



Infrastructure  
and Projects  
Authority

MOD, XXXXXX

## Stage Gate Assessment

### Stage Gate 0 / 3 Annual Review

Template Version	V3.0 2021
Report Version:	3 FINAL
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO):	XXXX XXXX
Date of Osmotherley Appointment letter issued to SRO:	XX XXX 2023
Programme or Project Title	XXXXXXX
Does this review cover the entire Project / Programme?	Yes
Department/Organisation of the programme/project	Ministry of Defence (MOD)
Agency or NDPB (if applicable):	n/a
Programme Director:	XXXX XXXX
Business Case stage reached:	Full Business Case (Approved 2021)
Decision/approval point this report informs:	Review Note for an Approved Budgetary Level (ABL) uplift
Review Start Date:	XX XXX 2023
Review End Date:	XX XXX 2023
Review Team Leader:	XXXX XXXX
Review Team Members:	XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX
Report Distribution:	SRO, IPA
Previous Review:	
IPA ID Number:	XXXX
GMPP ID Number	XXXXXXX

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### About this report

This report is an evidence-based snapshot of the programme's/project's status at the time of the review. It reflects the views of the independent review team, based on information evaluated over the review period, and is delivered to the SRO immediately at the conclusion of the review.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/infrastructure-and-projects-authority>

## 1. Stage Gate Assessment (SGA)

See Annex A for SGA criteria and definition

All Gate Review Guidance and Workbooks can be found [here](#).

The SGA rating is **AMBER**

The Review Team (RT) heard that there is a compelling strategic case for this programme to replace an aging PLATFORM fleet and bring a new critical capability to the XXX XXX (XX) community that meets the UK National Policy requirements. There was clear strategic alignment, across all interviewees, that procurement of NEW PLATFORM through Foreign Military Sales (FMS) would meet the National Policy requirements and provides critical interoperability with INTERNATIONAL PARTNER counterparts and is also vital in terms of the UK/INTERNATIONAL PARTNER relationships.

The RT were impressed by the leadership demonstrated by the SRO and the wider enterprise to protect the relationship with the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER, drive costs down, develop a robust delivery programme and maintain momentum across the team during a significant period of delay.

Costs have grown because of the IR decision to delay for 3 years and additional cost growth because of inflation. As such, affordability was identified as a key challenge for the programme and is expected to remain so. Nevertheless, the RT heard there was confidence that the Programme's affordability challenge could be managed and a consensus on the importance of the Programme for TLB capability.

UK certification of NEW PLATFORM is on the critical path and will be challenging but there is an agreed and mature approach to certification. It is important for the SRO to ensure that this approach will be agile enough to meet the "No White Space" intent with spiral developments.

The RT understand that NEW PLATFORM is a "digitally enabled" platform and step change from the current fleet. The Information DLOD will be critically important and although DELIVERY ORGANISATION is undertaking discovery work, it will be vital that direction and support from SENIOR STAKEHOLDER in TLB HQ is sought early, to both ensure that Info risks do not materialise as issues and reduce the probability of unforeseen risks manifesting later in the programme.

The resourcing of the programme has challenges and while XXXXXX is relatively well resourced, it is reliant on skilled contractors with finite contracts that will need to endure to maintain the SQEP. To deliver the Programme as scheduled, a wider issue needs to be agreed to support transition to NEW PLATFORM which will either reduce the operational outputs of XXXX or increase the workforce capacity of both Crew and Maintainers during the transition period.

Whilst significant effort must remain across the enterprise to resource the Programme with the necessary SQEP to deliver the capability, if the Programme receives the ministerial approval it requires to proceed, it is the RT's view that it is on course for delivery and there is a clear route to meet the requirement.

The detailed risks and recommendations are included in the body of this report and if addressed are likely to improve the success of this programme.

## 2. Summary of concerns, evidence and recommendations

This section summarised the recommendations made by the Review Team and shows the key risks and issues that they address. The **recommendations are listed in priority order of impact**. Please refer to Annex E for a breakdown of the recommendation classifications and the definitions for Critical, Essential and Recommended.

Priority	Recommendation	Risk	Classification	Critical, Essential, Recommend
1	<p><b>Resources:</b> The SRO should carry out a programme-wide resourcing capability review in conjunction with DELIVERY TEAM to ensure that they collectively have the right skilled resources, and appropriate resilience for critical posts, at the right time in the Programme, and advise TLB Command of the consequences of not achieving this.</p> <p><i>(See paragraph 5.37)</i></p>	There is a risk that key capability gaps continue which is likely to have a detrimental effect on the schedule and cost.	10	Critical
2	<p><b>XXX Team:</b> The SRO to ensure the XXX team is sufficiently resourced with the right skills and capability and leadership to support the transition into in-service operations.</p> <p><i>(See paragraph 5.52)</i></p>	The XXX team insufficiently resourced in time to make a smooth transition to operations resulting in an increased likelihood of schedule delay.	10	Critical

