National Infrastructure
& Service Transformation
Authority

Delivering PFI Reset

A guide for SROs and contract management teams

PFI Centre of Excellence

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Delivering PFI Reset

Introduction

Purpose

This guidance introduces the Reset Routemap and sets out a process which parties can use to move through the stages of reset. It will be relevant to those who have a desire to use the reset process as a means of implementing material change on their projects.

This is the second of NISTA's guidance documents supporting reset, the others being:

- PFI Reset: an introduction for SROs and contract management teams
- Building Blocks of PFI Reset

Other supporting documents include:

- PFI Stocktake
- Relationships Toolkits

Audience

This guidance is primarily aimed at Senior Responsible Owners (SROs) with PFI responsibilities and their contract management teams. Reset, however, should be a joint endeavour between the public and private sector parties and, as such, this guidance is intended to be useful to investors, funders, asset managers, market suppliers and all those with an interest in PFIs. This guidance has been developed in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders across the public and private sector.

Legal caveat

This guidance is designed to help you consider what practical steps you should take to manage your PFI project; why you should take them; and how you might go about them. Given the breadth of the PFI sector, the guidance is necessarily generic in nature, and not intended to override your contract. Action should not be taken without careful consideration of the details of your own project. As such, this guidance cannot be relied on as legal or any other form of advice, or professional opinion. You should seek formal professional advice as necessary.

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1. The Reset Routemap

1.1 Why have we designed the Reset Routemap?

The Reset Routemap has been designed to support parties in applying the concept of PFI reset to their projects. The scope of any reset will be determined by the specific characteristics of a project, but it is likely to involve significant change across several specialisms and a need to find effective ways of joint working.

This significant change is not a simple thing to achieve; the Reset Routemap is intended to support parties in doing this by providing a simple framework to structure discussions and joint activity.

1.2 When and how do I use the Reset Routemap?

In PFI Reset: an introduction for SROs and contract management teams we introduced the Project Stocktake as a tool to support a joint review of a project's performance. The Reset Routemap process assumes that parties have completed their own stocktake questionnaires but are yet to discuss the results of their review with the other parties.

You should bear in mind the following when making use of the routemap:

- **The routemap is presented as sequential for presentational purposes**, but experience suggests that matters will rarely happen in a neatly sequential manner on PFI projects. Recognise this and adapt as needed.
- **The process recognises that differences of opinion are bound to exist** and that it is important for these to be communicated and understood clearly – the process does not force parties into agreement where that is not realistic to achieve.
- **The extent to which activities are joint will vary on a project-by-project basis** – the process is not intended to be prescriptive: adapt as you see fit.
- **Building and maintaining effective relationships is fundamental** to getting the best out of the routemap process, and so it would make sense to read the advice which we include in Part B of this guidance on managing relationships before making use of the routemap.
- **Proportionality will be key** – projects will vary in this respect, but it is important to focus on what is important and not to get distracted by a desire for perfection.

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In making use of the routemap in order to implement a reset, you will need to have a clear idea of where you want to focus your efforts. Completion of a stocktake questionnaire may have highlighted a number of areas which require focus, but any approach will need to be proportionate to a project's needs (as noted above) and the available resources. The scoping of activities will be key. In Building Blocks of PFI Reset we put the building blocks of strong PFI performance in the context of reset and provide advice, toolkits and signposting of further documents which can support parties in developing the scope of a reset.

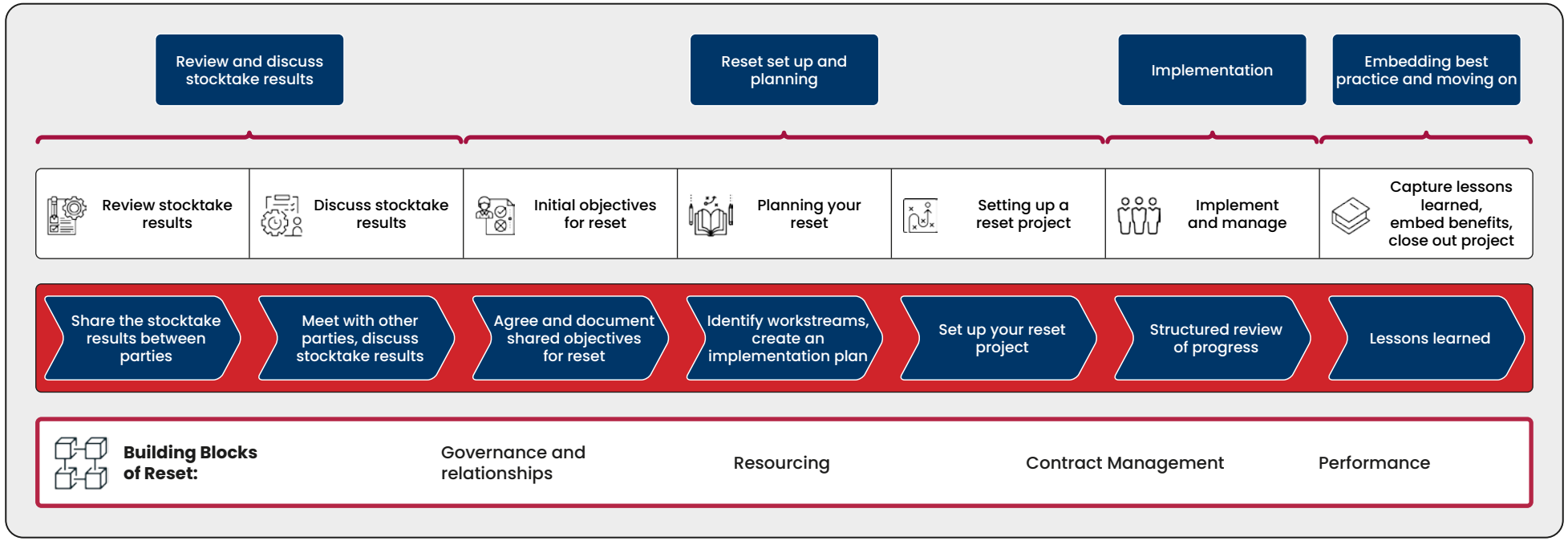
The Routemap has been divided into the following distinct stages.

