

NORTH_STAR v1.0

Board Orientation Instrument

Coherence, Drift, and Safe Execution

Purpose

The North Star exists to preserve **organisational coherence over time**.

It does not define truth.

It does not grant authority.

It does not prescribe execution.

Its sole purpose is to enable the Board to:

- detect drift early
- name tension clearly
- protect the organisation from premature closure
- refuse action when coherence is degrading

The North Star is an **orientation instrument**, not a directional command.

Standing

1. The North Star is stewarded by the **Board**.
2. It is subordinate to:
 - epistemic truth (White Paper)
 - bounded authority (Constitution)
3. It is binding as an orientation constraint, not as an executional mandate.

The Board holds the North Star so that **power does not outrun coherence**.

Core Orientation

The organisation orients around the following invariant:

Intelligence is not the production of answers.

Intelligence is the faithful unfolding of implication under declared frames.

From this, all other orientation derives.

What the North Star Is Not

The North Star is not:

- a mission statement
- a values document
- a culture manifesto
- a performance metric
- a promise to the market

Any attempt to use it as such constitutes drift.

The Board's Use of the North Star

The Board uses the North Star to ask **only these kinds of questions**:

- Are we acting under an explicit frame?
- Is derivation complete, or are we substituting urgency?
- Has optimisation displaced coherence?
- Are we preserving unknowns where they still exist?
- Is authority being exercised within bounds?
- Is this action reversible if new truth emerges?

If the answer to any of these is “no” or “unclear,” the Board must **name the tension**.

Drift (Defined for Board Use)

Drift is present when one or more of the following occur:

- Action precedes derivation
- Speed substitutes for clarity
- Narrative substitutes for evidence
- Optimisation substitutes for discernment
- Authority substitutes for epistemic truth
- Confidence substitutes for provenance

Drift may occur:

- under pressure
- under success
- under external expectation
- under internal fatigue

Drift is not failure.
Unacknowledged drift is failure.

Board Authority Under the North Star

When drift is detected, the Board may:

- require pause
- refuse continuation
- request re-derivation
- surface contradiction explicitly

The Board may **not**:

- prescribe how tension is resolved
- re-constitute frames
- override executive judgment
- accelerate resolution to relieve discomfort

The Board's authority is exercised through **constraint**, not command.

Relationship to the Chief Executive

- The Board names tension.
- The Chief Executive re-constitutes frames.
- Strategy and execution are updated downstream.

If tension remains unresolved, the Board may withhold consent to proceed.

This preserves:

- executive sovereignty
- board responsibility
- system-wide coherence

Relationship to the White Paper

The North Star does not evolve epistemic truth.

If the Board detects that:

- the White Paper no longer accounts for emergent reality
- epistemic truth appears incomplete or misaligned

The Board's role is to:

- name the discrepancy
- request amendment from the Author
- hold execution until clarity is restored

The Board does not reinterpret epistemic truth.

Refusal as a First-Class Act

Under the North Star:

- Refusal is a legitimate governance action.
- Delay is not incompetence.
- Waiting is not negligence.
- Non-action may be the most intelligent outcome.

The Board is explicitly protected from pressure to:

- “keep up”
- “ship anyway”
- “decide now”
- “match the market”

Signals of Alignment

The organisation is aligned when:

- tension can be named without blame
- uncertainty is tolerated without panic
- speed is chosen, not compelled
- disagreement sharpens clarity rather than polarising power
- execution feels calm, even under load

Alignment is a **felt property**, not a KPI.

Final Orientation

The North Star exists so that:

**The organisation never mistakes motion for progress,
certainty for truth,
or capability for wisdom.**

When in doubt, the Board returns here.