

PARS II Process Document

SUBMITTING AND PROCESSING EMAIL AS OFFICIAL PROJECT ACTION APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to describe the process and documentation requirements for submitting and processing approvals of project actions (i.e. On Hold Memo, Critical Decision Approval Memo, FPD Designation Memo, etc.) in PARS II via electronic signature.

SCOPE

This process applies to all Acquisition Executives and other approving officials wishing to substitute ink-and-paper approval of project action with electronic notification of the approval action through electronic mail (email) message.

PROCESS DESCRIPTION AND REQUIREMENTS

In an effort to streamline the project action approval process and minimize the time lag in updating PARS II, electronic messages (emails) are now being accepted as official approval documentation by the Office of Acquisition and Project Management (OAPM) for the purpose of updating project records in PARS II. Acceptance, however, requires the electronic message to be digitally signed by the approving official and must contain all required documentation and information to ensure the validity, completeness, auditability, and certainty of the project action approval. **This will ensure adherence to the Deputy Secretary's Memorandum for Distribution on Improving Capital Asset Project Documentation dated April 22, 2013 that states: "One area that requires further attention is documenting project baselines, changes, and results. The GAO [Government Accountability Office] cited numerous project documentation deficiencies in recent reports ...".** The process outlined below implements needed definitions and controls that will make electronic approvals of official memorandums meet project documentation requirements.

Documentation Requirements

There are no defined or directed documentation requirements that are associated with submitting and processing email messages as official project action approval documentation. As such, all requirements applicable to traditional ink-and-paper approvals are also applicable to electronic approvals. All documentation and information required by DOE Order 413.3B for individual project action approvals must be included with the electronic approval of such action. This documentation and information may be submitted as an additional file attachment, or inserted in the body of the email message containing the electronic approval.

Electronic Signature Requirements

All electronic messages containing approval of a specific project action must be digitally signed by the Acquisition Executive (AE), Senior Acquisition Executive (SAE), or other specific approving official using a DOE Entrust account – a digital identity authentication program. The original approval email with a record of the digital signature must be received by OAPM in order to accept and process such email as official approval documentation.

PROCESS

- An electronic message (email) containing all required information applicable to a specific project action/decision is prepared for approval.
 - The information applicable to a project action/decision can reside within the body of the email or be contained in an attachment to the email. The key is to ensure that ALL information required by DOE O 413.3B for a project action/decision is available within a single email message (including all relevant attachments).
- The approving official applies Digital Signature to the prepared email, thus affirming the decision.
 - Currently, only DOE users with an active Entrust Account are able to apply Digital Signature to the email.
 - The approving official must be the one to apply the Digital Signature to an email from their DOE Outlook Mailbox.
- The approving official sends the email to all interested parties, **including the Project Analyst from DOE Office of Acquisition and Project Management (OAPM) assigned to a project.**
 - **NOTE:** If the email from the approving official fails to reach OAPM, any interested party included on the distribution list for that email (FPD, Program Office, etc.) can forward the digitally signed email as an electronic attachment to an OAPM Analyst assigned to the project as follows:
 - *Start new Outlook mail message*
 - *Enter desired recipients of the message in the TO and CC lines*
 - *Drag-and-drop original digitally-signed email into the body of a new message*
 - *The digitally signed email is now an attachment that can be sent without loss of digital signature and attached to PARS II record*
 - Users unfamiliar with the process of “forwarding” digitally-signed email should contact PARS II Support at parsiisupportapm@hq.doe.gov for assistance.
- Once OAPM Analyst receives and verifies email to contain all necessary information for documenting project action in PARS II, the following updates are performed either by the OAPM Analyst or OAPM PARS II Support Staff:
 - Update the PARS II project record accordingly, based on the approval action received.
 - Attach digitally-signed email, including original AE digital signature to PARS II as a MS Outlook .MSG file attachment
 - Notify AE and all others in the TO and CC lines of email that PARS II update is complete.

Important Considerations and Exceptions:

Office of Science Project Record Update Exception: Project actions/decisions approved by the Office of Science will be updated in PARS II by the FPD assigned to the project and verified by OAPM Analyst. FPD must still upload digitally-signed email from Acquisition Executive as a file attachment to PARS II project record.

Incomplete Documentation/Missing Information: PARS II project record will not reflect any updates if email is deemed to be missing key documentation and/or information required by the DOE Order 413.3B. Missing documentation can be re-submitted as a physical document or electronically, but must contain all necessary approval signatures or be digitally signed by the AE.