| **1. Policy, programme or project name** *(Also note previous name if it has changed since* *last assurance review)*  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2. Change driver** *(Primary reason for change)* | **Ministerial initiative\*****Legal\*****Operational Business Change\*** **Other \****(provide short explanation)* *\* delete as appropriate* |
| **3. Programme/project type**  | 1. Government Transformation & Service Delivery\*2. ICT\*3. Infrastructure & Construction\* 4. MoD Capability\***\****delete as appropriate* |
| **4. Objectives and expected benefits** | *Insert a short narrative summary description of financial and non-financial benefits envisaged.*  |
| **5. Department, Agency, or NDPB name** **& parent department name** (if applicable) | **Name:****Parent Dept:**  |
| **6. Contact Details:**  **Senior Policy Owner (SPO)** *(for Starting Gate)*  **Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)**  *(for existing project or programme)* | **Name:****Address:****Telephone No.** **Email:** |
| **7. Programme Director details** | **Name:** **Address:****Telephone No.** **Email:** |
| **8. Primary contact point for administration of** **assurance reviews**  | **Name:****Address:****Role:** **Telephone No.** **Email:** |
| **9. If a programme, please list names of the** **constituent projects.**  **If a project, please give the name of the over - arching programme.**  |  |
| **10. Costs** *(Indicative estimate or as defined in latest* *business case)* | **Capital: £****Operational (Running costs): £****Whole life: £****Business Case Status:**  |
| **11. Expected duration (yrs) of major contract or** **service** (if known & appropriate) |  |
| **12. Next planned review** | **Project Assessment Review (PAR) \*****Gate 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 \* *\**** *delete as appropriate* |
| **13. Requested start date for next review** *(This should be approximately 12 weeks after the Assessment meeting)* | **Week Commencing Date:** |
| **14. Overall Assessment***Derived from Table C* | **Low/Medium/High\* *\**** *delete as appropriate* |
| **15. Date of previous assurance review**  **& IPA ID No.** | **Type of Review: Date:****ID No.** |
| **16. Name of responsible Minister** |  |
| **17. RPA approved by SRO**  | **Name: Date:** |
| **18. Validated by organisation’s Portfolio Manager or an equivalent e.g.** **Head of PPM Centre of Excellence** | **Name: Date:****Role:****Email: Tel. No.**  |
| **19. Departmental Assurance Coordinator (DAC)** | **Name:**  |
| **20. RPA Version No. & Date** | **Version No. Date:** |
| **The General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018It is intended that the data collected via this form will be used by the Cabinet Office for its own purposes and also to inform other areas of Government business. The data may also be used to make you aware of services, advice and guidance. Issues related to the use of personal data within this form should be addressed to:** **Gateway.Helpdesk@ipa.gov.uk** |

1. **Guidance for Completion of the RPA**
2. **What is the RPA for?**

This version of the Risk Potential Assessment (RPA) is designed to provide a standard set of high-level criteria for assessing the strategic risk potential of programmes and projects, and of emerging policies and initiatives that are expected to be delivered through a programme or project in the future.

**The RPA is used to initiate a Project Assessment Review (PAR) or a Gate Review**, by helping to determine who should arrange and manage a review and decide on the make-up of the review team.

Once agreed the completed form should be sent to the **Departmental Assurance Coordinator (DAC)** (or equivalent) for onward transmission to the Cabinet Office Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA), where appropriate.

This assessment is an indicator of risk potential and is not an exhaustive risk analysis model. However, it can be the starting point for a more exhaustive risk assessment. The RPA enables a conversation to be had about the risks and responsibilities for delivery of a programme or project, and its visibility, reporting and assurance in a wider portfolio management context. The RPA can also help to identify areas where specific skill sets, commensurate with the level of programme or project complexity, may be required.

1. **How to complete this RPA**

Assurance reviews are applicable to a wide range of change programmes and projects, including policy driven, business, property/construction, ICT enabled or procurement/acquisition-based change initiatives.

