



Reply to  
Attention of:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
1100 COMMERCE STREET  
DALLAS, TEXAS 75242-0216

10 JUL 2007

CESWD-PDS-P

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Review Plan Approval for Brazos Island Harbor Feasibility Study

1. References:

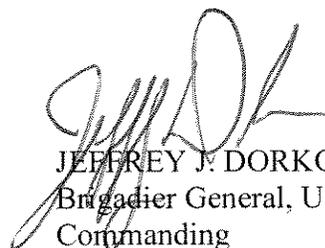
- a. EC 1105-2-408, 31 May 2005, subject: Peer Review of Decision Documents.
- b. Memorandum, CECW-CP, 30 March 2007, subject: Peer Review Process.

2. The enclosed Review Plan (Plan) for the Brazos Island Harbor Feasibility Study has been prepared in accordance with referenced guidance.

3. The Plan has been made available for public comment, and the comments received have been incorporated. It has been coordinated with the Deep Draft navigation Planning Center of Expertise of the South Atlantic Division which is the lead office to execute this Plan. The Plan does not include external peer review.

4. I hereby approve this Review Plan, which is subject to change as study circumstances require, consistent with study development under the Project Management Business Process. Subsequent revisions to this Plan or its execution will require new written approval from this office. For further information on this issue please contact Lanora Wright, CESWD-PDS-P, at (469) 487-7032.

Encl

  
JEFFREY J. DORKO  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

# **BRAZOS ISLAND HARBOR, TEXAS**

## **Project Review Plan Independent Technical Review and External Peer Review**

### **1. PURPOSE**

Pursuant to Engineering Circular (EC) 1105-2-408, “Peer Review of Decision Documents,” Office of Management and Budget’s “Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review,” and the May 30, 2007 memorandum from Major General Don Riley, USACE Director of Civil Works, a Project Review Plan (PRP) is being developed.

This Project Review Plan presents the process for independent technical review (ITR) and external peer review (EPR) that will be implemented as part of the Brazos Island Harbor (BIH) feasibility study. These processes are essential to improving the quality of the products that we produce.

### **2. APPLICABILITY**

The document provides the PRP for the BIH Channel Improvement Feasibility Study. It identifies the ITR and EPR process for all work conducted as part of the study, including in-house, non-Federal sponsor, and contract work efforts.

### **3. REFERENCES**

EC 1105-2-408 “Peer Review of Decision Documents” dated May 31, 2005  
ER 1105-2-100 “Planning Guidance Notebook,” dated April 2000  
Major General Riley Memorandum on Peer Review Process, dated May 30, 2007

### **4. GENERAL**

The Port of Brownsville is located on the south Texas coast near the US-Mexican border. The study area encompasses the entire Brazos Island Harbor and surrounding region. The entrance channel is located offshore of Cameron County, Texas, in the Gulf of Mexico and ends at the Port of Brownsville Main Harbor in the City of Brownsville. The most recent deepening was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1986. The existing channel is 42-feet deep. The proposed study will address the feasibility of deepening the entrance and jetty channel (2 miles) to 48 feet, deepen the lower 9 miles of main channel to 48 feet and deepen the upper 7 miles of main channel and turning basin to 45 feet.

The Port of Brownsville is the only deep draft port available to the industry along the U.S. – Mexico border. Brownsville is primarily a bulk commodity port covering both liquid and dry cargo handling. Current vessel sizes associated with the increased use of container vessels

has resulted in inefficient utilization of the Port of Brownsville. The increased traffic is a direct result of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) in that a majority of the increased commodity traffic is to meet industrial needs in Mexico.

In 2002, Brownsville was the nation's second largest in-transit harbor by volume. Total tonnage on the Brazos Island Harbor increased from 1,829,000 tons in 1992 to 4,741,000 tons in 2002; a difference of 2,912,000 tons. In addition to traditional vessel traffic, there is a need for increased channel dimensions in order to serve offshore rigs presently operating in the U.S. Gulf Coast. The operational draft of the newer rigs ranges from 45 to 63 feet.

The feasibility study will also investigate potential restoration opportunities of over 6500 acres of tidal marsh habitats, as well as brush habitat with the Bahia Grande in collaboration with federal and state agencies. Marsh restoration associated would provide feeding, breeding, and wintering habitat for colonial and migratory water birds and provide connective habitat to the Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge.

## **5. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS (Independent Technical Review)**

As part of the Quality Control Plan for the BIH Project, an ITR team will be formed to perform periodic reviews of the feasibility study efforts, including the project assumptions, analyses, and calculations, as needed throughout the planning study process. The ITR is best conducted by experienced peers within the same discipline who are not directly involved with the development of the study or project being reviewed.

Pursuant to EC 1105-2-408, the District will coordinate with the Deep Draft Navigation Planning Center of Expertise (Mobile District) to organize a team to perform the ITR at various stages throughout the study. The ITR point-of-contact at Mobile District is Ken Claseman (CESAM-PD-FE).

