

OFFICIAL



Assurance Guide

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Purpose

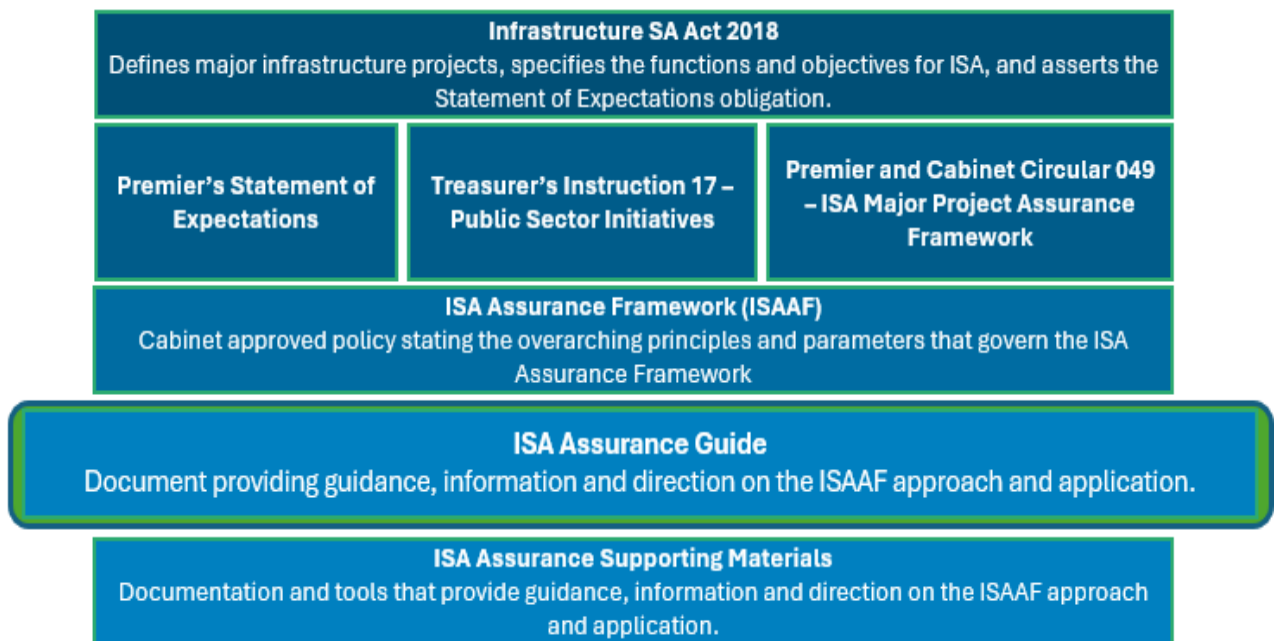
Infrastructure SA (ISA) was established under the *Infrastructure SA Act 2018* (the Act) to improve prioritisation, delivery, and operation of infrastructure, and to support sound infrastructure decision-making.

The Act creates a requirement for ISA to:

- review and evaluate proposals for major infrastructure projects undertaken by public sector authorities,
- assess the risks involved in planning, funding, delivering and managing infrastructure and assets, including how those risks are managed, and
- monitor the delivery of major infrastructure projects, as well as other infrastructure projects identified in strategies, statements or plans adopted by the Minister (Premier) and any other infrastructure project at the request of the Minister.

To fulfil these requirements, ISA developed the *Infrastructure SA Assurance Framework* (ISAAF), which outlines the core regulatory obligations, principles and requirements that supports ISA’s legislative mandate and aligns with the Premier’s Statement of Expectations.

This **ISA Assurance Guide** (‘Guide’) supports the ISAAF implementation. This Guide provides definitions and guidance on how the ISAAF is applied across government and throughout the project lifecycle, including the roles and responsibilities of Sponsor Agencies for registering and reporting of projects/programs and for Sponsor Agencies and Assurance Review Teams when undertaking assurance reviews.



Sponsor Agency Requirements

Under Premier & Cabinet Circular 049, public authorities must comply with the ISAAF when undertaking:

- a) an infrastructure project with an estimated capital investment value of \$50 million (excl. GST) and above,
- b) an infrastructure program with an estimated total capital investment value of \$50 million (excl. GST) and above per annum,
- c) any other infrastructure project or program that the Minister or Cabinet has approved to be monitored and assured by ISA.

A Sponsor Agency is a public authority that initiates a major infrastructure project/program.

Registration

A Sponsor Agency must register a project/program once it meets the above threshold with ISA. The registration form is on the Infrastructure SA website, or by contacting the ISA Assurance Team and includes information required for a Gate 0 Review.

High Value / High Risk Methodology

Once a project is registered, ISA and the Sponsor Agency assess the project using a high value/high risk (HV/HR) methodology to determine the project's level of assurance, ie risk Tier, that informs the frequency of project reporting and Assurance Reviews.

The HV/HR assessment is applied at key points across the lifecycle of the project, which may raise or lower the assurance risk Tier, supporting an assurance approach that is proportionate to the risk profile of the project at that point in time to deliver the greatest value to agencies and government.

ISA will determine the appropriate risk Tier in consultation with the ISA Board and/or Assurance Committee as appropriate.

The application of the HV/HR assessment across the project lifecycle is provided at **Appendix A**.

Sponsor Agency Reporting

This section provides guidance for sponsor agencies on project reporting requirements:

- Frequency and standard,
- Progress of review recommendations (i.e. Recommendation Action Plans) and supporting documentation.

Major infrastructure projects and programs are monitored to provide Cabinet with transparent and continuous oversight on their management and delivery.

Effective monitoring involves a commitment to establishing and building relationships and supplying comprehensive information on an ongoing basis.

