



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Defense Contract Management Agency

INSTRUCTION

Agency Suggestion Program

Corporate Support Directorate
OPR: DCMA-DSI

DCMA-INST 592
May 29, 2014

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction:

a. Reissues, updates, and renames DCMA Instruction (DCMA-INST 592), “Continuous Improvement Idea Identification (CIII)” (Reference (a)).

b. Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides guidance for the implementation of the Agency Suggestion Program in compliance with paragraph 6.i. of DoD Directive 5105.64, “Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA)” (Reference (b)).

2. APPLICABILITY. This Instruction applies to all DCMA activities.

3. MANAGERS’ INTERNAL CONTROL PROGRAM. In accordance with the DCMA-INST 710, “Managers’ Internal Control Program” (Reference (c)), this Instruction is subject to evaluation and testing. The process flowchart is located at Appendix A.

4. RELEASABILITY – UNLIMITED. This Instruction is approved for public release.

5. PLAS CODE. Employees shall charge effort to submit, review, and respond to suggestions to the process proposed to be improved.

6. POLICY RESOURCE WEB PAGE. <https://home.dcma.mil/policy/592r>

7. EFFECTIVE DATE. By order of the Director, DCMA, this Instruction is effective May 29, 2014, and all applicable activities shall be fully compliant within 60 days from this date.

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Executive Director
Corporate Support

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REFERENCES

- (a) DCMA-INST 592, "Continuous Improvement Ideas Identification (CIII)," July 2010 (hereby canceled)
- (b) DoD Directive 5105.64, "Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA)," January 10, 2013
- (c) DCMA-INST 710, "Managers' Internal Control Program," September 12, 2011
- (d) DoD Instruction 1400.25-V451, "DoD Civilian Personnel Management," Volume 451, "Awards," November 4, 2013
- (e) DCMA-INST 613, "Recognition and Awards Program," December 2005
- (f) DCMA-INST 591, "Continuous Process Improvement/Lean Six Sigma (CPI/LSS) Program," April 22, 2013
- (g) DCMA Memorandum, "DCMA Corporate Governance Structure," January 13, 2012

CHAPTER 1

POLICY

1.1. SUGGESTION PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVE. The warfighter, DoD, DCMA workforce, our customers, and ultimately the American taxpayer will all benefit from a robust Agency suggestion program that couples prolific employee suggestions with conscientious rigor in review and implementation of beneficial suggestions. The objective of the Agency Suggestion Program is to provide a forum for submission and review of suggestions for the betterment of the Agency. Its express purpose is to encourage Agency personnel at all levels to submit any ideas or suggestions they believe will actively enhance or contribute to DCMA's affordability, efficiency, effectiveness, and/or work environment, to include those improvement suggestions which may result in group or individual awards pursuant to paragraph 7 of Volume 451, "Awards," of DoD Instruction 1400.25-V451, "DoD Civilian Personnel Management" (Reference (d)).

1.2. POLICY.

1.2.1. Suggestion Program Implementation. DCMA will continuously pursue managing and sustaining an effective suggestion program as an essential platform for receiving and evaluating ideas and beneficial suggestions to facilitate improving upon our administrative and operating effectiveness across the full spectrum of the Agency.

1.2.2. Timely Review. To demonstrate leadership commitment towards improving Agency stewardship, the Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) Office shall provide formal written acknowledgment to the individual contributor within 7 calendar days of suggestion being submitted. Upon evaluation and determination on pursuing whole or in part, the Component Administrator shall provide written formal response of findings and fully substantiated determination on future action to the suggester within 30 calendar days of suggestion being submitted.

1.2.3. Capturing and Reporting Results. To sustain a robust suggestion program, the Agency will capture and publicize determinations made on all suggestions and the results achieved as an outcome of successfully implemented suggestions. These results will be documented and maintained in an automated and accessible manner for purposes of knowledge sharing and historical reference. The system that currently facilitates this open exchange of information is managed within the Agency's eTools. For reference, the actual software program and database has historically been known by its eTool program name: the Continuous Improvement Ideas Identification System (CIIS). (**NOTE:** Procedures for retrieving reports of previously submitted suggestions are located on the resource page for this Instruction.)

1.2.4. Savings. Components will typically be permitted to retain savings and other resourcing benefits generated by implementing beneficial employee suggestions, unless explicitly directed to meet efficiency targets in accordance with Agency guidance.

