

## Step 16

# Prepare the Project Definition Document

Once management has approved the recommended system design for implementation and the contractual needs analysis is complete, the next step is to prepare a Project Definition document.

A project manager should be assigned at this point, if this has not already been done. This position should carry the authority to commit budgeted resources on behalf of the administration.

The project definition defines the project in terms of system design, schedule, and resource requirements. The following are typical topics to be covered.

- *System Design Description:* Locations, technology, system descriptions, equipment lists, etc. supported by maps, diagrams, and tables.
- *Work Breakdown:* The functional structure of the project, its breakdown into specific tasks, and the grouping of tasks into contracts. (Refer to Figure 15.1 for a typical breakdown structure and Figure 16.1 for a typical task network.)
- *Organization and Staffing:* A chart of the project organization with staff assignments including brief terms of reference for each position and noting when the position should be activated.

- *Schedule:* A project schedule showing tasks, activities, and major milestone events (manpower and other resource requirements may be shown). A high-level bar chart is appropriate, but it should be supported with a critical path or precedence-type network diagram.
- *Resource Requirements:* Overall budgets, cash flow projections, manpower and special equipment needs, and any specific breakdowns required by the administration or funding agency.
- *Project Control:* Cost and schedule control methods, such as monitoring actuals and updating forecasts against original budgets and schedules.

Since the Project Definition document is the implementation plan and fundamental control document for the project, it should be reviewed and approved by the appropriate management level.