3	<p><b>Affordability and Efficiency:</b> The SRO should consider the level of Risk inside Costing (RIC) and ensure that the programmes continue to drive efficiencies to create sufficient financial headroom.</p> <p>(See paragraph 5.12)</p>	There is a risk that further cost pressures emerge as the Programme matures and moves into the delivery phase, including costs outside of the existing scope, for example maintaining 'no white space' beyond year 3.	5	Essential by XXX 24
4	<p><b>Information DLOD:</b> The SRO to engage with SENIOR STAKEHOLDER to seek direction and support for the Information DLOD within XXXXXX that will both enhance and optimise digital enablement for NEW PLATFORM.</p> <p>(See paragraph 5.45)</p>	There is a risk that without the involvement of SENIOR STAKEHOLDER in setting the direction and supporting the Information DLOD within XXXXXX that relies heavily on digital enablement, that risks may emerge and impact the overall capability.	12	Essential by XXX 24
5	<p><b>Certification:</b> The SRO with DELIVERY TEAM review the current certification strategy and ensure that it has sufficient agility to match the tempo for spiral development that enables the minimisation of "No White Space" and maximises UK and INTERNATIONAL PARTNER capability concurrency for NEW PLATFORM.</p> <p>(See paragraph 5.34)</p>	There is a risk that without an agile approach to certification that matches the tempo of spiral development, the UK may not maintain capability concurrent with the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER.	13	Essential by XXX 24
6	<p><b>Programme Controls:</b> SRO to reassure himself that the programme controls, including reporting and attendance at</p>	There is a risk that the continual current distraction of getting approval means that	3 & 9	Essential

	<p>the Programme Board, and dependency management are efficient and effective and meet delivery needs as the Programme moves into the next phase.</p> <p><i>(See paragraph 5.23)</i></p>	the Programme organisation is not ready for the next phase of delivery.		by XXX 24
7	<p><b>Transition:</b> To deliver the Programme as scheduled, the SRO must secure an agreement between the Operational outputs of OPERATIONS and the skilled operational resources required for the transition for NEW PLATFORM or secure an agreement to reduce operational outputs.</p> <p><i>(para 5.56)</i></p>	There is a risk that without an agreed and resourced front-line skills workforce plan, there is a risk to maintaining the current level of output of operations during the transition phase.	10	Recommend

### 3. Blockers to delivery

This section records the critical, high impact blockers that are outside the Programme's control that will severely impact Time, Cost, and Quality and Scope.

No:	Blocker	Describe specific nature of blocker	Consequence if not resolved
1	Government Indecision	Indecision is delaying the programme	The costs of the programme are likely to increase, relationships damaged with ALLY the delivery of National Strategic Objectives is negatively impacted
2	Access to Suitably Qualified and Experienced Person(s) (SQEP)	Civil Service Recruitment Freeze PPM generalist bulk recruitment campaigns Length of onboarding processes Competition with other programmes Reward and recognition packages Dependency on individuals Short term appointments Lack of recognition of SQEP for key roles	The wrong people in the wrong posts; inefficient working; overheated personnel and poor resilience in the workforce.
3	TLB and DELIVERY TEAM systems do not align	Systems to manage the programme and provide management information are not drawn from single and reliable data sources	Efficiency and capacity.  <i>This one is not "severe" at a Programme level, but it becomes so when aggregated across the TLB Portfolio</i>



4	Continuity of Programme leadership	The Programme has experienced high churn in PDs and the SRO will be changing in autumn 2024. The programme should ensure continuity of leadership through Initial Operating Capability (IOC).	Inconsistent programme leadership undermines programme success.
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#### 4. Comments from the SRO

##### SRO Comments

I want to start by remarking on a superb RT and RTL. A really positive experience for the programme, giving me full confidence in the findings and I am grateful for the recommendations.

The Amber rating feels spot on. Within it, there is sufficient to reassure a team who will benefit from positive reinforcement in the face of a period of prolonged uncertainty over the programme's future. The existential threat since XXX 2023 has added almost daily Ministerial activity to the already intensive business of GMPP delivery. Heavy workload on a thinly resourced team has impacted work-life balance for the majority, while deep emotional investment has taken its toll on the health of some. I am grateful for the RT's sensitivity to this, as well as to the political context.

Reassuringly, nothing in the recommendations is a surprise. The package provides important evidence to support continued efforts to address risks, issues and blockers and a helpful framework to support SRO supersession in XXX 2024.

The evidence on the material risk of workforce resourcing will be helpful in securing TLB HQ and DELIVERY TEAM advocacy to support ongoing efforts to generate and sustain sufficient SQEP for assured delivery of this programme. Programme controls, the XXX Team and the Info DLoD are top priorities.

And on blockers, if the Programme survives the Ministerial decision on its future, with support from TLB HQ and DELIVERY TEAM in delivering the resourcing plan, I am confident that we can continue to work through persistent organisational misalignment (e.g. different systems) to delivery this programme successfully.

