



Infrastructure  
and Projects  
Authority

# IPA Charter

# About IPA

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) is government's centre of expertise for infrastructure and major projects. We sit at the heart of government, reporting to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury.

We support the successful delivery of all types of infrastructure and major projects ranging from railways, schools, hospitals and housing schemes, to defence, IT and major transformation programmes.

Our purpose is to continuously improve the way infrastructure and major projects are delivered, in order to support government priorities and improve people's lives.

**We are the home of the Government Project Delivery Function and are responsible for the overall project delivery system; the projects, people and processes that together create the right environment for successful delivery. This includes:**

- Supporting and de-risking the most complex and high risk projects;
- Developing the skills and capability of the people who deliver projects;
- Overseeing the project life-cycle from policy, initiation and financing to independent assurance;
- Learning important lessons from projects and feeding them back into the system.

We aspire to build the best-performing project system of any government in the world.

**Our teams include experts in infrastructure, project delivery and project finance who work with government departments and industry. We bring together expertise from across the IPA to prioritise the following four activities:**

- **Setting up projects for success** by influencing the policy environment, deploying our expertise as early as possible and helping projects access resources;
- **Creating market confidence** by providing foresight and transparency on the future pipeline of projects and establishing the right financial policies and products to support private investment;
- **Building delivery capability** by providing world class leadership programmes, career pathways and leading the Project Delivery and Project Finance Professions;
- **Measuring and improving performance** of infrastructure and major projects over time, in order to help them deliver benefits for society and provide value for money.

# Our Charter

This Charter sets out how the IPA works with government projects and programmes across its dual roles of commercial and delivery support, and independent assurance. It explains what you can expect from us and what we ask of you in return.

## 1. Customer Contact

We will give projects support and constructive challenge that is fair, accurate and based on mutual trust and respect.

We will inform you of the IPA team leader responsible for the overall supervision of the work we do.

On each assignment, we will aim to agree with you the IPA team members who will undertake the day to day work and their respective roles and responsibilities.

On significant mandates, we may seek to agree a bespoke protocol to aid clarity and communication across the team and wider stakeholders.

## 2. Scope of Services

On each engagement, we will seek to agree with you the precise scope of services which we will undertake and clarify whether we are acting in an advisory capacity, providing independent assurance services, or both.

If we are providing independent assurance services, we will agree with you to whom those independent assurance services and resultant reports are being provided, and for what purpose.

On significant mandates, we may seek to record this information in a bespoke protocol which can be referred to and used on an ongoing basis.

## 3. Independence between Support and Assurance

We will ensure that our independence and the perception of independence is not compromised.

We will organise ourselves and work in a way that maintains the integrity and objectivity of our advice and judgement.

Where the role of commercial and delivery support and the role of independent assurance are both present on a project, we will ensure that they are undertaken by different individuals.

For high risk projects, we will appoint a team leader for independent assurance reviews

from outside the department that is delivering the project. In cases where the IPA have been providing support services to the project, the team leader for the review will also be appointed from outside the IPA.

Given this independence, we acknowledge that it is possible and acceptable for different views of a project's status or likelihood of success to co-exist across the IPA.

#### 4. Access to Information

Our ability to provide a quality service is dependent on you giving us prompt access to the data, information, decisions and documentation pertinent to your projects and programmes.

By accepting services from us, you agree to give us this access and accept that our output is dependent on it.

When receiving information from you, we will handle it with care and safeguard it as is appropriate for OFFICIAL assets. We routinely handle OFFICIAL information and are used to operating on a need-to-know basis for OFFICIAL assets that are sensitive or commercial in nature.

#### 5. Disclosure of Information

In order to drive improved project performance and enable collaboration across government, we follow a general presumption in favour of information and advice being shared openly between departments, the IPA, the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury.

However, if departments are at the early stages of policy development and would like the opportunity to develop their thinking in a "safe space" prior to proposals being socialised more widely, non disclosure by the IPA ("confidentiality") can be agreed on a case by case basis using a bespoke protocol.

#### 6. Publication of Major Project Data

The IPA is committed to transparency of major project data in order to help government measure and improve delivery performance.

We publish an Annual Report which shines a light on the performance of projects in the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) and the appointments of Senior Responsible Owners (SROs).

Departments are required to publish information on their major projects in the GMPP, 6 months in arrears, and update this annually. Exemptions to this policy will be limited and consistent with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and the government's approach to the public interest test.

## 7. Confidentiality of Independent Assurance Reviews

Independent assurance reviews are carried out in order to assist SROs at key project stages. For these reviews to be effective, it is important that the views expressed by interviewees are treated confidentially. This gives interviewees the safe space to provide full and honest answers and enables the IPA's recommendations to be direct in their messaging.

The IPA's policy is, therefore, not to publish reports of independent assurance reviews as it is not in the public interest. To do so would compromise the effectiveness and integrity of the independent assurance process and jeopardise successful delivery.

Subject to the disclosure of confidential information, the IPA may share independent assurance reviews across departments to enable collaborative working and drive improved performance.

### **Contact IPA**

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