

POLICY / PROCEDURE TITLE		DATE OF APPROVAL
NCG Change Control Policy		February 2024
APPROVED BY	VERSION NO.	VALID UNTIL
Executive Board	1.0	February 2027

<b>OWNER</b>	Director IDS		
<b>GROUP EXECUTIVE LEAD</b>	Chief Information Data & Estates Officer		
<b>DOCUMENT TYPE</b>	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Group Procedure <input type="checkbox"/>	Local Procedure <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	The purpose of this policy is to outline the policies and procedures for handling data and software in a secure and controlled manner. It provides information on the types of data that can be shared, the types of software that can be used, and the procedures for managing changes to production systems.		
<b>APPLICABLE TO</b>	All users of NCG's networks and systems.		
<b>EQUALITY ANALYSIS COMPLETED [POLICIES ONLY]</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
	(If EA not applicable, please explain)		
<b>KEY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Change management</b> is used to ensure standardized methods, processes, and procedures are used for all changes to production systems.</li> <li>Key to successful changes are a number of key aspects that must be adhered to at all times, without these, changes are destined to fail and cause wider issues. These include inclusion, communication, and authorization, planning, implementation, and testing.</li> <li><b>RFC</b> should be used whenever there is a change to a production environment that is outside day-to-day administration.</li> </ol>		
<b>EXPECTED OUTCOME</b>	Readers are expected to understand the organisational position on change control, know their responsibilities in relation to the policy and comply with the terms of the policy.		

MISCELLANEOUS	
<b>LINKED DOCUMENTS</b>	•
<b>KEYWORDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change management</li> <li>Inclusion, communication, and authorization</li> <li>Request For Change (RFC)</li> </ul>

## Equality Impact Assessment

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT			
	Yes	No	Explanatory Note if required
EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy/procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in Section 2?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be YES
EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy/procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Disability / Difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA3 - Does the proposed policy/processes contain any language/terms/references/ phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA4 - Does the policy/process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this could be yes or no as positive action is lawful. However, an explanation must be provided for clarity.
EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?	Change control is solely operated by NCG IDES and to my knowledge is not adopted outside of this team. We have consulted this team and I am happy to confirm the above is correct.		

## 1. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

### 1.1 IT CHANGE CONTROL & REQUEST FOR CHANGE (RFC) PROCESS

In a complex IT environment it is of utmost importance to ensure changes to production systems are carefully planned and controlled to ensure users and the wider business are not adversely affected by these changes.

Change is defined as *'The addition, modification or removal of approved, supported or baselined hardware, network, software, application, environment, system, desktop build or associated documentation or processes'*.

### 1.2 WHY USE CHANGE MANAGEMENT

- Ensure standardised methods, processes and procedures are used for all changes.
- Facilitate effective and prompt handling of all changes.
- Ensure that all possible outcomes have been considered and mitigate extended disruption to service.
- Ensure that scheduled changes have been communicated to users and service support staff.
- Allows visibility of changes and provides statistics on the type of work completed.
- Ensure that allocation of appropriate resources (i.e. staff or hardware) are considered and agreed.
- Improved Productivity of key IT personnel due to less distraction to repair faulty changes.
- Maintain control over configuration item accuracy.

Key to successful changes are a number key aspects that must be adhered to at all times, without these, changes are destined to fail and cause wider issues:

- **Inclusion, Communication & Authorisation** – are the right people included to ensure the change is successful? Have the necessary users been informed of the change? Is the change approved by those accountable for the systems?

- **Planning, Implementation & Testing** – How will the change be actioned and by who? What dependencies are there? How is the change reversed if there are problems? What is the testing plan?

### 1.3 WHEN SHOULD AN RFC BE USED?

- Whenever there is a change to a production environment that is outside day to day administration.
- If there is any uncertainty, speak to your Team Leader or Line Manager.

### 1.4 TYPES OF CHANGES

#### Standard Changes

A standard change is a previously approved process for handling common requests or tasks that are low risk. A Standard change will be logged and actioned without seeking further approval from the Change Advisory Board (CAB). A list of Standard Changes is available further in this document. Examples of SC's could be:

- Adding memory or storage,
- Replacing a failing router with an identical working router or
- Creating a new instance of a database.

#### Normal Changes

Normal Changes are non-emergency changes without a pre-approved process. Some NC's are still high risk and may require a risk assessment, others may be low risk and can be quickly approved. A normal change will be referred to the CAB for approval after a review of the change and any associated information. Logging a normal change requires implementation, roll back and communication plans. Examples of NC's could be:

- Upgrading to a new management system
- Migrating to a new data centre
- Performance improvements

## Emergency Changes

If the implementation of a change is urgent an Emergency Change should be logged. These changes usually arise from an unexpected error or threat which needs to be immediately addressed. Emergency discussions between the CAB will take place before the EC is submitted. The change will move straight to implementation stage with retrospective permission being granted and logged formally by the CAB after the event. Examples of EC's could be:

- Implementing a security patch
- Dealing with a server outage
- Resolving a major incident

### **1.5 HOW DO I RAISE AN RFC**

NCG will utilise Service Desk Plus software to raise and manage changes. Refer to "Change Management SDP Procedure" for detailed steps.

