

November 2021

IRM/BMP/ITA/CM – Department of State

Evolve IDIQ

J-6 Attachment

Standard Quality Assurance

Surveillance Plan

**Revision Log**

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**Table of Contents**

[1. Introduction 1](#_Toc86704349)

[1.1 Purpose 1](#_Toc86704350)

[1.2 Performance Management Approach 1](#_Toc86704351)

[1.3 Performance Management Strategy 1](#_Toc86704352)

[2. Roles and Responsibilities 2](#_Toc86704353)

[2.1 Contracting Officer 2](#_Toc86704354)

[2.2 Contracting Officer’s Representative 2](#_Toc86704355)

[2.3 Government Technical Monitor (CFR Title 48, Chapter 6, Subpart 642.271(a)) 2](#_Toc86704356)

[3. Identification of Required Performance Requirements 2](#_Toc86704357)

[4. Surveillance Methods to Monitor Performance 2](#_Toc86704358)

[4.1 Random Monitoring 2](#_Toc86704359)

[4.2 100% Inspection (Complete and Full Review) 3](#_Toc86704360)

[4.3 Periodic Inspection (Complete and Full Review) 3](#_Toc86704361)

[4.4 Customer Satisfaction Feedback 3](#_Toc86704362)

[4.5 Audits 4](#_Toc86704363)

[4.6 Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) 4](#_Toc86704364)

[4.7 Performance Requirement Monitoring 4](#_Toc86704365)

[5. Quality Assurance Documentation 4](#_Toc86704366)

[5.1 The Performance Management Feedback Loop 4](#_Toc86704367)

[5.2 Monitoring Forms 4](#_Toc86704368)

[6. Analysis of Quality Assurance Monitoring Results 4](#_Toc86704369)

[6.1 Determining Performance 4](#_Toc86704370)

[6.2 Quarterly Reporting 5](#_Toc86704371)

[6.3 Reviews and Resolution 5](#_Toc86704372)

# Introduction

This Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) sets forth the procedures and guidelines the Department of State (hereafter referred to as “DOS” or “Department”) Bureau of Information Resource Management, Budget Management and Planning Directorate, Office of Information Technology and Acquisitions, Contract Management Division (IRM/BMP/ITA/CM) will use in ensuring the required performance targets are achieved by the Contractor.

## Purpose

The purpose of the QASP is to describe the systematic methods used to monitor performance and to identify the required documentation and the resources to be employed. The QASP provides a means to evaluate whether the Contractor is meeting the contract requirements and performance requirements identified in the Evolve IDIQ Task Orders (TOs).

This QASP defines the roles and responsibilities of all members, defines the methodologies used to monitor and evaluate the Contractor’s performance, describes quality assurance documentation requirements, and describes the analysis of quality assurance monitoring results. It is intended that the QASP and the Contractor’s Quality Control Plan (QCP) complement one another to achieve an equitable and effective oversight and monitoring partnership. Further, it is intended that once the Contractor’s QCP is approved, the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) will measure the Contractor against the QCP.

## Background

IRM/BMP/ITA was formed as part of the re-organization within the Directorate for Business Management and Planning (BMP) which was implemented in October 2020. The organizational matrix of ITA is comprised of four divisions, including the Contract Management Division (CM) and the Vendor Performance Management (VPM) Division, established to meet the Department objectives as outlined in the 2018 IT Acquisition Reform Strategy. The second goal of this reform strategy is to increase in efficiency and visibility of the IT acquisitions lifecycle process. VPM will support CM to monitor and report Contractors’ performances in efforts to ensure the accountability, reporting and transparency across the procurement and acquisition portfolios.

## Performance Management Strategy

The Government will perform surveillance on the contract in accordance with this QASP but reserves the right to monitor the contract in any manner necessary, at any times necessary, and at all locations necessary to ensure that the rendered services conform to contract requirements.

Performance management depends on developing a capability to review and analyze information generated through performance assessment. The ability to make decisions based on the analysis of performance data is the cornerstone of performance management; this analysis yields information that indicates whether acceptable performance is being achieved by the contractor(s).

## Performance Management Approach

The Contractor is responsible for the quality of all work performed and measures quality through the Contractor’s own approved QCP. The IRM/BMP/ITA/CM representative(s) will monitor performance and review performance reports furnished by the Contractor to determine how the Contractor is performing against the contract requirements and performance requirements identified in the Evolve IDIQ TOs. The Contractor will be responsible to make required changes in process methods and practices to enable successful performance. In order to facilitate reporting and analysis, the Contractor will be required to input data into government systems. During the Transition-In period, IRM/BMP/ITA/CM expects to work collaboratively with the Contractor(s) to ensure that their QCP complements IRM/BMP/ITA/CMs QASP.

