



1. Introduction

As the financial management arm of the Department of Commerce, the Office of Financial Management (OFM) formulates and prescribes Department-wide financial management, accounting, fiscal policies, procedures and controls.

One of the Department's strategic initiatives is to standardize business processes across the agency. Standard business processes will allow proper leveraging of resources across the Department, increase the efficiency of financial management activities and facilitate a more standardized approach to systems and tool development. In support of this strategic initiative, along with supporting the implementation of the President's Management Agenda, OFM initiated a Business Process Re-engineering effort to identify potential recommendations in the Accounts Payable area. Phase I of the Accounts Payable Business Process Re-engineering (AP BPR) effort, was completed in March 2007. Once Phase I was completed, the Department invested both internal and external resources in analyzing and creating the implementation plans for these recommendations as part of Phase II of the AP BPR effort.

The Phase II AP BPR effort was based upon the recommendations and process analysis material that was produced in Phase I. Original recommendations were modified/updated as part of the Phase II effort whenever any of the following circumstances applied:

- Events have transpired since the conclusion of Phase I in March 2007 that impact the original recommendation.
- More detailed information has become available regarding the accounting event to which the original recommendation applies.
- After further analysis, recommendations were deemed to have a potentially low return on investment or did not meet the goal of standardization across the Accounts Payable function.

This document incorporates the Phase II recommendation results into Business Rules. These business rules promote policy, procedures, and tasks for the standardized Accounts Payable Processes. Bureau Finance Officers have approved these rules and it is expected that the rules will be followed by all.