Project Assurance Review

Prepared for the Department of Treasury and Finance

[Insert project name]

[Insert date]

The Secretary

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* + 1. Report information
       1. Review details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Version number: | [Insert Draft 0.1,0.2,0.3 or Final 1.0] |
| SRO name: | [Insert SRO name] |
| Date of issue to SRO: | [Insert date] |
| Department: | [Insert name] |
| Agency or PNFC: | [Insert name] |
| Gateway Review dates: | [Insert dates dd/mm/yyyy to dd/mm/yyyy] |

* + - 1. Review team

|  |
| --- |
| Gateway Review team members |
| **[Insert name of team leader]** |
| [Insert name of team member] |
| [Insert name of team member] |
| [Insert name of team member] |
| [Insert name of team member] |

* + - 1. The purpose of a Project Assurance Review

|  |
| --- |
| The Project Assurance Review (PAR) is part of the Department of Treasury and Finance’s (DTF) assurance framework. The PAR aims to provide timely independent advice to both Government (as the investor) and departments or agency (as the deliverer), on the current progress and the objectives, governance and readiness of a project or program. The PAR process is designed to improve delivery confidence, provide assurance, reduce ‘scope creep’ and provide a wider stakeholder engagement than other processes may allow.  The intended audience for the report has been identified in the Terms of Reference (ToR). A copy of the report will be provided to DTF.  Appendix A gives the full purpose statement for a PAR and ToR. |

* + - 1. Conduct of the Review

|  |
| --- |
| This Program Review was carried out from [Insert: Date 1] to [Insert: Date 2] at [Insert: location of review].  The stakeholders interviewed are listed in Appendix C.  Delete where not applicable: Appendix D shows a list of documents received and reviewed by the review team.  [Insert a note of thanks to the SRO and the client team. e.g. The Review Team would like to thank the Client X Project Team for their support and openness, which contributed to the Review Team’s understanding of the Project and the outcome of this review] |

* + 1. Assurance assessment summary as at [insert date]
       1. Review team findings

The Review Team finds that [Insert a brief statement outlining the Review Team’s view of the status of the project].

* + - 1. Observations of good practice

[Insert instances of significant good practice found, especially those that may be transferable to other programs and projects.]

|  |
| --- |
| Good practice examples |
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* + - 1. Overall delivery confidence assessment

Overall delivery confidence assessment:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| R | A | G |

* + - 1. Red rated Individual recommendations

All individual recommendations arising from Program Assurance reviews, are to be reported to the Treasurer outlining the risk mitigation/s utilising a Recommendation Action Plan (RAP). Click on the hyperlink to download a Recommendation Action Plan.

The Department or Agency is also required to provide the review report and any associated RAP to the project Steering Committee (or equivalent governance forum) to provide oversight of all ‘critical’ actionable items. It is also recommended that the report and any associated RAP be issued to the relevant portfolio Minister.

All recommendations are to be classified using the themes in Appendix E.

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| # | Recommendation | Theme |
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* + - 1. Recommendations from previous reviews (including Gateway Reviews) and the Recommendation Action Plan (RAP)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes/No/NA |
| The previous review reports were provided to the review team. |  |
| The Review Team considered the previous reports during the conduct of the review. |  |
| The Recommendations from previous reviews were appropriately actioned? |  |
| A Recommendation Action Plan (RAP) was prepared as a result of previous reviews. |  |
| The RAPs were provided to the review team for consideration. |  |
| The RAPs have been implemented (where applicable)?  The agency provided a copy of the previous Gateway review report and any associated RAP to the Steering Committee (or equivalent) and the relevant portfolio Minister. |  |

The Review Team finds that [Insert a brief statement commenting on the adequacy of the actions taken in regard to all of the individual recommendations (Red and Amber) from previous reviews, and specifically the mitigation responses to and implementation of any Red recommendations as identified within a RAP].

* + 1. Findings and recommendations

A summary of all the individual recommendations can be found in Appendix B.