Sponsor agencies shall provide ISA with projects/programs reports in accordance with the requirements of the respective assurance risk Tier and as required for funding partners.

Minimum Project Reporting Frequency

Phase	Project Risk Tier			
	1	2	3	4
Planning (to Gate 2)	Bi-monthly	Quarterly	Quarterly	By agreement
Pre-Delivery (to Gate 3)*	Monthly	Bi-monthly	Quarterly	By agreement
Delivery (to Gate 4)	Monthly	Monthly	Quarterly	By agreement
Post Completion (to Gate 5)	By exception (6 monthly)	By exception (min annually)	By exception (min annually)	By agreement (min annually)

*Note, Pre-Delivery includes the period from investment decision to commencement of main works construction

Project Reporting Standards

Sponsor agencies will provide ISA with existing project governance reports to streamline reporting and limit duplication. These include:

- Project/proposal Executive Governance Committee reports such as Project Steering Committee, Executive Leadership Team, Alliance Leadership Team Reports, and
- Project Director/Manager level reports such as Alliance Management Team and Project Control Group or equivalent reports.

Agency governance reporting is relevant to the project phase and will include as a minimum:

- **Cost** - including total or estimated total capital investment, approved budget, monthly forecasts, monthly actuals, projected cashflows over the life of the project and final cost.
- **Scope** – original, current position, material changes, performance to approved scope
- **Schedule** – baseline, progress to date, critical path to completion and key milestones
- **Risk** – register with a minimum of top 5 risks relevant to the phase.
- **Stakeholder** – issues/risks/obligations/decisions

Recommendation Action Plans

Sponsor Agencies must respond to assurance review recommendations outlining the proposed steps to action and resolve the recommendations. The steps are documented within a Recommendation Action Plan (RAP), which a Sponsor Agency must provide with the finalisation of the review.

Sponsor agencies shall provide RAP progress updates to ISA in accordance with the following table.

Rating	Tier 1-2	Tier 3 and 4
Critical	Monthly	Monthly
Essential	Monthly	Quarterly
Suggested	Quarterly	Quarterly

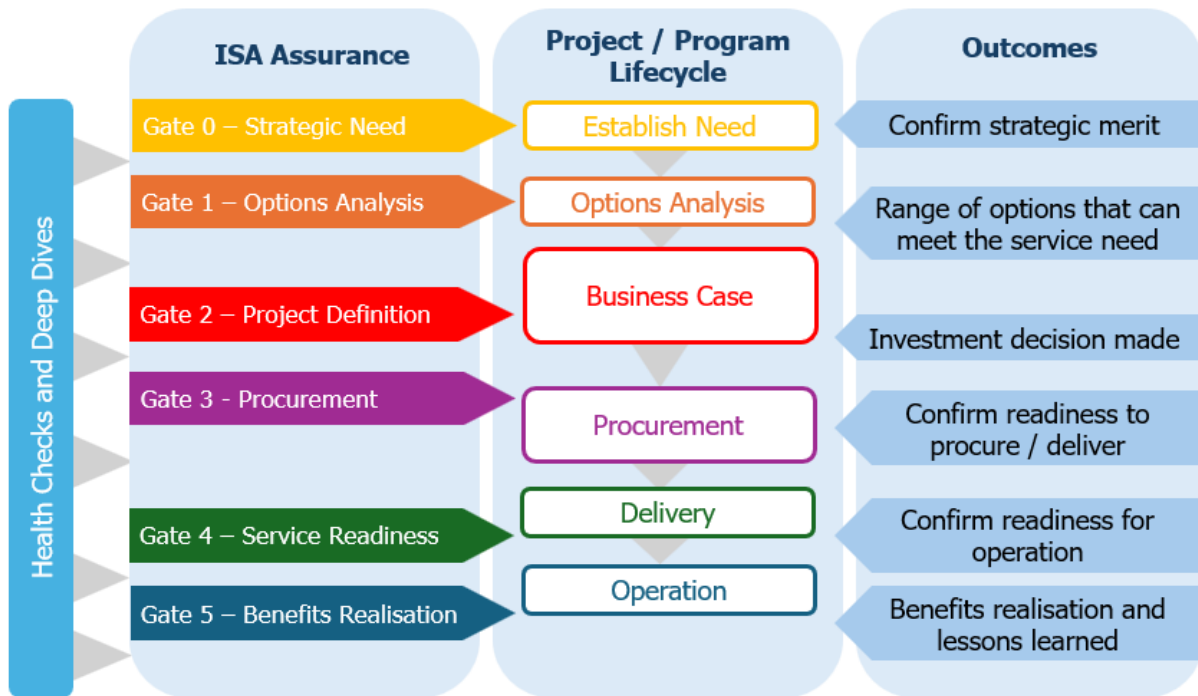
RAP responses, and particularly the closeout of Critical Recommendations, are reported to Cabinet.

Evidence supporting the closure of recommendations must be provided to ISA. Reporting is required until all actions are closed including those from Gate 5 Reviews.

Assurance Reviews

Assurance Reviews are an objective point in time assessment of a project that provides Cabinet, as investor, with confidence that a project is being well planned, developed, managed and delivered. Assurance Reviews are not an audit but a means to support agencies achieve enhanced outcomes through independent expert reviewer recommendations.

Assurance Reviews occur at key project milestones or points across the life of the project. The High Value/High Risk (HV/HR) methodology is applied to determine the assurance risk Tier for the project. The project may be reassessed using the HV/HR methodology across key points in the project lifecycle, which may result in a revised assurance tier or a need to undertake a review.



