Case Study: Use of COBIT® 5 for ISACA Strategy Implementation

In 2009, ISACA® developed a strategy focused on becoming the global leader in products and services that support trust in, and value from, information systems. By 2011, having accomplished many of the 2009 goals, ISACA began work on an extension of the 2009 strategy, resulting in an expanded focus on extending ISACA’s global leadership in educating and informing individuals and enterprises on the topic of trust in information and information systems. In recognition of the strategy’s 10-year horizon for completion, it is referred to as Strategy 2022, or S22, for short.

The strategic aspiration is underpinned by a series of more than 20 initiatives designed to help the association achieve its goals through creating or adapting knowledge, supported by practical guidance, education programs, online opportunities and a variety of other resources. The planned activities are expected to provide valuable products and services for core constituents, while also reaching a bit farther outside that core to make others aware of the importance of embedding trust concepts at all points of the information and information systems life cycle.

The initiatives are ambitious and complex, and contain numerous dependencies. They represent a prime opportunity—and need—for effective governance and management, with special focus on resource optimization, risk mitigation and benefit delivery. ISACA, as the developer of COBIT 5, became convinced that COBIT’s commonsense, business-oriented approach to governance and management would help in addressing the far-ranging and interrelated strategy-specific activities necessary to achieve its aspirational goals. The COBIT 5 framework provided the conceptual underpinning and COBIT 5 Implementation offered the practical guidance for putting plans into execution.

About ISACA
With more than 100,000 constituents in 180 countries, ISACA (www.isaca.org) is a leading global provider of knowledge, certifications, community, advocacy and education on information systems (IS) assurance and security, enterprise governance and management of IT, and IT-related risk and compliance. Founded in 1969, the nonprofit, independent ISACA hosts international conferences, publishes the ISACA Journal, and develops international IS auditing and control standards, which help its constituents ensure trust in, and value from, information systems. It also advances and attests IT skills and knowledge through the globally respected Certified Information Systems Auditor® (CISA®), Certified Information Security Manager® (CISM®), Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT® (CGEIT®) and Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control™ (CRISC™) designations.

ISACA continually updates and expands the practical guidance and product family based on the COBIT framework. COBIT helps IT professionals and enterprise leaders fulfill their IT governance and management responsibilities, particularly in the areas of assurance, security, risk and control, and deliver value to the business.
ISACA is headquartered in Illinois (USA) and has a staff of approximately 110 employees.

**Why COBIT 5?**

One of COBIT’s strengths, since its first edition, issued in 1995, is its flexibility. It not only accommodates customization to fit the user’s needs, it encourages it. Therefore, it easily lent itself to ISACA’s planned usage, which did not focus on IT, COBIT’s more common milieu. Instead, ISACA’s intent was to utilize COBIT to ensure that the strategic initiatives were undertaken in such a way as to enable the goals cascade, i.e., that the needs of stakeholders (members, certification holders, others in “IT trust” professions, and enterprises that are dependent on IT, among others) were reflected in appropriate organizational goals, the achievement of which would be enabled by achievement of the goals of the entire strategic portfolio, which in turn would be supported by achieving individual initiative goals. The goals cascade shown in figure 1 is the COBIT 5 cascade; for purposes of this project, ISACA did not address the IT-related goals, as COBIT 5 was not being applied to an IT project.

*Figure 1—COBIT 5 Goals Cascade*

Based on COBIT’s methodology, ISACA expected that the use of COBIT would address many challenges inherent in the implementation of the strategy:

- It would help to identify and clarify dependencies among initiatives.
- It would ensure a consistent approach to executing the tactics required to achieve the strategic objectives.
• It would “force” thinking through the issues surrounding each initiative in a logical, reasoned and methodical way, and taking a holistic view resulting from consideration of the seven enablers.
• It would help to establish the scope for each initiative—especially important in ISACA’s “try to do all things for all people” culture.
• It would help ensure wise and unified use of limited resources.
• It would help to recognize risk on a timely basis, so it could be mitigated, and it would help ensure realization of the value anticipated from the project.
• It would support the identification of stakeholders, and the subsequent development and implementation of sound value proposition for each, in a coherent way.