* + - 1. Governance and project management

[Insert findings – brief paragraphs setting out key findings. **Where appropriate, include recommendations (in bold text) relating to individual findings including the RA assessment.**]

* + - Are the appropriate management controls in place to manage the project through to completion?
    - Are all Governance structures and management plans appropriately documented?
    - Does the project team, and governance structure, have the appropriate resourcing and capability to deliver the project?
    - Is there a strategy in place to manage change in the project?
    - Have the recommendations from the previous review been addressed?

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | Recommendation | Theme | RA status |
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* + - 1. Scope, benefits and coherence of project

[Insert findings – brief paragraphs setting out key findings. **Where appropriate, include recommendations (in bold text) relating to individual findings including the RA assessment.**]

* + - Is there a clear understanding of the outcomes to be delivered by the project and are they sound?
    - Is the scope of work feasible within the constraints of the existing budget envelope?
    - Is the delivery approach coherent in terms of structure and staging, including consideration of any project interfaces?
    - Is the project still aligned with the approved Business Case?

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| # | Recommendation | Theme | RA status |
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* + - 1. Risk management, budget and schedule

[Insert findings – brief paragraphs setting out key findings. **Where appropriate, include recommendations (in bold text) relating to individual findings including the RA assessment.**]

* + - Is the project under control? Is it running according to plan and budget?
    - Are estimates for the program costs and schedule reasonable?
    - Have changes to the contract been forecast, accurately recorded, and approved?
    - Have options for potential ways forward been identified?

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| # | Recommendation | Theme | RA status |
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* + - 1. Readiness for next phase (if relevant and appropriate)

[Insert findings – brief paragraphs setting out key findings. **Where appropriate, include recommendations (in bold text) relating to individual findings including the RA assessment.**]

* + - Is there a sufficient level of assurance that the program is strongly positioned to proceed to the next stage?
    - Are risks and issues associated with the implementation phase being properly identified and managed?
    - Is ownership after handover clearly understood?

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| # | Recommendation | Theme | RA status |
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* + 1. Planning for the next Review

According to the project’s current schedule, the next Program Assurance Review should occur [Insert appropriate month and year and rationale].

The Department should confirm the requirement and timing for the next Review approximately 8-10 weeks prior to the above date.

Should there be any significant changes to the project schedule that would alter the date above, please notify the Gateway Unit.

# Appendix A

## Purpose of a Project Assurance Review

The Project Assurance Review (PAR) is part of the Department of Treasury and Finance’s (DTF) assurance framework. The PAR aims to provide timely independent advice to both Government (as the investor) and departments or agency (as the deliverer), on the current progress and the objectives, governance and readiness of a project or program. The PAR process is designed to improve delivery confidence, provide assurance, reduce ‘scope creep’ and provide a wider stakeholder engagement than other processes may allow.

The review process provides an opportunity for Government to be advised of any areas of concern regarding the program’s progress and provided with recommendations to improve its deliverability. The intended audience for the report is the [insert audience here]. A copy of the report will be provided to DTF.

## Terms of Reference

As defined in the document ‘Attachment 1: [Insert appropriate attachment details here].’

# Appendix B

## Summary of individual recommendations

|  |  |  |
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| Recommendation # | Recommendation | RA status |
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# Appendix C

## Interviewees

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# Appendix D

## Documents reviewed

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# Appendix E

## Red Amber Green definition

There are two levels of Red Amber Green (RAG) status for a project that must be given, using the colour-coded indicators Red, Amber or Green, as described below. These include:

* + - Red (Critical and Urgent) and Amber (Critical, non-urgent) and Green (Project would benefit from uptake) for individual recommendations;
    - Red, Amber or Green Delivery Confidence assessment for the overall project.

## Individual recommendations (criticality)

Recommendations should be made in relation to all risks identified during the review that have the potential to materially impact on the successful delivery of the project.

It should be noted that risk management is an inherent feature of projects, and risks identified through gateway review processes do not substitute the need for strong risk management processes within a project.

