



Challenge:

The Congress, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Government Accountability Office have directed federal agencies to establish and maintain sound internal control systems as a primary means of improving accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency in achieving program goals and objectives, and in preventing fraud, waste and mismanagement. Each agency is required to promote continuous monitoring of internal controls as a part of daily program and operation management to strengthen management accountability and enhance and improve program performance and operations.

OMB has provided detailed guidance on implementing required A-123 Internal Controls. The guidance, however, does not address the real-life challenges associated with ensuring adequate controls, operational effectiveness, and efficient demonstration of regulatory compliance.

Michael Shannon Consulting Response:

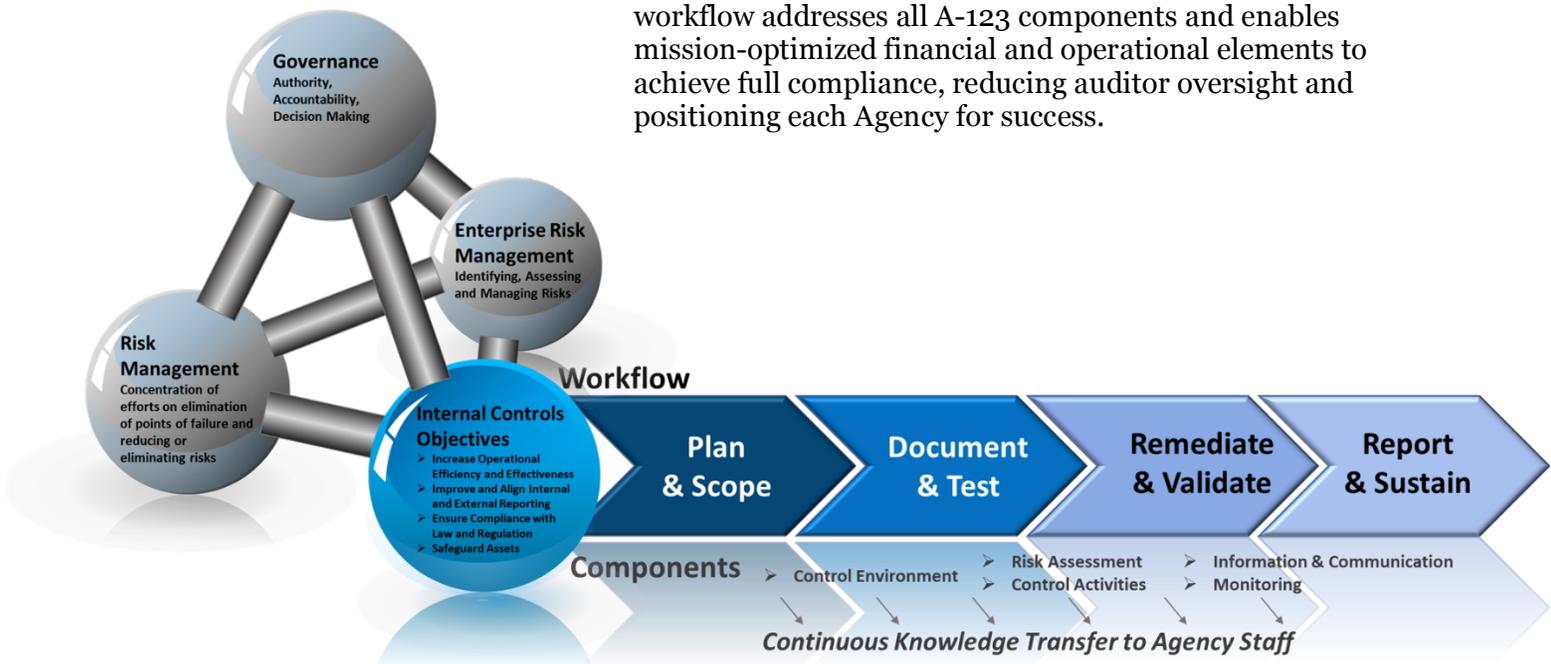
Michael Shannon Consulting supports Agencies as they mature their internal control programs including recognizing that end to end process integration is critical and that achieving this desired state is not as simple as it may appear. Success requires attention to understanding systems and interfaces and that having a change management plan is paramount. Our proven approach to maturing in this area includes

- Ensuring requirements are identified upfront and remain in focus throughout the initiative
- Aligning operations with objectives to realize expected potential
- Streamlining business processes to meet requirements and expectations.
- Identifying the appropriate resource mix to maximize utility
- Defining communication channels and transportation mechanisms to facilitate interoperability
- Safeguarding implementation of new initiatives from premature deployment and prior to proper identification of critical success factors
- Providing for validation that the final output meets expectations.
- Ensuring and continuously checking that knowledge gained is transferred to Agency staff, reducing reliance on outside consultants

Our approach situates internal control goals and objectives within an Agency’s risk management and governance structure. We use modern process automation and digital dashboarding to keep all levels in the loop on current action plans and initiatives, and create alignment between daily operations and strategic goals and mission objectives.

While our approach relies on proven approaches to safeguarding assets, ensuring compliance, aligning internal and external reporting, and increasing operation efficiency and effectiveness, we recognize that each mission set is unique.

Our scalable and tailorable internal controls support workflow addresses all A-123 components and enables mission-optimized financial and operational elements to achieve full compliance, reducing auditor oversight and positioning each Agency for success.



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