## **5. Review Team (RT) findings and recommendations**

- 5.1 This the first review of the XXXXXX Programme since it has been on the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP). The Review focused on XXXXXX Tranche 1 (Tr1) which is intended to deliver a transformational change to the UK XXX XXX (XX) XXX capability through the procurement of 14 new-build PLATFORMS and to address capability obsolescence issues across the XX.
- 5.2 At the time of the review, the Programme was waiting on a decision by the Secretary of State for Defence relating to the continuation of the Programme.
- 5.3 An Accounting Officer Assessment was prepared in XXX 2022.

### **Strategic Alignment / Outcome and Objectives**

- 5.4 The RT saw and heard evidence of the strategic need for NEW PLATFORM to allow the UK to remain a tier 1 nation and be able to deliver National Sovereign Capability in accordance with National Policy and SU policy, as well as the wider TLB Doctrine and providing sustained capability for the SU and release capability to Green TLB to replace XXXX, in particular XXXXX and XXXX units.
- 5.5 The current XXX capability of PLATFORM is only achieving approximately 45% availability against a required 66%, with the oldest platforms spending 6 months in deep refit before being able to resume use. All the evidence presented to the RT suggested that if this project is not approved immediately and further delay is incurred, the costs will rise again (as they did previously as a result of IR decision to delay by 3 years) making the programme more unaffordable and weakening the relationship with INTERNATIONAL PARTNER in particular the ALLY and its various XXX XXX.
- 5.6 The RT heard there is no written plan B for not proceeding with this programme because this would require a fundamental shift in UK Policy, UK commitment to NATO and a change in TLB Doctrine, and any alternative such as keeping the CAPABILITY will be more expensive than this programme, given the already sunk cost.

### **FBC, Affordability and Commercial Arrangements**

- 5.7 The RT heard that costs have grown because of the IR decision to delay for 3 years and additional cost growth because of inflation (i.e. this is not due to poor project management), and that further in-decision and delay will incur further cost. As such

affordability was identified as a key challenge for the programme and is expected to remain a risk. Nevertheless, the RT heard there was confidence that the Programme's current affordability challenge could be managed and a consensus on the importance of the Programme for TLB capability. The RT learned that there could be a solution to the current affordability challenge for CDeI within the TLB equipment programme of works and Programme and there are opportunities for DEL and CDeI reductions over the next 10 years as FMS costs represent an upper bound.

5.8 The RT heard that the FMS commercial arrangements represent the only route to secure specialist INTERNATIONAL PARTNER capability, and this commercial route is expected to be a lower cost than a separate procurement process, or standard build PLATFORM direct from XXX.

5.9 The Programme business case establishes an economic case that supports the preferred option. The economic case includes material savings from reduced maintenance costs and the RT consistently heard there was confidence that these savings would be realised.

5.10 Programme costs are derived from a range of acquisition and support service contracts that are offered via both a Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case through the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER and through Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) arrangements. This range of activity encompasses all DLODs, and whilst it is recognised that FMS and DCS contracts have applied a level of contingency for cost escalation within the Cost Modelled position for Review Note, unforeseen events could drive costs beyond the modelled P10/50/90 range offered.

**5.11 RISK: There is a risk that further cost pressures emerge as the Programme matures and moves into the delivery phase, including costs outside of the existing scope, for example maintaining 'No White Space' beyond year 3.**

**5.12 RECOMMENDATION: Affordability - The SRO should consider the level of Risk inside Costing (RIC) and ensure that the programmes continue to drive efficiencies to create sufficient financial headroom.**

### **Leading, Managing and Monitoring the Programme**

5.13 The RT observed a mature programme in flight with a clear route to meet the requirement to procure the XX Platforms. The commitment to deliver the capability, and strength of

close and supportive relationships between the XXXXXX Programme Team and Delivery Team and the REGULATORY AUTHORITY were commended by the RT. The Programme leadership was highly praised by interviewees throughout the review as well as the advocacy the Programme receives from the wider senior stakeholders.

5.14 At the time of the review, the Programme was operating in the midst of an enterprise in flux with major changes to the TLB Operating Model bedding in and transformational changes in DELIVERY ORGANISATION and DELIVERY TEAM underway and was “*hugely distracted*” by addressing ministerial concerns. The major impact of this instability was on resourcing, both in terms of securing the right SQEP and in terms of responding to ministerial questions which was consuming resource and time in the Programme and Delivery teams and the wider the xxxxx pillar. The Programme has also lacked continuity of resourcing in with 4 Programme Directors in 18 months, however this churn looks to be stabilising.

5.15 Despite the distraction, the RT were consistently told that the Programme was deliverable, and that relative to other programmes in the TLB portfolio, it was managed well and was not an area of concern.

