

PRINCE2® and SLA's

About this document

This document was written in 2007 and was based on the 2005 manual of PRINCE2®. References made in this document and codes of sub processes are therefore also based on the 2005. The information in this document is still relevant. The 2009 version of the PRINCE2® manual now discusses some of the points made here but may give further clarification.

The issue

PRINCE2® does not talk specifically about SLA's, their development and necessary activities. The reason is very simple; PRINCE2® is a generic approach to project management and anything that is specific for certain environments or specific development projects should be kept out. If not, the approach will not work anymore for other situations, will become far too restrictive and people will use the approach without thinking: management by template.

There are however enough angles in the approach to notice that PRINCE2® does not ignore these issues and in fact gives generic guidelines how to handle just about any issue in projects, including SLA's.

This is an overview of where in PRINCE2® (processes) to think about SLA's and who should do so in the project organisation. To be complete in footnotes there are references made to the PRINCE2® manual (2005 edition).

Project Closure

PRINCE2® is an approach in which the project manager should focus on the required result, so a good start for this overview is in fact the end of the project where the results should all have been delivered (actual delivery takes place during the stages, so before the closure).

Decommissioning a Project - CP1

An important part of the Closing a Project (CP) process is the Decommissioning of the Project (CP1) in the description of this process the manual says: "*Confirm that the correct operational and maintenance environment is in place (where applicable).*"¹



Nico Viergever

Website:

<http://www.viergever.info>

Email:

nico@viergever.info

Nico Viergever has over 20 years of experience managing change and consulting for improving project management and programme management.

He is a prominent PRINCE2® en MSP™ expert and trainer.

Management, Consultancy, Coaching and Evaluation.

¹ Paragraph 10.4.3, page 157

This is backed up by the Key Criteria of this process: *"Have the operational and support teams formally agreed that they are ready to accept handover (if appropriate)?"*²

And also in the hints and tips of the CP1 process: *"When the final product will require a lot of potentially expensive maintenance, the Project Manager should ensure that a suitable service agreement or contract has been drawn up between the support group and the end users. In such instances, it may be correct to include the agreement as a project product. This will probably lead to a small team from the operations group being part of the final stages of the project, leading to the delivery of a signed agreement. The support group need full information about the product as it is developed (see the Communication Plan in Product Description Outlines, Appendix A) to understand the support and maintenance implications of the product and its working environment."*

Identifying Follow-on Actions - CP2

In this process any open issues are to be identified leading to activities to be taken care of after the project. This may be caused by *"Project Issues that were put into 'pending' status by the Project Board"* or *"risks that may affect the product in its useful life"*³.

Also PRINCE2® recommends a re-examination after a period of use to check the quality of products and their effectiveness in use. This could be done as part of a "Post Project Review" which is planned during the CP2 process. Possible questions that could be asked are⁴:

- *"Is the product as well supported as was expected?"*
- *"Are the support staff happy with what they have been given to support the product?"*

Start and execution of the project

Now it is apparent what the PRINCE2® views are on the SLA issue it is important to see what instruments there are during the preparation of the work and the work itself to get to this requirement of closure. The next chapters will discuss that.

Starting Up a Project (SU)

Before the project can be planned there must be a common understanding of what the project is there for, so all involved parties can show their commitment and the project manager has a basis for the plan. That is the reason for the Project Brief and the Project Approach.

The Project Brief describes that "what" and the "why" of the project. In the Customer Quality Expectations there may be a mention of the supporting requirements by the Customer of the project.

The Project Approach describes on a high level how the required result will be created. One of the subjects that can be considered to be described here is the *"operational environment (identification of any environment into which the solution must fit)"*⁵. In the process description of SU5 there is another reference to SLA's: *"Consider how the finished product can be brought into use"*⁶. Also the

² Paragraph 10.4.5, page 159

³ Paragraph 10.5.3, page 160

⁴ Paragraph 10.5.3, page 161

⁵ Appendix A, page 372

⁶ Paragraph 4.8.3, page 41

Key criteria of the process hint at SLA's: "*Have the operational and support issues been addressed when selecting the approach ...*"⁷

Initiating a Project (IP)

This process will lead to a collection of documents, called the PID. The Brief and Approach will be part of it. Additional actions for the development of the SLA will probably be in IP1 where the 'internal quality management system' will be developed: the Project Quality Plan. Input will be the Brief and Approach but also the existing applicable corporate quality management systems and other standards of customer and supplier. Configuration management specific to the project will also be defined here.