	What is it about
Review stocktake results	Use stocktake process to identify issues and areas of alignment and misalignment with other key project parties.
Reset set-up and planning	Start work on shared objectives built around stocktake themes. Identify what is needed to meet those objectives and work with other parties to turn that into a plan.
Implementation	Focus on implementation of plan through use of agreed meeting structure, reporting and discussion.
Embedding best practice and moving on	Ensure benefits of reset are sustained. Close out the reset project in a transparent and structured way, and document learnings so that processes can be adapted and new ways of working embedded.

The following tables provide more detail on the key activities, outputs and considerations for each stage of the routemap.

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Reset Routemap



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Review and discuss stocktake results

This phase requires all parties to review and then compare and contrast each other's stocktake results in order to clarify areas of alignment and misalignment. Parties should then meet to discuss in order to better understand differences of opinion and why they exist.

	Review stocktake results	Discuss stocktake results
Key activities	Share stocktake results between parties. Identify where there are differences of opinion across the stocktake results. Consider which of those differences you would like to understand better.	Meet with the other parties to discuss stocktake results: • Understand other parties' perspectives – ask why they assess the theme in that way, and share your view. • Capture alignment and misalignment of views. This stage is about sharing perspectives and finding areas where there is agreement on the need for change. It is not about determining who is right or wrong.
Key outputs	List of key areas where parties are aligned and misaligned. A list of your priorities. A list of questions to help you understand the other parties' perspectives.	List of key areas where: • Parties agree that change needs to happen and have a common view on this. • Parties agree that change needs to happen but are not agreed what this might be. • Parties agree a need to investigate further to understand if change is needed. • Some parties want change but others do not agree. • Parties agree that no change is needed, or that the area is not a priority.
Key considerations	Clarifying that there are major differences is a good thing as it will enable a discussion to understand why these exist. Identifying those areas of disagreement which are important to you. Be prepared to explain why you have come to a particular conclusion, particularly where this is different to other parties' views. Do not judge parties' perspectives at this stage – be open-minded. Do you know why issues have arisen? This will be critical to embedding change.	More than one meeting may be needed! Be evidence-based – do you have the data you need to come to informed conclusions, and if not what data do you need to see to have an informed view? Depending on results of stocktake it may make sense to meet some parties individually – i.e. end users. Share your perspectives – be open but don't seek to criticise or blame others. Be inquisitive – ask people why they hold that view. Consider using an independent party to support your discussions.

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Reset set-up and planning

This phase will require you and the other parties to communicate clearly what you want your reset to look like. This will include working together to set some initial objectives, unpick the root causes of issues in your project and then agreeing a more detailed plan of action.

	Initial objectives for reset	Planning your reset	Setting up a reset project
Key activities	Identify the areas that need addressing and whether it is possible to agree a plan to fix them, or whether further investigation is required first to enable action. Agree and document a shared set of objectives for the outcome of the reset which deals with the areas that need addressing – try to define an end state with clear and measurable objectives, so you know if you have achieved the desired outcome. Be clear about where parties are not able to agree on objectives – these issues may still need to be addressed.	Identify the workstreams needed to meet the objectives of your reset. Identify areas for further investigation and preferred methodology (assurance, condition surveys, etc.). Develop an overall implementation plan supported by lower-level workstream plans. These should include activities, timelines/ target dates, responsibilities, outputs, dependencies, etc. Consider creating activity schedules to further define what needs to take place within each workstream over specific periods of time – this may help for workstreams with significant dependencies and interconnected activities taking place over an extended period of time.	Establish a project governance structure – decide on which meetings are needed, who attendees should be and frequency. Within the governance structure, be clear about decision-making – where and how decisions will be taken and the relevant internal approvals needed within each party. Appoint SROs for each key party to provide oversight and leadership. Create standardised approach to reporting, with clear lines of reporting and issues log to track key items. Consider using a RACI analysis to define and clarify roles and responsibilities within the project – this will support clearer accountability and reduce confusion.
Key outputs	Set of shared objectives aligned to stocktake findings. List of areas where joint objectives cannot be agreed.	Implementation plan with sufficient detail regarding the "how" and "what" to support effective delivery. Workstream plans and activity schedules with scopes of work	Governance framework – setting out meetings, attendees, timings, decision-making process. Ensure that reporting lines and escalation routes are in place. Reset report (periodic) – to track progress. Issues log and risk register updated. RACI.