The ITR team will meet with project delivery team (PDT) members on a quarterly basis or as needed. These quarterly meetings will be documented as required by ER 1165-2-203. Coordination throughout the study will be accomplished through individual contact between the PDT and the ITR team. The ITR will focus on the following:

- Review of the planning study process,
- Review of the methods of analysis and design of the alternatives and recommended plan,
- Compliance with program and NEPA requirements, and
- Completeness of study and support documentation

More detailed ITR information is found in the Plan Formulation and Evaluation Section of the Project Management Plan (PMP).

## 6. REVIEW PROCESS

The ITR process will be conducted throughout the study process. ITR involvement is anticipated between major project milestones (FSM, IPR, and AFB). Once the ITR team has been identified, copies of PDT meeting notes will be provided to ITR team for information. ITR participation in PDT meetings on a quarterly basis (at a minimum) will be recommended.

## 7. REVIEW COST

The cost for ITR is estimated at \$55,000.

## 8. REVIEW SCHEDULE

<u>TASK</u>	<u>Proposed Date</u>
Develop Project Review Plan	April 15, 2007
Coordinate with MSC and post on website	April 30, 2007
PCX identifies ITR team	June 1, 2007
Review of Models	TBD
ITR review of FSM documents	TBD
ITR review of draft documents (before AFB)	TBD
Participation in AFB meeting	TBD

## 9. PROJECT RISK

Anticipate minimal risk involved with the project.

## 10. PROJECT REVIEW PLAN

The components of the PRP were developed pursuant to the requirements of EC 1105-2-408.

### A. General Information

The decision documents that will undergo peer review are the Feasibility Report (including Economic Appendix), Environmental Impact Statement, and Engineering Appendix. The District PDT is listed below:

#### 1. District Project Delivery Team

<u>NAME/ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
<b>Carl Anderson</b> Project Manager CESWG-PM	409-766-3914	carl.m.anderson@usace.army.mil

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CESWG-PAO

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## **2. ITR Team – TBD**

### **B. Scientific Information**

The final feasibility report (and supporting documentation) is anticipated to contain standard engineering, environmental and economic analyses and information; therefore no influential scientific information is likely to be contained in any of the documentation.

### **C. Timing**

The peer review process is projected to begin by the end of FY07 with the initiation of the ITR team and assessment of key models (e.g. hydrodynamic-salinity model and ship simulation) during this initial plan formulation phase of the study.

### **D. EPR Process**

The BIH Project is a typical navigation study for deepening and widening an existing navigation channel. The scope and technical complexity of this project is not expected to warrant EPR; however, since the BIH feasibility study is in the early stages, the need for EPR will be reassessed as the study progresses.

### **E. Public Comment**

A Public Scoping Meeting was held in Brownsville, Texas on January 31, 2007. An Interagency Coordination Team (ICT) made of representatives from the District, non-Federal sponsor, state and Federal resource agencies, and interested groups is being formed as part of the study. The ICT will participate in identifying potential sensitive resources and environmental issues and developing ways to address those issues. A Public Involvement Plan will be formulated to ensure public involvement throughout the feasibility study process. Public comments will be made available on the project website.

<u>TASK</u>	<u>START DATE</u>	<u>FINISH DATE</u>
Public Scoping Meeting	January 31, 2007	January 31, 2007
Public Involvement Plan	TBD	TBD
ICT Meetings	May 2007	TBD

## **F. Dissemination of Public Comments**

Proceedings from all public meetings, minutes from ICT meetings or any other public involvement meetings will be posted on the BIH Project website.

## **G. Reviewers**

Since the feasibility study is a navigation study to deepen and/or widen the existing channel, anticipated disciplines of ITR reviewers are:

1. Engineering (hydrology and hydraulics)
2. Economics
3. Environmental
4. Real Estate
5. Planning
6. Operations

## **H. Review Disciplines**

A brief description of the disciplines required for the ITR team are identified below:

1. Hydrology and hydraulics – the reviewer(s) should have extensive knowledge of hydrodynamic-salinity, ship simulation, sediment, erosion and coastal shoreline models/studies.
2. Economics – the reviewer should have a strong understanding of economic models or studies relative to deep draft navigation (e.g. multi-port, container and bulk cargo analyses).
3. Environmental – the reviewer(s) should have strong background in coastal ecosystems (e.g. hypersaline, lagoonal, wind-tidal flat system) and Texas environmental laws and regulations.
4. Real Estate – The reviewer should have knowledge in reviewing RE Plans for feasibility studies (e.g. navigation servitude).
5. Planning – The reviewer(s) should have a strong knowledge in current planning policies and guidance related to feasibility studies.

## **I. EPR Selection**

An External Peer Review is not anticipated for this study; however, since the BIH feasibility study is in the early stages, the need for EPR will be reassessed as the study progresses.