Although ISACA is the organization responsible for COBIT’s development and continued enhancement, that work is carried out by ISACA volunteer members. Therefore, while the staff members who worked with the volunteers on the COBIT development projects were intimately familiar with COBIT’s concepts, most staff was not. In other words, ISACA came to a COBIT implementation as would any typical small to medium enterprise, facing a similar degree of understanding, challenges and questions. It quickly became clear that a first step would need to be building a level of COBIT understanding among staff, so that its general concepts could be applied to specific strategic activities.

**Getting Started**

**Training**

The need for training to support the initial baseline activities was identified early in the process. Each of the strategy’s 24 initiatives was managed by a staff team representing various functional areas (e.g., research, finance, certification, marketing/communications, membership) that would be needed to deliver on the purpose of the initiative. Therefore, the initiative team leaders were treated to a training session conducted by one of the staff COBIT experts.

The training covered the basics of COBIT 5—principles, enablers, goals cascade, etc.—and then addressed COBIT 5 as applied to ISACA strategy. Considerable discussion took place about the identity and roles of ISACA stakeholders. It was concluded that the most succinct way to identify them was to determine who bears the risk, who gets the benefit and who provides/is a resource. Also generating a good deal of discussion was the nature of enablers within the association, the processes pertinent to the strategy project, and the need for common understanding of terms. COBIT’s flexibility was stressed, as was the need to customize the framework to address the specific initiative being addressed. For example, COBIT 5’s process reference model was singled out for adjustment, to accommodate the fact that ISACA’s particular usage of COBIT 5 in this case was not an IT implementation, but rather a business use, therefore requiring a subset of the COBIT 5 processes.

The training was well received and universally considered valuable, especially in the discussion it sparked. A similar version of the training was created for use by the others on the initiative teams and for any new staff added to the teams later.
**Project Management**

Typical of any enterprise implementing COBIT, ISACA began its application of COBIT concepts to strategy execution in mid-stream. Very few enterprises have the luxury of using COBIT at the beginning an entirely new project, applying COBIT concepts from the outset. ISACA was no different. Some work had already begun on outlining and scheduling tasks necessary to progress the initiatives. A project management resource had been added to staff to help organize the portfolio and program and schedule each project, and various schedules, timelines and stage-gates had already been established. One of the tasks that had to be included in applying COBIT to each initiative was incorporation, accommodation and/or revision of already existing project plans.

**Setting Up Teams**

This case study has mentioned the creation of teams for the purpose of ensuring effective implementation of S22. It was recognized that the teams that arose on somewhat of an *ad hoc* basis, or the individuals assigned specific responsibilities, needed to be formalized, with clear roles and responsibilities assigned. Work commenced immediately to define the composition, scope, mission and accountability of each team, with the following results:

- **Initiative management team**—A unique team assigned to each initiative for ensuring that activities necessary to accomplish the initiative’s goal are undertaken (plan-build-run-monitor). The initiative management team consists of:
  - Team leaders—Senior and executive staff responsible for:
    - Managing assigned initiatives
    - Identifying market demand for proposed ISACA constituent products or services or ISACA fit and implementation
    - Determining and proposing appropriate business and enabler goals for governance team approval
    - Establishing and coordinating execution of plans to achieve the approved goals
    - Working with volunteer bodies, staff liaisons and support staff to advance the initiatives as and when appropriate
  - Additional team members—Staff assigned to the team based on their specific skills, expertise, experience or knowledge of ISACA or the professional area of knowledge being addressed by the initiative. They add strength to the team in progressing the initiative effectively, but do not remove the need for the team to collaborate with any and all management necessary to ensure progress on the initiative.

