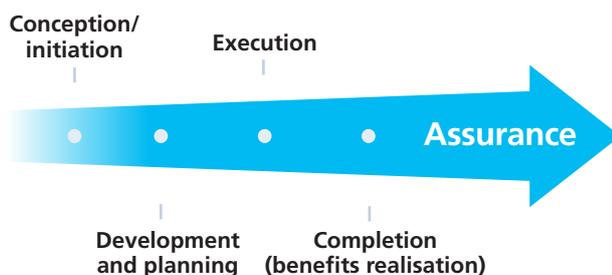


## Programme and project assurance

Delivering independent assurance and advisory reviews that unlock and enhance value.

Throughout the lifecycle, every programme or project is vulnerable to changing risks and issues. These can come from within the business or be externally driven. Wherever there is a new development, transformation or change created by a programme or project, reliable assurance should be obtained to confirm everything is as it needs to be. Each phase, or stage, of a programme or project brings new threats and opportunities. Good assurance provision should help the business maximise the upside, and minimise the downside, of risk whilst ensuring opportunities are fully leveraged.



Mega projects in the Middle East are now quite the norm. Projects such as the Hamad International Airport in Qatar and the Burj Khalifa in Dubai can take years to come to fruition and are fraught with risk. The risks come in many shapes and sizes including those related to cost, quality, time, and scope. Small changes in design can create impacts across a range of other interdependent activities on such large scale development programmes. Understanding those risks and being able to consider the impacts is where Moore Stephens can provide a unique, bespoke and boutique insight that ensures you can see the whole picture.

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A recent article featured on Arabian Business website highlighted that 50% of Dubai property projects failed to achieve their 2015 handover. Internal development delays and external market changes both serve to impact project delivery which ultimately affects time, return on investment and overall profit. Levels of investment in projects in the Middle East are high. Within the UAE the need to meet timescales and expectations for Expo 2020 are paramount. Many new projects in Dubai are driven by its hosting of the World Expo in 2020. It is estimated that Dh30 billion (US\$8.174 billion) will be spent on infrastructure at the Expo site and in the city. Given the scale of expenditure the need to maintain robust controls, risk management and governance are paramount to success.

From a federal perspective, the UAE plans to spend Dh6 billion (US\$1.63 billion) on major infrastructure developments across the country, including road networks and federal buildings. The ongoing transformation of electricity/water production and supply networks, telecommunications, airports, ports and public transport is set to continue. Also, the various ‘visions’ developed across the Middle East (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi, and Qatar Visions 2030) require significant transformation in order to see plans turned into reality. Now more than ever, the region requires robust and insightful programme and project assurance to see its aspirations and ambitions become reality.

If your company has a number of programmes or projects underway, then you will probably know that vigorous and reliable assurance is a vital ingredient for success. Insightful, timely and value adding assurance provided by Moore Stephens experts is designed to assist senior managers in achieving their project objectives within agreed timescales, budgets, quality parameters and scope.

Programmes and projects, ranging from construction to information technology are dependent upon vigorous planning, controls, reliable data and stewardship to ensure the expected return on investment or real rate of return is delivered. Slippage in time and cost can erode both financial and operational benefits of a programme or project. Further, scope creep, de-scoping or quality issues can result in a project not delivering necessary or stated benefits, outputs or outcomes. There is always a risk that a project will complete and provide stakeholders with buildings, applications, and products etc. which are not fit for purpose.

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### Potential issues and risks

1. Ineffective or no due diligence, feasibility or proof of concept activities undertaken in the pre-commitment phase.
2. Lack of clarity in respect of purpose, specification, design, or programme or project definition, including, failure to align with the business longer term strategy and aims.
3. Lack of meaningful and complete engagement with users or stakeholders to ensure needs are appropriately considered and addressed.
4. Unrealistic expectations, or over inflated programme or project benefits.
5. Inappropriate business case or business justification including financial analysis or affordability assessment.
6. A risk that the human resource blend on the programme or project has not been effectively calibrated resulting in the wrong mix of staff or leadership, and ultimately failure.
7. Over optimism and poor risk management resulting in decisions being taken that jeopardise success or allow programmes and projects to go ahead which are not viable in the long term.
8. Lack of ownership, accountability and governance structures to effectively monitor and manage the programme or project on an end to end basis.
9. Lack or ineffective performance management mechanisms established and maintained. This can prevent corrective action being taken in a timely manner.
10. Programme or project procurement strategies which are inappropriate or not adequately planned resulting in spiralling costs, time delays or scope creep.

