



**Institute of
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READINESS IS NOT A FEELING, IT IS A DECISION

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Outcome Assurance is required as a governing layer to protect outcome accountability beyond project delivery.

Readiness is frequently described on projects as a state of confidence or comfort. Teams report that they are “ready,” leaders indicate that readiness has been achieved, and schedules assume readiness once defined activities are complete. While common, this approach treats readiness as a subjective condition rather than a governed decision.

For the purposes of Outcome Assurance, readiness is understood as a formal authorization decision. It is the decision that an outcome may proceed to the next stage of exposure, use, or reliance. Readiness is not achieved through progress, agreement, or passage of time. It is achieved only when an authorized role evaluates defined evidence and records a decision to proceed.

On many projects, readiness is implied rather than authorized. Milestones are reached, documentation is closed, and informal consensus is reached to advance. In these cases, no explicit determination is made that the outcome is fit for its intended purpose. Authority is assumed rather than exercised, and accountability is therefore unclear.

Schedule pressure does not change what readiness requires. As schedule constraints increase, the tendency to rely on informal judgments also increases. Expressions such as “ready enough” or “we will resolve this later” are not readiness decisions. They represent deferral of judgment without authorization. Outcome Assurance expects readiness decisions to be made deliberately, including under schedule pressure, because this is when risk exposure is highest.

A readiness decision does not require the absence of known issues. It requires that known limitations are visible, assessed, and explicitly accepted by the authorized authority. Evidence demonstrates that the outcome can perform its intended function safely and reliably, or that any constraints on performance are understood and managed. Acceptance of residual risk is explicit, not assumed.

Readiness authority is singular and defined. While technical input, review, and consultation may be broad, the authorization decision itself rests with one designated role. Consensus may inform readiness, but it does not replace authorization. Shared agreement without defined authority does not establish accountability.



Governing readiness therefore requires formal definition. This includes defining readiness criteria, evidence requirements, decision authority, and records of authorization. It also includes recognizing that, in some circumstances, the correct readiness decision is to delay advancement until conditions are met.

Projects do not fail due to lack of effort or intent. They fail when critical decisions are left implicit. Readiness is a governing decision that determines when an outcome may be relied upon. Treating readiness as a subjective condition exposes outcomes to unmanaged risk. Treating readiness as an authorized decision is a fundamental requirement for outcome protection.