

## **Report from the Global Alliance for Project Performance Standards, Workshop #15, Pretoria, South Africa<sup>1, 2</sup>**

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I am back in Jakarta from a hectic, but very productive Workshop #15 for the Global Alliance for Project Performance Standards (GAPPS), <http://www.globalpmstandards.org/> held at the beautiful Pretoria University Campus, <http://web.up.ac.za/> Pretoria, South Africa, from 21 - 23 Feb, 2009.

Despite the global recession, attendance was good and as always, the camaraderie and commitment were outstanding, as was the food!!

During this working session, 4 streams were being developed:

- 1) Mapping of the GAPPS Competency Standards
- 2) Marketing and Communications
- 3) Endorsement Process
- 4) Program Manager Performance Standards

### **Mapping-**

One of the primary objectives of GAPPS is to map the competency standards GAPPS has developed to serve as a baseline or “common denominator” against which to compare the bodies of knowledge and methodologies offered by professional organizations, individual companies or government agencies. In this workshop, we compared IPMA’s competency-based credentials vs. the GAPPS standards and we started mapping AACE’s Total Cost Management Framework against GAPPS. As I am most familiar with AACE, let me use them as an example and start by explaining that what GAPPS offers is NOT a competing credential, product or service, but a BENCHMARK or BASELINE.

When comparing the GAPPS standards against AACE’s Total Cost Management Framework (TCMF), <http://www.aacei.org/tcm/> we learned that while in many areas the AACE methodology exceeds the GAPPS standards, there were some areas (particularly in the soft or human aspects) where the TCMF was below the minimum standards set by GAPPS. So how is AACE using this information? In the upcoming revisions to the TCMF, AACE Technical Committees <http://www.aacei.org/technical/> are working to address these areas of weakness. This is not

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<sup>1</sup> *Editor’s note: Second Editions are previously published papers that have continued relevance in today’s project management world, or which were originally published in conference proceedings or in a language other than English. Original publication acknowledged; authors retain copyright. This paper was originally published in PM World Today, March 2009 (Vol XI, Issue III).*

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perceived to be a threat, but, consistent with the fundamental concepts of quality management, an opportunity to benchmark against an independent standard.

### **Marketing and Communication-**

GAPPS BoD voted to create a standing Marketing and Communications Committee, charged with the responsibility to help the community of practice understand that GAPPS is NOT in the training or consulting business. We do not compete or offer alternative credentials. The only thing GAPPS offers is a baseline standard, which enables any professional organization, company or government agency to compare their standards against the GAPPS standard, understanding that maybe they exceed the GAPPS standard and maybe not.

In particular, GAPPS Marketing and Communications has been charged with reaching out to companies wishing to benchmark their in-house project and program management methodologies against GAPPS.

### **Endorsement-**

Contrary to mistaken belief, GAPPS is NOT a competitor to organizations such as PMI, AACE, IPMA etc. GAPPS does NOT offer professional certifications.

One of the services GAPPS does offer is to function in a role similar to the “Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good\\_Housekeeping](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good_Housekeeping) or the Consumer Reports “Best Buy” <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/index.htm> or the Underwriter’s Laboratory [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Underwriters\\_Laboratories](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Underwriters_Laboratories) for project/program management competencies. That is, GAPPS serves as an INDEPENDENT third party that ENDORSES project and program bodies of knowledge and methodologies as having met or exceeded the MINIMUM competencies identified by GAPPS. What GAPPS does is to MAP the bodies of knowledge and methodologies against our independent third party standards and ENDORSES these bodies of knowledge or methodologies as having met the GAPPS standards, and if they do not meet the standards, where the weaknesses lie.

There are three sets or categories of stakeholders GAPPS is serving in our capacity as an independent third-party standard:

#### 1) Government Agencies-

In the event your government establishes and requires competency standards, GAPPS will provide independent, third party mutual recognition and reciprocity, enabling transportability between countries. (i.e. If a person is recognized as a RegPM in Australia and wishes to work in Russia, GAPPS would serve as the baseline to assure that the RegPM was equivalent to the comparable Russian credential.)

