



WORKBOOK

Gate 0

Strategic Need

Assessment Objective

Purpose

The Infrastructure SA Assurance Framework (ISAAF) sets out the approach for undertaking assurance on major infrastructure projects over \$50M. This Workbook provides information for an agency to prepare a Gate 0 submission. The *ISA Assurance Guide* also provides further guidance on the assurance process.

Objective

A Gate 0 submission establishes the strategic case for the project need, consistent with government and service priorities, and whether further investigation into the potential for an infrastructure solution is warranted.

Gate 0 confirms early in the project lifecycle whether a proposed initiative aligns with government priorities and service needs before investing funds or resources in potential solutions.

Approach

ISA will assess an Agency Gate 0 submission against a range of criteria including quality, completeness and clarity of information. See **Annexure A** for a copy of the Gate 0 Submission template.

The Gate 0 assessment will provide an overall outcome with commentary to move the initiative to the next phase of development. ISA will share the initial outcome with the Agency, who may provide additional information to clarify or strengthen the submission. The Agency may resubmit, withdraw, or defer the submission.

In considering priority, criticality and urgency, ISA will consider alignment to government priorities, the scale and complexity of the problem, the consequences of inaction, and whether an infrastructure solution is likely to address the problem.

The assessment uses the Assessment Approach Matrix (Table 1) to evaluate the quality and robustness of the information provided in Appendix A (and supporting evidence), including whether it is clear, complete, consistent and appropriately evidenced.

Ratings

Category	Rating (Gate 0)
Very High Justification	The need is clearly defined with strong strategic alignment, robust evidence, and a clear priority.
High Justification	The need is well articulated and strategically aligned, though some gaps in evidence or priority remain.
Moderate Justification	The need is established, but additional work is required to confirm strategic alignment and/or priority
Low Justification	The need is only partially established and requires substantial clarification, along with stronger evidence of alignment and/or priority.
Very Low Justification	The need is not adequately defined, with minimal or no evidence of strategic alignment, supporting data, or priority.

If the initiative undertakes further development of an options analysis / strategic business case, it will then proceed through to a Gate 1 assessment.

ANNEXURE A: Gate 0 Submission – Project Registration Information

Project Name		
Sponsor Agency		
Delivery Agency		
Brief description of project	<i>Provide a brief, high-level introduction to the proposal explaining its origin, strategic position and expected outcomes</i>	
Geographic Location	<i>(if available)</i>	
Project / Program Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Name:	
	Position:	
Project / Program Director/ Manager	Name:	
	Position:	
Sponsor Agency Contact <i>(for administrative liaison if applicable)</i>	Name:	
	Position:	

Gate 0 - Strategic Need

Agencies should refer to **Appendix A: Agency Key Considerations** for guidance on completing the table below and when Australian Government funding may be considered.

Project Name	
Proposal	<i>Purpose</i>
Strategic Alignment	<i>Alignment with:</i> <i>agency specific policy, strategy, service and asset management plans</i> <i>government policy and priorities including across government.</i>
Problem Definition / Case for Change	<i>Problem/service need</i> <i>Current state</i> <i>Demand analysis and impacts</i> <i>Consequences of continued inaction</i> <i>Root cause of the problem and/or opportunity</i>
Project Outcomes	<i>Expected direct benefits and outcomes</i> <i>Consequential benefits including any linked to other services/agencies</i> <i>Critical success factors.</i>
Potential Solutions	<i>Base case – minimum to manage problem/service need</i> <i>Any existing/previous workarounds</i> <i>New options including non-infrastructure solutions</i> <i>Risks and interdependencies</i>
Criticality Assessment	<i>Urgency</i> <i>Priority</i> <i>Complexity</i> <i>Project schedule – providing indicative estimates across all project phases including any critical dates and key milestones</i>
Stakeholder Assessment	<i>Key stakeholders – government, private sector and community</i>
Next Steps	<i>Approvals required to progress</i> <i>Intended scope and outcome for next stage</i> <i>How agency will deliver next stage (expected governance, resources, funding requirements).</i>

Supporting Evidence

Supporting evidence is required to corroborate the details within the submission. It is acknowledged that details regarding a potential solution and associated cost plans or economic modelling may not be available or in draft at this early stage.

The following list provides examples of the types of documents that should be provided where possible or available.