5.16 The Programme is operating under its 2017 Mandate, with a new mandate in draft in readiness for release in XXX 2024, assuming the RN is approved. There is a clear commercial strategy<sup>1</sup> in place and an experienced and knowledgeable Delivery Team in DELIVERY TEAM.

5.17 The Programme Definition Plan<sup>2</sup> provides the detail of the range of programme of controls and included the Terms of Reference for the various fora. The RT noted from the document that the “*Programme Board, which meets quarterly, allows Programme staff to seek the SRO’s direction,*” was described in the document as “*a small, empowered decision-making body.*” The RT reflected on whether that was achievable

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<sup>1</sup> XXXXXX COMMERCIAL STRATEGY – TRANCHE 1 Version 1.1 Dated June 23

<sup>2</sup> XXXXXX Tranche 1 Programme Definition Plan VERSION 3.1 Dated 8 Dec 23

with circa 40 people in attendance<sup>3</sup>. However, they also heard that dialling-in observers assisted with information flows across such a broad stakeholder community and were advised that decisions can be taken out of committee and that there are there are biweekly huddles with the SRO.

5.18 The RT learned that support of an external service provider has over the past 12 months provided the Programme with more rigour in terms of programme controls. The quality of the Planning Day materials and the structure of the documentation set provided to the RT prior to the review evidenced maturity in the Programmes controls.

5.19 Risk management looked to the RT to be well managed with a Bi-weekly risk review with the SRO and Risk working groups being regularly updated within the Combat Aviation Portfolio in Head Quarters.

5.20 Benefits are well understood by the Programme and it has a clear benefits map. It was reported that there is a dedicated Benefits Manager, but whilst the RT was reassured to see these artefacts, they noted that the continued distraction of preparing ministerial submissions was taking time away from maintaining them.

5.21 The RT heard that there has not been enough focus on the recording and active management of dependencies; the review of the reading materials supplied supported that assertion. For example, the RT noted the critical dependency on digital capabilities for engineering support, mission planning and what is the integration requirements.

**5.22 RISK: There is a risk that the continual current distraction of getting approval means that the Programme organisation is not ready for the next phase of delivery.**

**5.23 RECOMMENDATION: Programme Controls - SRO to reassure himself that the programme controls, including reporting and attendance at the Programme Board, and dependency management are efficient and effective and meet delivery needs as the Programme moves into the next phase.**

<sup>3</sup> 42 people attended the XXX 2023 Programme Board, ref: Record of Actions and Decision (RoADs) from the XXXXXX Programme Board (Pg Bd) on XX XXX 23

### **Programme schedule**

5.24 The Programme had a good understanding of the requirement and the approach to delivery through an INTERNATIONAL PARTNER Government Foreign Military Sales (FMS) acquisition. The RT learned that whilst there is a real benefit to procuring a fully developed PLATFORM that is currently in-service with the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER, it brings other challenges particularly around certification to UK standards (see below). The RT understands that the decision to delay for three years, as well as inflation, has caused cost growth and has required a Review Note (RN) to update the costing and delivery timescale to reduce the affordability gap to an acceptable level (see paragraphs 5.7-5.8 above).

5.25 The broader issues for the programme schedule are:

- a) the Secretary of State (SofS) for Defence is engaged with his INTERNATIONAL PARTNER counterparts on the reform of the FMS process and until this is concluded is holding up approvals; and
- b) completing approvals to maintain programme's schedule.

5.26 The sequence of approvals is aligned to enable a Letter of Agreement (LOA) to be signed no later than XXX 2024, otherwise the costs and timescales will need to be revalidated by the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER, which the RT heard is likely to increase the costs. The approval timing is tight to get through a MOD Investment Approval Committee (IAC) and subsequent HMT approval, therefore obtaining early SofS endorsement will be critical. The RT noted that the RN is targeted for a XXX 24 IAC with the "last safe date" for XXX 24 IAC. There is currently no contingency plan if these dates are not achieved.

5.27 In addition to the formal approval route above, the Programme need to secure the procurement of Long Lead Items and the deadline for this is XX XXX 2023 to remain lockstep with the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER.

5.28 **Certification:** The RT were told that Certification was on the critical path for delivery of NEW PLATFORM and heard that the key challenges included:

- a) No single Design Authority for NEW PLATFORM as a platform in the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER.

- b) The base xxxx platform is produced by xxxx, but many of the components are provided by other suppliers. In particular, the avionics suite
- c) The ALLY has a different approach to certification to the UK.
- d) Timely access to ALLY detailed technical information has been difficult due to foreign disclosure restrictions and ALLY resource capacity.

