



Transforming Strategy into Capability

## **Enhanced Managed Services Delivery**

*Written by: Juliet Clews – SYPAQ Consultant (jclews@sypaq.com.au)*

### **Abstract**

According to George Vicino, MD, SYPAQ, “**Effective business strategy is about determining future capability needs and then turning capability concepts into reality**”. Hence, investment in Information Technology (IT) is not about buying information technology – it is about investing in business flexibility. In this sense business flexibility through IT investment can best be achieved via the application of IT best practises combined with a traditional Systems Engineering methodology within a well-defined Enterprise Architecture. SYPAQ has used this approach to define the IT services it provides to its business partners through extensive stakeholder engagement, prioritisation and analysis mechanisms. SYPAQ’s IT Service Management Framework (ITSMF) essentially follows the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) v3 service model. However, the SYPAQ ITSMF has benefited from combining elements of the systems engineering approach defined within EI(A)-632, and the Capability Development Methodology defined within the Defence Capability Development Manual to develop an ITSMF that overcomes some of the restrictions commonly associated with applying a traditional EI(A)-632 Systems Engineering approach, or an exclusively ITIL approach, to the delivery and support of IT Services.

### **Introduction**

In this report, SYPAQ illustrates the application of the SYPAQ IT Service Management Framework (ITSMF) in the ITIL context with an example of a discrete ITIL project currently in progress. This project was conducted for mission critical requirements for a Systems Program Office (SPO) within the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO).

### **Application of the SYPAQ ITSMF**

SYPAQ’s ITSMF life-cycle essentially follows the ITIL v3 service model and comprises the following key elements or functions:

- Strategy,
- Design/Planning,
- Transition/ Handover,
- Operation, and
- Optimisation (Continuous Service Improvement (CSI)).

By provision of experienced, ITIL Certified resources, SYPAQ is able to review, refine, mentor and deliver best practice IT Services within the constraints of the IT Service

environment. However, as a Service Provider with its roots in the Systems Engineering domain, SYPAQ recognises the inherent restrictions associated with subscribing to a singular, IT-centric framework when benchmarking its provision of IT Managed Services.

Predominantly, these restrictions are found, not within the IT Service Environment itself, but from other Business, Infrastructure or Technology constraints. It is too often the result of poorly defined business requirements, or recognition of the dependencies between the business and IT requirements, that undermine the outcomes of an IT Services programme. For whilst ITIL is recognised by many of our clients as the best practise methodology for optimising IT Services, a recognised limitation of the ITIL framework is the somewhat narrow treatment of the Enterprise Architecture (EA) in which the IT Services are being provided. By defining the EA, and understanding these constraints that can impact the IT Service Environment, and hence the ability to deliver to best practice principles, it is possible to define the full operational context and improve the resultant outcomes. These outcomes are often in the form of augmented Service Management via corrective action applied to the Enterprise Architecture, its lower level elements: the Segment Architecture, the Solution Architecture or, most commonly, the Software, Network or Database Architectures supporting the IT Services Environment, rather than purely Service Methodology improvements.

The definition, assessment, aims (requirements) and dependencies of the EA, and its interactions with the IT Services, can be readily performed by following the SYPAQ Capability Definition processes, as part of the ITSMF.

This definition of the EA and the relevant IT Services requirements enables the ready definition of the IT System, its constraints, the resultant requirements that allow for a more complete System Baseline definition, to which the traditional Systems Engineering methodologies may be applied. It is this combined Capability Definition and Systems Engineering Methodologies that allow greater business flexibility to be gained from the IT Services Management, as recommendations for improvement to the IT Services are no longer limited to the IT Service Environment.

Whilst the depth of these Capability Definition and Systems Engineering elements of the ITSMF is tailorable to scope of each project, by taking a whole-of-system and whole-of-life approach to the IT Services Management delivery, the benefits of scalable systems, sustainable processes and infrastructure, obsolescence planning, and process improvement are able to be more clearly defined to the client, often resulting in a surprising cost-benefit analysis for solutions over the enterprise as a whole, versus exclusive costing to the IT Service Environment.

### **Case Study**

SYPAQ is responsible for the Project Management (using PRINCE2) of network infrastructure, software application, help desk and disaster recovery streams on behalf of a SPO within Defence. SYPAQ has adopted ITIL best practices for the management of

IT services to deliver practical guidance for everyday IT practices and activities, helping users establish and implement reliable, cost-effective IT services. This encompasses the entire IT lifecycle by integrating Service Strategy, Service Design, Service Transition, Service Operation, and Continual Service Improvement.

The streams include:

1. Management of the IT infrastructure through the establishment of appropriate Help Desk support and project documentation;
2. Recommendations to improve the security segmentation of existing demilitarized zones, thereby enhancing the protection and security management across production and test servers;
3. Recommendations to reduce the overall complexity of the server environment by consolidating compatible workloads on to fewer servers, and relocating outlying servers into the primary data centre facility; and
4. Improvement of the overall storage management for service improvement and cost reduction.

The SPO has chosen to adopt ITIL as a framework to guide the definition of the services provided to the SPO's stakeholders. These definitions were useful for negotiating the services to be provided and the value associated with these services. In this project, the SPO and SYPAQ partnered to apply the SYPAQ ITSMF for the definition of service level agreements and the provision of other standard services, for some of the SPO's remote and regional offices. The SYPAQ method includes ITIL Compliant Management Frameworks/Processes and Management Tools and Enterprise Architecture (EA) method. Due to the relative maturity of the SPO EA, and the clear definition of user requirement at the onset, a Capability Definition process was not required to be performed.

By coupling these recognised methods with resources experienced in ITIL and Systems Engineering, a robust process with appropriate feedback loops was established to provide the SPO with solutions that were not unnecessarily constrained by the existing architecture. Importantly, this process allowed for traceability of the solutions to the business requirements, allowing for ongoing performance assessment against business needs.

The benefits of this approach have been multiple. For example, it helped the SPO offices to become aware of the mutual expectations between business and IT. It also brought some objectivity in the definition of the service and in the performance monitoring. Hence, ITIL contributes to structure the interaction between business and IT; it encourages collaboration between both parties.

Moving to service management requires the "negotiation of a common understanding" between IT and business. This is best achieved when the full system, its processes, functions and dependencies are clearly defined, the requirements are traceable within the system and the full life-of-system impacts are considered. This allows stakeholders to meaningfully review performance metrics, identify change requirements and ensure

sufficient information is available to support long-term planning to meet business needs. This is where SYPAQ's managed services methods have been most useful within this project.

## **Conclusion**

SYPAQ has evolved a best practice ITSMF from the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) framework, incorporating the Capability Definition and Systems Engineering principles to ensure not only Service Delivery and System Architecture, but also Enterprise Architecture requirements are identified and managed, to ensure optimum provision of services support and delivery. The consequence of such a combination is aimed at providing higher quality of services for SYPAQ's customers through continual process improvement across the whole information system as an integral and essential part of overall business capability.