



Governance and Delivery Excellence

Make the right decisions at the right time with clear decision rights and disciplined stage gates



Make the right decisions at the right time — with clear decision rights, disciplined stage gates, and executive confidence

Major capital programs are not “business as usual.” They operate at a scale, pace, and complexity that exceed traditional corporate governance structures. As KPMG’s major project governance research highlights, effective project governance requires ensuring the right decisions are made by the right people at the right time with the right information.

When governance is not fit-for-purpose, it impacts delivery excellence and consequences extend well beyond cost and schedule overruns:

Unclear decision rights and escalation pathways delay critical approvals, slowing delivery and creating avoidable schedule churn

Diffused accountability weakens executive line-of-sight to risks and issues, reducing delivery confidence and increasing late-stage surprises

Limited transparency and assurance mechanisms weaken early warning signals, eroding stakeholder confidence and delivery performance

Inconsistent or poorly designed stage gates result in premature approvals, rework, and weakened cost and schedule predictability

Cultural misalignment slows decision velocity and undermines execution discipline, amplifying delivery risk



For Boards, CEOs, and Executive Sponsors, the risk is not only financial — it is reputational, operational, and strategic.

Strong governance is one of the six pillars that determine major project success and delivery excellence. When properly designed, it enables autonomy, authority, alignment, and disclosure — the foundational elements of effective oversight.

The six pillars of project success — with governance at the core

KPMG’s Six Pillars framework recognizes that successful major projects integrate:

01

Investment & Business Planning

Business strategy and investment processes that optimize capital allocation.



02

Governance & Oversight

Structure and rules that establish efficient delivery and effective oversight.



03

Organization & Performance

Structure and behaviors that organize resources and maximize performance.



04

Commercial & Financial

Commercial strategy, relationships and risk profile that support success.



05

Approvals & Social License

Support, license and approvals necessary to enable effective delivery.



06

Delivery & Risk Management

Processes and procedures to guide effective project delivery and risk management.



Governance and oversight sits at the foundation— aligning these pillars and ensuring disciplined, transparent decision-making that drives delivery excellence, predictable outcomes, and benefits realization throughout the lifecycle.

Our approach balances **alignment, autonomy, accountability, and disclosure** — the core principles of effective major project governance — to help executives lead with confidence.

Governance model selection | Principles of good governance

The right information...	...to ensure decision making by the right people...	...at the right time... and with the mandate...	...to achieve the agreed objectives.
Disclosure	Accountability	Authority	Alignment
- A defined system for monitoring the project and assuring stakeholders that the project is set to meet its objectives - Reporting of information is transparent, timely and appropriate to meet the needs of the delivery and governance teams	- Clearly defined, unambiguous and agreed accountability - Clarity across functions and individuals for defining objectives, ensuring objectives are met, managing change, and managing associated risk and opportunities	- Authority is assigned to empower and facilitate effective decision-making - Is aligned to accountability and capability - Empowers effective, timely decision making, made at the appropriate level of the project to enable efficient delivery	- Ongoing alignment between corporate objectives and direction, project objectives and successful outcomes - Alignment of culture, policies and objectives across stakeholders - Mechanisms in place to efficiently surface and respond to misalignment

Sources:
(1) Project Development Routemap for Infrastructure Projects: Governance (UK Infrastructure and Projects Authority, 2020)
(2) Major project governance – Far beyond “business as usual” (KPMG, 2022)

Comprehensive support for governance and delivery excellence decisions

KPMG helps Boards and executive teams design and implement fit-for-purpose governance and delivery excellence structures that are proportionate to project complexity and aligned with corporate strategy. We work across the full lifecycle to strengthen decision-making, delivery discipline, and executive confidence on major capital programs.

Our services include:

Fit-for-purpose governance models	
Corporate division, independent business unit, or subsidiary structures that support delivery accountability and clear performance ownership	Board and Program Board advisory structures that enhance challenge, assurance, and delivery confidence
Defined terms of reference and committee mandates to speed decisions and reduce delivery churn	Clear transition points from corporate to program governance to maintain execution discipline across project phases
Delegation of authority and decision frameworks	
Explicit decision rights and escalation pathways to improve decision velocity and protect schedule and cost outcomes	Stage gate design and sanctioning discipline to reduce rework and increase predictability through each phase
Authority aligned to capability and accountability so leaders can act decisively and drive delivery performance	Executive reporting cadence and issue escalation protocols that enable timely intervention and delivery recovery
Integrated reporting and assurance	
Embedded transparency and line-of-sight reporting mechanisms that strengthen project controls and delivery decision-making	Independent challenge and oversight through Progressive Assurance to protect delivery outcomes and reduce surprises
Executive dashboards aligned to strategic outcomes, with clear cost, schedule, risk, and benefits line-of-sight	Early warning systems to surface risks early and enable course correction before impacts to cost, schedule, and benefits

As highlighted in KPMG's Progressive Assurance approach, projects fail for predictable reasons — rarely unforeseeable events. Independent, real-time oversight strengthens executive decision-making, improves delivery performance, and provides confidence to stakeholders.

Delivering immediate benefits and lasting outcomes

Organizations that implement disciplined governance and delivery excellence frameworks experience:

Delivery excellence means translating governance decisions into predictable execution — with strong project controls, timely interventions, fewer surprises, and sustained focus on benefits realization.

✓ Faster, higher-quality executive decision-making	✓ Reduced optimism bias and improved risk transparency
✓ Improved cost and schedule predictability	✓ Increased stakeholder and investor confidence
✓ Clearer accountability across functions and delivery teams	✓ Stronger alignment between corporate strategy and project outcomes

In our experience advising Boards and executive sponsors on major infrastructure and energy programs, governance transformation often yields immediate impact — stabilizing delivery, clarifying accountability, and restoring confidence — while building lasting institutional capability.

How KPMG can help

KPMG’s Global Infrastructure Advisory team brings multidisciplinary experience advising on complex, multi-billion-dollar capital programs across infrastructure and energy sectors.

We support executive leaders through:

- **Governance design and transformation**
Board and Program Board structures, operating models, autonomy design
- **Executive oversight and assurance**
Progressive Assurance, independent reviews, performance monitoring
- **Decision, authority and escalation protocol design**
Delegation of authority frameworks, stage gates, sanction readiness reviews
- **Delivery excellence enablement**
Project controls, integrated schedule and cost management, risk and issue management, benefits realization, and performance reporting — so governance decisions translate into predictable execution
- **Leadership and cultural alignment**
Embedding accountability, transparency, and decision velocity across delivery teams

Contact us



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