

Glossary

This glossary contains those terms that have a specific meaning in a programme using MSP.

It excludes the documents created as a result of implementing the MSP integrated framework. These are listed in alphabetical order in Appendix A.

aggregated risk

The combined effect of risk to the programme objectives when risks are viewed collectively rather than individually. This could include the outputs of particular scenarios or risk combinations.

approach

The term used to describe a mandatory section of the programme strategy. Approaches establish tailored governance and controls for the particular work.

assumption

A statement that is taken as being true for the purposes of planning, but which could change later. An assumption is made where some facts are not yet known. There is a risk that assumptions are not stable and therefore cannot be relied on.

assurance

A discipline that provides transparency and confidence to the sponsoring group that the programme will meet its objectives by focusing activities on the most risky aspects of the programme.

audit

A type of assurance activity that provides a systematic and independent examination of records vs a defined standard.

baseline

A reference level against which an entity is monitored and controlled.

benefit

The measurable improvement resulting from an outcome perceived as an advantage by the investing organization(s) and which contributes towards one or more organizational objectives.

benefit erosion

An undesirable situation where the quantum of realized benefits is reduced over time. In business as usual, for example, resource efficiencies claimed by the programme are reduced by hiring additional staff or contractors.

benefits management

The identification, definition, tracking, realization, and optimization of benefits within and beyond a programme.

best practice

A defined and proven method of managing events effectively.

budget

The sum of the estimates of income and expenditure for the programme that are delegated to the roles in the programme organization.

business as usual (BAU)

The ways of working used by an organization to achieve its objectives in its steady state.

business change manager (BCM)

A role that is accountable to the programme board and has overall and ongoing responsibility for the successful day-to-day adoption of new capabilities in the investing organization(s) in support of the realization of outcomes of benefit on behalf of the senior responsible owner (SRO).

capability

The completed set of project outputs required to deliver an outcome; this exists prior to transition. It is a service, function, or operation that enables the organization to exploit opportunities.

cash flow

The net amount of cash and cash-equivalents that the programme requires to pay for resources over time.

change agents

The people deployed by the investing organization(s) to shape, drive, and implement change.

change control

The procedure that ensures that all changes which may affect the programme's agreed objectives are identified and assessed, and then approved, rejected, or deferred.

change recipients

The people in the investing organization(s) who are expected to change their ways of working.

community of practice

A learning network of people who share a skill and who improve as they interact and learn from each other on a regular basis.

continual improvement

A delivery mode used for improvement work that enables an organization to identify waste in a process or system and work to eliminate this.

corporate governance

The means by which an organization is directed and controlled. At the level of a legal entity, corporate governance is focused on maintaining a sound system of internal control by which the directors and officers of the organization ensure that effective management systems are in place to protect assets, earning capacity, and the reputation of the organization.

corporate portfolio

The totality of the change initiatives within an organization; it may comprise a number of programmes, stand-alone projects, and other initiatives that achieve congruence of change.

current state

The existing operating model and performance of the organization(s) that will be impacted by a programme. Also called 'as-is state'.

decision point

An event or occurrence that triggers the need for programme governance to make decisions about the future of the programme.

decision quality

A concept that supports organizations in making appropriate decisions by focusing on the decision-making process.

decision tree

A technique that uses a tree-like model to evaluate different options to a problem by considering conditions, probabilities, and consequences.

delegated limits of authority

The limits for decision-making that are delegated to individual roles in an organization; the limits define the levels of accountability of those roles.

dependency

An activity, output, decision, or resource that is required to achieve an aspect of the programme.

dis-benefit

The measurable decline resulting from an outcome perceived as negative by the investing organization(s) and which detracts from one or more organizational objectives.

document

A record, in any format, used to evidence application of the MSP integrated framework.

enterprise agility

A condition of an organization that is able to be flexible and responsive to drivers in its environment. Programme management enables enterprise agility. Also called 'corporate agility' or 'organizational agility'.

financial contingency

The financial allowance that the investing organization(s) decides to make available to deal with identified and unidentified risks.

financial measure of benefit

A metric that enables benefit to be evaluated in financial terms, e.g. cash saved or revenue growth.

funding mechanism

The way(s) that the investing organization(s) chooses to provide finances to the programme over time.

future state

The defined future state of the organization at the end of the programme and documented in the target operating model. Also called the 'to-be state' or 'end-state'.

gated review

A structured review of a project, programme, or portfolio as part of the formal assurance arrangements carried out at key decision points in the lifecycle to ensure that the decision to invest as per the agreed business case remains valid.