Assurance Review Types

The table below describes the line of inquiry for each Gate. ISA may vary the scope or timing of the Gates to ensure the review provides greatest value to government:

Review Type	Description
Gate 0 Strategic Need	Establishes the strategic case for project need, consistent with government and service priorities, and whether further investigation into the potential for an infrastructure solution is warranted.
Gate 1 Options Analysis	Following the establishment of a project need, this Gate assesses how well the project has analysed a range of options to meet the service need and can maximise benefits within a range of cost-effective scenarios. It also considers whether the proposed way forward is achievable and will successfully support the development of the business case.
Gate 2 Project Definition	Reviews the robustness of the Business Case and assesses how well the project has defined and proven that the recommended option best meets the service need, maximises benefits at optimal cost and has an appropriate delivery strategy. Identifies if the project is ready for an investment decision by government if not already provided.
Gate 3 Procurement	Following the investment decision, this Gate investigates and confirms the preparedness, capacity and capability of the Sponsor Agency to procure and deliver the project within Cabinet approved parameters.
Gate 4 Service Readiness	Confirms the readiness of the project to move from construction into operations and service delivery.
Gate 5 Benefits Realisation	Considers how effectively the project has delivered the approved and intended service needs, outcomes and benefits. It reviews the life of the project and lessons learned.
Health Check	Occurs between Gates to respond to previous review recommendations or risks that emerge as the project progresses that changes the project's risk profile. The review will assess the performance of the project in accordance with the ISA Assurance Review Key Focus Areas and any particular matters of concern. It is also used as a check-in for multi-year projects.
Deep Dive	Is in response to one or a small number of highly significant risks that threatens successful progression. The review focus is on the risks drawing in any other matters that are intrinsically linked.

Table 3

Health Checks and Deep Dives may be requested by the Sponsor Agency or recommended by:

- Premier or Cabinet, or delegate
- Sponsor Agency Minister, Chief Executive or SRO
- Chief Executive or ISA Director, Infrastructure Assurance
- An assurance review team (as a recommendation from a previous review).

ISA will then determine if a Health Check or Deep Dive review should be undertaken.

In accordance with the HV/HR methodology the CE ISA may approve the deferral, change in timing, or bypassing of a Gate to cater for the specific risk or needs of a project.

Assurance Reviews by Tier

The table below shows the reviews applied to a project relevant to its assessed risk Tier, noting that under the HV/HR methodology projects may move between tiers over the life of the project.

Review	Tier
Gate 0	All Tiers (1,2,3 and 4)
Gate 1, Gate 2 and Gate 5:	All Tiers (1,2,3 and 4)
Gate 3	Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 (Tier 3 may be subject to HV/HR assessment)
Gate 4	Tier 1 and Tier 2 (Tier 3 subject to a HV/HR assessment)

Undertaking Assurance Reviews

Appendix B provides guidance to project teams, assurance reviewers and broader stakeholders on:

- Assurance Review roles and responsibilities
- Code of Conduct for assurance reviews
- Preparing for an assurance review, planning meeting and stakeholder interviews.

Assurance Review Outcomes

Gate 0 Assessment

ISA will assess, within approximately 10 days of receiving a Gate 0 submission, against a range of criteria including quality, completeness and clarity of information.

The Gate 0 assessment will provide an overall rating to move the initiative to the next phase of development. The initial finding will be shared with the agency who can provide further information to improve the content. The agency can resubmit the submission, withdraw or defer it to a later date.

The priority, criticality and urgency are considered noting alignment to government priorities, the scale and complexity of the problem, consequences of inaction, and potential for an infrastructure solution to resolve the problem.

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.

Project Confidence Assessments

A Project Confidence Assessment (PCA) rating is assigned by the review team on completion of an Assurance Review (excluding Gate 0). The PCA is a single rating at a point in time based on an assessment of the project’s performance and risk profile. It is based upon the line of inquiry, the Key Focus Areas, stakeholder interviews and project documentation evidence.

The PCA rating reflects the review team’s confidence assessment of the project’s ability to deliver (or has delivered), its aims, objectives and outcomes consistent with government expectations.

Whilst a PCA rating is assigned at the time of a review, ISA may review the risk profile after assessing:

- The Sponsor Agency’s performance in addressing recommendations from previous assurance review/s.
- Ongoing ISA monitoring and Sponsor Agency reporting.

A PCA has five grades of confidence, ranging from Very High Confidence (Green) through to Very Low Confidence (Red), with definitions as illustrated:

PCA Rating	Rating Pre Delivery (From Gates 0 to Gate-3)	Rating Delivery (From Gates 3 to Gate 4)	Rating Post-Completion (Gate 5)
Very High Confidence	There is very high confidence that the initiative:		
	<p>...can achieve a successful outcome with a clear scope, time and cost estimate and identified benefits.</p> <p>There are no extreme residual risks identified.</p>	<p>...is delivering a successful outcome. The initiative is well-defined and managed with no extreme residual risks identified.</p>	<p>...has successfully delivered to scope, time and costs, meets users’ needs, and there is evidence of the intended benefits being achieved.</p> <p>There are no extreme residual risks, and the lessons learned have been captured, recorded and applied.</p>
High Confidence	There is high confidence that the initiative:		
	<p>...can deliver a project with a clear scope, time and cost estimate and intended benefits.</p> <p>There are residual risks that will require treatments and ongoing monitoring.</p>	<p>...is delivering a successful outcome. The initiative has appropriate definition and management plans in place, but further work is required to better position it for success.</p> <p>There are residual risks that require treatment and ongoing monitoring.</p>	<p>...has delivered within a revised scope, time or cost. The outcome meets users’ needs and there is evidence of the intended benefits being achieved.</p> <p>There are residual risks that are treated and monitored. Lessons learned have been captured, recorded and have been mostly applied.</p>