The RPA should be completed as early in the life of a change initiative as possible, e.g. when policy is being formulated or to support the development of the Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan (IAAP). The RPA should subsequently be reviewed before its use to initiate all IPA assurance reviews.

The RPA requires the Senior Policy Owner (SPO) or Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) or Project Executive, to consider the initiative from two perspectives: firstly through a strategic assessment of the Consequential Impact, should the programme or project fail to deliver its objectives or outcomes (see Table A); followed secondly, if appropriate, by an assessment of Complexity (see Table B).

**Each table is made up of a series of assessments, with the result indicated by marking X in the appropriate box between VERY LOW (VL) and VERY HIGH (VH).** These assessments are made using the knowledge and judgement of the SPO/SRO and policy/programme/project team, and should be considered in the light of the strategic context for the initiative. Examples have been provided as a guide to what might be considered as VL or VH assessments. For each assessment a short explanatory note of the reasoning for each mark should be given (where appropriate) in the text box to provide an audit trail of the considerations.

**Table A – Consequential Impact Assessment**

Having considered each **Strategic Impact** **Area** an overall assessment is required to determine the Consequential Impact Assessment. This is based on the holistic assessment of all five areas in total; there is no formula or calculation involved. The overall assessment should be shown by an **X** in the final (pink) section of Table A.

An explanatory note **must** be given in the text box provided to give the reasoning for the overall assessment.

**During** **policy development**, when assurance may be provided through a Starting Gate or equivalent review, completion of only Table A is required. Only the Overall Consequential Impact Assessment mark should be entered in Box 14 on the cover sheet. If this assessment indicates that the impact is **MEDIUM or above**,the RPAshould, after agreement of the SPO, be submitted to the DAC.

**For existing programmes/projects** if, after completing Table A, the Overall Consequential Impact Assessmentis considered to be **VERY LOW,** completion of Table B is **optional** and the completed RPA can be sentto the DAC, who will discuss with the programme/project what assurance activity might be most appropriate.

**Table B – Complexity Assessment**

If the Consequential Impact Assessment (Table A) is assessed as **greater than** **VERY LOW,** completion of the Complexity Assessment (Table B) is **required**. The approach for Table B largely follows the same format as for Table A, but for convenience is broken down into four **Complexity Areas**.

Having assessed each factor in each of the four complexity areas, an assessment is then required to determine a summary assessment for each area. Again an **X** should be marked in the appropriate (yellow) score box for each complexity area and an explanation given in the notes box.

At the end of Table B there is a (yellow) table headed **Complexity Assessment Summary** where the area summary assessment results should be recorded.

Consideration should now be given to reaching an **Overall Complexity Assessment** for the initiative, based on the four area assessments. Again, there is no scoring or formula for determining this; it is the policy/programme/project team’s holistic assessment.

The Overall Complexity Assessment is recorded in the final (green) section of the Complexity Assessment Summary with an **X** marked in the appropriate box. **An explanatory note must be provided** to support the overall complexity assessment for audit trail purposes.

**Finalising the Risk Potential Assessment**

As the environments in which programmes or projects operate will vary, there may be other aspects that might not be covered by the RPA which affect the impact and/or complexity assessments in this form. These additional aspects, if considered material to the overall impact and/or complexity assessments, should be reflected with explanatory notes in the overall assessments in Tables A and B respectively.

Having completed the Consequential Impact Assessment (Table A) and the Complexity Assessment (Table B), the overall **Risk Potential Assessment** for the programme or project is determined by plotting the respective assessments on Table C.

Using the overall results from the Consequential Impact and Complexity Assessments and the respective axis of Table C, mark an **X** in the appropriate cell where the two assessments intersect. This will then indicate what level of review may be required, as suitable for the Low, Medium or High Risk level of the initiative. **The overall level of review (L/M/H) should then be noted in Box 14 on the cover sheet of the RPA.**

The SPO or SRO (as relevant) must agree the completed RPA, after which the completed RPA should then be sent to the DAC, who in turn will copy it onto the organisation’s Portfolio Manager (or an equivalent e.g. Head of Centre of Excellence), for validation.

