The Gateway Review

Helping your projects succeed on time on budget

Gateway Review process

Gateway reviews provide the project's Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) with advice that can improve or advance a project. The primary purpose of the review is to add value to the project team's own expertise in order to help them to be more successful in delivering the project. While the review process follows a standard methodology, the review team is flexible in implementing the methodology. Each project is reviewed on its own merits, and the advice provided is tailored to the relevant needs of the project.

The Gateway Review Process is not a substitute for a rigorous governance framework by the Public Authority, but rather a support for the framework. It complements the Strategic Asset Management Framework that defines the Western Australian Government's good practice for capital investment planning and delivery.

Criteria for a Gateway Review

General Procurement Direction 2024/03 requires the following categories of projects to complete a minimum of two Gateway reviews, with one of these being at the Business Case gate:

- Infrastructure projects/programs that are valued at $100 million and above
- ICT projects/programs valued at $10 million and above
- Oher projects identified by the Department of Treasury

Where a project/program meets the above thresholds, an agency must submit a Project Authorisation document to Gatewayunit@finance.wa.gov.au.

The Department of Finance (Finance) will then contact the agency to discuss appropriate Gateways for review. When agreed, Finance will confirm in writing. Where a project/program meets the above thresholds, and an agency does not wish to undertake a review, an agency may apply for an exemption. Agencies seeking an exemption must complete a risk assessment, and forward the assessment to Finance for consideration.

The cost of a Gateway Review is borne by the agency seeking the review.

Gateway methodology

Gateway reviews focus on the key issues for a project at the time of review. Six key decision points (gates) in a project's lifecycle have been established as areas of probing and consideration. This forms part of the Gateway methodology.

The methodology involves a team of up to four independent experts conducting short, intensive and timely reviews at key decision points during the life of the project. The six gates are depicted in the diagram.

Strategic Assessment

Business Case

Readiness for Market

Tender Decision

Readiness for Service

Benefits Evaluation

Key people in the Gateway Review process

SRO	Owner of the overall business or service change that is dependent on the project
Review team	A team of independent practitioners who undertake the review
Interviewees	Stakeholders who have input to the project or may be impacted by it
Gateway Unit	Coordinates the reviews

The SRO is often called the 'Project Sponsor'. Commonly this will be the person to whom the Project Director reports. As the Gateway review is conducted for the SRO, they need to be involved in arranging access to documentation and stakeholders. The SRO would normally be updated on progress of the review at the end of each day. The review report is prepared for the SRO who owns the final report.

Gateway Review Team

Gateway review team members are independent practitioners from outside the project who are selected for their relevant experience and expertise. They may be sourced from the public or private sectors based on their suitability for the project being reviewed. They will have been trained in the Gateway review methodology, and registered by the Gateway Unit.

The review team obtain their understanding of the project and its current status from reviewing project documents, from discussions at the planning meeting and from information gathered at interview.

Stages in the Gateway Review process

Stage 1: Initiating a review (2–3 months before review)

- Initial meeting between Gateway Unit and SRO to discuss review requirements and dates.

Stage 2: Preparation (6–8 weeks before review)

- Gateway Unit proposes review team for SRO approval.
- Formal engagement of review team by Gateway.
- Draft document list prepared by agency.
- Interviewees booked in by agency.

Stage 3: Planning meeting (2–3 weeks before review)

- Project overview delivered by agency.
- Discussion of key issues and stakeholders by agency.
- Finalisation of documents and interviewees by review team and agency.
- Distribute documents to review team after the planning meeting.

Stage 4: Conducting the review (short duration: 3–5 days)

- Review project documentation by review team.
- Interview key project stakeholders by review team.
- Daily briefing with SRO and review team.
- Review team presents draft report to SRO.

Stage 5: Post review (1 week after review)

- Final report sent to SRO, with a copy to Gateway.
- Collection and distribution of feedback by Gateway.
- Agency complete Action Plan template for any Red recommendations.
- Agency informs Minister if project receives Red recommendations or overall rating of Red or Amber/Red.

Interviews

The interview stage is a key component of any Gateway review. It gives access to those who are closest to the relevant issues, allowing the review team to quickly gain an understanding of the project and any potential difficulties. Discussions are held in an open and friendly manner, are entirely confidential and non-attributable.

They are two-way discussions, rather than formal interviews. Interviewees should have the confidence to volunteer their thoughts, concerns and issues in the knowledge that only by obtaining an honest and accurate picture of the project can the review team offer the SRO the best possible advice.

In general no prior preparation is necessary, as the review team will be interested in an interviewee's current understanding of the project, their role within it and how it may affect their area of responsibility.

Typical subject areas explored in an interview include:

- Project aims, objectives, deliverables and schedules
- Stakeholders
- Business case, funding and budget
- Relevant government policies
- Any problems, issues or potential risks

Not every interviewee is expected to have knowledge of all areas explored - questions will evolve around each individual's area of expertise. It should be emphasised that the interview is not a test of knowledge of the project, it is an opportunity to capture different perspectives.

Please note any reference to 'projects' also includes 'programs'.

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