

Sustainment Appraisals

Addressing frequently asked community questions

A Sustainment Appraisal is a type of CMMI appraisal in which organizations can gain more frequent insight and validation of their performance improvement with a reduced scope and resource cost to the appraised organization. As a result, CMMI Institute has been receiving an increase in inquiries regarding Sustainment Appraisal conduct and eligibility. The aim of this Quality Tip is to help the CMMI community understand how to determine eligibility for, and how to conduct and report, Sustainment appraisals in the CMMI Appraisal System (CAS).

When determining eligibility for the conduct of a Sustainment Appraisal, Appraisal Team Leaders (ATLs) should first consult Tables 11 (Sustainment Eligibility Conditions and Decision Criteria) and 12 (Sustainment Example Eligibility Scenarios) of the CMMI Appraisal Method Definition Document (MDD). These tables provide example scenarios that are intended to cover most real-world applications organizations may face. However, this list is not comprehensive as noted in the MDD, and there may be exceptional circumstances that ATLs may encounter. In such cases, ATLs should proactively discuss the specific circumstances with CMMI Institute's Quality Management who determine, in consultation with CMMI Institute's CMMI Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), whether a Sustainment can be performed on the Organizational Unit (OU) in question.

A frequently asked question from the LA community pertaining to Sustainment Appraisals is whether organizations that underwent an appraisal using a prior version of the CMMI model are eligible for a Sustainment Appraisal. For example, a CMMI V2.X Benchmark to V3.0 Sustainment Appraisal is permissible provided that all applicable MDD conditions and eligibility requirements are met. This includes cases where the prior Benchmark Appraisal target was Maturity Level 2, despite the changes with additional Practice Areas (PAs) in scope at Maturity Level 2 between respective versions. If any assistance is required with setting up a Sustainment Appraisal in CAS for this situation, please contact Quality Management for guidance.

Several LAs have also inquired about the process for Randomly Generated Sample (RGS) requests for Sustainment Appraisals. CAS generates a sample that includes any weaknesses from the prior appraisal as well as other project/Organizational Support Function (OSF) and practice area (PA) pairings. This selection is to be examined in-depth by the ATL and comprises 1/3 of the overall sample. If desired, the ATL can then designate any additional project/OSF and PA pairings as "In-Depth by ATL" to the sample in CAS. From there, the ATL will then need to decide the remaining 2/3 of the scope for high-level analysis by adding these project/OSF and PA pairings into CAS per the MDD.

As described in the MDD, it is the ATL's responsibility to provide the comprehensive Sustainment Appraisal eligibility analysis to Quality Management before RGS scoping review. At that time, CMMI Institute will determine Sustainment Appraisal eligibility at its sole discretion in collaboration with CMMI

SMEs based on the MDD conditions and any additional relevant factors. To help facilitate Quality Management's review and decision-making process, ATLs should ensure that they provide thorough and comprehensive analysis in CAS.

Questions regarding this Sustainment Appraisals or this Quality Tip can be sent to quality@cmmiinstitute.com.