

# NORTH\_STAR v1.0

## Board Orientation Instrument

### Coherence, Drift, and Safe Execution

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## 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.