

“Impossible” timescales recovered using Strategic Delivery Assurance

PA Consulting relied on De-RISK’s Strategic Delivery Assurance (SDA) methodology to support the delivery of Qatar’s first international sea port – and set the agenda for additional engagements



BACKGROUND

Qatar’s strategic aim was to build an international, independent sea-port to remove their reliance on land borders with Saudi Arabia for imports and exports. This was reputationally, politically and economically critical and with increasingly unstable relationships between the two countries, meeting timescales for the port’s opening was vital to achieving supply chain security.

PA Consulting was engaged with Salam International, the primary contractor for delivering IT solutions across the overall programme. Providing IT systems in compressed timescales was proving to be the most challenging part of the sea-port scheme.

The first major milestone was the ‘go-live’ date of 1 December. However, PA Consulting was concerned that Salam senior management team had effectively given up on meeting this milestone, despite the potential for losing the entire contract if the deadline was missed. Having collaborated successfully with De-RISK in the past, PA Consulting contacted us to implement Strategic Delivery Assurance on the programme.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- De-RISK’s SDA methodology quickly identified a 4-month delay to meeting project timescales
- SDA gave PA Consulting the evidence to push for a restructure of the project
- SDA rigour showed how to get the programme back on schedule
- PA Consulting positioned to facilitate several additional engagements focused on recovering the programme.

PA Consulting engaged De-RISK because it knew SDA would deliver:

- An excellent return on investment.
- Rigorous assessments resulting in accurate predictions.
- Reassurance to all parties in the programme.
- Recommendations for delivering objectives to put the programme back on time and budget.
- Quick results, reducing downtime and impact on the team.
- Additional engagements for PA, drawn from the risks identified.

What Strategic Delivery Assurance brings our strategic partners

A

Quantitative Analysis

- Gives you and your client the percentage confidence that the programme is doable
- ... and if not, what is needed to fix it

B

Qualitative Analysis

- Capture a complete picture of the strategic assumptions and risks to the programme
- Utilise the “Assure” cloud-based tool for data capture

C

Governance

- Implement actions plans to manage
- Implement a rigorous process to recover the programme or take the opportunities identified

D

Growth

- Partner scopes and delivers multiple engagements based on strategic risks uncovered in previous steps

A QUICK, ACTIONABLE RESPONSE

De-RISK quickly established via SDA (Stage A) that the initial go-live milestone was likely to be missed by four months.

More worryingly, the analysis showed that there was, in any event, a 0% chance of meeting the dates. This meant that even if they managed all the identified risks, they would only recover approximately two months of the delay.

Stage B of the SDA methodology captured non-timescale strategic assumptions. Together, these elements facilitated a full joint Risk Review Board which led to the establishment of the improved associated governance processes needed to agree specific actions and monitor progress in regular follow up Risk Review Boards.

The result, as well as the immediate prediction that the current programme was not achievable as structured, positioned PA Consulting to facilitate a series of short, focused, 'fix the brick' workshops where elements ('bricks') of the programme were restructured, re-designed or down-scoped to

ensure that the minimum objectives were met by the required milestone date.

Re-running the SDA confirmed convergence with the original target date and the port successfully opened for business on-time.

THE VALUE TO PA CONSULTING AND SALAM INTERNATIONAL

Our initial analysis showed the probability of achieving the desired milestones: the predicted delays, along with the risks - 'risky assumptions' - that would need to be managed in order to get back to plan. The 0% chance of success meant that the programme required restructuring in order to be deliverable. The 'fix the brick' workshops and the identified risks provided ample opportunities for PA Consulting to offer specific, extra help to get the programme back on track, resulting in some additional work packages for PA.

The Salam International management team were delighted with the results, which enhanced and furthered its reputation and relationship with

Qatari government, particularly because, just after the sea-port became operational, the border dispute with Saudi Arabia escalated and the land border was closed.

PA continued to support the programme using SDA to help meet subsequent milestones.

"When we started the analysis of the programme it was clear that Salam senior management had - privately and individually - given up on trying to meet the go-live date and were focused on just keeping their jobs. When we were able to show them how the dates were possible, they became fully engaged again and worked effectively with PA Consulting and De-RISK to rigorously manage the identified risks."

Keith Baxter, Managing Director, De-RISK

Cut through complexity: How Strategic Delivery Assurance brings predictability and assurance to your clients' programmes