This all leads to IP2 where the project will be planned and stages will be defined (based on Business products and risks, so not based on low level technical products and technical phases). The planning process will be used to identify products and their quality criteria for sign off, which gives two choices: a quality criterion of a product may be that there is a SLA in place or on a low level a SLA will be another product (criterion: signed).

Managing Stage boundaries (SB)

Each stage will be planned in detail, also based on products, but now on a lower level than the higher level project products. Here is again the planning process (PL) used including the focus on the products and their quality criteria. Result will be the required products, activities to create them and activities for their sign off.

Controlling a Stage (CS) and Managing Product Delivery (MP)

On basis of the Stage Plan the project manager will assign work to the teams (work Package, CS1) and will eventually receive the results (CS9). Within the team the work will be done but also the test will take place here, including acceptance (MP2/MP3). This is where the SLA will be defined and signed on basis of the requirements defined on project and stage level.

Organisation and Job descriptions

There will be nothing specific in the job description of the project manager. The duties are consequences of the descriptions of the processes.

*There is however a specific responsibility for the Senior Supplier: "ensure that any supplier and operating standards defined for the project are met and used to good effect"*⁸

This could be implemented in several ways:

1. The Senior Supplier takes responsibility for development and implementation into support. The advantage is that the customer is not confronted with two separate (IT) suppliers. But the supplier must be aware of the full responsibility.
2. Same as point 1, only now the support group take part in the Senior Supplier's Assurance function
3. The Senior Supplier's role is split in a part for development and a part for future support. This will have the disadvantage that the support representative is there all the time but should only be there for a relatively small part of the project. The presence of the support

⁷ Paragraph 4.8.6, page 42

⁸ Appendix B, page 400

representative will take the focus of the required end results and will possibly make the project board discuss too many technical details.

4. In some organisations where there is a normal strong distinction between development and maintenance/support, the maintenance group may assume part of the role of Senior User, thus also specifying required quality and signing off/accepting relevant products. This has the advantage of a more formal handover from the project to support.



Nico Viergever

Weigeliaplein 59
2563 PJ Den Haag
Nederland

Tel: +31 651334258

<http://www.viergever.info>

Email: nico@viergever.info



Op mijn Website zijn de volgende documenten over PRINCE2® en MSP™ te vinden:

- [PRINCE2 in een notendop; de essentie van PRINCE2 in slechts vijf pagina's](#)
- [PRINCE2 Principes; worden de principes wel toegepast? Wat veroorzaakt de ineffectiviteit van PINO?](#)
- [PRINCE2 en MSP in relatie tot elkaar en andere methodes en aanpakken, zoals ITIL, PMBoK en Agile methodes. Raakvlakken en vooral culturele verschillen.](#)
- [PRINCE2 \(niet\) voor leveranciers; waarom PRINCE2 niet voor leveranciers bedoeld is en hoe zij dit model misschien toch kunnen toepassen](#)
- [Hoe voer je een methode als PRINCE2 in? Overwegingen, valkuilen en praktijkvoorbeelden](#)
- [PRINCE2 Life Cycle; hoe de Business Case zich ontwikkelt gedurende een project](#)
- [PRINCE2 Procesmodel; wat is de process flow en wie is verantwoordelijk voor welke processen?](#)
- [PRINCE2 tijdens Stages; een overzicht van PRINCE2 processen die tijdens Stages gebruikt worden](#)
- [Special: SPEER - ERP/SAP programma bij Defensie](#)
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On the topics of PRINCE2® and MSP™, the following documents are available on my Website.

- [PRINCE2 in a nutshell; the essence of PRINCE2 is only five pages](#)
- [PRINCE2 Principles; are the 7 principles applied? What causes the ineffectiveness of PINO?](#)
- [PRINCE2 \(not\) for suppliers; why PRINCE2 is not aimed at suppliers and how they can possibly use the model](#)
- [Programmes and Projects; how do projects and programmes relate and interface? What is MSP and how to use MSP in combination with PRINCE2.](#)
- [How to implement a method such as PRINCE2? Considerations, pitfalls and examples](#)
- [PRINCE2 Lifecycle; the product life span versus the project life cycle](#)
- [PRINCE2 Process Model; shows the process flow and who is responsible for what processes](#)
- [PRINCE2 during Stages; details of the PRINCE2 processes used during Management Stages](#)
- [Method Integration; can ICT development approaches such as RUP, SCRUM, Agile, etc, really be combined with PRINCE2 \(and MSP\)?](#)
- [PRINCE2 and SLA; how does PRINCE2 cope with service level agreements and with support \(ITIL\) after the project?](#)

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