# Product Documentation



**Process Asset Library
Office of Information and Technology**

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## Process Maps: Product Documentation



## Process: Product Documentation

Overview: The process map for Product Documentation cycles through the following process and review activities:

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan
DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide
DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)
DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)
DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?
DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software
DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)
DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation
DOC-09 Conduct Formal Review of Product Documentation

## Product Documentation: Description and Goals

### Description

This process provides required artifacts for the Office of Information and Technology (OIT) currently defined requirements and processes. It ensures necessary documentation is developed according to standards and best practices and is accurate, complete, and clear for both internal teams and end users for continued development and sustainment efforts.

### Goals

* Maintain Project Management Plan (PMP)
* Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide
* Create Production Operations Manual (POM) or Technical Manual (for VistA applications)
* Create User Guide(s)
* Create Online Help (optional)
* Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

## Product Documentation: RACI Information

The following describes the RACI information for this process:

**DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan**

Responsible Role: Project Manager
Accountable Role: Program Manager
Consulted Role: Stakeholders; Technical Writer
Informed Role: Application Project Team

**DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide**

Responsible Role: Technical Writer
Accountable Role: Project Manager
Consulted Role: Developer; Software Quality Assurance Analyst
Informed Role: Application Project Team; Release Manager; Stakeholders

**DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)**

Responsible Role: Technical Writer
Accountable Role: Project Manager
Consulted Role: Developer; Software Quality Assurance Analyst
Informed Role: Application Project Team; Release Manager; Stakeholders

**DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)**

Responsible Role: Technical Writer
Accountable Role: Project Manager
Consulted Role: Application Project Team; Developer; Software Quality Assurance Analyst; Stakeholders
Informed Role: Release Manager

**DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?**

Responsible Role: Technical Writer
Accountable Role: Project Manager

**DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software**

Responsible Role: Technical Writer
Accountable Role: Project Manager
Consulted Role: Developer; Software Quality Assurance Analyst
Informed Role: Application Project Team; Release Manager; Stakeholders

**DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)**

Responsible Role: Configuration Manager
Accountable Role: Project Manager
Consulted Role: Technical Writer
Informed Role: Application Project Team; Developer; Release Manager; Stakeholders

**DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation**

Responsible Role: Project Manager
Accountable Role: Program Executive Officer
Consulted Role: Application Project Team; Stakeholders
Informed Role: Release Manager

**DOC-09 Conduct Formal Review of Product Documentation**

Responsible Role: Software Quality Assurance Analyst
Accountable Role: Project Manager
Consulted Role: Application Project Team; Stakeholders
Informed Role: Release Manager

## Product Documentation: Associated Artifacts Information

Associated Artifacts information (including hyperlinks) for this process include:

Artifact Review Agenda and Minutes Template

Artifact Template

Deployment, Installation, Rollback, Back-out Guide Template

Guidance Document Template

Product Documentation Artifacts Approval Signatures Template

Product Documentation Review Checklist

Production Operations Manual with RACI Template

Project Management Plan (PMP)

Record of Notification Template

Release Notes Template

Review Findings Summary Template

Standard Operating Procedures Template

Technical Manual Template

User Guide Template

Version Description Document Template - Markdown Template (GitHub Issue Type)

Version Description Document Template - Word Version

## Product Documentation: Tools and Web Sites Information

The Tools and Web Sites associated with this process (including hyperlinks) include:

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

Configuration Management Department (CMD) SharePoint: CM Frameworks – 1.06.01 Standards for Version Description Documents

Section 508 Intranet Home Page

SPA (formerly CMD) Resource Request Form

VA Software Document Library

VA Technical Reference Model

## Product Documentation: Standards Information

Standards associated with this process (including hyperlinks) include:

CMD Standard File Naming Convention Guide

Configuration Management (CM) Standards for Version Description Documents

Digital Signature Guide

Displaying Sensitive Data Guide

Documentation Style Guide MS Word Version

Documentation Style Guide PDF Version

Federal Information Processing Standards Publications (FIPS) 186-5, Digital Signature Standard (DSS)

Memorial Benefits and Services (MBS) Section 508 Best Practices

NIST Special Publication 800-128 - Guide for Security-Focused Configuration Management of Information Systems

NIST Special Publication 800-53 Revision 5 - Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations

OIT End-User Documentation Standards MS Word Version

OIT End-User Documentation Standards PDF Version

OIT Master Glossary

Section 508 Policy and Procedures

Section 508 Quick Reference MS Word Guide

Section 508 Standards, Checklists and Document Applications Checklists

U.S. Access Board, Information Communication Technology (ICT)

VA Directive 6004, Configuration, Change, and Release Management Programs

VA Directive 6500, VA Cybersecurity Program

VA Handbook 6500, Risk Management Framework for VA Information Systems: VA Information Security Program

VA Master Glossary

VA OIT Technical Writers Community of Practice (CoP) SharePoint Site

## Product Documentation: Acronyms

Acronyms associated with this process include:

CMD : Configuration Management Department

RACI : Responsible Accountable Consulted Informed

SPA : Software Product Automation

## Product Documentation Process

### Activity Name: DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

**Concurrent Activities**

DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

And

DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

And

DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

And

DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

And

DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

And

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Previous Activities**

Process Begins

**Next Activities**

DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Description**

The Project Manager, in conjunction with the Stakeholder designated Project Team Membership, updates the Project Management Plan and obtains Sponsor and Member signatures as required.

**Input**

Project Management Plan

**Output**

Updated Project Management Plan

**Associated Artifacts**

Project Management Plan (PMP)

Standard Operating Procedures Template

**Responsible Role**

Project Manager

**Accountable Role**

Program Manager

**Consulted Role**

Stakeholders

Technical Writer

**Informed Role**

Application Project Team

**Tools and Websites**

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

Section 508 Intranet Home Page

Technology Support Squad

VA Technical Reference Model

### Activity Name: DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

**Concurrent Activities**

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

And

DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

And

DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

And

DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

And

DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

And

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Previous Activities**

Process Begins

**Next Activities**

DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Description**

The Technical Writer creates the Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide, which is a required document for national releases of products/patches to be installed on multiple platforms (e.g., client/server installations). This artifact provides the information necessary to install the software with little or no assistance from the software developers or support staff as well as troubleshooting, back-out and rollback instructions. Installation procedures are a required component and must be accessible according to the "Section 508 Standards for Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility" section 1194.41. These artifacts are included in the final overall Release Package.
If this product is an enhancement to an existing product, the current Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide is updated.
For the initial distribution of software, Release Notes are optional. Revisions to a product that involve major changes to technical specifications or end-user functionality (e.g., new version releases) require Release Notes. Changes to software or documentation that have a minimal impact (e.g., small scope patches) do not require Release Notes. The project manager, as the authoritative source and in consultation with the technical writer, determines if a Release Notes document is a required artifact for the project.

**Output**

Deployment, Installation, Rollback, Back-out Guide
Release Notes

**Associated Artifacts**

Artifact Template

Deployment, Installation, Rollback, Back-out Guide Template

Release Notes Template

**Responsible Role**

Technical Writer

**Accountable Role**

Project Manager

**Consulted Role**

Developer

Software Quality Assurance Analyst

**Informed Role**

Application Project Team

Release Manager

Stakeholders

**Tools and Websites**

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

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Technology Support Squad

VA Software Document Library

VA Technical Reference Model

**More Info**

When the Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide is updated, also update the Compliance User Stories contained in the project/product instance.

### Activity Name: DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

**Concurrent Activities**

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

And

DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

And

DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

And

DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

And

DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

And

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Previous Activities**

Process Begins

**Next Activities**

DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Description**

The Technical Writer defines the Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM) as routine operations. The Technical Manual, for Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) products, or POM, for non-VistA products, provides sufficient technical information about the software for developers and technical personnel to operate and maintain the software with only minimal assistance from the product support personnel.
The intended audience for this documentation is software support, management, and development personnel for nationally released software. If this product is an enhancement to an existing product, the current Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM) will most likely be updated.
The POM is not published to the VA Software Document Library (VDL), but the Technical Manual is published to the VDL.

**Input**

Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

**Output**

Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

**Associated Artifacts**

Artifact Template

Production Operations Manual with RACI Template

Technical Manual Template

**Responsible Role**

Technical Writer

**Accountable Role**

Project Manager

**Consulted Role**

Developer

Software Quality Assurance Analyst

**Informed Role**

Application Project Team

Release Manager

Stakeholders

**Tools and Websites**

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

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Technology Support Squad

VA Software Document Library

VA Technical Reference Model

**More Info**

When the Program Operations Manual (POM) is updated, also update the Compliance User Stories contained in the project/product instance.