- **S22 management team**—A team of four individuals responsible for providing to the initiative teams advice, guidance and facilitation on using COBIT 5 and PMO-supported portfolio, program and project management techniques. The S22 management team:
  - Is proactive in assuring that initiative teams are moving forward readily and focusing on the high-priority initiatives
  - Raises concerns on progress or use of PMO techniques to the governance team for resolution when necessary
  - Is the driver of and responsible for monitoring progress of the overall program of work
  - Reports progress to the governance team
• Governance team—Executive staff responsible for the governance (evaluate-direct-monitor) of the S22 portfolio of initiatives

• Study author—Staff member responsible for documenting ISACA’s use of COBIT 5 as a business framework for governing and managing S22 initiatives as well as other selected standalone initiatives. The study author was charged with keeping the governance team advised of progress on the preparation of the case study.

• Volunteer oversight body—The volunteer body responsible for providing direction on the ISACA business strategy as it relates to the S22 portfolio of initiatives. Within ISACA, that group is the Strategic Advisory Council, acting on behalf of and reporting to the ISACA Board of Directors.

• Volunteer advisor—The individual volunteer who was heavily involved in COBIT 5 framework development and to whom the S22 management team turned for guidance when needed

**Governance**

Before the teams could begin work in earnest, some governance issues arose that had not heretofore been articulated or addressed. The issues and corresponding resolutions were:

• **What is the approach for advancing from one phase of an initiative to the next? Should there be a formal stage-gate and governance process around the seven phases of the implementation life cycle?**

  It was agreed that there should be a stage-gate approval process for advancing from one phase to the next of a project, in keeping with good project management practices (and recognizing that moving from one stage to the next is not a finite act; there will be a need for iterations back and forth between stages as new information arises). A governance team composed of ISACA chiefs at international headquarters (IHQ) was designated the phase-gating group—however, it was quickly realized that this group would not have time to review seven stages for each of the 20-plus initiatives. The stage-gating was reduced to review after phases 1, 3, 4 and 6 (and, in cases where progress had already advanced significantly, the post-phase 1 review would be combined with a later phase review to ensure that no aspects or considerations regarding the initiative stakeholders or drivers had been overlooked in preparing the initiative for detailed planning and approval). Approval of moving a project to the next phase would indicate the governance team’s support for advancement of the initiative and the phase’s outputs.

• **What is the mechanism for raising and solving issues? For example, if an initiative’s team members believe the initiative has factors that are beyond the scope of what they can address on their own (e.g., the initiative requires a substantial improvement in services, infrastructure or applications; a cultural shift; or additional/different staff skills), what is the mechanism for raising and solving the issue?**

  The governance team was designated the first line of response to address items the initiative teams identified as needing to be elevated for attention. It would be the responsibility of the team leaders to raise the issues to the attention of the governance team. In response, the governance team might take one or more of several possible approaches, such as identifying a solution, suggesting a course of action to resolve the issue, assigning responsibility for executing the solution or course of action, or determining whether the matter should be presented to volunteer leadership for input.
• **How do teams know they are going in the right direction on an initiative?** Are the initiative teams asking the right questions and getting the right answers?

Nothing can substitute for a collaborative team approach to careful thought, establishment of common definitions and goals, and readiness to be flexible. Any team that felt it had not been able to get the right answers to its questions or was in a rut would raise the issue first to the project management office (PMO). The PMO director’s familiarity with all the initiatives should enable him to suggest avenues for consideration or know when to refer the issue/question to the governance team for further guidance and resolution.

• **How will the initiatives be rolled up, and how will decisions be made (or recommendations offered to volunteer leadership) about overall prioritization and optimization of resources in the case of conflicts?**

The PMO serves as an integral part of the mechanism for pulling together a consolidated view of initiatives, particularly in regard to their timing, the human resources required to execute tasks, and the way the interdependencies among initiatives may affect timing and resources. Therefore, the PMO director is uniquely positioned to identify trouble spots that emerge in the consolidated view and call them out for attention. This information would be provided to the governance team, which would use it to determine next steps in adjusting resource allocations, timing, etc., where necessary. However, it was noted that the PMO focus is primarily on human resources—not on other resource needs, such as infrastructure. These considerations must come from the governance team.