1.2.5. Recognition and Awards. Recognizing the implementation of beneficial suggestions is an essential element of encouraging and publicizing the extension of an improvement-oriented culture in the Agency. Components that benefit from implementing beneficial suggestions shall establish a recognition and reward program to highlight new ideas, encourage innovation and engagement among the workforce, and to demonstrate leadership commitment towards improving Agency stewardship. Awards shall be in compliance with DCMA-INST 613, “Recognition and Awards” (Reference (e)).

CHAPTER 2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. DIRECTOR, DCMA. The Director, DCMA requires a forum for submission and review of suggestions for the betterment of the Agency. To this end, the Director has delegated to the Executive Director, Corporate Support (DS) the responsibility to establish, oversee, and implement the Suggestion Program.

2.2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SUPPORT (DS). The Executive Director, DS shall:

2.2.1. Establish and oversee implementation of the Agency Suggestion Program and provide support to Components as they review and respond to suggestions.

2.2.2. Assign the Director, CPI Office (DSI) to develop, implement, and manage the Agency Suggestion Program.

2.3. DIRECTOR, CPI OFFICE (DSI). The Director, DSI, under the authority, direction, and control of the Executive Director, DS, shall:

2.3.1. Develop and implement guidance, procedures, and performance metrics for the Agency Suggestion Program.

2.3.2. Provide local management and oversight of the Agency's central employee suggestion repository, database and knowledge sharing program.

2.3.3. Conduct periodic workshops to give Component Administrators the training they need to succeed in using and navigating the Suggestion Program.

2.4. COMPONENT HEADS. As the Director's principal advisors, Component Heads shall:

2.4.1. Oversee the review and evaluation of employee suggestions that fall within their purview and ensure that the formal acknowledgments are made and appropriate findings are uploaded in the required timeframes (reference paragraph 1.2.2.).

2.4.2. Designate a single individual who must receive all suggestions on behalf of their Component (the "Component Administrator") and post acknowledgement and findings accordingly.

2.4.3. Maintain personal cognizance on suggestions received, assessments conducted, and findings provided to assure Component staff assigned to this effort are making a good-faith effort on appropriately addressing all suggestions and pursuing those determined lucrative either in whole or in part. Sustain adequate review of feedback being provided to enforce quality and sufficiency and to ensure responses consistently exhibit esprit de corps that would heighten confidence and participation in the program.

2.4.4. Act as the deciding official for all suggestions in their purview that are ultimately rejected.

2.4.5. Establish corresponding recognition and rewards/awards procedures to incentivize employees to continuously seek ideas that will enhance or contribute to DCMA's affordability, efficiency, effectiveness, and/or work environment.

2.4.6. Provide monthly status on the progress of suggestions in the stage of implementation and report on the results of those employed for on-going briefings to the appropriate DCMA governance panels and/or future council meetings.

2.5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT). The Executive Director, IT, shall support the Agency Suggestion Program by programming, funding, and providing technical support for the suggestion program (CIIS), to the extent resources are available.

2.6. REVIEWERS. The Component Administrator and the Component's subject matter expert (SME) work together to review suggestions and craft formal responses. For the purposes of this Instruction, they are referred to collectively as Reviewers. Component Administrators shall ensure timely review, defined in paragraph 1.2.2., is accomplished for all suggestions received by their component. Component Administrators will coordinate with the appropriate SME(s) to complete evaluation of assigned suggestions, draft responses, vet through their Component, and upload their Component's formal response to the suggestion.

2.6.1. Component Administrators. Once assigned by the Component Head, Component Administrators shall be the single receiver of suggestions and the Component's administrative point of contact for reporting on the entirety of the Component's actions. They shall be trained in the use of the suggestion program and the proper procedures for receiving, evaluating, and formally posting responses to employee suggestions in the system. Component Administrators shall assign suggestions to the appropriate SME(s), coordinate engagement amongst other Components if deemed prudent, facilitate SME progress, and upload formal response into system once SMEs have obtained Component leadership concurrence.

2.6.2. SMEs. Once assigned by a Component Administrator, SMEs shall evaluate to determine the feasibility and beneficial return of pursuing a suggestion either in whole or in part; draft formal findings; and obtain Component leadership concurrence on formal response prior to submitting to Component Administrator for upload into the system.

