Table of Contents

Change History 2
Overview 3
  Change Request Identification 3
  Submitting a Change Request 3
  Patches vs. Functional Changes 3
  References 4
Patches 4
Functional Changes 5
Appendix A – Patch Workflow 6
Appendix B – Functional Change Workflow 7

Change History

Date	***Version***	***Change***
June 1, 2006	Draft	Original draft

Overview

This document is intended to provide a functional overview of the Change Control process in effect at the NCICB. It is primarily a supplement to the *NCICB Change Control Plan* available on the NCICB SCM Initiative GForge site at http://gforge.nci.nih.gov/docman/view.php/27/1179/SCMInitiative-ChangeControlPlan.pdf. All conflicts between this document and the *NCICB Change Control Plan* should be resolved in favor of *this* document.

The scope of the change control process in effect at NCICB is limited to patches and functional changes that are implemented between officially scheduled product release dates. Therefore, any such changes that are to be incorporated into a future release do not need to be reviewed by the Change Control Group.

This process covers all software products being developed by NCICB.

Change Request Identification

Change requests will be identified by their project name and GForge Tracker number. Therefore, the implication is that all change requests will be entered into an appropriate GForge tracker. GForge assigns globally unique IDs to tracker items, so the combination of the project name and Tracker number is sufficient to uniquely identify a change request.

Submitting a Change Request

The NCICB Change Control Group (CCG) meets every Tuesday at 2:00 to discuss all pending change requests. Change requests must be submitted to the NCICB SCM Administrator (scmadmin@mail.nih.gov) by COB Friday for consideration at the next Change Control Group meeting.

All change requests must be submitted on the NCICB Change Request Form, available through the SCM Initiative GForge Project at http://gforge.nci.nih.gov/docman/view.php/27/1182/Change%20Control%20Form.doc. This link will always point to the most up-to-date version of this form. Versions retrieved from other locations must be considered to be out of date.

Patches vs. Functional Changes

As discussed above, this process addresses both patches and functional changes that are to be implemented between regularly scheduled releases. A patch, for the purposes of this document, is defined as a fix for an identified and recorded defect. A functional change is a new feature that has been deemed to be of enough importance that it can't wait until the next official release. Note that functional changes that are scheduled for an interim point release of a product do not need to be reviewed by the CCG.

Note that from the perspective of the CCG, there is little difference between patches and functional

changes, but the submitting team's responsibility is slightly different. The next two sections address these differences. Appendices A and B provide flowcharts of the patch and functional change processes.

References[1]

- NCICB Change Control Plan
- NCICB Version Numbering Policy – implementation of both patches and functional changes require an increment to the product's version number. This document provides guidelines on determining the appropriate new version number.
- NCICB Deployment Handbook – under the new policy, all inter-release deployment requests must be associated to an approved change request. The Deployment Handbook summarizes the deployment process in place at NCICB and will be updated to reflect this new policy.
- NCICB Change Request Form

Patches

Appendix A provides a flowchart of the patch change request process. Prior to submitting a patch change request, it should be implemented and fully tested on QA. Once the fix has been verified on QA, the QA manager should complete and submit the Change Request form. The following information should be provided:

- CR Title – a brief description of the defect
- Software version – the current version of the software that the defect was discovered in
- Problem statement – a detailed description of the problem. QA managers may also attach additional supporting materials.
- Root cause – a detailed description of the root cause of the problem
- Proposed solution
- Impact assessment – an overview of the potential impact of the change on dependent projects or the user community

As a technical matter, all patches should be implemented in an isolated branch of the code base, rather than in the main trunk. This will allow the patch to be more easily discarded if the CCG should reject it for any reason.

If any stakeholders have concerns about potential interactions, the patch will not be immediately approved for deployment, and arrangements will be made to allow the stakeholders to test their software against the proposed change. Those results will be provided to the CCG at a later meeting before a final disposition of the change request will be made.

1 All referenced documents can be found at the NCICB SCM Initiative GForge site: http://gforge.nci.nih.gov/projects/scmapilot/

Functional Changes

Appendix B provides a flowchart of the functional change change request process. The primary difference between a functional change and a patch is that functional changes should be approved by the CCG prior to implementation. Once a new use case has been defined, and the project manager determines that the change is important enough that it can't wait for the next scheduled release, they should create a Design Document/Implementation plan, which should include sufficient information about the function and implementation to allow potentially affected systems to evaluate the impact of the change. This should be submitted as an attachment to the change request form. The same information as was outlined above is required, with the exception of the root cause field.

Again, as a technical matter, changes should be made and tested on an isolated branch of the code base.

As with patches, if there are any concerns about the potential impact of the proposed change, the feature will not be approved for immediate implementation, and any test cases necessary to address those concerns will be added to the implementation plan. Final disposition of the request will be made at a future CCG meeting, after they have an opportunity to review the test results.