IRM/BMP/ITA/CM views the QCP and QASP as living documents that matures as necessary in accordance with the delivery of the TO requirements and industry standards. IRM/BMP/ITA/CM considers QCP outputs and results as in-scope for its QASP activities. IRM/BMP/ITA/CM will be responsible for the maintenance of the QASP. Nothing in this QASP takes precedence over applicable statutes or regulations, to include, but not limited to:  IDIQ contract clauses, terms, and conditions; Task Order clauses, terms, and conditions; and regulatory (e.g., FAR, Department of State Acquisition Regulation [DOSAR]) clauses, terms, and conditions applicable to this contract, regardless of whether such clauses were properly or improperly included in or excluded from the contract.

# Roles and Responsibilities

Each role has defined responsibilities within the process. Roles may be filled by one or many resources. Roles and responsibilities during the process are subject to change depending on activity, resource availability, and schedule.

## Contracting Officer

The Contracting Officer (CO) is responsibilities are to monitor for compliance, the administration and for resolution of any differences between the observations documented by the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) the Evolve Program Manager (PM), and the Contractor. The CO will designate an IRM/BMP/ITA/CM COR, at the request of the Evolve Program Manager, as the authority for performance management.

## Contracting Officer’s Representative

The Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) is designated by the CO in writing to act as his or her authorized representative to assist in administration of the contract. COR limitations are contained in the written appointment letter. The COR is responsible for technical administration of the contract and ensures proper surveillance of the Contractor’s performance. The COR is not empowered to make any contractual commitments or to authorize any contractual changes on DOS’ behalf. Any changes that the Contractor deems may affect price, terms, or conditions shall be referred to the CO for action. The COR will have the responsibility for completing QASP monitoring forms (See Section 5.2 Monitoring Forms) used to document the inspection and evaluation of the contractor’s work performance.

## Government Technical Monitor (CFR Title 48, Chapter 6, Subpart 642.271(a))

The Government Technical Monitor (GTM) is designated in writing by the CO, as identified by IRM/BMP/ITA/CM to assist the COR in monitoring a Contractor’s performance. GTMs may be appointed to provide technical monitoring, advice, and assistance to aid the COR in the monitoring and evaluation of a Contractor’s performance.

# Identification of Required Performance Requirements

The performance requirements are included in Evolve IDIQ TOs. The performance requirements are structured to allow the Contractor to manage how the work is performed. It is expected that the Contractor’s QCP (to be reviewed and approved by DOS) will provide further detail to describe how it will achieve the performance targets defined in the Evolve IDIQ TOs’ Performance Requirements Summary.

# Surveillance Methods to Monitor Performance

To minimize the performance management burden, simplified surveillance methods shall be used by the Department to evaluate Contractor performance when appropriate.

DOS expects to use the following methods of surveillance:

## Random Monitoring

Random Monitoring is to be performed by the COR, GTM or COR designated inspector(s). This may be project based, by subject matter area, etc. This may be on-site at Contractor’s facility(s). This may occur without prior warning to the Contractor (i.e., surprise monitoring). DOS and the Contractor shall collaborate to create, maintain, and continually enhance agreed upon Quality Assurance Monitoring Forms to document the results of Random Monitoring inspections.

Examples of Random Monitoring: Penetration Testing, Help Desk Call Center Call Review (Live or Recorded calls)

## 100% Inspection (Complete and Full Review)

100% Inspection is to be performed by the COR or COR designated inspector(s) and may include the CO when necessary. 100% Inspections may be project based, by subject matter area, etc. It is intended that deliverable items will comprise this surveillance category. In order to maintain appropriate oversight and management of contractual items, it is expected that DOS, or its designated inspector(s), and the Contractor will review each deliverable in a timely manner after the required delivery date of each deliverable. DOS and the Contractor will collaborate to agree upon an appropriate time to do this. This may be on-site or at Contractor’s facility(s). 100% Inspections may occur without advance warning to the Contractor (i.e., surprise inspection). DOS and the Contractor shall collaborate to create, maintain, and continually enhance agreed upon Quality Assurance Monitoring Forms to document the results of 100% Inspections.

Examples of 100% Inspection: Deliverable Review and Acceptance Testing

## Periodic Inspection (Complete and Full Review)

Periodic Inspection is to be performed by the COR or COR designated inspector(s). This may be project based, by subject matter area, etc. This may be on-site at a Contractor’s facility(s). This may occur without prior warning to the Contractor (i.e., surprise inspection); however, it is expected that DOS will conduct Periodic Inspections on a quarterly basis, with a set scope, agenda, and be done in collaboration with the Contractor. DOS and the Contractor shall collaborate to create, maintain, and continually enhance agreed upon Quality Assurance Monitoring Forms to document the results of Periodic Inspections.

Examples of Periodic Inspection: Disaster Recovery Inspection and Periodic Program Review

## Self-Inspection

To achieve consistent, high quality to meet the requirements of the Evolve IDIQ TOs, the Contractor will utilize a Self-Inspection/peer review process approved by the COR. This process establishes tools and techniques, defines required processes and activities, and who is responsible for activities at each phase of the process. Throughout the process, the Contractor Project/Program Manager works with the IRM/BMP/ITA COR to agree upon quality plans, comments and corrective actions to provide transparency into the process, status, and results.

