Introduction

Configuration Management is the tracking and control of the assets created by the programme or project.

Assets can be anything that is created and can range from a document to a building. In this context, an asset is the same as a deliverable, product or output.

Configuration Management is more than Asset Management, as it tracks the relationship between assets, so a configuration is likely to contain a number of assets that are related to each other.

The purpose of configuration management is to control the development of, and changes to, groups of assets.

Configuration Management covers the programme or projects dependencies on items outside of its control as well as those within the programme or project.

Configuration Management enables the functional and physical characteristics of a particular configuration, a product or a service to be identified, recorded and tracking

When do you use this guide?

Configuration Management can be relatively informal in the early stages of the idea.

More formality will be required once the Define stage commences.

Once there has been approval to proceed into Define for either a programme or a project then there should be a structure.

Configuration Management is a key part of the Management Control theme.

This guide provides guidance and examples on:

- The steps to set up configuration management
- Naming conventions
- Version control
- Filing structure

Implementing Configuration Management Steps

There are five basic steps involved in programme or project level configuration management.

1 **Planning.** Decide what level of configuration management is appropriate and plan how it will be achieved. The programme will then set out the requirements for configuration management that all its projects should adopt. The planning should decide what structure will be required, what will be within scope and how they will be controlled once identified. The starting point for configuration management is often “what exists now” and developing a baseline. For example, if you were rolling out new standards and guidance on Health and Safety, you would need to know what is currently in existence.

2 **Identifying.** This includes assets created during the programme or project and any dependencies. A system for describing configuration items must be set up. This could also include an audit of existing documentation or systems to set out the scope of what the project may need to change.

3 **Controlling.** Most programme or projects will change over time, and it is crucial that any changes are properly version-controlled following procedures described in the information management strategy. Version control also includes managing all of the programme or project's management information. The programme or project should set out how dependencies on external assets will be managed in the event of external assets being revised. Control over an asset passes to business as usual when it is agreed that the asset is no longer the responsibility of the programme or project. Where assets are actually live and in everyday use, there will need to be controls placed on changes to them using the Change Control guidance.

4 **Status Accounting.** Involves maintaining current and historical information concerned with each configuration; the configuration items (assets) and all dependencies which may be external to the programme or project as well as inter-project dependencies. This could involve reporting on their status as part of highlight reporting.

5 **Verifying.** Includes auditing to ensure that there is conformity between the documented configuration and the actual status of products and configuration items. This will take place before delivery to operations and of the versions that are in operation and may need to be changed. The dependencies are also verified as part of this audit, as these may have moved over time.

Naming Conventions Technique

It is important that there is a common structure to the way documents are named. If this isn't in place then a lot of random naming will occur and control will be lost. The same applies to physical assets like computers; they should have some sort of unique reference that distinguishes them.

For documentation within a programme or project, it is important to have a common approach within the organisation so that there is consistency and people get used to it within the project and as they move around the organisation.

The following is the recommended approach.

File Reference	**Type** Pg for Programme or Pj for Projects	**Name Abbreviation** For example, HR upgrade - HRU	**Document Title** For example, programme business case	**Version Number** In this case V2 draft 4 (see naming conventions)
Example worked for High Speed 2	PG	PG_HRU	PG_HRU_Buscase	PG_HRU_Buscase_v2d

This is a simple number convention. By using alpha characters to track minor versions, up to 26 can be achieved and anyone receiving the document will know immediately what the document is about and its state of maturity.

Version Numbering Technique

There is nothing more frustrating at a meeting than finding people have different versions of the documentation or not knowing what version of the document they have in front of them.

It is important that the programme or project has a structured approach to version numbering and effective distribution techniques.

Approaches to version control are often random and inconsistent within initiatives and nearly always between different initiatives, which means that it is very difficult to get consistent quality.

The following is a recommended version numbering approach.

Version	Sub Version	Use	Explanation
1	A to Z	Undergoing internal development	1 should be used for the first draft version being developed within the team as it builds for wider release. By supplementing the 1 with alpha characters up to 26 versions change be achieved.
2	A to Z	Undergoing technical review	2 should be used when the document has left the team in draft form for technical review by specific specialists as required.
3	A to Z	Undergoing quality review	3 should be used when the team has completed their contributions, the document is now technically reviewed and is undergoing internal quality review prior to release.
4	A to Z	Released for external consultation	4 will be the version that is released for wider consultation. External means outside of the programme or project structure.

The version audit trail should be included in each document using the following table and example.

Version number	Author	Role	Release Date	Content Commentary
1a	John Smith	Project Manager	1/1/2013	First rough draft for team comment

It is also to include a document distribution list to enable formal release control for consistency and an audit trail of acknowledgements if required

Name	Role	Method	Acknowledgement
Laura Smith	Project Executive	Email	Read receipt used to confirm.

Filing Structure

All projects and programmes should use a common filing structure to enable consistency. It will also increase efficiency and enable cross working between initiatives and for people moving between teams.

The standard structure can be developed through sub folders to meet the needs of different levels of sophistication.

The standard directory filing structure should be used as follows:

Control Documents	This would include the definition that was used to define the initiative- for example, mandate, brief, blueprints, benefits, organisational structure.
Requirements	This would contain the details of the business requirements, product descriptions and technical specifications that will be used to define what will be delivered
Procurement	This would contain information specific to procurement, OJEU notices, tenders and audit trails.
Reports	This would contain highlight reports and other governance reporting that may be required - this would include MPA reporting returns
Plans	This is where the various planning information and details around the resourcing arrangements is stored.
Business Case	This is where the documentation relating to the business case and the various iterations is located
Assurance	Documentation to relating to gateway reviews, either internal or external. It would also include assurance reviews and associated action plans.