- Relevant Government policies, plans or directions
- Agency strategic plans, policies, operational service plans, service models, asset management plans
- Service deficiency assessments
- Costs / size of problem evidence
- Demand forecasts or modelling including evidence of cost of inaction
- Non-infrastructure solution analysis
- Benchmarking activities
- Agency performance metrics

If available:

- Investment Logic Map
- Benefits Management Plan
- Risk assessments
- Budget impact tables
- Capital and operating cost plans
- Financial analyses
- Stakeholder Identification assessments
- Customer feedback

Appendix A: Agency Key Considerations

The intent of Gate 0 is to confirm early in the project lifecycle whether a proposed initiative aligns with government priorities and service needs before investing funds or resources in potential solutions.

Agencies should be able to describe the problem to be resolved (including the cost of the problem) or the opportunity and demonstrate the urgency for resolution at this stage. It is not expected that solutions will have been explored or developed. Where potential solutions are known (e.g., through asset management data or previous project experience), these details may be included.

Gate 0 – Strategic Need	
Proposal	<i>Describe the problem to be resolved or the opportunity.</i>
Strategic Alignment	<i>Demonstrate that the problem or opportunity is directly linked or aligned to an agency specific policy, strategy, service or asset management plans or other government policy and priorities (including across government).</i>
Problem Definition / Case for Change	<i>In this section, agencies must be about to describe the underlying problem or service need, its current state, projected demand, analysis and impacts including consequences of inaction (or opportunity lost) and the analysis of the root cause of the problem and/or opportunity (ie population growth, changing technologies, legislation, etc).</i> <i>Consideration of non-infrastructure solutions must be evident and the case for change must support the case for further investigation.</i>
Project Outcomes	<i>Agencies should identify what the expected direct benefits and outcomes for the initiative and any consequential benefits that may be linked to other services/agencies. High level identification of critical success factors.</i> <i>At this stage, these should primarily relate to the issues identified in the Problem Definition/Case for Change section.</i>
Potential Solutions	<i>Where potential solutions are identified (e.g., based on asset management data or previous projects), include a description of the base case (i.e., the minimum requirement to manage the problem/service need) and any existing or previous workarounds. This may include new options and/or non-infrastructure solutions. Describe risks and interdependencies identified to date.</i>
Criticality Assessment	<i>Describe and evidence the urgency for progressing with the proposal, the reason for prioritisation, and an overview of complexity (of the problem/opportunity and any identified solution, if known).</i> <i>Develop a high-level project schedule providing indicative estimates across the project lifecycle, including any critical dates and key milestones.</i> <i>This should be consistent with the Problem Definition/Case for Change root cause analysis.</i>

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Stakeholder Assessment	<i>If relevant, include any outcomes from engagement with key stakeholders (government, private sector and community) on the problem/opportunity or any proposed solution.</i>
Next Steps	<i>Provide an overview of internal and external approvals required to progress to the options assessment phase.</i> <i>Describe how the agency proposes to progress to the next stage (expected governance, resources and funding requirements).</i>

Australian Government requirements

The Australian Government has a range of additional requirements for funding consideration. While the likelihood may be uncertain during proposal development, if there is a reasonable chance that the initiative will seek Australian Government funding, Infrastructure SA strongly recommends addressing these additional Australian Government requirements to prevent re-work during funding consideration.

The compliance checklist in this template summarise additional requirements under the following frameworks:

- Infrastructure Australia’s (IA) Assessment Framework
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts’ (DITRDCSA) guidance for Federation Funding Agreement (FFA) Schedule on Land Transport Infrastructure Projects
- National Water Grid’s Investment Framework.

See the figure below for the triggers for these requirements to identify proposals where these requirements may apply.

Framework:	Infrastructure Australia Assessment Framework	Notes on Administration for Land Transport Infrastructure Projects 2024-2029	National Water Grid Investment Framework
Eligibility:	Nationally significant infrastructure proposals (see IA definition)	Nationally significant land transport proposals (see DITRDCSA definition)	Water infrastructure for regional and remote communities and/or productive use
Sectors:	Transport, water, energy, telecommunications	Land transport	Water
Reason for considering:	Consideration for the <i>Infrastructure Priority List</i> or Seeking >\$250 million in Australian Government funding	Seeking funding under the FFA Schedule on Land Transport Infrastructure Projects	Seeking funding under the National Water Grid Fund
Consult with the Australian Government for other funding pathways			