5.29 The RT heard that the original strategy for Certification was based on a REGULATORY AUTHORITY-recognised approach that complied with regulatory requirements. The UK would utilise DEFENCE STANDARD to set the Type Certification Basis, which has circa XXXX applicable requirements. The Design Organisation will generate Compliance Claims against these requirements to build an argument for compliance and gather evidence to endorse this argument. It is recognised that against DEFENCE STANDARD there would still be circa XXXX non-compliant claims which would be subject to review for 'Equivalent Level of Safety' and support the necessary arguments to demonstrate As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP) in subsequent Risk Transfer to the SRO / ADH chain. Notably this approach had been communicated to the REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

5.30 The RT also heard that a mature certification plan had been developed that was focused and prioritised on the high-risk areas with key review points to underpin this approach. There was wider work with key components in the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER, and specific contracts with xxxx and the supplier of the xxxx solution (xxxx xxx) to support this plan and provide timely access to technical information.

5.31 The RT understood that the “Magnificent Seven” group, which sits within the governance, meets every six months and has senior members from the UK (including the SRO and Capability Sponsor) and INTERNATIONAL PARTNER who lead on programme delivery and certification and provide an opportunity for strategic intervention as well as monitoring certification progress. The RT heard that FMS Reform seeks to expedite the release of technical information, which if successful, will only serve to support the delivery of the certification plan.

5.32 The RT heard that the aspiration is for “No White Space” between the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER and UK versions of NEW PLATFORM and included in the RN was the first 3 years of spiral development to support necessary upgrades. Once the platform has achieved the initial UK certification to meet IOC, there may be a requirement to adjust



the approach to certification to accommodate the tempo of spiral development that maintains the “No White Space” and continued capability concurrent with the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER.

- 5.33 **RISK:** There is a risk that without an agile approach to certification that matches the tempo of spiral development, the UK may not maintain capability concurrent with the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER.
- 5.34 **RECOMMENDATION:** Certification – The SRO with DELIVERY TEAM review the current certification strategy and ensure that it has sufficient agility to match the tempo for spiral development that enables the minimisation of “White Space” and maximises UK and INTERNATIONAL PARTNER capability concurrency for NEW PLATFORM.

## Resourcing

5.35 Resourcing is a material risk to the delivery of the programme and the Programme team have been under pressure delivering the core programme activities alongside supporting strategic decision making. The issue is less about capacity, it is more about capability and securing resources with the right expertise and experience. Whilst there is a high degree of confidence in the current Programme Team, the RT identified a number of resourcing challenges, which include:

- a) The Programme Controls Team is resourced by specialist contingent labour through to XXX 2024 with a high likelihood of a gap in these key roles from XXX 2024.
- b) The resilience of the team, including losing key personnel and the ability of the team to recruit suitably qualified and experienced staff leaves the Programme vulnerable.
- c) The XXX Team, ramping up as the programme moves into the delivery phase of the programme lifecycle, was reported under resourced. The RT team heard that five new posts are being recruited into, but there is uncertainty about the timing and capability of people to fill these roles.
- d) There are insufficient engineers across defence, exacerbated by LOCATION being a less attractive place to work than alternative sites. The RT heard that without additional resource during the transition phase the operational team would be unable to maintain operational outcomes alongside introducing the new platforms.

- e) The operational teams into which the new platforms will land – specifically additional resource requirements during the transition phase such as Business Continuity Management, to concurrently operate the existing platforms and introduce the new platforms.

**5.36 RISK:** There is a risk that key capability gaps continue which is likely to have a detrimental effect on the schedule and cost.

**5.37 RECOMMENDATION:** Resources - The SRO should carry out a programme-wide resourcing capability review in conjunction with DELIVERY TEAM to ensure that they collectively have the right skilled resources, and appropriate resilience and continuity for critical posts, at the right time in the Programme, and advise TLB Command of the consequences of not achieving this.

#### **DELIVERY TEAM Programme Controls and Pan DLOD Aspects**

**5.38 DELIVERY TEAM:** The RT were told that the Programme Controls for the Equipment and Support DLOD were mature and adequately resourced, although some of the resourcing was from high quality consultants. The delivery schedule had been risk adjusted and resource loaded, with a “laser focus” on the critical path, which was currently on the Certification activities.

**5.39** The RT understood that management of risks plays a key part in underpinning the schedule with a constant focus on mitigating risks before they mature. There was evidence of establishing the right culture within the Delivery Team that recognised the rigour of “Programme Controls” and the expert “Engineering Skills” that were necessary to achieve a successful delivery. While it is recognised that delivery is complex with high levels of risk around certification, the leadership, structure and rigor, if maintained, should enable success.

**5.40 DLODs:** The RT heard that the most mature DLODs beyond Equipment and Support are the Infrastructure and Training DLODs, both are well understood and resourced, which is positive for the programme. The Doctrine and Concepts DLOD is less mature, although the Review Team heard that there was a current set of concepts, and these would evolve as the new capability was fielded. There was also a view that the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER were keen to learn from the UK as it evolved the concepts.

