

Delivery Governance Assurance

When governance is visible and active but you no longer feel in command of the outcome, an independent view on whether your control system is still steering delivery — or only documenting it.

More meetings is not more control.

Executive scan

The problem

Boards meet, SteerCos run, packs circulate, PMO processes operate — but leadership is no longer confident those structures are still exerting real control over delivery.

When to use

When process is heavy but impact is light. When the same risks come back every cycle. When escalation no longer changes trajectory.

Decision supported

Confirm, tighten, simplify, or reset the control model. One clear position on what governance has to do next.

What you receive

A **Governance Posture Signal**, a 30-day control restoration plan, and four supporting analyses — see page 4.

Timeframe

2 to 5 weeks. Scaled to the scope and consequence of the control environment under review.

Who commissions

CIO, CTO, or CDO · executive sponsor or SteerCo chair · CFO or investment committee · board or audit committee.

Governance failure rarely shows up as a single catastrophic event. It erodes value over time — through delayed intervention, unresolved escalation, unclear accountability, and decisions that arrive after the window to act has narrowed. By the time the erosion is visible in delivery performance, much of the damage has already been absorbed as avoidable cost, sponsor exposure, and reduced room to recover.

The failure we address — governance that documents but no longer steers

Most distressed delivery environments are not missing process. They are full of it. Forums meet, packs circulate, actions are logged. What is missing is the link between governance activity and a change in delivery trajectory.

What we prevent

Passive Governance

Governance structures that remain visible, structured, and active — but no longer change decisions, risk exposure, or outcomes. Meetings review status without altering trajectory. Risks are logged without being resolved. Escalation moves issues upward without triggering intervention. The result is a structure of oversight that stays intact while real control quietly drifts. ***This service exists to tell you whether governance is still doing its job — and what to change if it is not.***

Sound familiar?

These are sentences executives say to us in the first ten minutes of a briefing. Any one of them — present across two or more reporting cycles — is reason to commission an independent view. Three or more is rarely a coincidence.

"The same risks come back every cycle."

Top risks are reviewed, owned, mitigated — and never actually close. The list rolls forward unchanged.

"We escalated. Nothing changed."

Issues reach the right forum on time. Trajectory does not change afterward. The escalation did not function as control.

"The real decisions get made somewhere else."

Side conversations and ad hoc calls do the steering. The official forum ratifies decisions already made.

"The pack looks fine. The team is not."

The governance narrative remains stable while delivery teams express growing doubt that the underlying conditions match.

"We have governance for everything. We control nothing."

Oversight has intensified. Decision speed and follow-through have not.

"If we needed to pivot tomorrow, could this structure do it?"

An honest test of whether the current governance model could intervene if it had to — not the same as whether it usually meets.

Why this is hard to see from the inside

Passive Governance does not appear as disorder. It appears as a highly structured, highly documented, visibly active system — while control continues to weaken underneath it.

01	02	03	04	05
Ownership in name only	Decisions arrive too late	Information softens going up	Shadow channels do the real work	Process becomes the product
Roles are documented. In practice, no one is clearly empowered to stop work or force a decision.	Decisions move slower than risk accumulates. The window for meaningful intervention has already closed.	Each layer rounds toward the positive. Governance sees a cleaner version of reality than delivery is experiencing.	Influence migrates into side conversations and informal interventions. The formal structure documents the rest.	Staying "governed" — decks, logs, packs, updates — consumes the senior capacity that should protect delivery.

What we test — four questions, led by evidence

We do not assess whether governance exists. We answer four questions that determine whether it still functions as a real control system under delivery pressure — and whether that position holds under board, audit, or regulator scrutiny.

1 Are decisions actually being made — and implemented?

Are high-consequence decisions being made at the right level, with the speed and quality required, and is the link to delivery action intact?

2 Does escalation change anything?

How quickly do issues move from being raised to being intervened on — before avoidable loss occurs?

3 Where is real steering happening?

Are the official forums where decisions get made, or has steering migrated to shadow channels that are not visible to the model?

4 Could this structure intervene if it had to?

If the program needed to pivot, re-scope, or stop tomorrow, would governance have the authority, visibility, and confidence to act?

Each question is supported by sub-tests across the five dimensions of Control Integrity: decision integrity, escalation velocity, accountability grip, evidence-narrative alignment, intervention readiness.

Three methods, every engagement

Evidence-led, system-framed, and built to produce a position that holds in any forum.

We pressure-test the control system, not the committees

Findings frame the control system — decision paths, escalation patterns, forum design, information quality — never individuals. That makes the review safe to commission in politically loaded conditions.

We rebuild the real decision and escalation paths

From minutes, action logs, decision records, and pack lineage we reconstruct where decisions truly get made, where they stall, and where they bypass the formal structure altogether.

We talk to the people who know

Confidential, structured interviews with sponsors, forum chairs, PMO, and delivery leads — to surface where steering actually happens, regardless of where the model says it should.

Scope — scaled to the decision you are facing

The constant: a position you can stand behind, in time to act. The variable: how much of the control environment needs to be inside the review.

Focused

2 to 3 weeks · one program

A rapid review of governance control within a single initiative, delivery forum, or decision layer — where a fast answer is required.

Multi-tier

3 to 4 weeks · cross-forum, cross-vendor

A broader review across multiple governance layers, vendor boundaries, and delivery streams where control appears fragmented or diluted.

Strategic

4 to 5 weeks · board, audit, or regulator scrutiny

An executive-level intervention where the control model itself may need to be reset, restructured, or reinforced — and the answer has to hold outside the room.

What you walk away with

Every output answers one question — in language you can defend at the next gate: *is governance intact, fragile, or failing — and what must change now?*

The decision-ready position

Governance Posture Signal

A clear, board-ready rating of whether the current control model is intact, fragile, or failing — with the evidence to support it. Expressed across six positions:

- Confirm
- Tighten
- Simplify
- Reinforce
- Reset
- Restore Control

30-Day Control Restoration Plan

5 to 10 immediate moves to restore real control — who changes what, where, by when, and what should visibly improve first.

Control Integrity View

Where governance is functioning as a control system, where it is weakening, and where it has already broken — mapped to the four questions.

Decision Latency Map

Where key decisions stall, recycle, soften, or bypass the formal structure — and what that is costing in time and risk.

Friction Profile

Where governance friction is necessary and value-adding versus where it is wasteful, delaying, or duplicative — with what to simplify without losing control.

If the situation is bigger than governance — this is one of five Delivery Assurance services. Health, recovery, portfolio, or vendor concerns connect, but this brief stands alone. Ask, and we will tell you the right place to start.
itdeliveryassurance.com/services

Who commissions this review

CIO, CTO, or CDO

"We have governance for everything. I am no longer sure it is actually controlling anything."

Executive Sponsor or SteerCo

"The pack looks fine. The room does not feel in command. I need to know which side is right."

CFO or Investment Committee

"Before I approve more spend, I want assurance that the oversight on this program is still doing its job."

Board or Audit Committee

"I need an evidence-based view that the control model is defensible — before we are asked to defend it under scrutiny."

itdeliveryassurance.com

Canada · US