Australian Government
Department of Human Services

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Going the extra mile…

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“How do we become brilliant at delivering programmes and projects?”

DHS **delivers** for Australians…

- We design, develop, deliver, co-ordinate and monitor the Government's social security, child support, student, families, aged care and health services.
- In 2014-15 we managed:
  - $164.5 billion in payments on behalf of government
  - 380 services centres across Australia (and another 350 agents and 238 access points)
  - 25.4 million visits to a service centre
  - 56.8 million calls about Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support
  - 3.7 million Centrelink claims
  - 373.4 million Medicare transactions
  - 124 million 'self service' digital transactions
  - 55 million digital letters delivered through myGov and some 30 million SMS notifications, and
  - emergency payments for natural disasters.
- So fast forward
  - 9.1 million active myGov accounts (with 600,000 logins per day at peak)
  - 7.4 million mobile app downloads, and
  - 29 measures in the 2016 Budget.

And we operate in a **highly complex** environment…

- The Department **MUST** manage service delivery while transforming itself and taking its people on the journey.
- This includes managing a large and geographically dispersed workforce, ageing legacy ICT systems and multiple Commonwealth, State and Territory, private sector and not-for-profit stakeholders.
- And a portfolio of initiatives that includes:
  - six large programmes – Welfare Payment Infrastructure Transformation, Aged Care, Child Support Redesign System, Strengthening the Integrity of Welfare Payments, myGov and Shared Services, and
  - over 100 active projects covering numerous Budget and legislative measures and internally funded projects.
- All of these programmes and projects
  - deliver significant value to government, the department and its staff
  - make it easier for people to connect to and access services (including with other parts of government)
  - involve teams working across the department and with external stakeholders, and
  - normally involve the creation of new ICT systems or changes to existing ICT systems, or both.
- Our **success** depends on how well we establish, manage and deliver these programmes and projects.

So **how** are we going?

The department has **successfully delivered** large and complex programmes and projects over a number of years

We have established a very good track record by delivering the Service Delivery Reform programme and many budget measures over many years.

We have helped shape the digital transformation agenda, we have driven improvements to service delivery, and we have delivered red tape reduction for individuals and businesses.

And we are recognised as a leader across government (eg the recent Shergold review and our P3M3 assessment in 2014).

But we know we have to continue to get better to avoid

- programmes and projects slipping and losing the impact and benefits they set out to achieve
- projects having 'unintended consequences'
- any miss-alignment across the department on what needs to be done, by whom and by when, and
- being siloed in the way we operate.

And we need to be innovative, focus on simplifying our services, put the user first, and respond and adapt to Government policy changes and directions.

So how can we become **brilliant?**

My starting point:

a. We need to become **better at setting up programmes and projects** for success (including being realistic about benefits and impacts).

b. We need to be stronger and **more disciplined around the basics** – especially schedule, issue and risk management, and contingency planning.

c. We need to **make our SROs, project managers and project teams great**.

d. We need to **drive a culture of transparency** and ensure the escalation of the right information, to the right people at the right time **with actionable options**.

e. We need to make it OK to **ask for help** (and then collaboratively deal with the issues).

f. We need to **continually improve our frameworks, our systems, tools, our analysis and our reporting**.

g. We need to be **outward looking** and understand what is happening in other parts of government and within industry.

Most importantly, we need to embed the **right behaviours and culture**.

The PPO's **mandate**...

Transparency, forward looking, and active engagement

- Investment prioritisation
  - *Cross portfolio investment prioritisation*
  - *Advice to line areas on investment proposals*
- Project Services
  - *Management of the departmental roadmap of key deliverables*
  - *Active support and rigour testing for Tier 1 and Red/Amber programmes*
  - *Monthly reporting, analysis and alerts*
  - *Support for programme and project governance*
  - *Portfolio programme/project risk analysis*
- Systems and frameworks
  - *Register of T1, T2 and T3 programmes and projects*
  - *Development and implementation of PPO systems*
  - *Updating of P3M3, risk and related frameworks*
  - *Enhancement of tools and templates*
  - *PMO engagement and compliance*
  - *Internal assurance programme (eg Gateway and P3M3)*
- Capability building
  - *SRO coaching and mentoring*
  - *Departmental training and accreditation*
  - *Awareness building (including communities of interest)*
  - *External engagement*
  - *Help desk services*

What is the PPO doing to go the extra mile?