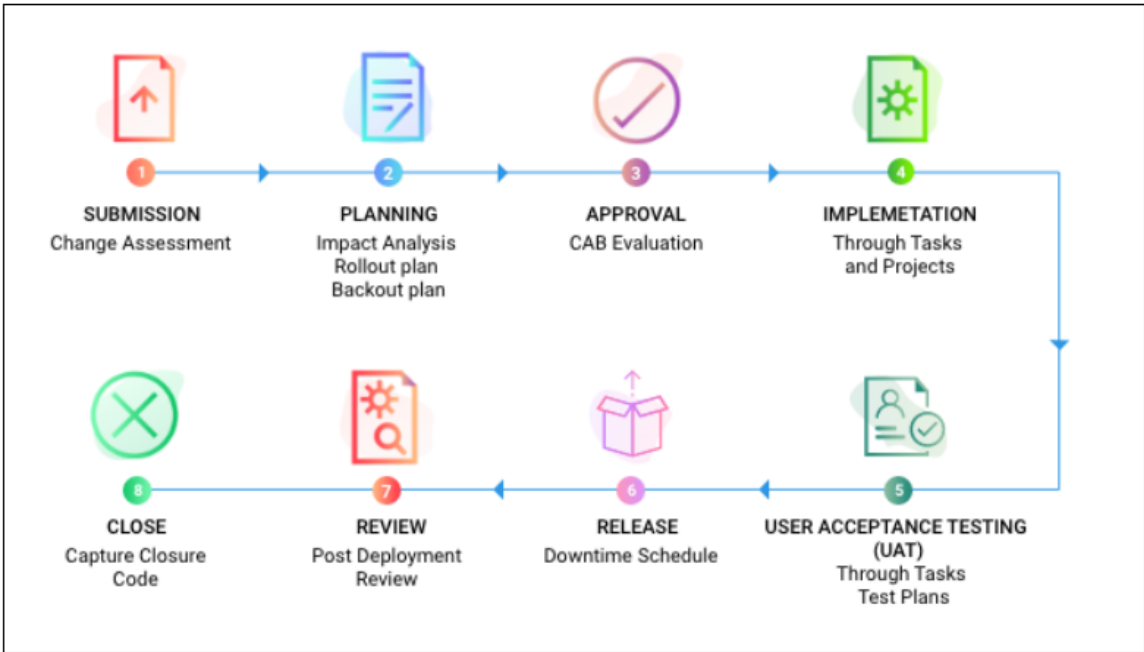
### **1.6 WHAT HAPPENS IF AN RFC IS NOT RAISED?**

There are three outcomes:

1. It is an emergency and the change must be actioned to ensure operational effectiveness, the RFC must be raised retrospectively (it still must be authorised by an accountable Manager).
2. The change will not be actioned.
3. If an RFC level change is actioned without an RFC, a formal investigation will be carried to understand why the process had not been followed.

### **1.7 RFC PROCESS IN SDP**

SDP supports the following stages in the Change Control process (via the available status options). Not all stages will be required for all types of changes. The example below shows the workflow for a Normal Change.



Stage	Purpose	Change Type
<b>Submission</b>	Decide change template and workflow. Configure change details such as change type, the risk involved, priority, and urgency.	ALL
<b>Planning</b>	Analyse and work out the change impact, rollout plan, back out plan, checklist, and probable downtime.	SC, NC
<b>CAB</b>	Set up the Change Advisory Board (CAB) that will assess change plans and provide the required approval for the change request to proceed into implementation.	NC
<b>Implementation</b>	Implement the change by creating projects and tasks. Estimate and evaluate team activities through work logs and downtime scheduling.	ALL
<b>User Acceptance Testing (UAT)</b>	Enable selected users to test the implementation. Stakeholders and clients perform functionality tasks and place their opinion.	ALL
<b>Release</b>	Roll out the change and the associated service for the users.	ALL

<b>Review</b>	Evaluate whether the changes have been successfully implemented and suggests further improvements.	ALL
<b>Close</b>	Associate formal closure code and close the request.	ALL

## 1.8 CHANGE MANAGEMENT ROLES IN NCG

### Change Manager

This role is responsible for managing all aspects of the change, moving it through the workflow.

### Change Approver

This role is responsible for initially approving the change when requested. This cannot be the same person who is the Change Requester or Manager. This is often (but not always) the team manager.

### Change Requester

This role raises the request for a change. This could be the same person who holds the Change Manager role in some cases.

### CAB – Change Advisory Board

The CAB will be responsible for authorising the implementation of the change after reviewing the submission and planning details.

The NCG CAB is held most often in the form of a designated MS Teams chat group, with face-to-face meetings being held where required (usually based on risk factor of change and practicality).

Roles will be assigned to the relevant members of the IT team in Service Desk Plus. Depending upon the change, these roles may be interchangeable between teams/job role.

## 2. STATEMENT ON POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval, this policy will be uploaded to the policy portal and communicated to staff via The Business Round-Up.

### 3. STATEMENT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

NCG is committed to providing equality of opportunity. Further details of our aims and objectives are outlined in our [Equality Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Strategy](#).

This policy has been assessed to identify any potential for adverse or positive impact on specific groups of people protected by the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate either directly or indirectly. In applying this policy, we have considered eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between people from diverse groups.

### 4. STATEMENT ON CONSULTATION

This policy has been reviewed in consultation with Information and Data Services team and subsequently with members of the Policy Review Council as part of the policy review and approval process.

VERSION CONTROL				
Version No.	Documentation Section/Page No.	Description of Change and Rationale	Author/Reviewer	Date Revised
1.0	Full Document	This is a new policy and procedure following a change to the platform and to the template format.	NCG Head of Business Services	25/01/24