2.7. EMPLOYEES. To formally submit an idea or recommendation, employees shall utilize the Agency Suggestion Program eTool, DCMA's central repository and database for the coordination, completion, knowledge sharing, and archiving of all employee improvement suggestions and proposals.

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES

3.1. OVERVIEW. These procedures provide the framework for managing a successful suggestion program, and will help foster a CPI culture across all organizational levels of the Agency.

3.2. SUBMITTING AN IMPROVEMENT IDEA. Employees seeking formal review of an improvement idea or any type of suggestion they believe would benefit the Agency, shall use the “Agency Suggestion Box” (also known as CIIS) to submit their proposals. Employees seeking management review of notional Lean Six Sigma (LSS) project ideas may also use this system to submit their project proposals.

3.2.1. Accessing the Suggestion Program. The system can be accessed: (1) via the “Suggestion Box” Quick Links icon on the DCMA Home Page; (2) by clicking on the CIIS launch tile on the eTools Web page; or (3) at this Web address: <https://emini.dcmamilitary.com/CPI/index.cfm>. All of these avenues take the user directly to the CIIS Web page where they can submit an idea or evaluate workload (suggestions) that have been assigned to them to review.

3.2.2. Submitting an Idea. Logging a clear and concise submission is the best first step in moving a beneficial suggestion from thought to action. Suggesters shall thoroughly explain the problem as well as the recommendation and the anticipated intrinsic/extrinsic benefit(s) that will result. If adhered to, the following recommendations will facilitate clear and concise submissions:

3.2.2.1. Fill out the suggestion form completely.

3.2.2.2. Give the idea a short, descriptive title, such as “Improve the ‘XX’ Program,” “Reorganize Workload in the ‘XX’ Office,” or “Improve Performance Criterion in ‘PI####’.”

3.2.2.3. Under the field for “Your Idea,” describe the problem using specific examples (if possible), describe the recommended solution, and address the benefit of fixing the problem (e.g., estimated savings (time or funding), increased effectiveness and/or responsiveness to the Contract Management Office). Identify and submit what are considered problems even if there are no solutions to offer, as these may be considered good candidates for future LSS efforts.

3.2.2.4. Under the field for “Explanation,” give the Reviewer a deeper dive into the details. Like a good news reporter, be sure to describe “who, what, where, when and how much” (or how often).

3.2.2.5. Use the embedded spell check feature as needed. A character counter has also been provided.

3.2.2.6. If more space is needed, upload attachments that support your research and findings.

3.2.2.7. Click “Save as Draft,” “Submit” or “Reset” (cancel), when ready.

3.2.3. Receiving Responses. Once an idea has been entered into the CIIS, the suggester will receive a system-generated response on the date that the suggestion is submitted. No later than 7 days after the submission, suggester will receive an acknowledgment response indicating that the CPI Office has assigned the suggestion to a Component Administrator and another response within no later than 30 days of submission indicating that formal response has been posted.

3.2.3.1. Initial Acknowledgement. The suggestion program automatically sends an acknowledgement to the suggester (subject line: “Thank you for using CIII System” from eTools@dcma.mil). This acknowledgement includes the following information:

- Day, date, and time that the idea was submitted
- Process name, idea title, and idea description as entered
- Unique tracking identification number

NOTE: Suggesters should not respond to this e-mail address (eTools@dcma.mil) as this is a system account and is not monitored.

3.2.3.2. Acknowledgement that the Suggestion has been Assigned for Review. Once the CPI Office assigns the suggestion to a specific Component for review, the program automatically sends an acknowledgement to the suggester (subject line: “CIII System – The idea (ID #xxx) has been updated” from eTools@dcma.mil). This acknowledgement includes the following information:

- A full copy of the text from the initial acknowledgement
- Date that the idea was forwarded to the Reviewer for evaluation

NOTE: Suggesters and reviewers should not respond to this e-mail address (eTools@dcma.mil) as this is a system account and is not monitored.

3.2.3.3. Notification of Status (Interim or Final Disposition). All subsequent e-mails that the suggester receives from his idea are system-generated messages from the suggestion program relaying a response from the Reviewer. (Subject line: “CIII System – The idea (ID #xxx) has been updated,” from eTools@dcma.mil). This may be either an interim or final disposition of the suggestion. This e-mail includes the following information:

- A full copy of the text from the initial acknowledgement
- Status Designation (“Approved,” “Rejected,” etc.; see paragraph 3.3.2.1.)
- Reviewer’s written response

NOTE: Suggesters and reviewers should not respond to this e-mail address (eTools@dcma.mil) as this is a system account and is not monitored.