PCA Rating	Rating Pre Delivery (From Gates 0 to Gate-3)	Rating Delivery (From Gates 3 to Gate 4)	Rating Post-Completion (Gate 5)
Moderate Confidence	There is moderate confidence that the initiative:		
	<p>...can deliver a project with a clear scope, time and cost estimate. The intended benefits appear feasible subject to additional work to improve, options analysis or time and cost estimation.</p> <p>There are no major unmitigated risks that would threaten successful delivery.</p>	<p>...is delivering a successful outcome. The initiative requires more definition and improved management. There are moderate risks and/or issues that could compromise successful outcomes and require ongoing and effective management.</p>	<p>...has delivered to scope, time and cost and meets users' needs. There is evidence of benefits being realised.</p> <p>Moderate risks to successful asset operations remain and require timely management attention.</p> <p>There is evidence that the project can address these risks and has appropriate support.</p> <p>Lessons learned have been captured, recorded and intended to be applied.</p>
Low Confidence	There is low confidence that the initiative:		
	<p>...can deliver a successful outcome. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate a robust options analysis, time estimate or cost estimate suitable to this stage of the project. Purpose and benefits are not clear.</p> <p>There are major risks or deficiencies identified that require active and effective management.</p>	<p>...is delivering a successful outcome. Changes are required to the project governance, scope, budget, or program. There are major risks identified that require active and effective management.</p>	<p>...has delivered to approved scope, time, cost and/or does not fully meet the end users' needs. There is little evidence of benefits being achieved or likely to be achieved. Major risks remain that are impacting operations of the asset with some evidence of plans to address these issues.</p> <p>Limited evidence of lessons learned captured and recorded for the project.</p>
Very Low Confidence	There is very low confidence that the initiative:		
	<p>...can deliver a successful outcome. There is minimal evidence that the project has a well justified purpose, clear scope, time or cost estimate. There are significant risks that threaten the future viability of the project that will require urgent and significant intervention.</p>	<p>...is delivering a successful outcome. Significant changes to the project's governance, scope, budget and program are required immediately. Significant risks require urgent and immediate mitigation.</p>	<p>...has delivered to approved scope, time and budget. Outcomes have not been delivered and users' needs not met. Major risks remain that require urgent and significant intervention.</p> <p>No evidence of lessons learned captured and recorded for the project.</p>

Assurance Key Focus Areas

Each of the Key Focus Areas (KFA) are examined and assessed relevant to the current phase of the project/program lifecycle. The relevant Review Workbook sets out how each of these KFAs apply at each phase.

KFA	Area of Interest
Scope	Examines strategic alignment, case for change (need), purpose, options, functional requirements.
Cost	Examines budget estimates, cost management, commercial viability and affordability.
Time	Examines schedules and programs including risk allocations, float, contingency, milestones and external impacts.
Impact	Examines benefit identification, management, impact and value of outcomes and benefits – for investor (government), the asset owner, end user and community.
Deliverability	Examines the impacts of governance, capability, capacity and market approach for successful delivery on time and on budget.

KFA Ratings

Each KFA in a Gate Review or Health Check will be issued with one of three ratings:

Rating	Description
Strong	The approach is strong, requirements are being met and/or exceeded and there are no major issues or risks that are not being treated at this stage.
Satisfactory	The approach is satisfactory, requirements are generally being met; however, there are issues or risks that require attention.
Weak	The approach is weak, requirements are generally not being met and there are significant issues or critical/major risks that require immediate attention.

Further information regarding the key questions and expected evidence for each KFA is in the respective Gate Review or Health Check review guide.

Assurance Review Recommendations

Each review will generate recommendations to improve the project/program, which will be recorded in a RAP. Recommendations will be prioritised according to the following definitions:

Title	Description
Critical (Do Now)	The recommendation is critical and urgent. Action is <u>strongly recommended</u> before making any further key decisions. It means that there are significant risks that will seriously impact a successful outcome.
Essential (Do By)	The recommendation is important but not urgent. Action is <u>recommended</u> before making any further key decisions.
Suggested	The recommendation is not considered critical or urgent, but the project will benefit from the uptake of this recommendation to enhance project outcomes.

Sponsor agencies are required to detail how they will address each recommendation, including actions, timing and project team responsibilities.

Recommendation Themes

Each recommendation will be assigned one of the following 15 themes to enable ISA to track performance against KFAs and undertake comparative analysis across all major infrastructure projects and programs.

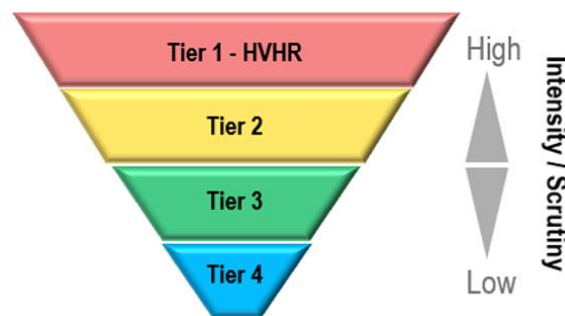
Theme	Definition
1. Objectives and Case for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of what the initiative aims to achieve. Specific and measurable outcomes that define success and aligned with strategy and goals. Explanation of why the initiative is necessary. Articulates the current challenges or pain points. Highlights the risks of doing nothing. Demonstrates the benefits and value of making the change. Often includes data, trends, and stakeholder impacts.
2. Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combining different systems, components, or processes so they work together as a unified whole. Harmonising systems, processes or workflows to avoid duplication or gaps. Verifying that integrated components function as intended before project completion.
3. Benefits Management and Realisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A structured process for identifying, planning, measuring, and monitoring benefits throughout the lifecycle. Ensuring that planned benefits are delivered and sustained after implementation.
4. Stakeholder Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder strategy/management processes, tools, and actions necessary to ensure stakeholders are appropriately involved and informed. Track stakeholder sentiment and involvement throughout the project and define processes for addressing disagreements or resistance.
5. Quality of Project Definition (Business Case)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refers to how well the business case meets the standards needed to justify and support a proposed initiative. It reflects the clarity, completeness, and credibility of the document in demonstrating why the project should proceed. Indicators of High-Quality Business Case include comprehensive and structured content (objectives, options, financials, risks, transparent assumptions and data sources, balanced view of benefits vs. costs and risks, clear link to measurable outcomes and benefits realisation plan and endorsement from key stakeholders.
6. Impact & Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration, documentation and assessment of the economic, financial, social and environmental sustainability impacts of the project/program.
7. Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance refers to the framework of rules, processes, and structures that guide decision-making, accountability, and control. Key Elements include decision-making structure to defines who has authority and responsibility, a framework for consistent accountability and transparency and active senior level support.
8. Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structured application of processes, tools, and techniques to plan, execute and control activities to meet specific objectives within defined scope, time, cost, and quality constraints.