We are:

a. **building our capabilities** to be **frank and fearless, expert and truly activist**

b. increasingly **engaged** (with the CFO division) in all of the department's programmes and projects

c. providing **better early warning** on programmes and projects that are going off the tracks (and then helping them)

d. **updating our Portfolio, Programme and Project Management frameworks** to make them easier to read, clearer in terms of accountabilities, and more flexible in accommodating new and emerging methodologies

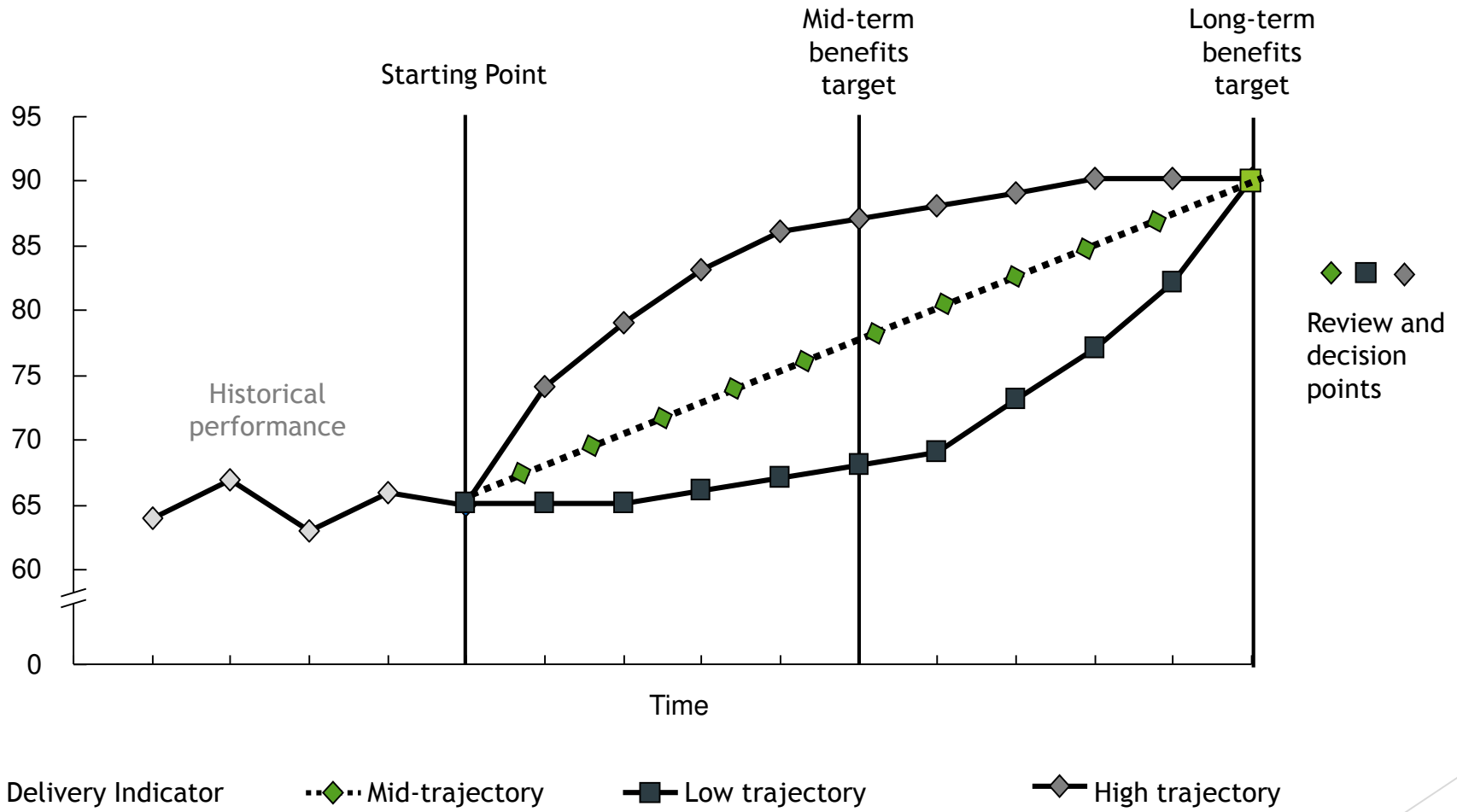
e. developing a much **sharper training programme** to support SROs and project managers

f. **experimenting** with new ways to drive change (including through **joint status reviews** of red and amber projects and **lighthouse** projects)