## Customer Satisfaction Feedback

The Contractor may be expected to establish and maintain professional communication between its employees and the customer. The primary objective of this communication is customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is the most significant external indicator of the success and effectiveness of all services provided to end users and can be measured through formal customer satisfaction surveys or from random customer feedback (i.e., compliments or complaints). Employing DOS feedback is also important and can be measured through formal customer satisfaction surveys or from random customer feedback (i.e., compliments or complaints).

Examples of Customer Satisfaction Feedback: Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey, Event-Driven Customer Satisfaction Query

## Audits

This method is performed by DOS or by an independent third party that is independent of the Contractor and DOS. Audits are typically an evaluation of a work product or process to determine compliance with specifications, standards, contractual agreements, statutes, or other pre-established criteria.

Examples of Audits: Internal, External Third-Party (e.g., Office of Inspector General, Department of Labor, etc.)

## Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V)

This method is verification and validation performed by an individual or organization that is technically, managerially, and financially independent of the Agency and is used to determine that the work product delivered by the Contractor matches the content requirement in the contract.

## Performance Requirement Monitoring

Performance requirements identify actual performance against a target. When using performance requirements as a method of surveillance, the Contractor is responsible to report on its own performance based on the measurements within the contract. ITA/CM will work with the Contractor, with recommendations from ITA/VPM to develop performance metrics that will be monitored over the life of the contract, unless otherwise determined. The Contractor’s performance data will be submitted to ITA/VPM and the ITA/CM COR for reporting in ITA’s vendor performance tracking tool. ITA/VPM will develop reports based on Contractor’s input and feedback from the ITA/CM CORs. ITA/CM CORs will document surveillance activities on Contractor provided deliverables, performance metrics and periodic activity reports. The ITA/VPM will analyze the data and provide its findings to IRM/BMP/ITA/CM. ITA/VPM and the COR will retain performance records as required by IRM/BMP/ITA/CM Director.

# Quality Assurance Documentation

## The Performance Management Feedback Loop

The performance management feedback loop begins with the communication of expected outcomes. Performance targets are expressed in the Evolve IDIQ TOs and assessed using the requirements and performance monitoring techniques, activities, processes and procedures detailed in the Contractor QCP, and then further assessed via the details provided in this QASP.

## Monitoring Forms

DOS’ QA surveillance, accomplished by the COR (or other approved parties), will be reported using the monitoring forms. A suggested example is in Exhibit 1. The forms, when completed, will document the assessment of the Contractor’s performance under the contract to ensure that the required outcomes are being achieved.

DOS will retain a copy of all completed QA monitoring forms.

# Quality Assurance Monitoring Results

## Determining Performance

DOS shall use the monitoring methods cited in this QASP, and as reflected in the approved QCP, to determine whether the performance targets have been met. If the Contractor has not met the target, it may be asked to develop a Corrective Action Plan to show how and by what date it intends to bring performance up to the required target.

## Quarterly Reporting

At the end of each quarter, IRM/BMP/ITA/VPM will prepare a written report for the CO, the COR, and the IRM/BMP/ITA/CM Director, that summarizes the overall results of the quality assurance surveillance of the Contractor’s performance. This written report will become part of the QA documentation. It will enable the Agency to demonstrate whether the Contractor is meeting the performance targets.

## Reviews and Resolution

The CO, Evolve Program Manager, and/or COR may require the Contractor’s Program Manager, or a designated alternate, to meet with other DOS personnel as deemed necessary to discuss performance evaluation. The CO and/or COR (as necessary) will define a frequency of in-depth reviews with the Contractor, however, if the need arises, the Contractor will meet with the CO and/or COR (as necessary) as often as required or per the Contractor’s request. The agenda of the reviews may include:

* Performance assessment data and trend analysis
* Issues and concerns of both parties
* Projected outlook for upcoming months and progress against expected trends, including a corrective action plan analysis
* Recommendations for improved efficiency and/or effectiveness
* Issues arising from the performance monitoring processes
* Adjustments to QCP and/or QASP documentation, activities, etc.

The CO and/or COR must coordinate and communicate with the Contractor to resolve issues and concerns regarding marginal or unacceptable performance.

The CO and/or COR and Contractor should jointly formulate tactical and long-term courses of action. Decisions regarding changes to performance requirements and/or targets should be clearly documented. Changes to performance requirements and/or targets or procedures will be bilaterally incorporated as a contract modification.

**Exhibit 1 – Quality Assurance Monitoring Form Template**

**COR or Designated Appointee: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**DELIVERABLE / PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT:**

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**SURVEY PERIOD:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SURVEILLANCE METHOD (Check):**

 Random Monitoring  100% Inspection  Audit

 Customer Satisfaction Feedback  Periodic Inspection

 Independent Verification and Validation  Performance Requirement Monitoring

**LEVEL OF SURVEILLANCE (Check):**

 Monthly  Quarterly  As needed  Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**Service Provider’s Performance (Check):**  Meets Requirements

 Does Not Meet Standards

**Narrative of Performance During Survey Period:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN REQUIRED:**

Yes No

If yes, please provide detail: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PREPARED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature – Contracting Officer’s Representative

**AGREED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature – Contractor Account Representative