For all submissions the Portfolio Manager (or equivalent) should independently validate the RPA and be satisfied that it fairly reflects the initiative’s strategic profile within the organisation’s overall change portfolio. If the RPA is deemed by them to be inaccurate, a discussion with the SPO/SRO should be held to reach a consensus.

**Using the RPA for assurance purposes**

Once the RPA is agreed, and depending on the overall assessment, the DAC or IPA will instigate the assurance review process by arranging an Assessment Meeting (see Table C below).

The initial RPA assessment will normally be used throughout the life of the integrated assurance and approval process, even though the risk potential might decline as the programme/project progresses through the change lifecycle. Should the RPA marking increase, the higher assessment may take precedence. Departments, Agencies and NDPBs, in discussion with the IPA, should undertake periodic reviews of their portfolios to ensure a consistent and appropriate use of the RPA in setting risk levels, and hence the appropriate assurance regimes.

The RPA will also be reviewed at each Assessment meeting to ensure there have been no material changes since it was completed. The type of review, duration of the review and constitution of the review team will be agreed at the Assessment meeting. **For further information see contact details on the last page.**

| **Table A****Consequential Impact Assessment**A strategic assessment of the consequential impact should the initiative fail to deliver its objectives to time, cost or quality |
| --- |
| **Strategic Impact Area**  |  | **Very Low** | **Low** | **Med** | **High** | **Very High** |  |
| **A1. Political**  | None, or unlikely to have any political interest.  |  |  |  |  |  | As a prerequisite for major policy initiative or manifesto commitment, a high level of on-going Ministerial or political interest. Likelihood of PAC, or equivalent strategic body, interest. |
| Explanatory Notes**(Completion mandatory)** |   |
| **A2. Public** | No public service impact. No information security or environmental implications. No interest from external pressure groups likely. |  |  |  |  |  | Significant public or business interest, e.g. related to information security, or to environmental issues. High degree of interest from pressure groups or media. Involves contentious change. |
| Explanatory Notes **(Completion mandatory)** |  |
| **A3. Financial** | Little or no exposure of public funds or additional financial burden. No financial impact from the environment or social costs. Limited or no savings to be delivered. |  |  |  |  |  | Very significant financial exposure of public funds, or additional financial burden. Significant financial impact from environmental or social change. Will, or likely to, require HM Treasury financial approval. Very significant savings expected to be delivered. |
| Explanatory Notes**(Completion mandatory)** |  |
| **A4. Operational business and commercial change** | Low priority, limited impact on the organisation’s administration, operations or staff. No impact on third party organisations. No changes to regulatory requirements. |  |  |  |  |  | Departmental priority, addressing high profile business issue. Essential to fulfil legislative/legal requirements. Significant impact or additional burden on business or staff, on external commercial markets, regulations or trade. The change is novel or contentious.  |
| Explanatory Notes**(Completion mandatory)** |  |
| **A5. Dependencies** | Stand alone - no dependency either way on other initiatives, programmes or projects.  |  |  |  |  |  | Highly dependent on other legislation, programmes, projects or change initiatives for its successful delivery, and/or vice versa. |
| Explanatory Notes **(Completion mandatory)** |  |
|  **Overall Consequential Impact Assessment** |
| **A6.** Little or no impact on the public, political stakeholders, public finances, operational business or dependent programmes/projects  | VL | L | M | H | VH | Very high impact on the public, political stakeholders, public finances, operational business or dependent programmes/projects |
| **Explanatory Notes (Completion Mandatory)****[Note: If score is Very Low (VL) completion of Table B below is optional. If Table B is not completed, note this score in Box 14 on the cover sheet. Alternatively, this score is to be used in Table C if Table B is completed.]**  |