Theme	Definition
9. Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The systematic process of identifying, assessing, and controlling risks. It enables potential threats and opportunities to be managed proactively to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive outcomes.
10. Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structured process of sourcing external providers in a timely, cost-effective, and compliant manner to meet project requirements. Key elements include planning and clearly defining requirements, understanding market and supplier capability and capacity, maintaining ongoing communication and performance monitoring and managing cost, quality, compliance, and risk.
11. Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structured approach used to prepare, support, and guide through transitions or transformations, ensuring success while minimising disruption and resistance. Key elements include effective mechanism to identify the changes necessary to achieve project outcomes.
12. Operational Readiness Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanisms to ensure effective readiness planning, prioritisation, management to transition into live operations with minimal risk and disruption. Operational governance and management structures include training, process validation, system testing, and contingency planning.
13. Lessons Learned and Knowledge Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of capturing insights, experiences, and outcomes from completed projects or activities, and disseminating that information across the organisation to improve future decision-making, enhance performance, and avoid repeating mistakes.
14. Resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of identifying, allocating, and managing the necessary human, financial, and material resources to ensure successful delivery of the project. Key elements include resource planning, capacity management, skills alignment and cost control.
15. Alignment with Government Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant government guidelines, frameworks and processes considered and complied with during project development and delivery. Consideration of approvals pathway.

APPENDIX A: High Value/High Risk Methodology

Assurance reviews provide confidence to Government that funded infrastructure is being well planned, developed and delivered. To maximise the value of this advice to agencies and government, a high value/high risk methodology is applied to enable assurance that is proportionate to the risk profile of each project/program.

Projects are assessed across key points in the life of the project that may raise or lower the assurance risk Tier commensurate with the risk profile of the project at that point on time. A project's risk profile may improve over time and in such cases the value of applying a high level of assurance is diminished. Conversely, if a project's risk profile deteriorates a higher level of assurance is warranted.

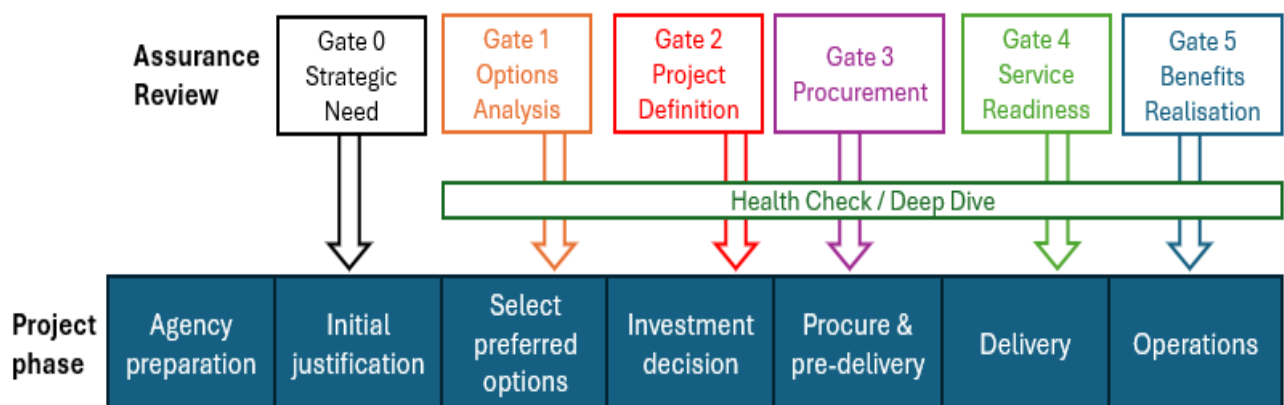


The **ISA Risk Tier Calculator** is predominantly used to identify the relevant risk tier at registration and then subject to need and applicability:

- key project milestones to inform an assurance review, and
- when there are significant changes to the project/program.

ISA may also assess the risk Tier using any other reasonable approach that demonstrates an appropriate level of consideration as approved by the CE or ISA Director Infrastructure Assurance.

Factors that may impact the risk Tier include the performance against scope, budget, schedule and risk. Other factors such as stakeholders, approvals and deliverability may also be considered.



The HV/HR assessment may adjust the overarching risk Tier on an ongoing basis, temporarily if the risk has increased until the risks have been mitigated, to inform a specific focus area for an assurance review or to determine whether a Review is required or may be bypassed.