Appendix A – Patch Workflow

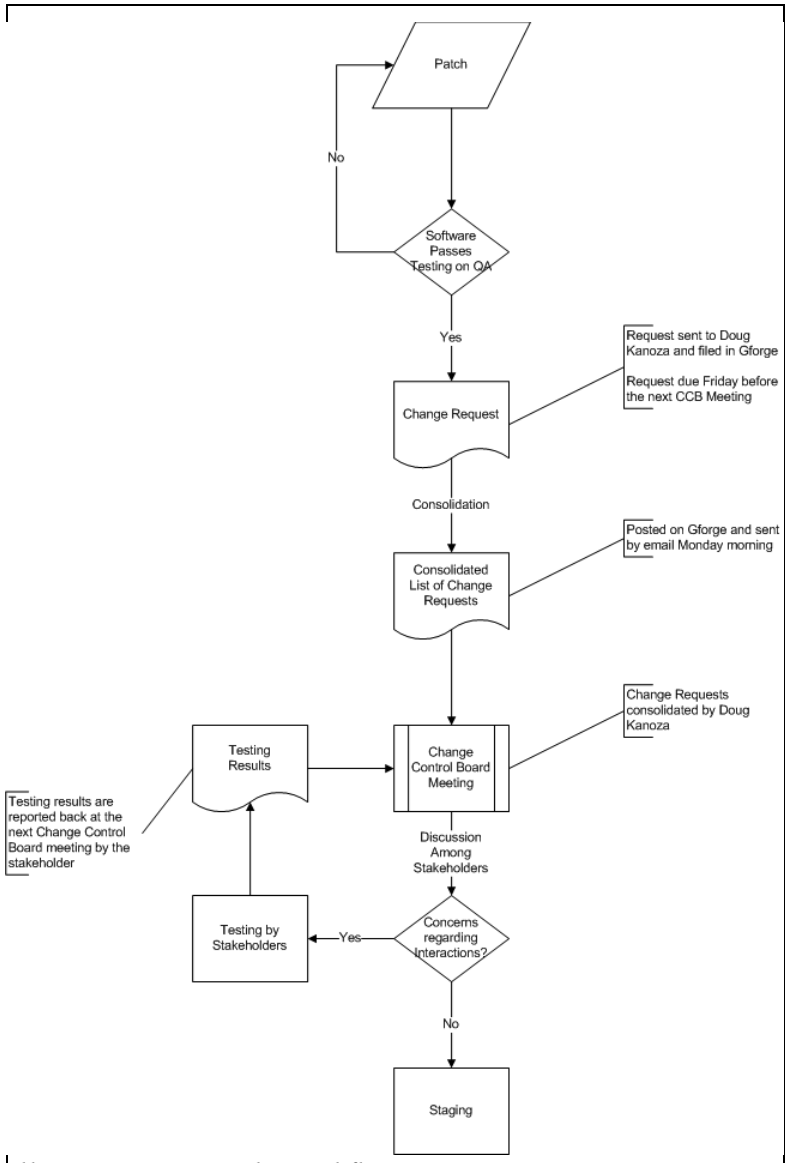

Illustration 1: Patch Workflow

Appendix B – Functional Change Workflow

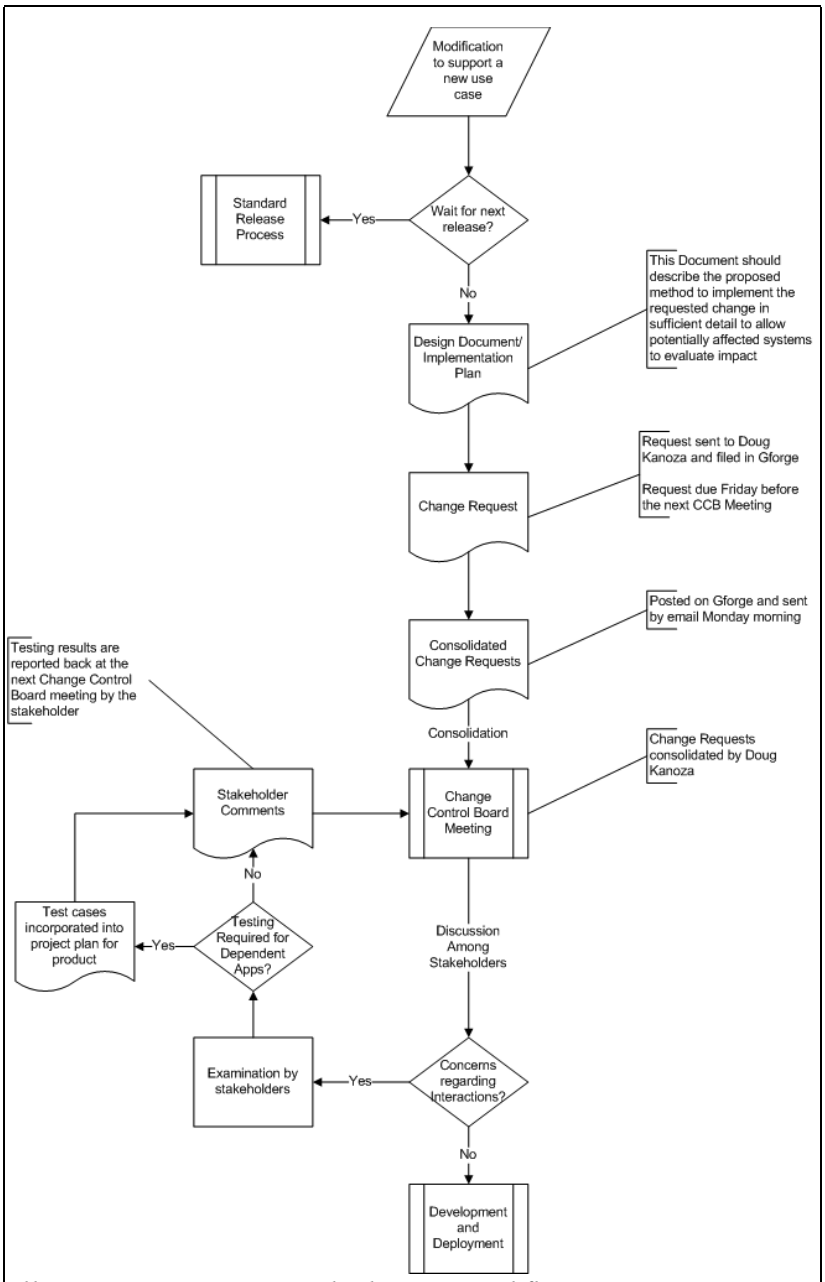

Illustration 2: Functional Change Workflow