### Activity Name: DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

**Concurrent Activities**

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

And

DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

And

DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

And

DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

And

DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

And

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Previous Activities**

Process Begins

**Next Activities**

DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Description**

The Technical Writer creates a User Guide, which is a required documentation component. Multiple User Guides can be produced for any given software (for example: Setup Guide, Deployment Guide, Developer Guide, etc.). This guide is included in the final overall Release Package. User Guides for distinct user audiences can either include separate sections or comprise separate documents specific to the audience (e.g., nurses, pharmacists, technicians, developers, etc.).
If this product is an enhancement to an existing product, the current User Guide(s) will most likely be updated.

**Output**

User Guide(s)

**Associated Artifacts**

Artifact Template

Guidance Document Template

Security Guide Template

User Guide Template

**Responsible Role**

Technical Writer

**Accountable Role**

Project Manager

**Consulted Role**

Application Project Team

Developer

Software Quality Assurance Analyst

Stakeholders

**Informed Role**

Release Manager

**Tools and Websites**

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

Section 508 Intranet Home Page

Technology Support Squad

VA Software Document Library

**More Info**

When the User Guide is updated, also update the Compliance User Stories contained in the project/product instance.

### Activity Name: DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

**Concurrent Activities**

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

And

DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

And

DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

And

DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

And

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Previous Activities**

Process Begins

**Next Activities**

If 'YES':

DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

Or

If 'NO':

DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Description**

The Technical Writer determines the software has a Graphical User Interface (GUI) or Web-based Software, Yes, or not, No.

**Responsible Role**

Technical Writer

**Accountable Role**

Project Manager

### Activity Name: DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

**Concurrent Activities**

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

And

DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

And

DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

And

DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

And

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Previous Activities**

DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

**Next Activities**

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Description**

The Technical Writer creates Online Help, which is a required component for all Graphical User Interface (GUI) based or Web-based nationally released software. Online Help must be accessible from within the application and contain context-sensitive help and system help.
Online Help must meet Section 508 requirements according to the "Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards" sections 1194.41 and 1194.22.

**Input**

User Guide

**Output**

GUI and Web-based Software Product Online Help

**Associated Artifacts**

User Guide Template

**Responsible Role**

Technical Writer

**Accountable Role**

Project Manager

**Consulted Role**

Developer

Software Quality Assurance Analyst

**Informed Role**

Application Project Team

Release Manager

Stakeholders

**Tools and Websites**

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Technology Support Squad

VA Software Document Library

VA Technical Reference Model

**More Info**

Access listing of evaluated Online Help software by searching for Online Help in the VA Technical Reference Model website.

### Activity Name: DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Concurrent Activities**

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

And

DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

And

DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

And

DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

And

DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

And

DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

**Previous Activities**

Process Begins

**Next Activities**

DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Description**

Version Description Documents (VDDs) are a required technical “parts list” (known as configuration items CIs), an authoritative inventory of product components that make up a deployable VA product or system. Product CIs and their versions include source code files, builds/packaging, tools information, baselines, locations, associated product files, and change records. The VDD itself is a CI and should be under Configuration Management control throughout the development process. For each product release, the Product Team creates a VDD that identifies the following: collections of changes made, tools information, resources for re-creating the current release and previous versions of the product, product build information, all product component versions in a production environment, and Product Team points of contact responsible for the release being delivered through the product development lifecycle. Maintaining product VDDs creates baseline place-markers that development teams can reference to go forward and backwards as needed to maintain the product. It also helps protect VA from loss of product IT assets, which is especially important with a regular rotation of personnel and contractors. Lastly, VDDs provide evidence that NIST Special Publication 800-53 and NIST Special Publication 800-128 are being executed as product-specific configuration management (CM) activities documented within the product Configuration Management Plan (CMP) and in support of product Authority to Operate (ATO) activities.

