-project reviews, post-project audits, retrospectives, or other similar terms.</p>

**aPRO-02 Element 3**

2.3 Evaluate benefits realized.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>2.3.1 Expected <b>benefits</b> are measurable, <b>documented</b>, and agreed to by <b>pertinent stakeholders</b>.</p> <p>2.3.2 Plans for <b>evaluating benefits</b> are developed and implemented.</p> <p>2.3.3 Responsibility for <b>evaluating benefits</b> is assigned and accepted.</p> <p>2.3.4 Variances in benefits realized are <b>addressed</b>.</p>	<p>a. <b>Evaluation</b> of benefits realized is typically done after the project is complete, but may be done during the project. Evaluation may be a discrete action or an ongoing process.</p> <p>b. <b>Benefits</b> are the organizational results obtained from using the product or service of the project. They may be tangible (new revenue, increased revenue, cost reduction, etc.) or intangible (market position, customer satisfaction, societal improvements, knowledge, etc.). Benefits may accrue to any of the stakeholders, and may be realized directly or indirectly. They may be measured using financial or non-financial criteria, and they may be realized in the short- or long-term. When a project is done under contract, benefits may include profit margins, follow-on business, and employee growth and development. Benefits are often called outcomes.</p> <p>c. Variances will normally be <b>addressed</b> through concrete action but may occasionally be addressed through a deliberate decision to do nothing. Variances may be positive or negative.</p>

## aPRO-03 Ensure Adequate Resources for Projects

**Unit Descriptor** This Unit defines the Elements required to ensure adequate resources for projects. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in staffing, funding, and supporting projects.

### aPRO-03 Elements

- 3.1 Provide adequate staffing for approved projects.
- 3.2 Provide adequate funding for approved projects.
- 3.3 Provide other necessary support for approved projects.

### aPRO-03 Element 1

- 3.1 Provide **adequate staffing** for approved projects.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>3.1.1 Project staffing <b>forecasts</b> are reflected in organizational <b>staffing plans</b>.</p> <p>3.1.2 Project <b>staffing needs</b> are agreed to as part of the project approval process.</p> <p>3.1.3 <b>Staff</b> are made available to projects as agreed.</p> <p>3.1.4 <b>Staffing plans</b> and <b>staff needs</b> are updated in response to changes in project plans or project results.</p> <p>3.1.5 <b>Staffing</b> inadequacies are identified and <b>addressed</b>.</p>	<p>a. <b>Adequate staffing</b> includes both quality and quantity such that each project can reasonably be expected to satisfy its success criteria. “Quality of staff” also means that a reasonable effort is made to assign the most-skilled staff to the organization’s most important projects.</p> <p>b. <b>Staff</b> may include full- and part-time assignments, and may include employees, consultants, or contracted services.</p> <p>c. <b>Forecasts</b> may be developed by an approach that is broadly-framed or highly-detailed. The approach may vary based on the nature of the product or service of the project, the organization’s risk tolerance, or other factors. Forecasts may be for an individual project, for projects in general, or for a portfolio or program.</p> <p>d. <b>Staffing plans</b> may be broadly-framed or highly-detailed.</p> <p>e. <b>Needs</b> should be identified according to a defined approach that is consistently applied. The approach may vary based on the nature of the product or service of the project, where the project is in the project life-cycle, whether the project is part of a program or project portfolio, the organization’s risk tolerance, or other factors.</p> <p>f. Inadequacies will normally be <b>addressed</b> through concrete action but may occasionally be addressed through a deliberate decision to do nothing.</p>

## aPRO-03 Element 2

3.2 Provide **adequate funding** for approved projects.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>3.2.1 <b>Forecasts</b> for project <b>funding</b> are included in <b>organizational budgets</b>.</p> <p>3.2.2 Expected project <b>funding needs</b> are agreed to as part of the project approval process.</p> <p>3.2.3 <b>Funding needs</b> are updated in response to changes in project plans or project results.</p> <p>3.2.4 <b>Funds</b> are made available to projects as agreed.</p> <p>3.2.5 <b>Funding</b> inadequacies are identified and <b>addressed</b>.</p>	<p>a. <b>Adequate funding</b> means that sufficient financial resources are provided such that the project can reasonably be expected to satisfy its success criteria. Funding is generally provided at different points during the project.</p> <p>b. <b>Funding</b> may include cash, internal budget allocations, authorization to purchase products and services from outside the organization, or external sources. When the project spans multiple budgeting periods, funding commitments should as well.</p> <p>c. <b>Organizational budgets</b> will generally be prepared annually. They may include estimates of funding needs for specific projects, program, or project portfolios, or they may include a lump sum allocation.</p>