Another question that arose in relation to governance—specifically, the monitoring activity—was how to report properly. Governance cannot effectively monitor without the information provided in succinct, pertinent reports. COBIT 5 does not prescribe how to report, so it was necessary to develop a process that served the needs of the Board of Directors and the Strategic Advisory Council (SAC). Templates were created for each group, with the one for SAC containing considerably more detail than the one for the board. Both templates are considered “living documents” and will undoubtedly undergo revision as lessons are learned about reporting needs and preferences.

**Implementation**

*Laying the Groundwork*

First, two general flow charts were designed: one showed COBIT’s stages at a high level, and the second illustrated how those steps would apply to the overall portfolio of strategic initiatives (figure 2).
High-level View of Use of COBIT 5

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder drivers</td>
<td>Selection and application of appropriate COBIT 5 enablers</td>
<td>For example:</td>
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<td>Goals</td>
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High-level View of Use of COBIT 5 in Implementation of S22 Portfolio

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<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Process</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder drivers and</td>
<td>ISACA will use COBIT 5 as its business framework to ensure a common</td>
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<td>stakeholder needs</td>
<td>understanding and approach within the organization, which will enable</td>
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<td>were identified at a high</td>
<td>us to develop quantitative goals that can be projected out over time</td>
<td>initiatives, as needed</td>
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<td>so we can measure progress towards them, identify variances to</td>
<td>Guidance on addressing dependencies</td>
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<td>McKinsey and OnPoint.</td>
<td>projection,</td>
<td>Feedback on</td>
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<td>Resulting enterprise goals</td>
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<td>of certain percentages of</td>
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<td>shift in ISACA’s demographics.</td>
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<td>products for current</td>
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For example:
- Decisions on further prioritization of initiatives, as needed
- Guidance on addressing dependencies
- Feedback on
The next step was to use the two highest-priority initiatives\(^1\) as the subjects of a brief document outlining how COBIT would apply to the definition and execution of that specific initiative. Appendix 1 contains one of those brief summaries.

**Defining the Phases**

Each initiative team was provided a template\(^2\) (see appendix 2) to use to help the team members “think through” the application of COBIT principles and enablers to execute the initiative at each phase in the COBIT implementation life cycle (figure 3) and was asked to use the template to capture its conclusions and plans. It was anticipated that the template would help clarify and crystallize the team’s thinking, prove useful in bringing individuals outside or new to the team up to speed on progress and planning, and serve as a “project history” in the future.

**Figure 3—Implementation Life Cycle**

Once the template was finalized, a blank version was provided to each team (via the SharePoint site that had been established specifically for the strategy portfolio of projects). Each team was asked to go

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\(^1\) Based on a prioritization exercise previously conducted by ISACA volunteer leadership

\(^2\) The first draft of the templates was prepared for the two high-priority initiatives already serving as “pilot programs.” Once the templates were revised by both the COBIT subject matter experts and the two initiatives’ teams, they were rolled out to the teams for the remaining initiatives.
through the exercise of completing the template for its specific initiative through phase 1. The results were unexpected and highly beneficial. The consensus of the team members was that the exercise of working through the template had been helpful and had caused them to think of aspects of their initiative they had not previously considered. They believed it broadened their view. In fact, it led to the realization that looking at the initiatives through the COBIT lens had enabled more complete identification of all of the stakeholders, both internal and external, and their specific needs and wants relative to their initiative’s objectives. This, in turn, uncovered new opportunities in the way the initiatives were viewed and the way the teams moved forward with implementation, and would ultimately help in making better investment decisions.

As a result, face-to-face meetings between each initiative team and the S22 management team were scheduled on a weekly basis to continue work on the templates. This placed the management team in a proactive “coaching” role, which was considered helpful to ensure consistent application of COBIT 5 concepts throughout all phases of all initiatives in order to realize COBIT’s value of benefits delivery, risk mitigation and resource optimization. This facilitated approach helped with identification of dependencies and ways to leverage activity among multiple initiatives.