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	Initial objectives for reset	Planning your reset	Setting up a reset project
Key considerations	Recognise that parties will have different needs and motivations for addressing issues. Seek to understand these and explain your needs – this should help you understand each other and develop shared objectives. Focus here on outcomes and outputs – what do you and the other parties need (rather than want)? Try to make these SMART. Do not try to solve all issues at this stage – recognise that some issues may require further investigation before you can fully define objectives. This will be a first task in your reset plan, with later task to be defined later on. Where differences cannot be reconciled, identify these as issues and escalate. Ignoring them will cause more significant issues later on.	Do not try to have a fixed plan that takes you to the end – consider how your planning can be agile to reflect what you learn during reset. Include milestones and accountability, but acknowledge the need to maintain flexibility.	Governance will need to work on several levels. Senior leaders need to be involved and have oversight, but additional forums will be needed to ensure progress of activity across other disciplines – operational, commercial, etc. Clarity will be needed around decision-making so that any necessary approvals are properly understood both in terms of timing and responsibility. For significant change, project management support may well be needed. Be proportionate – projects will require varying approaches depending on their size and complexity.

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	Implementation	Embedding best practice and moving on
	Implement and manage	**Capture lessons learned, embed benefits, close out project**
Key activities	Dependent on workstreams, but likely to involve structured set of meetings at agreed points to review activity within each workstream. Set up monitoring to track progress and issue resolution, adjust governance framework if needed as reset progresses.	Reflect on why reset was needed and whether your original objectives have been met (recognising that those objectives may have evolved over time). Capture lessons from reset to support day-to-day contract management in the future to ensure best practice. Translate new ways of working and relationships into day-to-day as a new/refresh activity to manage actively.
Key outputs	Project report (periodic) – to track progress. Meeting minutes. Issues log and risk register updated. Updated implementation/delivery plan. Formally agree workstreams and reset outcomes and ensure that these are reflected in contract changes where necessary.	Lessons learned report. Project closure report. Day-to-day plan to transition/handover from reset to BAU.
Key considerations	Be agile – respond to issues and adjust approach if it isn't working. Governance is vital – all parties need to attend and actively participate in meetings for reset to progress. If this is not happening, it needs to be addressed. Without all parties buying into process and committing to attendance at meetings, reset will fail. Develop approach to risk management.	Think carefully about learning from experience – without embedding change, you are likely to fall back to the pre-reset position. What has caused the issues encompassing the reset? Where are the gaps, and have these been fixed e.g. through changes to processes, improved governance or better relationships? Assess project success through a closure report – what has been achieved? Make sure all key parties are brought into the process – think carefully about where change will need to take place and how that can embedded and monitored going forward.

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Critical factors for success	
Review and discuss stocktake results • **Be positive** – embarking on a reset with the right mindset is crucial. A reset is not merely a different forum to reiterate the same issues; it requires a significant shift in approach. • **Be honest** – you have conducted a thorough and honest evaluation of your current situation. Being willing to discuss the findings of your scorecard with your partners demonstrates a commitment to transparency and shared understanding. • **Be open-minded** – maintain an openness and receptiveness to listen to and understand the perspectives of your partners. Valuing their input fosters a collaborative environment. • **Dialogue over debate** – reset stocktake discussions should prioritise dialogue rather than debate. This approach encourages constructive conversations, allowing all parties to share insights and collaboratively explore solutions.	**Reset set-up and planning :** • **Work together** – initially, focus on areas of agreement and alignment to develop mutually agreed objectives and foster consensus. • **Allocate roles and responsibilities** – decide who is doing what and clearly allocate responsibilities. • **Identify quick wins** – what can be achieved most efficiently in order to make quick progress. • **Have a clear and agreed plan** – document what you are aiming to achieve and by when.
Implementation • **Commit to governance** – attendance will be crucial to maintaining progress in your reset project. If parties are not committed, ensure escalation routes are available. • **Report and monitor progress against the plan** – ensure governance is in place to review progress. Consider project management support if reset is significant. • **Be agile** – reset activity will never go according to plan, and you will need to consider changes in approach such as reprioritisation and/or new workstreams to make the best out of the project.	**Embedding best practice and moving on** • **Dedicate time** – put time aside for this important activity as unless you do so you will not embed change in your project. • **Joint focus** – bring all relevant parties together to reflect on the reset project. Try to discuss the reasons you have had to proceed with the reset approach and do so in an open and honest manner with all parties. • **Document lessons learned** – this will be important in the future when you need to refer back to previous work. Think about why issues have arisen, how the parties have resolved them and what has worked well/ less well.