The challenges with the Personnel DLOD are addressed in the resources section (See paragraphs 5.35-38)

- 5.41 The RT heard that there were concerns regarding maturity of the Information DLOD engagement and with recognition that NEW PLATFORM will provide a step change in its digital enablement both for Mission Planning and Maintenance this was a concern, albeit it was recognised that current PLATFORM has a level of digitisation for maintenance.
- 5.42 Work has started through DELIVERY ORGANISATION, tasked through DELIVERY TEAM to undertake the discovery of the requirements for NEW PLATFORM maintenance. The RT heard that there are circa XXXX Applications that will need to be hosted on MoDNet Cloud services and that the team are taking lessons from OTHER PROGRAMME and OTHER PROGRAMME. The RT endorse the good practice of engaging with those lessons and building them into the Programme risk log.
- 5.43 What was less evident was the role that SENIOR STAKEHOLDER's team within TLB Headquarters play in setting the direction for the Information DLOD in respect to xxxx. As digital enablement will play a much more critical role with this capability, then it will be vital to have the right Information direction and support, otherwise unintended risks may emerge.
- 5.44 RISK: There is a risk that without the involvement of SENIOR STAKEHOLDER in setting the direction and supporting the Information DLOD within XXXXXX that relies heavily on digital enablement, that risks may emerge and impact the overall capability.**
- 5.45 RECOMMENDATION: Information DLOD – The SRO to engage with SENIOR STAKEHOLDER to seek direction and support for the Information DLOD within XXXXXX Tr1 that will both enhance and optimise digital enablement for NEW PLATFORM. [Essential by XXX 24]**

### **Business change planning and transformation readiness**

- 5.46 The RT heard the new NEW PLATFORM is not a like for like replacement but brings a fundamental shift in capability for the UK armed forces particularly the SU and remain in lock step with INTERNATIONAL PARTNER forces. This will require the CAPABILITY

Command to retrain technicians and crew to operate the new platform, while maintaining the current platforms.

5.47 As reported in the Resources section the RT heard that it may not be possible to maintain for a period of time the full range of outputs that xxxx currently deliver during this transition phase. There is a risk if a plan and agreement is not in place between the Programme and Operations early enough in the delivery phase, that the transition gets delayed.

5.48 The RT heard that the base that will house NEW PLATFORM is LOCATION, which is still transitioning into a joint operating base, and dedicated leadership resources are required to accept the new NEW PLATFORM and all its new requirements into front line service.

5.49 Concerns were raised during the review regarding capacity/experience, and the need to have the right resources at the right time to ensure there is not programme slippage.

5.50 The RT learned that Programme needs sufficient SQEP (XXX team) in LOCATION to help bring NEW PLATFORM into service. There were serious concerns that if the XXX team were unable to secure the right skilled resources at the right time in the programme there is the likelihood of delay occurring.

**5.51 RISK: The XXX team insufficiently resourced in time to make a smooth transition to operations resulting in an increased likelihood of schedule delay.**

**5.52 RECOMMENDATION: The SRO to ensure the XXX team is sufficiently resourced with the right skills and capability and leadership to support the transition into in-service operations.**

5.53 Furthermore, there was a nervousness about maintaining the current level of output in MILITARY UNIT during transition to NEW PLATFORM with the same number of people. For the Programme to be successful and avoid delays to schedule and capability milestones, 'space' is needed during the transition period, either through additional frontline workforce or a reduction in MILITARY UNIT commitments. TLB and TLB Commands cannot be agnostic about the level of transformation and associated change activity that NEW PLATFORM will bring.

**5.54 RISK: Without an agreed and resourced front-line skills workforce plan, there is a risk to maintaining the current level of output of operations during the transition phase.**

**5.55 RECOMMENDATION: Transition – To deliver the Programme as scheduled the SRO must secure an agreement between the Operational outputs of TEAM and the skilled operational resources required for the transition for NEW PLATFORM or secure an agreement to reduce operational outputs.**

## 6. Areas of good practice

This section provides detail on what the Review Team consider is being delivered successfully and the areas that they commend the team on. Classifications are listed in Annex F.

Commending delivery of	Describe specific details of successful delivery
2 Stakeholder Management	Everyone aligned with the strategic intent, strong communications and relationships across all of the key stakeholders.  For example, the high level of observers at the Programme Board encourage clear understanding of the SRO and Leadership team's position.
2 Stakeholder Management	Senior UK/INTERNATIONAL PARTNER Stakeholder group – Magnificent 7, provides senior UK and INTERNATIONAL PARTNER influence across the programme to unblock barriers and maintain the critical relationship.
13 Lessons Learned	There are circa XXXX Applications that will need to be hosted on MoDNet Cloud services and that the team are taking lessons from xxx and xxx programmes. The RT endorse the good practice of engaging with those lessons and building them into the Programme risk log.

## 7. Acknowledgement

The RT would like to thank everyone involved in the review for their support and candour. With particular thanks to XXXX XXXX and XXXX XXXX, who provided exemplary support to the RT, and the detail in the Planning Day materials and the documentation set provided to the RT prior to the review and the way that it was structured was extremely helpful.

