



**Institute of
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FROM QUALITY TO OUTCOME LEGITIMACY

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Why Outcome Assurance - and Outcome Control - Must Lead the Governance Conversation

Introduction

The UK Government's recent release of Functional Standard **GovS 002 for Project Delivery** highlights a familiar problem: outdated project management models continue to dominate infrastructure discourse. These process-heavy frameworks prioritise activity over purpose and structure over value - failing to ask whether what's delivered truly serves long-term public needs, or whether the outcomes themselves are legitimate, credible, and aligned with public value.

Tools like WBS, CBS, and work package management may offer structural scaffolding, but they remain fundamentally disconnected from systems-based logic and outcome traceability. They organise activity - but not accountability. The result is fragmented governance, reactive oversight, and repeated missed opportunities to deliver infrastructure that truly serves society.

To move forward, governance must evolve from managing quality to **assuring outcomes**. That shift begins with commissioning-led systems thinking and ends with outcomes that matter, aligned with original project intentions.

From QA/QC to OA/OC: A Project Governance Innovation

Let's start with a familiar analogy:

Three Professionals Walk into a Project Room...

- One checks the blueprint to ensure the process is sound.
- Another inspects the final product to confirm it meets the specs.
- The third asks, "Does this actually deliver what people need?"



Outcome Assurance and Outcome Control (OA/OC) is the evolution from the **Quality Assurance (QA)** to **Quality Control (QC)** from the first ISO 19000 standard released in 1987. While QA/QC validates that construction activities confirm to requirements, OA/OC validates that projects deliver intended outcomes. You can't have one without the other.

Role	Focus	Question
QA	Quality Process Conformance	"Are we doing things the right way?"
QC	Quality Output verification	"Did we get the right result?"
OA	Aligning to the Outcome	"Are we governing to the outcome?"
OC	Executing to the Outcome	"Are we executing delivery in real time to protect the outcome?"

Outcome Assurance sets the strategic intent and governance mindset. **Outcome Control** delivers the discipline and structure to make it real - through systems-based commissioning, adaptive feedback loops, and stakeholder alignment. Outcome Assurance sets the project direction; Outcome Control ensures the project does not drift from the intended result.

Together, OA and OC mirror the QA/QC dynamic - but for project outcomes, not just task outputs.

- **QA/QC ensures construction deliverables meet requirements.**
- **OA/OC ensures project outcome deliverables meet initial intentions.**

If you only have QA/QC functions, you may have high-quality installations, but you'll never achieve outcome objectives. Design reviews ensure that proposed solutions meet functional and performance requirements. QA/QC confirms construction deliverables. **OA/OC is the missing piece that confirms project outcomes.**

Why Lean Six Sigma Isn't Enough

Lean Six Sigma blends QA and QC to optimise performance and reduce waste. It's powerful - but largely operational and inward-facing. It sharpens how things are done, but rarely asks whether they should be done at all.

Dimension	Lean Six Sigma	QA	QC	ICxA OA/OC
Primary Focus	Process efficiency	Process reliability	Output verification	Stakeholder alignment + delivery discipline
Orientation	Operational	Proactive	Reactive	Strategic + real-time
Methodology	DMAIC, value stream mapping	Standards, training	Inspection, conformance	Commissioning-led governance
Scope	Manufacturing, service delivery	Repeatable processes	Final outputs	Infrastructure systems, public programmes
Tools	Control charts, Six Sigma belts	Audits, documentation	Sampling, defect logs	CxOA, CxPM, CxOR, CxOAA ICxA Certified Methodologies
Success Criteria	Reduced variation	Consistent execution	Conformance to specs	Delivery of intended outcomes and impact
Stakeholder Engagement	Operational teams	Internal process owners	Inspectors, technical teams	Investors, users, regulators, communities
Governance Role	Operational improvement	Process oversight	Output validation	Transdisciplinary leadership and outcome legitimacy

From Compliance to Sovereignty

OA/OC comprised of Commissioning-led governance reframes delivery - from procedural compliance to **outcome legitimacy**. OA/OC anchors infrastructure in purpose, adaptability, and enduring public value.

In a world shaped by geopolitical pressures, fragile supply chains, and volatile markets, governance must evolve - not incrementally, but structurally. That evolution is embodied in the OA/OC pairing.

- OA provides the strategic lens.
- OC provides the operational grip.

Together, they offer a complete governance architecture - one that is measurable, teachable, and scalable.

Conclusion: From Delivery to Outcome Legitimacy

ICxAs OA/OC model doesn't just improve infrastructure delivery - it professionalises it. It elevates commissioning from a technical function to a sovereign leadership discipline, capable of shaping outcomes, stewarding complexity, and restoring public trust.

To embed this shift within UK policy corridors, we need more than frameworks - we need visible sponsorship, institutional accountability, and a shared commitment to outcome legitimacy.

OA/OC with Commissioning-led governance isn't a refinement. It's a redefinition. It's time to move beyond quality control and embrace a new standard - **Outcome Assurance and Outcome Control (OA/OC)** - as the backbone of credible, adaptive, and value-driven infrastructure.

Let's make OA/OC the new language of legitimacy. Let's make it policy.