| **Table B****Programme/Project Complexity Assessment** An assessment of the complexity factors that may affect the achievement of the programme/project objectives |
| --- |
| **B1 Strategic Profile** |  | **Very Low** | **Low** | **Med** | **High** | **Very High** |  |
| B1.1. Political  | No political involvement or does not require any special handling or additional engagement.  |  |  |  |  |  | Multiple political interests requiring handling. Political agenda changing, unclear direction or increasing opposition. External political interests involved. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B1.2. Public | No or very low public profile. No change in public interest or service provision. No interest from external pressure groups. |  |  |  |  |  | Very high public profile, significant interest from public and/or from active pressure groups/media. Complex external communications. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B1.3. Business performance | No significant change to the organisation’s business. No change to the operation of external bodies.  |  |  |  |  |  | Very high business performance profile. Changing demands or expectations of performance or staff or behaviours. Significant changes to consumer or business operations. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B1.4. Organisational objectives | No links to strategic targets or published performance indicators. Strategic status (portfolio position), mandate and objectives clear, stable and unlikely to change.  |  |  |  |  |  | Critical link to delivery of key strategic objectives and/or published targets. Strategic status, mandate or objectives likely to change.  |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| **Strategic Profile summary assessment**  | **Strategic profile low, changes unlikely to threaten objectives** | VL | L | M | H | VH | **Strategic profile very high and changes highly likely to threaten achievement of objectives** |
| **Explanatory Notes (Completion Mandatory)****[Note: Record summary assessment mark to Complexity Assessment Summary table below]**  |

| **Table B****Programme/Project Complexity Assessment** An assessment of the complexity factors that may affect the achievement of the programme/project objectives |
| --- |
| **B2 Delivery Challenge**  |  | **Very Low** | **Low** | **Med** | **High** | **Very High** |  |
| B2.1. Policy/Legal | No legal matters or legislation involved. Policy and legal implications fully understood, aligned and stable. Policy development assurance review (e.g. PVR or equivalent) undertaken. |  |  |  |  |  | Affects complex, multiple or cross-border jurisdictions. Legal, legislative or cross organisational policy unclear or changes and challenges highly likely. No policy development reviews undertaken. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.2. Security  | No security or public data handling implications. |  |  |  |  |  | Significant national security or public data handling issues or requirements. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.3. Requirements for business change  | Stable business, no significant changes envisaged to requirements. Implications established of wider strategic changes, e.g. green agendas, sustainability. Clearly defined, agreed measurable outcomes. Limited change to business operations.  |  |  |  |  |  | Multiple, interdependent and complex requirements that are dependent on wider emerging or change initiatives e.g. sustainability. Extensive change to business operations or additional information reporting requirements. Significant unplanned changes to business requirements or outcomes likely to be imposed or required. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.4.Technology development, production and/or techniques  | Involves no new or novel technology development, implementation, production, products, tools or techniques. Extensive previous use of development and/or production techniques.  |  |  |  |  |  | First or extensive use of leading edge, novel or innovative technology. High degree of design, build or implementation complexity or uncertainty. Technology or methodology likely to be subject to major changes.  |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.5. Commercial and supplier delivery | Established contracts or existing frameworks to be used. Commercial environment stable. Experienced sector suppliers. Single supplier or short supply chain.  |  |  |  |  |  | Complex or innovative commercial arrangements. Supplier market limited and/or very specialist. Multiple suppliers or complex/volatile supply or logistical chain.  |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.6. Financial provision  | Funding from within organisation budgets, no influence from economic climate. Supplier’s funding all in place.  |  |  |  |  |  | Complex cross-organisational funding arrangements. Funding not agreed or in place. Third party or supplier funding not in place. Economic conditions likely to affect funding options or availability. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.7. Governance and programme/project management | Straightforward and stable governance structure. Recognised formal PPM methodologies in use. Key post holders in place. |  |  |  |  |  | Complex or multi-faceted governance or management structures. Governance, management structures or key post holders are likely to change.  |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.8. Stakeholders | Single stakeholder community, fully bought-in. No expected change in stakeholder environment or from agreed requirements and outcomes. |  |  |  |  |  | Complex stakeholder community. Stakeholder environment volatile or with significant external change factors.  |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.9 Dependencies | Stand alone, no or few dependencies on or for other programmes or projects.All statutory approvals or authorisations in place.  |  |  |  |  |  | Complex dependency relationships with other initiatives or organisations. Significant external statutory authorisations or approvals (e.g. legislation, financial approvals, planning consent etc) remain outstanding or require explicit management. Dependencies changing or conflicting and/or coordination increasingly challenging.  |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B2.10. Change and implementation  | Single or co-located programme/project and supplier teams; single site delivery. No conflicting internal business change issues to affect change. Simple acceptance and cut-over issues. No “big bang” delivery. Change and benefits management fully embedded. |  |  |  |  |  | Complex national or international delivery environment. Changing or uncertain implementation, cultural or physical challenges to changes likely or expected. Big bang implementation. Complex testing and cut-over issues. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| **Delivery Challenge summary assessment** | **Challenges to deliver are very low and** **change is unlikely to threaten objectives** | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** | **Very high degree of challenge and changes are highly likely to threaten achievement of objectives** |
| **Explanatory Notes (Completion Mandatory)****[Note: Record summary assessment mark to Complexity Assessment Summary table below]** |