**Identifying Stakeholders and Setting Goals**

COBIT 5’s framework is driven by knowing who the enterprise’s stakeholders are and what they want. Although this seems obvious, it can often be something that everyone agrees is “understood,” but no one can really define it. Therefore, to pave the way for continuing forward motion, ISACA’s senior staff and S22 management teams focused on two major activities over the course of several meetings:

- Identifying and defining ISACA’s broad categories of stakeholders
- Developing goals for each of ISACA’s three lines of business (LOBs), defined as credentialing and career management, knowledge, and relations

The goal was to capture and codify what was termed “ISACA’s truth”—basically, who the association exists to serve and the ways in which that service is rendered.

Common ground was outlined first. The stakeholder groups were defined in terms of ISACA’s vision (Trust in, and value from, information and information systems) and its major topical areas. Then two large “buckets” were defined—individual and enterprise—into which more specific constituencies could be placed.

In the general classification of “individual,” three stakeholder groups were outlined: members, credential holders and nonmember consumers of ISACA products. In the “enterprise” bucket, two groups were defined: advocates (those individuals within the enterprise who promote and support ISACA’s activities and products) and consumers (those within the enterprise who simply purchase and use products).

To further clarify the population of each group, examples were identified, such as the student member and the academic advocate in the individual/member group, and, in the enterprise advocate category,
the IS audit director in an enterprise who requires all of the company auditors to hold the CISA certification. Many individuals could be classified as both stakeholders and enablers; in the interest of keeping the framework as simple as possible, most were listed in only one place—enablers.

Although the definition and mapping of stakeholders moved the project several steps in the right direction, it was hardly a finished product. It was clear that it would need to undergo revision as the project progressed and more was understood about ISACA’s potential new stakeholder groups and COBIT 5 itself. Two examples of needed revision follow:

- It will be necessary to prioritize the stakeholder groups. No organization can serve all its many stakeholders exactly equally. Therefore, priorities must be set, which must, in turn, align with the priorities set for the initiatives.
- The stakeholder diagram maps only to S22 initiatives. Significant challenges might arise in finalizing the stakeholder definitions and aligning them with business-as-usual (BAU) activities (e.g., certification, membership, education) and initiatives remaining from the 2009 strategy project. However, that is the only way to be sure there is a holistic view of which audiences ISACA is serving and what value is expected to be delivered to them. (A meeting of three key volunteer bodies scheduled at roughly the same time this issue arose, along with the expert counsel of the volunteer advisor, proved especially helpful in addressing these issues.)

With the stakeholders identified, each LOB team could zero in on pertinent stakeholders, define their needs and wants, and create a goal for the activity required to meet those needs/wants. For example, within the knowledge LOB, the stakeholders for a particular set of activities were defined as:

Individual members, credential holders and nonmember consumers

Their needs were defined as follows:

Knowledge products, tools and education that enhance their professional capability and credibility and enable them as professionals to deliver value to organizations where they are employed or offer services

The business goal for this portion of the knowledge LOB was stated as:

Advance the professional knowledge and competencies of information trust/value professionals and enhance the member value proposition in support of member acquisition and retention by developing, maintaining and disseminating a market-driven portfolio of highly valued knowledge products and services, providing engaging education, and contributing valued content for the Knowledge Center.

For each goal, the pertinent existing ISACA service(s) or product(s) was listed and the stakeholder’s contribution was defined. Ultimately, the following questions were asked and answered for each LOB:

- **ISACA business goal statement.** What do we hope to achieve?
- **ISACA stakeholders.** Who are we hoping to reach?
• **Stakeholder needs/wants.** What do they need and want from us?
• **Stakeholder contribution.** What do/will they provide us?
• **ISACA service or product delivered.** What do/will we provide them?

To complete this portion of the exercise, SMART (strategic, measurable, actionable, realistic and timely) will be defined for each goal statement, and used as a way to assess success as the project progresses.

**Governance Reviews**
Over the course of three weeks, governance reviews were held on all the S22 initiatives. In most cases, the initiative’s review covered phases 1 through 3; however, those initiatives in which work had already begun before the COBIT approach was applied reflected more progress.