3.3. ASSIGNING AN IMPROVEMENT IDEA FOR REVIEW AND RESPONSE. DSI acts as Primary Administrator of the content of CIIS, conducting the initial review of the suggestion and determining which component has primary responsibility for the subject matter. The component is selected based on preponderance of responsibility for the problem area or concern being addressed in the submission. Once a Component is identified, the CPI Office assigns the suggestion to the designated Component Administrator.

3.4. REVIEWING AN IMPROVEMENT IDEA. Reviewers shall meet the timely review standards established under paragraph 1.2.2. in managing the formal review and response requirements of their CIII System (suggestion) workload.

3.4.1. Review Process. At a minimum, the assigned Component Administrator and their SME shall work together to:

3.4.1.1. Immediately determine whether the suggestion has been correctly assigned to their office for review, or if it should be reassigned (see paragraph 3.4.2.).

3.4.1.2. Conduct a thorough review of the entire content of the suggestion.

3.4.1.3. Contact the suggester, as a minimum, to verify what the idea/suggestion is and to obtain any additional information or clarification.

3.4.1.4. Perform adequate analysis (e.g., feasibility, cost-benefit) to determine the appropriate follow-on action for the suggestion.

3.4.1.5. Draft a formal response with detailed findings and substantiated determination on recommended action and vet it appropriately within their Component.

3.4.1.6. Post the Component-approved formal response within the suggestion program and assign a status accordingly (see paragraph 3.4.3.).

3.4.1.7. Click “Save” (to save the draft response without sending) or “Send Update” (to post the final response to the suggester), when ready.

3.4.2. Reassigning Responsibility for Review (if necessary). If the Reviewer determines that their Component is not responsible for the subject matter of the assigned suggestion, they shall immediately reassign the workload (suggestion) back to the Primary Administrator in the CPI Office, using the workload assignment feature in the suggestion program (CIIS). This must be done as early in the 30-calendar-day window as possible, so that the Component being reassigned the suggestion has ample time to acknowledge submission, analyze, and provide sufficient formal response. In cases where determining assignment is difficult or disputed, the Primary Administrator in the CPI Office shall present the suggestion to the Executive Secretary of the Project Proposal Evaluation Panel (PPEP), a subcommittee of the Operations Integration Panel, for formal determination and assignment at its next regularly scheduled meeting. If this

occurs, the suggester will be notified and the timeframe for answering the suggestion will be extended accordingly.

3.4.3. Response to User and Status Designation (Final Disposition). Final Disposition consists of two parts: The status designation for the idea and a formal explanation in the “Response to User” field.

3.4.3.1. Status Designation. Several standard responses are available within the suggestion program for assigning status to the suggestions. They are assigned to the suggestion using a dropdown menu within the suggestion record in the CIIS. The various dropdown options and their explanations are described in Table 1.

3.4.3.2. Response to User Field. There are four specific parts of a well-written response:

3.4.3.2.1. Narrative. This is the Reviewer’s assessment of the suggestion, which responds to the suggestion, explains why a particular status designation was made, and describes follow-on actions, if warranted.

3.4.3.2.2. Validation of Appropriate Vetting. The Reviewer shall provide a statement that this response was appropriately vetted within their DCMA Component (or other appropriate office of responsibility).