## aPRO-03 Element 3

3.3 Provide **other necessary support** for approved projects.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>3.3.1 <b>Forecasts</b> of <b>other necessary support</b> needed by projects are included in organizational plans.</p> <p>3.3.2 <b>Other necessary support</b> needed by projects is agreed to as part of the project approval process.</p> <p>3.3.3 <b>Other necessary support</b> needed by projects is provided as agreed.</p> <p>3.3.4 <b>Other necessary support needs</b> are updated in response to changes in project plans or project results.</p> <p>3.3.5 Inadequacies in <b>other necessary support</b> are identified and <b>addressed</b>.</p>	<p>a. <b>Other necessary support</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocacy from senior management.</li><li>• Normal business functions not funded directly by the project such as accounting, information technology, facilities, legal services, human resource management, quality management, and procurement or purchasing.</li><li>• Supplies, equipment, and material.</li></ul> <p>For project-oriented organizations, other necessary support may also include sales, marketing, and business development. Other necessary support may be provided by staff and line units, or by specialized functions such as a Project Management Office (PMO).</p>

## aPRO-04 Develop Project Management Staff

**Unit Descriptor** This Unit defines the Elements required to develop project management staff. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in developing skills that can be applied on future projects.

### aPRO-04 Elements

- 4.1 Develop project managers.
- 4.2 Develop staff in project management support roles.

### aPRO-04 Element 1

- 4.1 Develop project managers.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>4.1.1 <b>Project manager selection criteria</b> are <b>documented, distributed,</b> and followed.</p> <p>4.1.2 <b>Knowledge and skill needs for project managers</b> are <b>documented</b> and <b>distributed.</b></p> <p>4.1.3 <b>Project managers</b> are evaluated against performance <b>metrics</b> that they can <b>influence.</b></p> <p>4.1.4 Good <b>project manager</b> performance is <b>recognized,</b> and poor performance is <b>addressed.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Project manager</b> may be a full- or part-time role, and the individual fulfilling that role may not have the title of project manager. The title of the person fulfilling the role may be program manager, project lead, project engineer, or another title. Project managers may be employees or contractors.</li> <li>b. <b>Project manager selection criteria</b> may include knowledge, skills, experience, and personal attributes. They may vary by type or complexity of project, and may include hiring criteria as well as appointment and promotion criteria.</li> <li>c. <b>Documented</b> means that the information is available electronically or on paper. Information may be documented without being distributed.</li> <li>d. <b>Distributed</b> means that information is proactively disseminated to and accessible by decision-makers and others within the organization when and as needed.</li> <li>e. <b>Knowledge and skill needs</b> may relate to project management, general management, or the product or service of the project. They may include team building, negotiation, estimating, scheduling, problem-solving, decision-making, tool usage, or other topics. They may include consideration of future needs and may be broadly-framed or highly-detailed.</li> <li>f. <b>Metrics</b> would generally include project management success criteria, and may also include other measures such as support for staff development. Metrics may defined within the project or as part of the organization's overall staff evaluation process.</li> <li>g. <b>Influence</b> means that the project manager has the resources or the authority to directly affect performance against the metrics.</li> <li>h. <b>Recognition</b> may include promotions, performance bonuses, opportunities for personal or professional growth, advancement within a defined career path, public acknowledgement, funding for conferences, and support for external certifications.</li> <li>i. Poor performance will normally be <b>addressed</b> through concrete action but may occasionally be addressed through a deliberate decision to do nothing. Concrete actions may include training, coaching, mentoring, or other personal development opportunities as well as reduced responsibility, demotion, or firing.</li> </ul>

**aPRO-04 Element 2**

4.2 Develop staff in **project management support roles**.

<b>Performance Criteria</b>	<b>Explanatory Statements</b>
<p>4.2.1 <b>Knowledge and skill needs for project management support roles are documented and distributed.</b></p> <p>4.2.2 Individuals in <b>project management support roles</b> are evaluated against performance <b>metrics</b> that they can <b>influence</b>.</p> <p>4.2.3 Good performance in <b>project management support roles</b> is <b>recognized</b>, and poor performance is <b>addressed</b>.</p>	<p>a. <b>Project management support roles</b> may include sponsor, manager of project managers, scheduler, cost engineer, quality assurance manager, financial analyst, procurement manager, change advocate, team lead, project controls administrator, or other roles and titles. They may be located in a specialized unit such as a Project Management Office (PMO) or spread throughout the organization. Individuals in project management support roles will typically be employees, and may be full- or part-time. Development of particular roles may be vital to success in certain application areas. For example, the sponsor role is often vital to the success of an Information Technology (IT) organization.</p>

## aPRO-05 Ensure a Reliable Framework for Project Management

**Unit Descriptor** This Unit defines the Elements required to ensure a reliable framework for project management. It includes the Performance Criteria required to demonstrate competent organizational performance in defining and implementing effective project management methods.

### aPRO-05 Elements

- 5.1 Shape and sustain project management practices.
- 5.2 Shape and sustain project life-cycle definitions.

### aPRO-05 Element 1

- 5.1 Shape and sustain **project management practices**.