| **Table B****Programme/Project Complexity Assessment** An assessment of the complexity factors that may affect the achievement of the programme/project objectives |
| --- |
| **B3 Capacity and Capability** |  | **Very Low** | **Low** | **Med** | **High** | **Very High** |  |
| B3.1. Programme or project team | Fully resourced and skilled team.Stable team, no recruitment issues. Specialist support (e.g. commercial, legal) in place or available when required. Experienced with similar change or technology projects. |  |  |  |  |  | Personnel resources or funding not available when required. Significant resource changes likely leading to skill gaps or disruption to key posts. No previous experience with similar change or technology. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B3.2 Stakeholders and organisation  | Fully resourced and skilled, available when required. Open to and comply with change. Common and accepted priority across an engaged stakeholder community.  |  |  |  |  |  | Key resources or skills lacking or unavailable when required.Changing environment. Business priority is low, inconsistent or changing. Significantly differing priorities between stakeholder groups. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B3.3. Suppliers(internal or external) | Experienced, strong and stable market or suppliers.Supplier resources skilled and available, with ongoing support and commitment. |  |  |  |  |  | No, weak or overstretched market - unlikely to meet demand. Suppliers unable to sustain support, withdraw, or cannot meet requirements. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B3.4. Strategic leadership and business culture | Good capacity, continuity and experience in leadership roles. No unforeseen organisational pressures. Open culture for change, no staff or trade union concerns.  |  |  |  |  |  | Strategic leadership subject to change. No previous responsibility for or direct experience of change of similar magnitude or complexity. A challenging cultural, staff or workload environment.  |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| **Capacity & Capability summary assessment** | **Capacity and capability in place and change unlikely to threaten objectives**  | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** | **Significant capacity or capability issues. Changes highly likely to threaten achievement of objectives**  |
| **Explanatory Notes (Completion Mandatory)****[Note: Record summary assessment mark to Complexity Assessment Summary table below]** |

