

# Case Study – State Emergency Services

## Business Planning & Reporting Project Diagnostic

- A State Emergency Services organisation launched a Business Planning and Reporting (BPR) project to enable more effective decision-making and more efficient integrated planning at corporate level and across field Business Units.
- A cloud-based system was chosen to build business plans and was in Project Delivery Stage.
- Helmsman was engaged to conduct an independent assessment/ project performance diagnostic for the project.
- The client wanted evidence to support a Go/No Go decision and guidance on areas that required priority improvement.

## What were the challenges?

- **Business outcome focus.** The root causes of poor, siloed business planning was not tested. Instead, the organisation defaulted to an IT solution that was expected to provide a panacea for effective planning across 80-100 users. None of the benefits identified in the Business Case were quantified.
- **Focus on whole project lifecycle.** Estimates of the total lifecycle of the project (cost, time and benefits) did not exist. Instead, the only project schedule appeared to be written by the vendor, scoped around the IT solution.
- **Quality Information for the Project Board.** Fragmented decision making resulted in scope creep for the project, evidenced through over 10 change requests and no decisions. While the Board had knowledge of the Change Requests, they had no data on the impact to schedule, budget & business outcomes.

## What changes were proposed?

- Helmsman identified that the project was NOT set up for success. There were three recommendations:
- **Define success measurably.** Build a measurable definition of success, clearly articulating the what, how and when.
  - **Build project forecasts.** By properly forecasting time, budget and benefit for each change request and for the whole project, the Project Board could then make informed decisions about whether the project would deliver against targets and would meet business outcomes.
  - **Assess each change request.** With information on the impact that each change request would have on the project, the Project Board should decide what scope change was to continue.

## What was achieved?

By undertaking the 3 recommendations, the Project Board could make key decisions:

- Stop the project, as the cost and time forecast are not appropriate given the current manual processes work; or
- Descope / prioritise the Change Requests to deliver the measurable business outcomes sought once a transparent decision framework is in place.