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Issue Management Supporting Process

The purpose of Issue Management is to ensure the proper oversight and management of unanticipated or unplanned issues or actions that arise throughout the project lifecycle for which advanced planning is not possible. When an issue is identified, the following criteria should be used to help prioritize and identify impacts to the project. The analysis should consider impacts both if the issue is and is not resolved and/or impacts for various resolutions.

- Dollar impacts
- Schedule impacts
- Resource (personnel, facility and equipment) impacts
- Political/reputation/relationship impacts
- Additional risks or changes to existing risk status and impacts

An Issue Tracking System is one of the key tools in the Project Office. The system facilitates the **issue process** and has **specific features** necessary to capture and track issues and action items, and their resolution.

The basic elements of Issue Management are:

- **Issues.** An issue is defined as a statement of concern or need which is formally recorded and tracked via an Issues/Actions Management system.
- **Actions.** An action is an issue that is formally assigned resources (usually one person) to work toward eventual resolution.
- **Tasks.** A task is an extension of an action including multiple tasks (usually assigned to multiple people) whereby the sum of the sub- tasks equals the action.

Generally, issues can be any unplanned task needing resolution. Action items typically are associated with an issue and are specific tasks with assigned staff and due dates that relate to completing or resolving the issue.

Samples:

- [C-IV Consortium Issue Resolution Approach](#) (pdf)
- [CalWIN Issue Management Process](#) (pdf)
- [SAWS Process for Statewide/Policy Issues](#) (pdf)
- [SAWS Process for Consortia Level Issues](#) (pdf)
- [SAWS Standards for Consortia Issue Management](#) (pdf)

- [SAWS Issue Paper - One Page Summary](#) (pdf)
- [SAWS Issue Paper - Side by Side Comparison](#) (pdf)
- [SAWS Issue Paper - Options and Considerations](#) (pdf)
- [WDTIP Issue Management Process](#) (pdf)



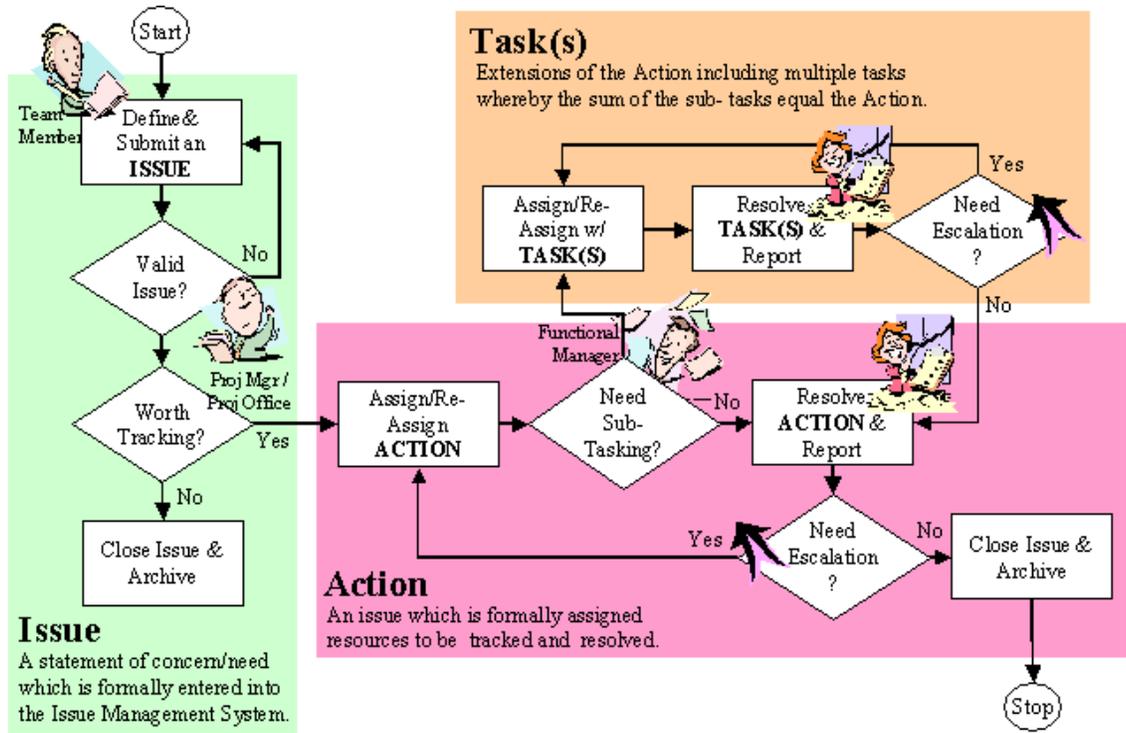
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Issue Management Process Diagram

[Issue Main](#)

The diagram below shows the relationship between issues, actions, and tasks, and is a generic process for managing issues and action items.




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Issue Management Tool Features

[Issue Main](#)

The following features are required of an [Issues/Actions Management System](#):

- **Formal Recording-** The Issues/Actions Management system must have a mechanism for formally recognizing an issue/action and recording it for disposition and tracking.
- **Validation of Issues-** Not all issues become actions worthy of formally recording and expending energy to track. Therefore, the Issues/Actions Management system must have a mechanism for review and validation of issues for either closure, or action.
- **Prioritizing-** The Issues/Actions Management system must have a mechanism for prioritizing issues/action. Priority levels should be selected in a manner that maximizes the ability to manage issues/actions to closure.
- **Security / Permissions-** The Issues/Actions Management system must be capable of establishing permissions and maintaining security on a need to know basis. This is particularly important when dealing with procurement issues where compromising of information could lead to legal consequences.
- **Custom Categories-** The Issues/Actions Management system must be flexible enough to allow for project-specific customization. While there are many aspects of issues/actions that are common to all projects, there are also unique needs for categorizing issues/actions by each individual project.
- **Custom Sorts / Filters-** The Issues/Actions Management system must be flexible enough to provide many unique sorting AND Filtering capabilities. Both features are essential.
- **Custom Reporting-** The Issues/Actions Management system must provide the ability to print reports. The exact type and style can be standardized to a great extent. However, the more flexible the reporting feature, the better.
- **Escalation of Issues-** The Issues/Actions Management system must accommodate the ability to escalate issues/actions that warrant high management attention.
- **Search / Find-** The Issues/Actions Management system must provide the ability to search and find issues/actions depending on keywords or phrases in the data fields. This is essential in recovering historical information or issues that are related.
- **Cross-Referencing-** The Issues/Actions Management system must have the ability to cross-reference issues with other project-related activities. Examples of this include cross-referencing with an RFP paragraph/contract number, or to a specific document.
- **Running History Log-** The Issues/Actions Management system must track incremental progress notes documented against an issue/action.
- **Final Resolution Log-** The Issues/Actions Management system must have a place where final resolution and closure of an issue/action is accessible. Unlike progress notes (which will change over time), the final resolution is the action/decision that closes the issue/action and states the agreements made between parties etc.
- **Purging & Archiving-** The Issues/Actions Management system must have the ability to permanently purge sensitive data (e.g. procurement data, contractor proprietary notes), and also archive issue/action information for future reference and lesson's learned.
- **Overdue Notification-** The Issues/Actions Management system must have a mechanism for proactively notifying users of an overdue issue/action (or an issue coming due). This is referred to as "push" technology because it occurs without prompting by the user.