**Input**

Product VASI entry
Project Management Plan (PMP)
Deployment Installation Rollback Backout Guide
Product build and/or installation documentation
Software and system engineering design documents, including: DevSecOps pipeline system design, logical and physical models, systems, components, hardware and software items, etc.
Product components
Product release baselines
Version Description Document template

**Output**

Release-specific Version Description Document

**Associated Artifacts**

Version Description Document Template - DSO CMD Version

Version Description Document Template - Markdown Template (GitHub Issue Type)

**Responsible Role**

Configuration Manager

**Accountable Role**

Project Manager

**Consulted Role**

Technical Writer

**Informed Role**

Application Project Team

Developer

Release Manager

Stakeholders

**Tools and Websites**

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

Configuration Management Department (CMD) SharePoint: CM Frameworks – 1.06.01 Standards for Version Description Documents

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**More Info**

Creation and maintenance of product VDDs falls under the functional area of Configuration Management (CM). CM plays a key role in DevSecOps practices. Without the CM discipline, DevSecOps practices will not reach their full potential. CM ensures the configuration of a software system’s infrastructure, software components, and functionalities are known initially and well-controlled and understood throughout the entirety of the DevSecOps lifecycle.

### Activity Name: DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Previous Activities**

DOC-01 Maintain Project Management Plan

And

DOC-02 Create Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide

And

DOC-03 Create Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)

And

DOC-04 Create User Guide(s)

And

DOC-05 GUI or Web-based Software?

And

DOC-06 Create Online Help for GUI and Web-based Software

And

DOC-07 Maintain Version Description Document (VDD)

**Next Activities**

DOC-09 Conduct Formal Review of Product Documentation

**Description**

The Project Manager conducts the Product Documentation Peer Review performing the following general steps:
1. Distribute the Peer Review Materials
2. Review the Peer Review Materials
3. Distribute the Consolidated Peer Review Findings
4. Record the Finding Resolutions
5. Implement the Finding Resolutions
The goal of the peer review of the Product Documentation is to resolve any questions the project team may have and to ensure the quality of the deliverable.

**Input**

Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide
Record of Notification
Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)
User Guide(s)
Version Description Document

**Output**

Product Documentation Review Checklist (Review Findings Summary included)
Updated Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide
Updated Record of Notification
Updated Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM)
Updated User Guide(s)
Updated Version Description Document

**Associated Artifacts**

Artifact Template

Deployment, Installation, Rollback, Back-out Guide Template

Product Documentation Review Checklist

Record of Notification Template

Review Findings Summary Template

Technical Manual Template

User Guide Template

Version Description Document Template - Markdown Template (GitHub Issue Type)

Version Description Document Template - Word Version

**Responsible Role**

Project Manager

**Accountable Role**

Program Executive Officer

**Consulted Role**

Application Project Team

Stakeholders

**Informed Role**

Release Manager

**Tools and Websites**

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

Configuration Management Department (CMD) SharePoint: CM Frameworks – 1.06.01 Standards for Version Description Documents

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**More Info**

When the Program Operations Manual (POM), the User Guide, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide and Version Description Document are updated, also update the Compliance User Stories contained in the project/product instance.

### Activity Name: DOC-09 Conduct Formal Review of Product Documentation

**Previous Activities**

DOC-08 Conduct Peer Review of Product Documentation

**Next Activities**

Process Ends

**Description**

The Software Quality Assurance Analyst conducts the Product Documentation performing the following general steps:
1. Plan the Formal Review
2. Review the Formal Review Materials
3. Implement the Finding Resolutions
The goal of the formal review is to obtain stakeholder concurrence of the Product Documentation artifacts and appropriate approval signatures.

**Input**

Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide
Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual
User Guide(s)
Version Description Document

**Output**

Artifact Review Agenda and Minutes
Product Documentation Artifacts Approval Signatures
Product Documentation Review Checklist (Review Findings Summary included)
Updated Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide
Updated Technical Manual or Production Operations Manual (POM) (Approval Signatures included)
Updated User Guide(s)
Updated Version Description Document

**Associated Artifacts**

Artifact Review Agenda and Minutes Template

Artifact Template

Product Documentation Artifacts Approval Signatures Template

Product Documentation Review Checklist

Review Findings Summary Template

Technical Manual Template

User Guide Template

Version Description Document Template - Markdown Template (GitHub Issue Type)

Version Description Document Template - Word Version

**Responsible Role**

Software Quality Assurance Analyst

**Accountable Role**

Project Manager

**Consulted Role**

Application Project Team

Stakeholders

**Informed Role**

Release Manager

**Tools and Websites**

Agile Center of Excellence (ACOE)

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**More Info**

When the Program Operations Manual (POM), the User Guide, Deployment, Installation, Back-Out, and Rollback Guide, and Version Description Document are updated, also update the Compliance User Stories contained in the project/product instance.

END OF PROCESS