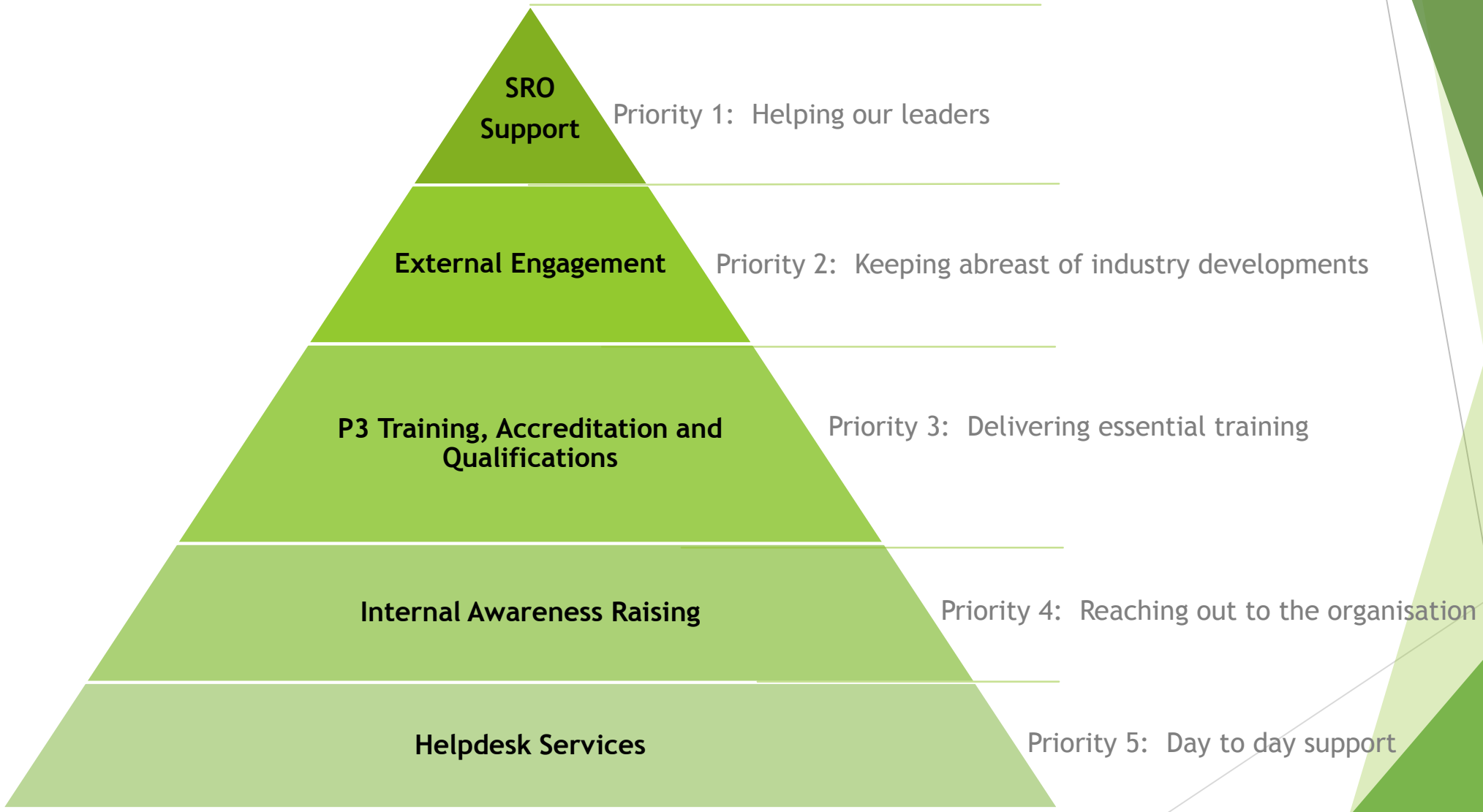
g. **striving** to provide the department's senior executive with better **advice and information** to help decision-making, and

h. trying to **get ahead of the curve** for setting up the portfolio for 2016-17.