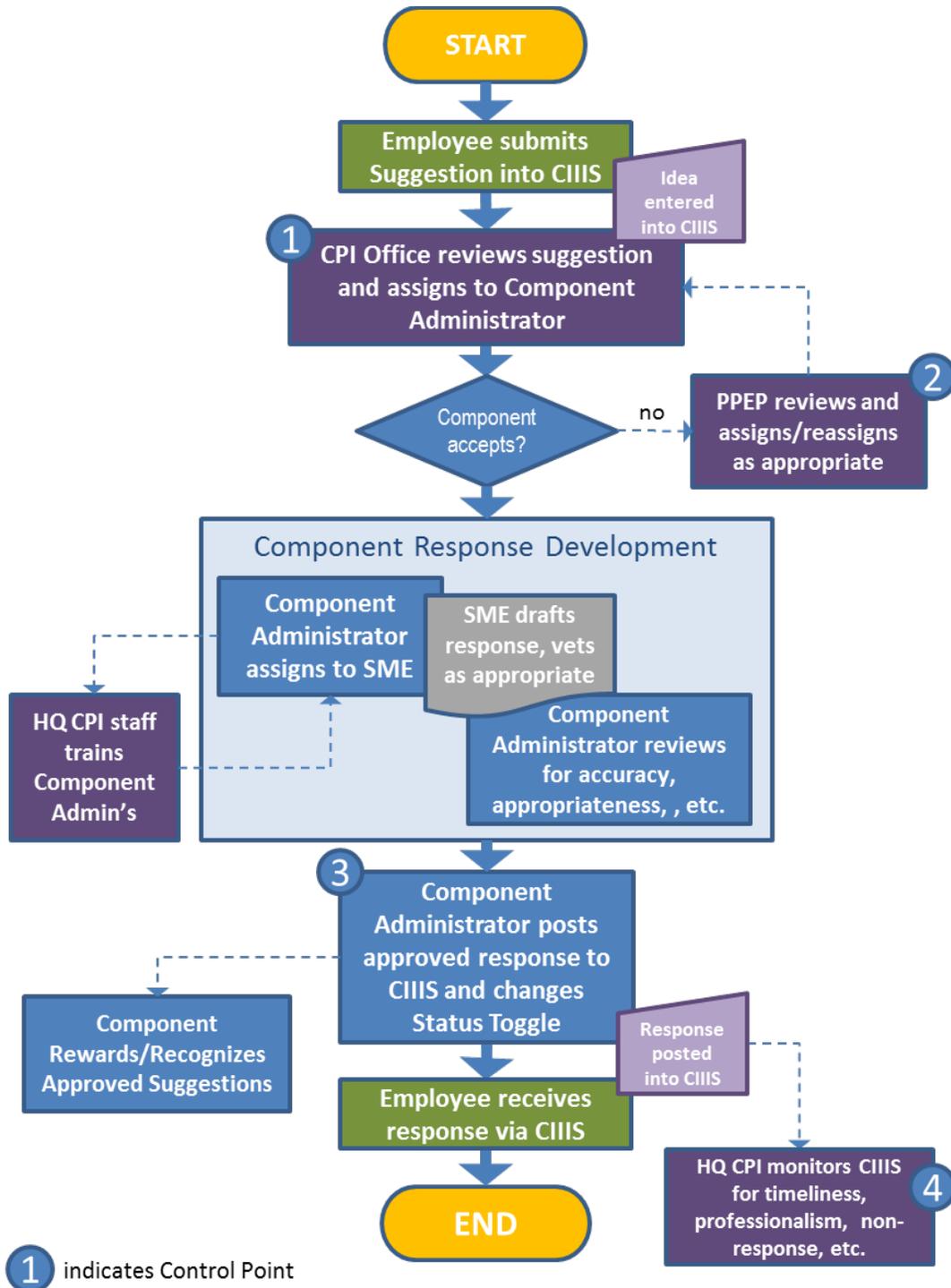
3.4.3.2.3. Thank You. Either at the beginning or at the end of the narrative in the Response to User field, the Reviewer shall insert a statement thanking the suggester **by name** for their suggestion.

3.4.3.2.4. Point of Contact. The narrative shall also provide the suggester with the name of a SME that he or she may contact to discuss their suggestion and the response further, if they wish.