health check

A type of assurance activity that examines a snapshot of performance status in order to identify which areas are going as planned and which need attention. Unlike audits, health checks are focused on learning and knowledge capture rather than compliance with a standard.

hybrid project lifecycle

A project delivery mode that combines a linear lifecycle for some phases or activities with an iterative lifecycle for others.

incremental progression

An approach to delivering a programme that focuses on delivering benefits of value to stakeholders throughout the programme lifecycle, adapting as necessary to align with new information.

investing organization

The body that carries the risks associated with funding the programme and realizing the beneficial outcome.

investment appraisal

A collection of techniques used to identify the viability of an investment as part of the creation of the business case. The purpose of investment appraisal is to assess the viability of decisions and the value they generate.

issue

An unplanned event that has occurred and requires management action. It could be a problem, query, change request, or a risk that has occurred.

issue owner

The person who is assigned to take responsibility for resolving the issue to the satisfaction of the programme's governance boards.

iterative project lifecycle

A project delivery mode that repeats aspects of the design or delivery with the objective of managing any uncertainty of scope by allowing outputs to evolve as learning and discovery take place.

key performance indicator (KPI)

A metric (either financial or non-financial) that is used to set and measure progress towards an organizational objective.

knowledge

An asset embedded tacitly in the minds of individuals or codified explicitly as information. Most knowledge is tacit and only becomes explicit when there is an investment of effort to do so.

landing point

A control point, following delivery of a step-change in capability and benefits realization (tranche), at which a programme can be redirected or closed.

lessons learned

Forms of new knowledge and/or understanding that arise from experience and which have been explicitly learned by embedding them into ways of working.

lifecycle

Defines the interrelated steps, stages, phases, or processes that provide a structure for governing the progression of work.

linear project lifecycle

A project delivery mode that aims to complete the delivery of outputs within a single pass through a set of distinct phases, completed sequentially.

maturity assessment

An assurance activity that enables the assessment and benchmarking of a programme vs a framework such as P3M3.

multimodal delivery

The selection of project lifecycles and/or methods of delivering the work of a programme that are appropriate to the task, the team, the individuals (including customers, stakeholders, leaders, and workers), and the context.

non-financial measure of benefit

A metric that enables a benefit (e.g. customer satisfaction) to be counted but not evaluated in financial terms.

opportunity

An uncertain event that would, if it occurred, have a favourable impact on programme objectives. Also called a positive risk or upside risk.

organizational ability

The overall capability of an organization to perform the work required to deliver outcomes of benefit with its current people, processes, and practices.

organizational capacity

The amount of work that an organization can deliver in a given period of time.

outcome

The result of change, normally affecting real-world behaviour and/or circumstances. Outcomes are desired when a change is conceived. They are achieved as a result of the activities undertaken to effect the change.

output

The tangible or intangible deliverable of an activity.

P3M3

The Portfolio, Programme and Project Management Maturity Model that provides a framework with which organizations can assess their current performance and put in place improvement plans.

pace

The timing of programme delivery to ensure the appropriate balance between a number of factors. The factors include delivery of capabilities, achievement of desired programme outcomes, available funds, maintenance of current performance levels, and business as usual (BAU) activities.

policy

Formally documented management expectations and intentions, used to direct decisions and activities.

portfolio

The totality of an organization's investment (or segment thereof) in the changes required to achieve its strategic objectives.

principle

A guiding obligation that is continually required to achieve value from programme management.

process

A structured set of activities that define the sequence of actions and their inputs and outputs to achieve a specific objective.

programme

A temporary structure designed to lead multiple interrelated projects and other work in order to progressively achieve outcomes of benefit for one or more organizations.

programme board

The governance board with delegated authority to drive delivery of the outcomes of benefit of the programme within the defined constraints. Members of the programme board include (as a minimum) the senior responsible owner (SRO), the programme manager, the business change manager (BCM), and the leader of the programme office.

programme environment

The internal and external context of the programme comprising the ecosystem of stakeholders and the business as usual (BAU) operations and functions of the investing organization(s).

programme governance

The framework of authority and accountability applied by the investing organization(s) to control the work of the programme and ensure the creation of value.

programme management

The management of the temporary structure designed to lead multiple interrelated projects and other work in order to progressively achieve outcomes of benefit for one or more organizations.

programme manager

A role that is accountable to the programme board and has overall and ongoing responsibility for the successful day-to-day leadership of the programme in support of the senior responsible owner (SRO).