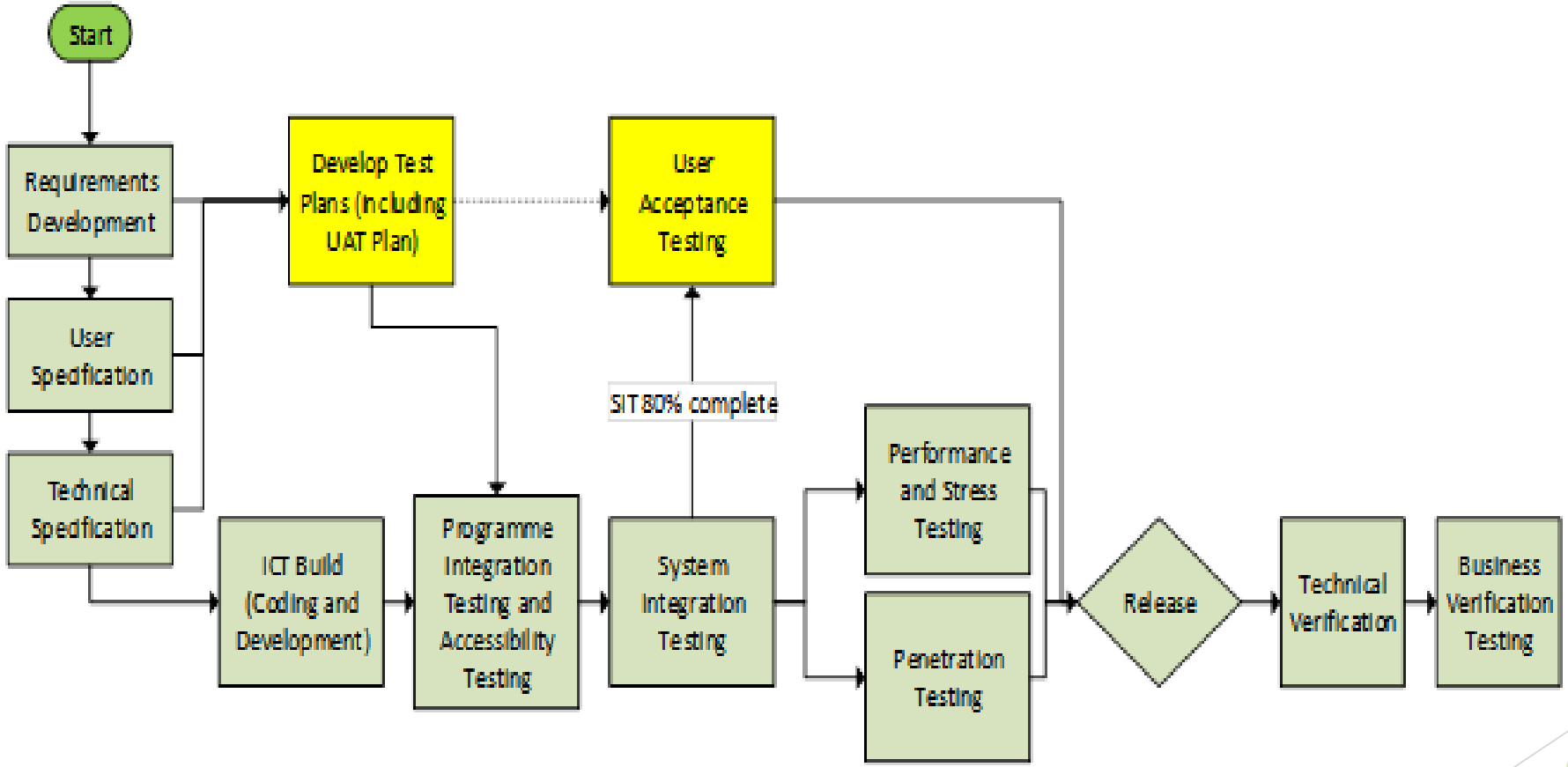
And we must **learn and adjust** as needed…



A small example …



Another example …



So we are committed…

…. to continuing to improve the way we set-up, manage and deliver our programmes and projects

…. to building our internal capabilities, systems and platforms, and

…. to engaging across government and with others.

Our success depends on it!