| **Table B****Programme/Project Complexity Assessment** An assessment of the complexity factors that may affect the achievement of the programme/project objectives |
| --- |
| **B4 Scale** |  | **Very Low** | **Low** | **Med** | **High** | **Very High** |  |
| B4.1 Time | Timescales are not challenging, no external drivers. No imposed changes expected to the agreed schedules. Contingency available and tested business continuity plans. |  |  |  |  |  | **Schedules are very** challenging. Immovable deadlines. Major changes to deadlines or imposed deadlines are likely to occur. Very limited or no contingency or contingency options available. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B4.2 Budget | Budgets within delegations and local control. Costs relatively small to overall organisational portfolio spend. Budgets agreed and stable. Appropriate financial management systems established.Change management system in place.  |  |  |  |  |  | Budgets outside organisational spend delegations.Cost estimates subject to significant pressures from ongoing or expected change. Costs are significant, relative to the organisation’s programme/project spend. Financial management system not in place or audited. Cross organisational/ multi-faceted funding with complex financial control and reporting. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B4.3 Benefits | Benefits are relatively small. Benefits easily and clearly defined, owned, measurable and achievable. No expected changes which might increase the scale of benefits.  |  |  |  |  |  | Magnitude of benefits significant. Complex benefits realisation challenges. Changing benefits management environment or realisation responsibilities. Achievability of benefits in doubt. Difficult to measure. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| B4.4. Quality  | Quality requirements are clear, easily achievable and stable.  |  |  |  |  |  | Quality targets are extremely challenging, likely to change significantly, or hard to achieve. |
| Explanatory Notes |  |
| **Scale summary assessment** | **Small scale, changes unlikely to threaten objectives**  | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** | **Very large scale, and changes highly likely to threaten achievement of objectives** |
| **Explanatory Notes (Completion Mandatory)****[Note: Record summary assessment mark to Complexity Assessment Summary table below]** |

| **Complexity Assessment Summary** **(Insert the marks allocated for each of the four (yellow) summary assessments from Table B above)** |
| --- |
| **Complexity Areas** **summary assessments** | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** |
| **Strategic Profile** (B1.1 – B1.4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Delivery Challenge** (B2.1 – B2.10) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Capacity and Capability** (B3.1 – B3.4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Scale** (B4.1 – B4.4) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B5. Overall Complexity Assessment** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Explanatory Notes (Completion Mandatory)****[Note: assessment above to be used on Table C]** |

| **Table C** **Risk Potential Assessment**Plot overall summary assessments from Table A (line A6) and Table B (line B5) and mark with an **X** in grid below |
| --- |
| **Overall Consequential Impact****Assessment****(Table A summary)** | **Very High** |  |  |  | **High****Risk** |  |
| **High** | **Medium Risk** |  |  |  |  |
| **Medium** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Low** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Very Low** |  |  | **Low Risk** |  |  |
|  | **Very Low** |  **Low** | **Medium** |  **High** | **Very High** |
| **Overall Complexity Assessment****(Table B summary)** |
| **Now transfer the Risk Potential Assessment score from Table C to Box 14 on the cover sheet of this form.** |
| **Please send the fully completed and approved RPA to your Departmental Assurance Coordinator (or equivalent), who will pass it on to your organisation’s Portfolio Manager (or equivalent) for validation.** **Who arranges the review?**In central government the “arrange and manage” process for Gate Reviews and Project Assessment Reviews (PAR) is generally as follows: Major Projects & High Risk Assurance Reviews: By the IPA for all GMPP Tier A Projects and ProgrammesMedium Risk Assurance Reviews: By Departments, under delegation from the IPALow Risk Assurance Reviews: By Departments, usually through consultation with their DAC/Centre of Excellence (or equivalent). **All RPAs indicating a requirement for Medium or High Risk reviews will be checked at the Assessment meeting.****Scheduling and lead time:**When planning an assurance review, please assume 12 weeks **from the date of the Assessment meeting** to the start of the review, **not from the date when the RPA was submitted**.**PLEASE NOTE: It may not be possible for the IPA to arrange a review at short notice as reviewers’ availability may be limited.** **Failure to provide sufficient information in this RPA may delay the timing of your assurance review.** **DAC submission of RPA:** Please delete the user guidance pages, and ensure the security classification is correct, before sending the completed RPA to gateway.helpdesk@ipa.gov.uk |

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Further information about the Cabinet Office Infrastructure and Projects Authority, and guidance for central government bodies on the requirements for integrated assurance and approvals is available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/infrastructure-and-projects-authority>

Infrastructure & Projects Authority

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