programme office

A governance-supporting office, led by the programme office lead, with primary responsibility for managing delivery and capacity controls for the programme. The programme office may be part of a wider governance office such as a portfolio management office, or may work with other relevant governance offices such as a project management office or a centre of excellence.

programme organization structure

The temporary organization that has been put in place to deliver the programme, including the governance boards and supporting offices.

programme risk

An uncertain event that, if it occurs, will have an effect on the achievement of the programme's objectives. The exposure of the programme's objectives to risk is determined by multiplying the perceived likelihood of each threat or opportunity occurring by an estimate of the size of its impact on one or more of the objectives.

programme risk appetite

The amount of risk the investing organization(s) is willing to accept in pursuing the benefits of the programme.

project

A temporary organization that is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business outputs according to a specified business case.

proximity (of risk)

The time factor of risk (i.e. when the risk may occur). The impact of a risk may vary in severity depending on when the risk occurs.

register

A formal repository, managed by the programme manager, that requires agreement by the sponsoring group on its format, composition, and use. MSP has three registers: issue register, risk register, and decision register.

resources

The people, information, equipment, facilities, and funding required to deliver the planned work.

retrospective

A regular event that looks at how the process of doing work can be improved.

risk assessment

The term used for the identification, analysis, and evaluation of risks.

risk connectivity

An analysis of the relationships between risks, providing insight into how they might unfold.

risk identification

The determination of what could pose a risk; a process to describe and list sources of risk (threats and opportunities).

risk owner

The person who is assigned to take responsibility for responding to a risk to the satisfaction of the programme's governance boards.

risk prioritization

The process of determining which risks matter the most by considering the likelihood of occurrence, the size of impact on objectives should the risk occur, and (sometimes) other factors such as risk proximity.

risk universe

A visualization of all the types of risk that could affect an entity.

senior responsible owner (SRO)

The single individual with ongoing accountability for the successful delivery of the outcomes of the programme. The role is accountable to the sponsoring group and chairs the programme board. Also known in some organizations as a sponsor.

sensitivity analysis

A technique for understanding how different sources of uncertainty relate to the overall risk to objectives.

socio-political complexity

Difficulties facing the programme as a result of the number and divergence of the following factors: the people involved; the level of politics or power-play to which the programme is subjected; the lack of stakeholder/sponsorship commitment; the degree of resistance to the work being undertaken; a lack of shared understanding of the programme's goals, a failure to align with strategic goals; and the hidden agendas or conflicting priorities of stakeholders.

sponsoring group

The governance board, which includes the senior leaders who are accountable to the executives of the respective investing organizations. The sponsoring group is responsible for ensuring the alignment of the programme's objectives with the strategic direction of the organizations or organizational units involved.

stakeholder

Any individual, group, or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceives itself to be affected by, a programme.

stakeholder analysis

The process of identifying stakeholders and prioritizing the level and type of engagement of each, depending on features such as their power, interest, influence, and alliances.

stakeholder engagement

A way of exercising influence and achieving positive outcomes through effective management of relationships.

stakeholder mapping

A set of techniques that enables visualization of stakeholders and their relative position in the network of individuals and groups that can affect, or be affected by, the programme.

target operating model

A detailed description of the future state of the investing organization(s) after the programme has finished, including roles and responsibilities, culture, processes, technology, infrastructure, information and data, and knowledge and learning.

temporary structure

The governance boards, supporting offices, and roles that are established to manage the programme.

terms of reference

The scope and limitations of the governance boards and supporting offices within the programme organization.

theme

An essential aspect of governance required to ensure that the programme is aligned with the principles. Themes are collectively applied during the processes throughout the programme lifecycle.

threat

An uncertain event that would, if it occurred, have a detrimental impact on the programme's objectives. Also called a negative or downside risk.

three lines of defence

The provision of three levels of assurance in line with the levels of delegated authority within the programme's organization.

timebox

A finite period of time when work is carried out to achieve a goal or meet an objective. The deadline should not be moved, as the method of managing a timebox is to prioritize the work inside it. At a low level a timebox will be a matter of days or weeks (e.g. a sprint). Higher-level timeboxes act as aggregated timeboxes and contain lower-level timeboxes (e.g. stages).

tranche

The work required to deliver a step-change in capability and benefits realization. Several interrelated projects and other work may be involved in a tranche. Work may be delivered incrementally across several tranches.

transition

The work done to hand over, commission, and adopt capabilities into business as usual (BAU) to embed outcomes of benefit.

version control

The control of a specific product baseline (e.g. a document or version of computer code) that enables users to know they are using the most up-to-date information.

vision

The desired future state of the investing organization(s) after the programme is completed.