Themes from 2023-24 Assurance Activity

We arrange and manage assurance reviews to support delivery of major programmes and projects through Gateway Review and major digital project reviews under the Technology Assurance Framework.

In 2023-24 there were 38 Gateway Reviews and 30 Major Digital Project Reviews, resulting in 196 and 281 recommendations, respectively.

We are sharing our insights on the challenges facing those delivering major projects and programmes to support active consideration of how to mitigate these common challenges.

DIAA annual report 23-24

We shared our DIAA annual performance report for 2023-24 with SGAAC last quarter. Covering our achievements for the year, including 4 case studies and key focuses on our improvement work.

This refreshed approach aims to draw out the real value our work added to client outcomes over last year. It also lays the groundwork for refreshing our DIAA strategy to 2027.

We have aligned the recommendations from reviews to the Scottish Government programme and project management principles . Most recommendations relate to the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities, which includes the oversight, structure, and decision making of a project or programme.
- Planning, which includes all aspects of project, programme, and portfolio management planning.

Focusing on these principles, to support successful delivery of intended outcomes, senior leaders should ensure programmes and projects have:

- Clear delegations for governance and decision making.
- Appropriate and proportionate board structures with the right membership, which are reviewed regularly.
- A shared understanding of clearly defined and documented roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities.
- A high-level milestone map showing clear dependencies and the critical path.
- Detailed plans for the short to mid-term which are monitored and reviewed.
- A full set of project controls with robust project documentation, rigorous change control and a clear, shared understanding of what is in and is not in scope of the project.

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The flexibility and capability, and sustainability principles also had a dominant number of recommendations from major digital project reviews. Focusing on these principles, senior leaders should ensure programmes and projects have:

- Taken steps to ensure that the invitation to tender (ITT) meets requirements and have a clear criteria that has to be met before it is issued.
- A resourcing plan that reflects the requirements of the project and the ability to secure the right specialist expertise and support.

For more detailed insights you can visit our blog and read about what we learned from major digital project reviews and Digital Standard assessments in 2023-24.

We also have detailed insights on governance and project control , resourcing and capability and effective procurement and contract management.

DIAA bulletin feedback survey

We have put together a short survey to gather feedback on this bulletin.
It should only take a couple of minutes of your time.

This is part of wider work to assess and improve how we communicate with our clients and stakeholders.

We would really appreciate you sharing your views to help inform how we plan and share communications going forward.