

Requirements of the Major Projects Authority mandate

In January 2011 the Prime Minister confirmed the mandate for the new Major Projects Authority (MPA) within the Efficiency and Reform Group in the Cabinet Office. The Major Projects Authority (MPA) represents a sea change in the oversight of central government's Major Projects at both an individual and a portfolio level and aims to address the findings from the NAO report 'Assurance of High Risk Projects' and from the Major Projects Review 2010. It is collaboration between the Cabinet Office, HM Treasury and Departments with the fundamental aim of significantly improving the delivery success rate of Major Projects across central government.

The MPA is supported by a clear and enforceable mandate and has the authority to:

- Develop the Government Major Projects Portfolio, and in collaboration with departments provide verified, timely data, with regular reporting to Ministers.
- Require, review and approve Integrated Assurance and Approval Plans for each Major Project or Programme, including timetables for Treasury approvals, and validated by the MPA and HMT.
- Carry out Assurance Reviews where there is cause for concern and that departments co-operate with MPA to take action to address any issues raised.
- Escalate issues of concern to Ministers and Accounting Officers.
- Intervene directly where Projects are causing concern including additional assurance and the provision of commercial and operational support.
- Make a Starting Gate Review, or equivalent, mandatory for all new Projects/Programmes to assess deliverability before project delivery gets underway.
- Work with departments to build capability in Projects and Programme management, including the nomination of suitably senior and experienced officials to act as reviewers on 'high risk' projects and programmes at least once every 12-18 months.
- Require publication of project information consistent with the Coalition's Transparency agenda.
- Collaboration with departments to publish an annual report on Government Major Projects.

The Prime Minister requires all Departments to comply with the requirements of the Mandate for Starting Gate Reviews, integrated assurance planning and reporting, and to provide an increased number of experienced reviewers on a reciprocal basis.