

Case Study – Industry Superannuation Fund / National

Unified Communications Project

- The project commenced in 2014 aimed to better manage the communications to its members.
- The project spent \$2.2M of authorised \$2.4M on a solution before a business case was developed and endorsed.
- In April 2017 an internal review halted the project as a result of expenditure overruns and material forecast expenditure required for achievement.
- It was concluded the capability sought from the platform would not be realized without significant further investment (~\$15-\$20m), consequently a manual catalogue based process has been deployed.
- Helmsman was engaged to complete a review of the project, using its diagnostic methodology, to understand why the project did not achieve its objectives after 2.5 years, describing the journey the project went on and how this scenario can be avoided in the future.

What were the challenges?

- **Strategic blindness for project:** the program business case poorly represented the project and there was no cascade to project business cases
- **All money on IT purchase looking for a problem:** buying and implementing an IT solution without control put the cart first, but on a journey to where? In a tools first approach, cost for configuration, integration and people change would always blow out...
- **Fear of being that messenger:** bad news was filtered and moderated to suppress problems. We also found that those who received reports were not ready to interpret and act.

And then:

- **Buried alive:** too hard to manage, the project continues to operate under business as usual - hidden from change governance and Executive.

What changes were proposed?

- **Establish clear direction** - Independent Business Cases are needed down to Project level. They need with an improved outcome structure (verb, numeracy, timeframe) to ensure change is defined and measurable.
- **Technology as enabler** – deployment should strategically compliment business process – projects need to focus on business outcome and not a manufacturers installation; therefore, design and selection must follow a business case.
- **Stay clear of the edge** – with a Complexity Cliff of 5, projects should be scoped under this level
- **Clear roles** – A systemic issue, roles and responsibilities are unclear – especially for Executive. Develop and disseminate RACI practices for the organisation. From Board through to project staff.

What was achieved?

- Identified tactical and systemic improvements to the project delivery system, providing immediate value to the project and projects across the portfolio
- Calculated the complexity cliff at 5.5 – demonstrating all projects above this score require new capabilities for the organisation