Table 1. Standard Status Designations in the CIIS and How to Use Them

| CIIS Label | Explanation | Reviewer Instructions |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Open | This is the status of all new ideas. No action has been recorded. | As stated. (This is the label automatically assigned by the system once a suggestion is submitted.) |
| In Progress | This idea is being actively worked. | Reviewer shall indicate the planned timeframe and course of action in the "Response To User" field. When the review is complete, Reviewer should post the formal response in the "Response to User" field, and change the Status toggle to reflect the final status of the suggestion; i.e., "Approved JDI," "Rejected." |
| Approved JDI | Idea implemented as a Just Do It (JDI). | Reviewer shall indicate the planned timeframe and course of action in the "Response To User" field. Reviewer shall provide recognition/ reward as appropriate. |
| Approved RIE | Idea executed as a Rapid Improvement Event (RIE). | "Rapid Improvement Event" refers to a formal LSS project, as defined in DCMA-INST 591, "Continuous Process Improvement/Lean Six Sigma (CPI/LSS) Program" (Reference (f)). Reviewer shall indicate the planned timeframe and course of action in the "Response To User" field. Reviewer shall provide recognition/reward as appropriate. |
| Approved FUP | Idea incorporated using a Full up Project (FUP). | "Full Up Project" refers to a formal LSS Green Belt or Black Belt project, as defined in Reference (f). Reviewer shall indicate the planned timeframe and course of action in the "Response To User" field. Reviewer shall provide recognition/reward as appropriate. (See paragraph 1.2.5.) |
| Un-actionable | Idea contained insufficient actionable details. | Reviewer shall fully explain why the idea is considered "un-actionable" in the "Response To User" field. Reference the attempts made to contact the suggester for clarification, if applicable. For example, an idea can reasonably be considered un-actionable if the ability to implement the suggestion lies outside the Agency's ability to control or influence. |
| Closed | All work is complete for this idea. | Reviewers should only use this status for ideas that were either initiated or implemented in advance of the suggestion being made. If used, the Reviewer shall fully explain what actions were taken (or are in process) in the "Response To User" field. |
| Deferred | This idea has been deferred indefinitely. | Reviewer shall fully explain why possible action on the idea has been deferred in the "Response To User" field. An idea worthy of implementation can be reasonably deferred if the action should be more appropriately taken at some point in the future (for example, the current workload does not allow implementation, or if the suggestion should be best incorporated into a future software release, or new equipment purchase, etc.). |
| Rejected | This idea has been rejected. | Reviewer must fully explain why the idea was rejected in the "Response To User" field. Even a beneficial idea may be rejected if the level of effort required far outweighs the expected benefit. All rejected ideas must be fully coordinated through each applicable HQ Component and the deciding official (Component Head) identified. |
| Recalled | This idea has been recalled or retracted. | Reviewer shall reference the specific request made by the suggester to recall the idea in the "Response To User" field. |

APPENDIX A
PROCESS FLOWCHART



GLOSSARY

DEFINITIONS

Component. As defined in DCMA Memorandum, “DCMA Corporate Governance Structure” (Reference (g)), this is “a term used to describe each of the distinct organizational elements of DCMA (i.e., office, directorate) whose leader reports directly to the Director, DCMA.”

Component Administrator. Component Administrators are assigned by their Component Head to be the single administrative receiver of CIIS suggestions. They are trained in the use of the CIIS to receive, evaluate, reassign within their respective directorate, formally post final responses to employee suggestions in the system and change the suggestion status toggle. As such, it is their job to assign the suggestions to the correct SME within their organization for appropriate review and development of a response.

Component Head. As defined in Reference (g), this is “the head of a DCMA Headquarters organization (office or directorate) that reports directly to the Director, DCMA.”

eTool. An on-line DCMA automated tool, such as a database.

Operations Integration Panel. As defined in Reference (g), this is the Mission Support Panel that specifically “coordinates and vets processes and policy changes surrounding contract administration services, and exercises sanctioning authority for Integrated Process Teams and LSS initiatives.”

policy. A set of principles and associated guidelines to direct and limit DCMA actions in pursuit of objectives, operations, and plans. Establishes Agency-wide rules. Describes the “what,” “who,” and “why” of operations by defining roles and responsibilities.

procedures. A set of mandatory step-by-step instructions established to implement Agency policy. It describes the process that must be followed to achieve the desired outcome.

Reviewer. For the purposes of this instruction, the Component Administrator and the Component’s Subject Matter Expert (SME) are referred to collectively as Reviewers.

Subject Matter Expert. SME’s are knowledgeable in the subject matter of the suggestion being reviewed, and can evaluate and recommend to leadership whether the Agency should implement a specific suggestion. SME’s also draft the formal response back to the suggester, having vetted their response within their Component, as appropriate.

GLOSSARY

ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| CII | Continuous Improvement Ideas Identification |
| CIIS | Continuous Improvement Ideas Identification System |
| CPI | Continuous Process Improvement |
| DCMA-INST | DCMA Instruction |
| DS | DCMA, Corporate Support |
| DSI | DCMA, Corporate Support, Continuous Process Improvement Office |
| FUP | full-up project |
| IT | DCMA, Information Technology |
| JDI | just-do-it projects |
| LSS | Lean Six Sigma |
| OIP | Operations Integration Panel |
| OPR | office of primary responsibility |
| PLAS | Performance Labor and Accounting System |
| RIE | rapid improvement events |
| SME | subject matter expert |