Individual recommendations are classified as either, Red Amber or Green as detailed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Red | Critical and urgent, to achieve success the project or program should take action on recommendations immediately. |
| **Amber** | **Critical but not urgent, the project or program should proceed, with action on recommendations to be addressed before further key decisions are taken.** |
| **Green** | **The project or program is on target to succeed but may benefit from the uptake of recommendations.** |

Green recommendations are effectively ‘suggestions’ for the consideration of the project or program team. They may be based on observations from the review or ‘Identified Lessons Learnt’ from relevant projects for consideration.

## Overall assessment (delivery confidence)

An Overall Assessment (Delivery Confidence) is also required for each review based on the definitions below. When determining the Overall Assessment, the Review Team should refer to their own judgement/expertise to determine the most suitable Delivery Confidence rating.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Overall report | Overall report | Overall report |
| Successful delivery of the project to time, cost and quality appears highly likely. | Successful delivery appear feasible but significant issues already exist, requiring timely management attention. | Successful delivery of the project to cost, time and/or quality does not appear achievable. |
| There are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to significantly threaten delivery. | These issues appear resolvable at this stage and if addressed promptly, should not impact on cost, time or quality. | The project may need re‑baselining and/or the overall viability reassessed. |

**Delivery confidence**

## Recommendation themes

The theme to be allocated to each recommendation, along with some general examples for each theme, are as follows;

**BUSINESS CASE**

* Project scope or benefits do not align with the case made for investment.
* Alternative options, including a realistic base case, are poorly explained / justified.

**GOVERNANCE**

* Governance frameworks are not fit for purpose.
* Governance frameworks are not clearly understood/articulated.
* There is a lack of active senior level support.
* Key roles lack appropriate capability and expertise.

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

* Key project risks not adequately considered.
* Issues with risk management strategy.
* Mitigation measures and contingency management has not been developed or is not up to date.
* Framework to manage risks is inadequate or poorly communicated / understood.

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

* Stakeholder strategy / management plan is missing or is not up to date.
* Lack of adequate stakeholder consultation.
* Stakeholder views / concerns have not been considered and addressed appropriately.
* Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities in stakeholder management plan.
* Lack of clear communication channels for respective stakeholders.

**PROJECT CONTROLS AND REPORTING**

* Lack of, or inadequate, scheduling discipline or project controls.
* Insufficient rigour, process and accuracy around cost estimates and contingency estimating, planning and management.

**PROCUREMENT**

* Inadequate procurement strategy or procurement planning.
* Procurement documentation does not provide transparency in the decision-making process.
* Delivery strategy not appropriately detailed and project staging not addressed.

**PLANNING AND APPROVALS**

* Planning pathway to achieve planning consent in a timely manner not identified or articulated.
* Insufficient planning allowances within the project schedule.

**CHANGE MANAGEMENT**

* Lack of an effective mechanism to identify the changes necessary to achieve project outcomes.
* Lack of a change management plan / inadequate change management plan.
* Significant changes on the project poorly implemented and/or communicated.

**OPERATIONAL INTEGRATION**

* Lack of, or inadequate mechanisms to ensure effective readiness planning, prioritisation, management and operation.
* Operational governance and management structures not determined, in particular not including the operator/franchisee on project governance forums/structures.
* Funding for the next phase not confirmed or allocated, gaps in project funding, lack of suitable funding strategy.

**BENEFITS REALISATION**

* Lack of benefits management plan.
* Inadequate process for ongoing review of benefits management plan.
* Lack of appropriate resources to realise stated project benefits.

**KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

* Lack of, or inadequate processes to capture and share project lessons learnt across government.

**PROJECT INTERFACES**

* Inadequate consideration of interfacing networks, precincts, projects and services.

**ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT POLICY/PROCESSES**

* Relevant Government guidelines, frameworks and processes not considered, employed and/or complied with during project development and delivery.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

* Lack of or inadequate consideration of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the project.
* Inadequate assessment and documentation of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the project.