Road and Rail Programme Delivery Training Course: Stage Gates, Contract Packages and Handover

30 August – 3 September 2027
Rome

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Programme Summary

Road and rail programme delivery is the subject of this one-week training course for directors and project managers of road, rail and transit programmes at managerial level, ending in a delivery control plan for one transport scheme. Schemes of this kind cross land, utilities, contract packages and operating networks, and gaps surface late. The programme moves from the stage gate structure to risk and interfaces, then to contract packages, cost and programme control, and ends with a plan a programme board can adopt. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on road and rail programme delivery to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Transport schemes carry public money, long lead items and many parties, so a weak decision at an early gate is repeated across every later package. Directors who control gates, interfaces and handover can protect budget and opening dates without adding resources. Land, utilities, packaging and readiness are often handled by separate teams, so gains depend on joining them in one review routine.

- Cost Predictability: Improves as scope, estimates and change are reviewed at each gate.
- Programme Reliability: Rises as interfaces and contract packages are sequenced together.
- Handover Readiness: Strengthens as operators and testers join planning early.

Principles and Evidence Base

- ISO 21502: Gives guidance on project management, applied in Sessions 1 and 5 to the gate structure and the delivery control plan.
- ISO 31000: Sets principles and a process for risk management, applied in Session 2 to risk and interface registers.
- ISO 19650: Sets requirements for information management with building information modelling, applied in Session 3 to package information.
- Earned Value Management and Critical Path Method: Measure cost and schedule performance, applied in Session 4 to programme control.

Intended Participants

- Programme directors who answer to a board for a road, rail or transit scheme.
- Project managers who run design, procurement and construction packages.
- Delivery leads who manage utilities, land and third party interfaces.
- Assurance and controls managers who review gates, cost and progress.

Typical settings include highway authorities, metro operators and contractors.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to construct a stage gate structure with clear decisions and evidence for each gate.
2. Participants will be able to diagnose risks and interfaces that threaten a scheme.
3. Participants will be able to evaluate contract package options against scope, risk and market conditions.
4. Participants will be able to prioritise corrective actions from cost and schedule performance data.
5. Participants will be able to design a handover and operational readiness routine.
6. Participants will be able to justify a delivery control plan to a programme board.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Road and Rail Programme Delivery and Stage Gates

Which decisions must each gate settle before a scheme moves forward?

- Scheme Lifecycle Map
- Stage Gate Decision Table
- Business Case Review Sheet
- Governance and Role Chart
- Benefits and Scope Baseline

Day 2: Risk, Interfaces and Third Parties

How are risks, utilities, land and third party interfaces found and ranked?

- Risk Register Method
- Interface Register
- Utility Diversion Tracker
- Land Access Schedule
- Stakeholder Influence Grid

Day 3: Contract Packages and Procurement

How is a scheme divided into packages that the market can price and manage?

- Package Breakdown Matrix
- Procurement Route Comparison
- Contract Risk Allocation Table
- Tender Evaluation Scorecard
- Design Information Handover Specification

Day 4: Cost, Programme and Change Control

How are cost and schedule performance measured and kept on course?

- Cost Breakdown Structure
- Earned Value Report
- Critical Path Schedule Review
- Change Control Log
- Forecast and Contingency Statement

Day 5: Delivery Control Plan for One Transport Scheme

Do the earlier tools combine into a plan that a programme board can adopt?

- Applying the Session 1 Stage Gate Decision Table
- Testing the Session 2 Interface Register
- Checking the Session 3 Package Breakdown Matrix
- Rehearsing the Session 4 Change Control Log
- Completing the Delivery Control Plan

Methodology

The programme uses case analysis built on prepared files for two schemes, one a highway widening project and one a metro extension, each with a business case, package list, risk register and cost report. Participants work in small groups, test gate decisions against the files, and defend choices to peers acting as a programme board.

- Suggested activity: Locating the interface that is missing from a package list and proposing an owner.
- Suggested activity: Reading an earned value report for early warning of overrun.
- Suggested activity: Rehearsing a gate review before a challenging board.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a delivery control plan for one transport scheme. It holds a stage gate table, an interface and risk register, a contract package breakdown, a cost and schedule control routine and a handover readiness checklist. The plan is used at work to brief a programme board and agree owners.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is a course on road and rail programme delivery suitable for managers who have not led a large scheme?

Yes. Road and rail programme delivery is taught through prepared files and templates. It assumes experience in running projects or packages, but not in leading a whole programme.

Which standards does road and rail programme delivery rest on?

Road and rail programme delivery rests on ISO 21502 for project management, ISO 31000 for risk, ISO 19650 for information management, and on earned value and critical path methods.

How is the plan from road and rail programme delivery used at work?

You use the delivery control plan to brief your programme board, agree owners for gates, interfaces and packages, and set the routine for cost and schedule review.

How does road and rail programme delivery differ from a general project management programme?

Road and rail programme delivery concentrates on gates, packages, interfaces and handover across a transport scheme, while a general project management programme concentrates on tools for a single project.