Performance Criteria	Explanatory Statements
<p>5.1.1 <b>Project management practices</b> are defined for each major <b>type of product or service</b>.</p> <p>5.1.2 <b>Project management practices</b> are <b>documented</b>, followed, and distributed to <b>pertinent stakeholders</b>.</p> <p>5.1.3 <b>Project management practices</b> are reviewed regularly, and improvement opportunities as well as deficiencies are identified and <b>addressed</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Project management practices</b> include the policies, responsibilities, methods, approaches, techniques, procedures, and processes for planning, organizing, staffing, directing, leading, monitoring, and controlling project work. Project management practices may be developed internally or derived from industry standards, published best practices, or other sources.</li> <li>b. <b>Type of product or service</b> recognizes that practices used in different application areas (e.g., new product development, construction, organizational change) may not always be effective in another.</li> <li>b. <b>Documented</b> means that the information is available electronically or on paper. Information may be documented without being distributed.</li> <li>d. <b>Distributed</b> means that information is proactively disseminated to and accessible by decision-makers and others within the organization when and as needed.</li> <li>c. <b>Stakeholders</b> include those whose interests may be affected by actions of the organization, and they may be internal or external to the organization. Internal stakeholders may include stock holders, executive management, department heads, project managers, project team members, and others. External stakeholders may include clients, customers, vendors, suppliers, elected officials, government regulators, media representatives, the general public, and others. Stakeholders may support a project or oppose it.</li> <li>d. The <b>pertinence</b> of a stakeholder may be affected by the impact of the organization's actions on the stakeholder, by the impact of the stakeholder's actions on the organization, and by cultural or ethical considerations. Different stakeholders are pertinent in different situations.</li> <li>e. Deficiencies will normally be <b>addressed</b> through concrete action but may occasionally be addressed through a deliberate decision to do nothing.</li> </ul>

**aPRO-05 Element 2**

5.2 Shape and sustain **project life-cycle** definitions.

<b>Performance Criteria</b>	<b>Explanatory Statements</b>
<p>5.2.1 <b>Project life-cycles</b> are defined for each major <b>type of product or service</b>.</p> <p>5.2.2 <b>Project life-cycle</b> definitions are <b>documented</b>, followed, and distributed to <b>pertinent stakeholders</b>.</p> <p>5.2.3 <b>Project life-cycle</b> go/no-go decisions are based on current, realistic business cases.</p> <p>5.2.4 <b>Project life-cycles</b> definitions are reviewed regularly, and improvement opportunities as well as deficiencies are identified and <b>addressed</b>.</p>	<p>a. <b>Project life-cycles</b> include the policies, responsibilities, methods, approaches, techniques, procedures, and processes involved in discovering, defining, and delivering the product of the project. A project life-cycle is a subset of a product life-cycle. Project life-cycles may be developed internally or derived from industry standards, published best practices, or other sources. When the organization has single-phase projects (e.g., delivery only as in the construction phase of a real estate development project), they should have interim checkpoints established in lieu of phase-end checkpoints.</p>

# Appendix A. Sample Element from the *aPRO* Assessor Guide (Informative)

The following material is an extract from the *aPRO* Assessor Guide. This material is included here to illustrate the structure and detail of that document. The *aPRO* Assessor Guide is a key tool used by *asapm* to ensure validity and reliability in recommendations for certification.

<b><i>aPRO</i>-01 Align Projects with Organizational Strategy</b>	
<b><i>aPRO</i>-01 Element 2</b>	
1.2	Manage the organization's <b>overall portfolio of projects</b> .
<b>Performance Criteria</b>	
1.2.1	<b>Project selection criteria</b> and <b>project prioritization criteria</b> are derived from the current <b>strategic direction, documented</b> , and used.
1.2.2	<b>Guidance for maintaining balance</b> within the <b>overall portfolio of projects</b> is derived from the current <b>strategic direction, documented</b> and applied.
1.2.3	Revisions to the organization's <b>overall portfolio of projects</b> are <b>documented</b> and <b>distributed</b> to <b>pertinent stakeholders</b> .

Possible Documentary Evidence	
List of active projects	Project request form
Project portfolio review meeting notes	Procedure for project approval
Project selection criteria	Project portfolio management policy
Project prioritization criteria	Project portfolio management procedures
Project portfolio management team meeting minutes	Correspondence regarding portfolio decisions

Role	Questions to Verify Understanding
<b>Executive</b>	How is a project's value to your organization determined?
	How is a new project approved?
	How was [ <i>insert randomly selected project name</i> ] approved?
	How is your overall portfolio of projects managed?
	How is information about the overall portfolio of projects disseminated?
<b>Manager</b>	How is a project's value to an organization determined?
	How is a new project approved?
	How was [ <i>insert randomly selected project name</i> ] approved?
	How is your overall portfolio of projects managed?
	How is information about the overall portfolio of projects disseminated?
<b>Project Manager</b>	How does(do) your current project(s) relate to the organization's strategic direction?
	If you are managing multiple projects, which is most important and why?

# Appendix B

## *aPRO* Development Team

### (Informative)

#### Core Team

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