APPENDIX B: Undertaking Assurance Reviews

Assurance Review Roles and Responsibilities

Infrastructure SA

ISA coordinate the assurance review process and provide support to project and review teams for the review. The Director, Infrastructure Assurance oversees the function with a Manager Infrastructure Assurance assigned as the review lead. The Manager Infrastructure Assurance is the primary liaison point with the Sponsor Agency before, during and after the review. An Assurance Coordinator provides logistical and technical support and works with the review team and the Sponsor Agency to coordinate stakeholder interviews and access to online data rooms.

ISA is responsible for reporting the finding of assurance reviews to the appropriate Cabinet committee.

Sponsor Agency

The Sponsor Agency will nominate a senior executive as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) who holds strategic responsibility and is the single point of overall accountability for the successful delivery of a project/program. Best practice is that the SRO reports to the Chief Executive of the agency.

During an assurance review, the SRO generally assumes the following responsibilities:

- contribute to the Terms of Reference (ToR) prepared by ISA for the review,
- attend the planning meeting to provide an overview to the review team on key aspects of the program/project, and
- receive end of interview day and draft report briefings from the review team, fact check the draft report and provide a response to review recommendations.

The Project Manager has primary responsibility for the day-to-day management of the entire project. They assist the review team obtain a thorough understanding of the project by taking an active part in the review by:

- preparing a planning meeting presentation, and
- providing the document and stakeholder lists prior to the planning meeting, ensure documents are provided for the review team when requested, and stakeholders are informed about the timing and purpose of the interviews.

Assurance Review Team

In accordance with the *Assurance Reviewer Management Framework*, ISA selects review team members with the optimum mix of skills and expertise. It is important to note that reviewers are selected for their impartial and objective expertise. All members of the review team sign conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements with ISA.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are organisations, groups or individuals, either internal or external to government, that are involved or impacted by the project. Stakeholders to be interviewed are identified by either a project team or a review team before or during the planning meeting.

Interviewees are encouraged to be open and transparent during interviews and provide supporting information if requested by the review team or ISA. This will allow the review team to form a true understanding of the project/program. All interviews are confidential, and discussions are not disclosed outside of the review process. Further information regarding interviews can be found in the **Stakeholder Interview** section.

Preparing for an Assurance Review

The assurance review process typically takes 3-4 weeks from the planning meeting. Sponsor agencies should engage with ISA at least 6–8 weeks ahead of each planned review to confirm that a review is required and allow sufficient time to:

- undertake an HV/HR assessment if required,
- ensure the review can be undertaken at the optimal time,
- source and engage the best reviewers with the right expertise,
- develop and finalise the Terms of Reference (ToR),
- develop the document and stakeholder lists and secure key interviewees availability, and
- collate and upload the pre-reading documents ahead of the planning meeting.

Unless requested by ISA, review documentation except for the planning day presentation, should not be created solely for an assurance review. All review documentation must be existing project documentation clearly marked as draft/work in progress or final approved.

The document list is prepopulated and key documents uploaded to the SharePoint online data room by the project team prior to the planning meeting. Any additional documentation requested at the planning meeting must be uploaded into the online data room when requested.

Review Workbooks and Terms of Reference (ToR)

ISA Workbooks outline the line of inquiry for each review and expected evidence.

The specific Terms of Reference for each review is developed by ISA with contributions from the Sponsor Agency/SRO. It includes areas of the project that are within or out of scope and any focus areas/issues that are relevant that ISA or the SRO.

Logistics

Planning Meeting

The purpose of the planning meeting is to:

- introduce the project to the Review Team by the project team,
- review the document list and confirm the documentation required for the review, and
- review the stakeholder list and finalise the schedule for interviewees.

The planning meeting is typically 2 to 3 hours long and may include a site visit. The SRO and/or project team will provide a presentation to the Review Team which should include:

- visual information such as site location, masterplan, images, flyovers etc
- updates from any previous review,
- information relevant to the review, and
- initial response to any specific terms of reference questions.
- The Review Team may ask questions during or after the presentation.

Documents

ISA will establish an online data room for sharing of review documents. The Sponsor Agency will upload documentation relevant to the review to the data room prior to the Planning Meeting.

Review Teams rely on existing good practice project documentation that is clearly labelled as approved, final, or draft.

Minimum project information required at least 5 business days prior to planning meeting:

- Gate 0 (Strategic Assessment) or other feasibility/planning document/s,
- the current primary document relevant to the review (eg Options Analysis /Strategic Business Case or Business Case) “Report” (draft or complete) and any supporting documentation, and
- Completed ISA Document and Stakeholder Lists.

All other supporting information is required **prior** to the planning meeting. Each review workbook will list the minimum expected documentary evidence expected.

The Review Team may request other information it considers relevant for the review.

Interviews

The Review Team will interview key stakeholders involved in the project. The sponsor agency must complete an ISA stakeholder list prior to the planning meeting. Typical interviewees include:

- Senior Responsible Officer (SRO),
- Project Sponsor if not SRO,
- Project Director and/or Project Manager,
- personnel who have contributed into the preparation of the Report including schedulers, communication managers, technical specialists (sponsor and delivery agency),
- external specialists/consultants,
- relevant senior agency representatives including head of the area where the service problem is manifesting, asset owner, Chief Financial Officer, head of the agency’s infrastructure planning and delivery group etc, and
- stakeholders from other agencies, bodies and/or user groups (internal and external) who may be contributing to or benefitting from the proposal.

A stakeholder list will be pre-populated by the Sponsor Agency with key internal and external stakeholders and submitted at least five (5) business days prior to the planning meeting. The Sponsor Agency must ensure that they contact key stakeholders to confirm availability, understand the process and terms of reference. The Review Team may request interviews with additional relevant stakeholders.