## 8. Next Assurance Review

Conduct a Gate 3 at the transition for SRO in 2024, likely to be early XXX 2024.

## ANNEX A – Stage Gate Assessment (SGA) Descriptions

From 1 April 2021, the IPA has moved to a 3 tier SGA RAG status (Red, Amber, Green).

The SGA is based on the following definitions:

Colour	Criteria Description
Green	<p>Successful delivery of the programme/project to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery.</p> <p><i>Recommendation: The programme/project is ready to proceed to the next stage.</i></p>
Amber	<p>Successful delivery of the programme/project to time, cost and quality appears feasible but significant issues already exist requiring management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage and, if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun.</p> <p><i>Recommendation: This programme/project can proceed to the next stage with conditions but the programme/project must report back to the IPA and HMT on the satisfaction of each time bound condition within an agreed timeframe.</i></p>
Red	<p>Successful delivery of the programme/project to time, cost and quality appears to be unachievable. There are major issues which, at this stage, do not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The programme/project may need re-baselining and/or its overall viability re-assessed.</p> <p><i>Recommendation: This programme/project should not proceed to the next phase until these major issues are managed to an acceptable level of risk and the viability of the project/programme has been re-confirmed.</i></p>

## **ANNEX B - Terms of Reference**

This is a Gate 0/3 Review.

The standard terms of reference for all Guidance and Workbooks can be found [here](#)

In addition to the standard terms, the review considered the SRO areas of focus

- Reassurance around programme schedule, especially certification
- Resourcing – Is the Programme adequately resourced in all critical areas?
- DELIVERY TEAM – Programme Controls and Pan DLOD Aspects
- Is the Programme adequately set up for business change planning and transformation readiness?

**ANNEX C - Background**

This section was completed by the Programme team in advance of the review.

Question	Answer
Describe the aims of the project/ programme	<p>The agreed approach from the IAC (FBC approval 2021) ensures the best value for money for capability procurement, drives cost effectiveness for ongoing support to an out of service date of at least 2050.</p> <p>The NEW PLATFORM capability will significantly enhance the UK SU's ability to operate with increased freedom of action, probability of mission success and interoperability with INTERNATIONAL PARTNER counterparts, while reducing operational risk.</p>
Reasons for the project/ programme's existence, by type and description	<p>The imperative to deliver XXXXXX Tr1 is driven by the unsustainable, increasing cost of ownership of the current fleet; the older PLATFORMS are already subject to deteriorating availability and maintainability. There is also an urgent need to address the SU capability gap.</p> <p>The High-Level Characteristics (HLC), Key User Requirements and the requirement for a fleet size of XX NEW PLATFORMS have been endorsed by the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee.</p> <p>The NEW PLATFORM procurement, offered by the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER Government to the UK alone, and only through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route, is linked directly into the bespoke, time-bounded NEW PLATFORM production timetable through a Letter of Offer and Acceptance.</p>
The impact if the project/programme fails to deliver e.g. any risks to or any material impact on civilians/citizens:	<p>The current PLATFORM is unable to meet all the UK's requirements set by the SU's Single Statement of Need (SSON). They are not capable of operating against some of these increasingly capable xxxx systems or operating within the same battlespace as the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER SOF. This reduces the UK's Defence choice when dealing with crises domestically and abroad.</p>



	<p>The purchase of XX NEW PLATFORMs for XXX will allow retirement of the XX oldest PLATFORMs xxx (many beyond the initial design life). Whilst transferring the current XX PLATFORMS across to the Wider PLATFORM fleet will increase availability.</p> <p>Without this Programme the availability and serviceability of XXX to XXX TLB, wider Defence and OGDs will drastically reduce. This will impact Defence Priority Outcomes, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protect the UK and its overseas territories</li> <li>• enhance global security through persistent engagement and response to crises</li> <li>• understand and counter state and nonstate threats</li> <li>• contribute to NATO collective deterrence and Defence</li> <li>• modernise and integrate Defence capabilities by taking a whole force approach to our people and increasing the use of technology and innovation</li> </ul>
Project/programme link to departmental or government strategies or policies:	<p>XXXXXX Tr1 is compliant and aligns with strategic policies inc. Integrated Review 21, Defence Command Paper 21, IR Refresh, Defence Command Paper 23 and the associated TLB Command Plans.</p> <p>NEW PLATFORM remains the only platform capable of delivering the UK Su User High-Level Characteristics and Key User Requirements endorsed by the Joint Requirement Oversight Committee.</p> <p>Unstable regions now have access to increasingly capable CAPABILITIES. There is a UK sovereign need to perform complex, high-tempo, often time-sensitive missions worldwide into these contested, degraded and operationally limited environments. Cutting edge PLATFORM survivability equipment is required to operate in these environments with the highest chances of mission success.</p>

Projects/programme interdependencies [if applicable]:	As XXXXXX is part of a joint UK/INTERNATIONAL PARTNER programme there is an interdependency to/from the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER. XXXXXX makes up FRACTION of the total Programme. The associated economies of scale are capitalised on by the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER and we additionally benefit from the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER Test and Evaluation and new technologies.
Has the SRO's Osmotherley letter (letter of appointment) been approved at the appropriate levels?	Yes – Received XXX 2023
The procurement / delivery status:	Single Source procurement via Foreign Military Sale (FMS) in accordance with best practice.  Programme is in the Design and Manufacture stage.