2) Professional Institutions, Companies and NGO's-

In this case, GAPPS serves as the independent third-party benchmark to enable a meaningful comparison between any two or more professional organizations credentials. A potential example of would be to use GAPPS to help determine where PMI's PMP should be compared against IPMA's credentials. Is the PMP equivalent to an IPMA Level D or Level C? Another useful application for GAPPS is to compare the internal credentialing that many companies offer, to see if those meet or exceed the GAPPS standard. Possible applications of the GAPPS standards for commercial companies would be to compare two or more proprietary methodologies. (i.e. Ericsson's "PROPS-C" vs. Siemen's methodology, "PM@Siemens".) Are they equivalent or not? By providing an independent, third party assessment, helps defuse potential arguments or disputes about bias.

3) Consultants, Training Providers and Universities-

How does our training and consulting match up to the competencies required to be effective project and/or program managers? By obtaining endorsement as an assessor, those of us providing training, consulting and related educational services can ensure that our quality standards are consistent and that our assessment methods are appropriate to ensure that when evaluating practitioners against the GAPPS standards, we are doing so correctly and appropriately. Again, because this standard is independent of any specific methodology or body of knowledge, it provides for transportability and reciprocity as we travel around the world offering training and consulting professional services.

**Program Manager Competency Standards-**

This is a "work in progress" and is just about ready to be released as an exposure draft for public review and comment. To get an appreciation for what the program manager standards will look like, check out the project manager competency standards.

<http://www.globalpmstandards.org/project-manager-standards/general/download-latest-update/>

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he program manager standards will have a similar look and feel, although the actual standards are somewhat different.

The next working session is scheduled for May 2009, to be hosted by Cranfield University <http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/> in the UK. To confirm the dates and exact location on the Cranfield University campus, please visit the GAPPS website, <http://www.globalpmstandards.org/become-involved/general/working-sessions/> or email Ms. Melody Framp, the GAPPS Secretariat, [secretariat@globalpmstandards.org](mailto:secretariat@globalpmstandards.org)

## About the Author



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**Dr. Paul D. Giammalvo**, CDT, CCE (#1240), MScPM, MRICS, is a Senior Technical Advisor (Project Management) to PT Mitratata Citragraha. (PTMC), Jakarta, Indonesia. [www.build-project-management-competency.com](http://www.build-project-management-competency.com). He is noted for the development and delivery of graduate level, blended learning curricula designed for the mid-career path, English as Second Language (ESL) professionals to develop competency in the local practitioner and build capacity for the local organizations. For 25+ years, he has been developing and delivering Project Management training and consulting throughout South and Eastern Asia Pacific, the Middle East, West Africa, and Europe.

He is also active in the Global Project Management Community, by playing a “thought leadership” role for the Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering International, (AACEI) <http://www.aacei.org/since1991>; He has also been active in two IPMA member organizations: The Green Project Management Association (GPM) <http://www.greenprojectmanagement.org/> where he served on the Certification Board of Directors for two years and the American Society for the Advancement of Project Management <http://www.asapm.org/> for which he served for four years on the BoD as Director of Marketing. He also sat on the Board of Directors of the Global Alliance for Project Performance Standards (GAPPS), [www.globalpmstandards.org](http://www.globalpmstandards.org), Sydney, Australia and is active as a regional leader. Currently, he is a compensated consultant to the International Guild of Project Controls. <http://www.planningplanet.com/guild> as the primary author of their “Compendium and Reference” as well as the chief architect of their competency-based credentialing program. <http://www.planningplanet.com/guild/certification>

He has spent 35 of the last 50 years working on large, highly technical international projects, including such prestigious projects as the Alyeska Pipeline and the Distant Early Warning Site (DEW Line), upgrades in Alaska and the Negev Airbase Constructors, Ovda, Israel and the Minas Oil Field in Rumbai, Sumatra. His current client list includes Fortune 500 major telecommunications, oil, gas and mining companies plus the UN Projects Office and many other multi-national companies, NGO organizations and Indonesian Government Agencies.

In addition to 45+ years of hands-on field experience, Dr. Giammalvo holds an undergraduate degree in Construction Management, his Master of Science in Project Management through the George Washington University and was awarded his PhD in Project and Program Management through the Institute Supérieur De Gestion Industrielle (ISGI) and Ecole Supérieure De Commerce De Lille (ESC-Lille) under the supervision of Professor Christophe Bredillet. “Dr. PDG” can be contacted at [pauldgphd@gmail.com](mailto:pauldgphd@gmail.com).