Review Team interviews are held on a 1:1 format (ie one stakeholder at a time) to facilitate full and frank discussion. Interviews are usually 1-2 weeks after the planning meeting and held over 2-3 days (approximately, 6-8 per day) to allow the Review Team time to review project documentation consider questions and identify the information to be followed up in interviews. Generally, interviews with Sponsor Agency key stakeholders are held on the first day (with subsequent key personnel in organisational hierarchical order), broader project team members, consultants and external stakeholders across the balance of the remaining interview day(s). Each interview is typically 30-45 minutes in duration.

The review process is structured to seek views from a wide range of stakeholders associated with the project/program and at different levels and functions, both internally and externally to the project. The aim is to gain the broadest understanding of the project and its status.

Interviewees are encouraged to prepare themselves for the interview to consider what is working well, any areas of concern, risk or areas for improvement. The advice and comments will assist the assurance Review Team to provide useful recommendations to better position the project for success. ISA may observe stakeholder interviews but will not participate in discussions.

SRO/ISA Debriefs

At the conclusion of each interview day, the Review Team will provide a briefing to ISA and the SRO on the results and key outcomes from the interviews including indicative thoughts on how the project is meeting the KFA's and the terms of reference. The Review Team will also highlight any gaps in information that needs to be provided or changes to the interview stakeholder list.

The Review Team may also provide insight into the direction of the review report and potential recommendations. A debrief session is typically 30–45 minutes.

A final SRO / ISA review outcomes briefing will occur on conclusion of all interviews and once the Review Team has aligned on their findings. The briefing will include a summary of the Project Performance including the indicative PCA, TOR findings, performance against the KFA's, key risks and indicative recommendations.

Code of Conduct for Assurance Reviews

All participants in the assurance review should act collaboratively. The Review Team will work together to add maximum value to the development, management and delivery of the project. Assurance reviewers will participate in the review in accordance with the following Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct

The assurance Review Team will:

- maintain a professional approach throughout
- be open and honest with each other and encourage interviewees to be so
- use open and exploratory questions
- use constructive and focused questions and avoid an 'audit style' approach
- ensure interviews are confidential and all views are non-attributable
- effectively manage and dedicate the time required (subject to unavoidable issues) to the assurance review by actively listening to the interviewees
- adopt a rigorous, thorough & evidence-based approach
- apply independence and objectivity
- look for and value best/good practice
- appreciate the context of political and environmental drivers
- work as a team and support each other
- ensure the review is a learning experience for all involved
- provide regular feedback sessions to check that assumptions and findings are accurate and relevant and that emerging findings are on the right track
- avoid personal anecdotes and dwelling on past experience.

Review Outcomes

The Review Team will provide a confidence statement on the initiative's ability to deliver the expected outcomes and benefits in accordance with the agreed objectives, include a summary of the rationale and advice on the key risks that could jeopardise viability.

The Project Confidence Assessment (PCA) is a prediction on the likelihood of the project's success, based on the project's documented evidence presented during the review and stakeholder interview statements to effectively satisfy the objectives of the review.

It is understood that any major initiative has risk. The PCA is influenced by the evidence of how well the initiative can anticipate and manage risk and the likelihood of delivering within the approved scope, time, cost, and quality (quantitative and qualitative) outcomes. The assessment is influenced by the number and criticality of recommendations and is an overall assessment of confidence at the point in time. Refer **Project Confidence Assessment ratings and definitions** section in this Guide.

The Review Team will also assess the project's performance across the 5 Key Focus Areas (KFAs) and assess the performance of each as Strong, Satisfactory or Weak. Refer **Key Focus Areas** section in this Guide.

Review Recommendations

Review Teams will make recommendations based on opportunities, deficiencies and gaps linked to the TOR and KFAs. Recommendations must be succinct, unambiguous, and be able to be read in isolation. When appropriately acted upon they should deliver positive improvements that better position the project for success.

Recommendations are rated according to their urgency and criticality and assigned a theme. Refer **Assurance Review Recommendations** and **Recommendation Themes** sections.

The Review Team will also consider previous review recommendations (if applicable) and assess whether they have been adequately addressed and closed. If a recommendation is not closed and no longer valid it can be superseded by a new recommendation or if still valid, be maintained. Any previous recommendation that has not been addressed and has been found to contribute to a new recommendation shall be clearly noted.

Review Finalisation

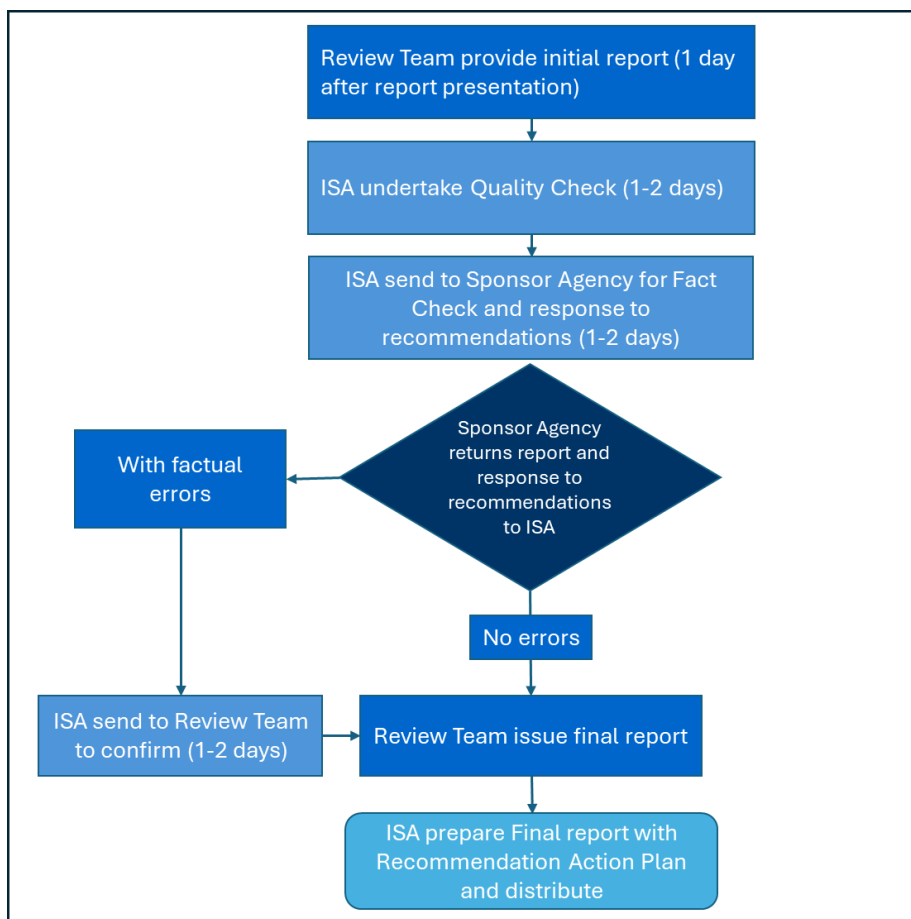
Review Report and Recommendation Schedule