Preparation for the governance reviews consisted of each member of the governance team receiving two items for pre-read:
• The detailed document (appendix 2) outlining the results of the initiative team’s deliberations on the critical issues to be addressed in each phase
• A set of slides serving as an executive summary of that material

Each review began with a member of the initiative team making a formal presentation of the slides; the “ground rule” was that the presentation would be made without interruption—questions were held until the end. After questions were raised and answered, and discussions were held, the members of the governance team voted on their degree of satisfaction (based on a 0-5 range) with the initiative’s progress to date and its readiness to be taken forward in the manner described in the presentation.

The votes of less-than-full support did not reflect the quality of the work invested by the initiative team, but rather the fact that the COBIT implementation approach and the governance review had accomplished exactly their intent: they had enabled further in-depth consideration of the initiative, the resources needed, the information still lacking, the market suitability, the previous priority rating and the appropriateness for ISACA. As a result, some initiatives were combined, one was designated as BAU and therefore taken off the S22 reporting list, and others were redefined to clarify their intent and make them more “fit for purpose.” Each level of review is expected to provide this further level of refinement, ultimately rendering a portfolio of initiatives that are attainable, appropriate and effective.

**In Conclusion**
Although this case study is being wrapped up at this point in order to document the process and value captured in the early stages of the program, the work to use COBIT 5 as a strategy implementation tool goes on—in keeping with S22’s ten-year horizon. Now that the first governance review has taken place for each initiative, progress on the remaining phases will continue and tangible results are expected to ensue. Measures will be developed to gauge achievement against objectives, and monitoring will be maintained.
There is no question among those working on the S22 initiatives that using COBIT 5 has enabled a more productive outcome to date. The rigor required by starting with defining stakeholders, their drivers and their needs, then proceeding to describe the as-is and to-be states, has sparked a deeper analysis of each initiative. It has enabled achievement of a more in-depth, profound understanding of the problems, so that they are addressed in the most effective way, as opposed to trotting out easy and obvious “solutions” so that another task can be checked off the list. COBIT 5 has also surfaced the deep layers of interdependences among the initiatives, thus “forcing” a holistic, rather than siloed, planning approach. Recognizing the interdependencies has made it clear that issues cannot be dealt with on a piecemeal basis, but rather as parts of a whole. This realization has even gone so far as to extend to select vendors, who are being asked to view the services they provide ISACA through the COBIT lens, albeit in an abbreviated way.

COBIT 5’s first four phases guide the process of framing the project with the right scope and set the expectations on cost, time and accountabilities (through phase 4, planning). Once execution begins, it will be important to ensure that a good project change management process is set in place to control scope creep, cost creep and time creep.

Based on the success of using COBIT to implement strategy, ISACA is applying COBIT 5 to other specific activities as well. Gradually, the intent is to expand COBIT’s scope to cover broader enterprise issues. After years of developing COBIT, writing about it, offering education and training on it, and incorporating it into certifications, ISACA has found it a rare privilege to apply it to the association’s own environment.
Appendix I—Brief Description of Use of COBIT 5 With S22 Initiative

INPUTS
Market research has indicated that there is a market need for implementation guidance for privacy concerns (focus on best practices and guidelines on how to implement processes) for managers and practitioners. The target audience interested in privacy includes IT, audit, governance, HR, legal and regulatory compliance, and line-of-business executives.

In response to this need, ISACA will form a small working group to define the role ISACA wishes to take on the topic of privacy. ISACA aspires to expand knowledge offerings on privacy targeted at current constituents and, depending on the outcome of this effort, consider future offerings on privacy targeted at constituents in professional roles that would be new to ISACA. The undertaking of this initiative is in support of the strategic aspiration of the association and its strategic objective of developing and providing relevant, usable products and services.

ISACA stakeholders are driven by various influences and external factors, all of which combine to cause them to have specific needs where ISACA is concerned. These stakeholder needs will generate specific initiative goals, which are likely to have measureable output and are important inputs to the development processes.