Funding / Business Case:	<p>Full Business case approved XX XXX 2021.</p> <p>Following a 3 year defer to PLATFORM delivery against the original delivery plan, FBC was approved in XXX 2021 by the Investments Approvals Committee (IAC). Subsequently, to mitigate a Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (CDEL) underspend within Defence, the IAC approved, in XXX 2021, a request to the INTERNATIONAL PARTNER Foreign Military Sales team to examine the feasibility of bringing forward enabling elements of the Programme by up to 18 months. The bring forward was unsuccessful.</p> <p>The Programme has an agreed baseline ABL of £XXXm, with an original forecast cost growth of c£XXXM (driven primarily by Foreign Exchange and inflation) from the initial decision to defer PLATFORM delivery by 3 years.</p> <p>The IAC was alerted of the cost growth XXX 2023 which will result in a Review Note submission. The draft was presented at a joint APPROVAL BOARDS XXX 2023, the final will then go for IAC approvals XXX 2024. Work is ongoing to close a c.£XXXm affordability gap prior to IAC submission.</p>
Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan (IAAP):	A IAAP has been recently refreshed (XXX 23) following ongoing review note activity.
Programme/Project plan:	Does the project / programme have an appropriate plan in place?
	<p>Yes</p> <p>Has the plan been baselined? Please include who signed it off etc.</p> <p>Yes. Approved by Programme Manager</p>

Current position regarding previous IPA assurance reviews:	No previous IPA assurance reviews have taken place to date. (MOD Internal Assurance Review carried out in XXX 2019.)
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2	Stakeholder Management	Recommendations related to relationships with all parties with an interest in the outcome of the project/programme, whether internal to the agency, internal to government or external.
3	Programme and Project Management	Recommendations related to all aspects of project, programme and portfolio management, but excludes recommendations on Risk, Issues and Dependency Management (Theme 9) and Resource Management (Theme 10)
4	Change Management & Transition	Recommendations related to the Management of Business Change – all the work required with and in the business and with the customer to make ready for the initiative, in terms of changes to business processes including: business continuity planning, changes to work processes and resourcing, changes to organisational structures and staffing to support transformational or process changes to business delivery to ensure a smooth transition to BAU It does not include Technology Readiness for Service (Theme 12).
5	Financial Planning and Management	Recommendations related to financial planning, organising, directing and controlling of financial activities.
6	Benefits Management & Realisation	Recommendations related to the identification, ownership, measurement and realisation of benefits and dis-benefits. Benefits can be either financial or non-financial.
7	Commercial Strategy & Management	Recommendations related to the end-to-end procurement process including: Procurement strategy and planning, Approaches to the market, Contract negotiation and Contract management.
8	Context, Aim & Scope	Recommendations that are aimed at the clarity of the change to be implemented. It covers alignment to vision, strategy and policy; the purpose, objectives, justification and description of the change; and the determination of success and the necessary environment to ensure
		success.

9	Risk, Issues & Dependency Management	Recommendations related to the identification, analysis, impact assessment, response and the on-going review and management of Risks, Issues and Dependencies (i.e. outputs that are required by a project to succeed, but which will be delivered by parties not under the direct control of the project).
10	Resource & Skills Management	Recommendations related to all aspects of the identification, supply, optimisation, prioritisation and maintenance of resources and appropriate skills.
11	Knowledge Management	Recommendations related to the process of capturing, developing, sharing, and effectively using organizational knowledge. It includes sharing knowledge and experiences or Lessons Learnt.
12	Technology	Recommendations related to all technology issues, including the alignment of the technology solution to the technology and business strategy, the integration of one or more technology solutions, the operational readiness of the solution (including testing of the solution), and all aspects of security relating to the technology solution.
13	Other	To be used only when other classifications do not apply.

Each risk-based recommendation is recorded as Critical / Essential or Recommended:

- **Critical (Do Now):** To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome it is of the greatest importance that the programme/project should take action immediately.
- **Essential (Do By):** To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome the programme/project should take action in the near future. [Note to review teams – whenever possible Essential risk-based recommendations should be linked to programme/project milestones e.g. before contract signature and/or a specified timeframe e.g. within the next three months.]
- **Recommended:** The programme/project should benefit from the uptake of this recommendation. [Note to review teams – if possible Recommended risk-based recommendations should be linked to programme/project milestones e.g. before contract signature and/or a specified timeframe e.g. within the next three months.]