### How we can contribute to help ensure success

Effective and informed independent assurance can be a powerful force for maintaining focus and achieving success. Programme and project assurance is a fundamental component of good governance and is a recognised good practice. The Moore Stephens Governance, Risk and Assurance team recognises the finite nature of programmes and projects and that time is always an imperative. Our subject matter experts have a depth of cumulative knowledge and experience which your company can readily utilise in real time in order to maintain momentum and achieve success. We know that failure to deliver to scope/specification and quality requirements can generate a significant risk to the strategic direction and in many cases the financial viability of a business.

### We can provide assurance in respect of:

#### Health checks and diagnostic assurance

Ongoing assessments delivered throughout the course of a programme or project to confirm progress and assess the validity of management's opinion. This type of assurance is real time and continuous. It is designed to allow stakeholders to maintain a direct line of sight in respect of likely outputs, outcomes and benefit realisation. The health check process can help identify problems before they occur and is a proactive aspect of the assurance process.

#### Position statements

Stand-alone analysis and assurance regarding the position of a programme or project at any particular point in time. This may be to confirm management's understanding of advancement or to give the board and other stakeholder's specific assurances or snapshot assessment.

#### Phase or stage assurance

The provision of assurance prior to a phase, or stage gate, to help facilitate any required improvements or identify any weaknesses which may hinder success. This type of assurance can help management and stakeholders fully appreciate whether a programme or project should continue, change course or be halted.

**Programme and project controls assurance**

We can review and assess your programme and project methodology, policies, processes and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose and future-proofed. Our assurance covers the end-to-end processes in place and the level of risk exposure and associated materiality of potential impacts if risks come to fruition. Our solutions and advice are therefore prioritised to make sure controls are cost-effective and proportionate.

**Programme or project procurement and contract management assurance**

Independent scrutiny and advice regarding the procurement methodology and practices adopted and implemented across the programme or project. The reviews can be high-level and assess the procurement strategy including awareness of interdependencies and supply chain risk management. We can assess whether scope and procurement activities are aligned and provide recommendations to strengthen commercial capability and awareness.

Alternatively, the assurance work can drill down to assess the detail of individual procurements and consider compliance with business policies, regulations and legislation.

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**Programme or project risk management assurance and risk assessment reviews**

This aspect of the assurance and advisory service we provide is multi-disciplined in nature. We have the capacity to consider whether the prioritisation and analysis of risk is consistent with your company’s risk tolerance levels. We can assess the adequacy and completeness of risk coverage and provide advice on areas which may need to be strengthened or included within the risk framework.

Due to the depth of knowledge of our team we can consider whether a shared understanding of risk exists across the programme or project and amongst all relevant stakeholders.

In the event that risk management has not been applied to the programme or project we can undertake a holistic and overarching assessment to provide a comprehensive risk analysis and heat map for management to own and develop.

**Options appraisal and assurance**

If a programme or project is in crisis or going in the wrong direction our experts can help by providing candid and timely assurance with associated options for bringing things back on track.

“Understanding the pitfalls and what can be done to avoid or minimise risks is an essential part of guaranteeing future success.”

**Lessons learned reviews**

End of stage, phase or project reviews to consider areas where the programme or project went well or failed to deliver. This type of assurance assessment is of particular value where a business may need to undertake a similar development in the future. Understanding the pitfalls and what can be done to avoid or minimise risks is an essential part of guaranteeing future success.



### How Moore Stephens can help

We would work with your programme and project teams to ensure those risks which would generate the greatest impact on successful delivery have been identified and are being effectively mitigated. This ensures a solid basis upon which to build all subsequent assurances.

We pride ourselves on focusing on your programme or project lifecycle to ensure your needs can be fully addressed. We have developed a premium assurance service which is always tailored to your needs and ensure your programmes and projects can gain a competitive advantage toward success. We help assess the warning signs that can signal a programme or project may be heading into trouble. Our services enable resilience to be structured into your programme or project and facilitate meaningful and pragmatic continuity solutions. This ensures that we can advise on the actions and options available to control or mitigate risks.

We know that the programme or project board is under pressure from stakeholders to reliably and effectively confirm progress. Our experts can give the programme or project board the independent insight and perception they require in order to fully appreciate how things are progressing.

If you would like further information on any item in this brochure or our services, please contact a member of the team.

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