Following the conclusion of interview days, the Review Team will:

- prepare the review report (over 1-2 days) using an ISA report template and a Recommendation Schedule, which, once the agency provides their response, becomes the Recommendation Action Plan (RAP)
- present an overview of the key findings to ISA and the SRO and issue the review report to ISA.

ISA will then undertake a quality check (1-2 days) before forwarding to the Sponsor Agency SRO for fact checking (1-2 days). The Sponsor Agency must respond to ISA within this time with any factual errors in the report and the initial response to the recommendations. If requested by ISA, Agencies must reference review documentation in support of factual errors. At the end of the fact check phase, the review team will consider any factual errors, and if agreed update the report and issue the final version.

ISA and the review team may complete the report at the **end of the fact check phase** even if a Sponsor Agency has failed to respond.



Recommendation Action Plan

The project team must provide the final response to the recommendations within 10 business days of the Final Report being issued. The project team must clearly detail the response, when it will be actioned and provide evidence to support a recommendation close out. Regular progress updates shall be submitted to ISA until the recommendations are all actioned and closed out.

Subsequent assurance reviews will review the status and actions taken on previous review recommendations. The Review Team will form a view on the timeliness and effectiveness of the actions taken to inform the assurance review and any further recommendations.

ISA reports the response and progress of review recommendations to Cabinet, the ISA Board and Assurance Committee.

Review Report Distribution

Review reports are prepared for:

- Cabinet (and/or sub-committee) to provide objective insight into the status of the project and any key risks and are classified as **'Sensitive: SA Cabinet'**
- the Sponsor Agency to assist with managing risk and better positioning projects for success.

Copies are also provided to the ISA Board and Assurance Committee. ISA may also submit the report to the Sponsor Agency's Minister.

The Review Team must not retain any project information or distribute copies of any versions of review reports directly to sponsor agencies, project teams or any other party.

ISA or the Sponsor Agency CE, or delegate, may distribute the final review report at their discretion, noting the confidential nature of the review report.

APPENDIX C: Glossary

Term	Definition
Cabinet	For the purposes of this document, Cabinet refers to the full Cabinet and/or Cabinet Committees of the South Australian Government.
Capital Investment Value	In accordance with the <i>Infrastructure SA Act</i> , capital investment value of a project includes all costs necessary to establish the project (including design, construction and land costs but not including GST).
Delivery Agency	The State Government agency appointed by to deliver an infrastructure project/program on its behalf. In South Australia, infrastructure can be delivered by sponsor agencies (in their own right); a delivery agency that specialises in project delivery (for example, the Department for Infrastructure and Transport), or non-government organisations
High Value High Risk (HVHR)	A HVHR methodology provides for levels of assurance and reporting to be in proportion to a project’s risk profile and investment from State Government.
Major Infrastructure Project/Program ¹	In accordance with the <i>Infrastructure SA Act</i> : A project to provide infrastructure that has a capital investment value of \$50 million or more or, if some other amount (whether greater or smaller) is prescribed by regulation for the purposes of this definition, that other amount; or A program to provide infrastructure that has a capital investment value of \$50 million or more per annum, if some other amount (whether greater or smaller) is prescribed by regulation for the purposes of this definition, that other amount; or A project, or a project of a class, to provide infrastructure that is determined by the Minister to be a project, or project of a class, requiring oversight or coordination by Infrastructure SA.
Public Authority	As defined by the South Australian Public Finance and Audit Act 1987.
Public Sector Agencies	Public sector agencies as defined in the <i>Public Sector Act 2009</i> .
Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Sponsor Agencies will nominate a senior responsible officer (SRO) as the individual that holds the single point of accountability for each project/program. An SRO is a senior executive that reports directly to the Chief Executive of the public sector authority.
Sponsor Agency	A Sponsor Agency is a public sector authority that initiates a major infrastructure project/program, justifies the initiative, secures the funding and ensures the project/program is delivered in accordance with the Sponsor Agency’s needs and Government approval.

Reference Material

The Review Team and Sponsor Agency should also refer to the following associated documentation:

- ISA Assurance Framework and Assurance Workbooks,
- Review Report and Recommendation Schedule templates,
- Planning Meeting Agenda, Document and Stakeholder List templates, and
- Reviewer Management Framework.

¹ Within this document any reference to ‘projects’, generally also includes ‘programs’