PROCESS
The use of several enablers will permit ISACA to accomplish this development of expanded offerings and provide for effective and transparent goal-setting. These enablers are explained in further detail below in the context of this initiative. Some of them are likely to be completed at this point, others will likely take more time and energy to understand and utilize. These are listed in the order in which they appear in COBIT 5; they may not necessarily be undertaken in this order.

1) COBIT 5 suggests considering principles, policies, and frameworks (C5 enabler 1). This exercise already makes use of that enabler in that the consideration of a framework is what is being done here by using C5 constructs. (Completed)

2) ISACA will require COBIT 5 processes (C5 enabler 2) through which the development activities will be planned, designed, executed and monitored. The initiative team will identify necessary processes and then complete further effort to determine what inputs are required for each and what outputs each will produce. (This is likely a key or secondary enabler for this initiative.)

3) ISACA should examine its organization structure (C5 enabler 3) to determine whether there are any impediments (program and project management organization) to an effective and efficient development process and remove or alter these structures as necessary.

4) The efficiency of developing new guidance can be influenced by the enterprise’s culture, ethics and behavior (C5 enabler 4). Examining ISACA’s organizational culture may lead to opportunities to leverage enterprise assets and better meet the needs of the initiative constituents.

5) In order to generate specific guidance on privacy issues throughout the world, ISACA will assemble a work group, or task force, that will gather information (C5 enabler 5) relevant to the topic and
development-specific guidance based on the newly acquired information and the expertise of the initiative members. (This is likely a key enabler for this initiative.)

6) Completing the development of this guidance will require specific services, infrastructure, and applications (C5 enabler 6). ISACA will need to examine its inventory of capabilities in this area and determine whether any new resources are needed.

7) The initiative members will be selected based on their unique sets of skills and competencies (C5 enabler 7) to perform this work. (In process)

**OUTPUTS**

- Decisions on the role ISACA may take, which may lead to development work, producing various project documents that may include project management reporting, publication design, publication drafts, expert review grids, review drafts, reviews by publication department, layout proofs, printed and electronic final publications
- Potentially, guidance on possible dependencies with other ISACA initiatives or external factors that could affect the decision on any proposed development work
- Feedback to SAC and the Knowledge Board on ISACA’s role on privacy going forward

**OUTCOMES**

- A way to create value more effectively and efficiently for specified external stakeholders and ISACA
- On-time and on-budget completion of the planned initiative
- Transparency on the approach being taken to determine ISACA’s role on privacy
- Satisfaction with the definition of ISACA’s role on privacy from all ISACA stakeholders relevant to this initiative
- Identification of ISACA’s role on privacy going forward and, as appropriate, provision of expanded guidance offerings in the privacy space for trust professionals worldwide
Appendix 2—Template for Outlining Each Initiative

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative Number and Brief Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Information</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SAC-accepted initiative concept</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prioritization</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated timing/horizon, milestones, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative objective/strategic intent</td>
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<tr>
<td>High-level anticipated initiative deliverables (outputs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>High-level intended initiative outcomes/goals (for external stakeholders and for ISACA, as applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enabler Considerations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(indicate COBIT 5 enabler considerations or potential impact specific to this initiative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[See pages 27 – 30 of the COBIT 5 Framework for an introduction to these enablers, and appendix G for a detailed description of the enablers.]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Principles, policies, frameworks
2. Processes
3. Organizational structure
4. Culture, ethics, behavior
5. Information
6. Services, infrastructure, applications
7. People, skills, competencies

**Applying a Continual Improvement Life Cycle Approach to ISACA’s Strategy**

By using a phased and structured approach such as depicted below for S22 initiatives, ISACA will be able to address holistically the complexity and challenges that may be encountered with S22 and its impact on the organization. The activities diagrammed represent an ongoing, continual, iterative process of implementation. Moving through the phases of implementation facilitates continued learning and enablement, with outputs from each phase providing input to the next phase. Note that the phased approach is not intended to impede necessary adjustments to initiatives; if circumstances come to light that have the potential to change the findings from earlier phases (e.g., a regulatory change has emerged which is seen as having the potential to alter market demand), those earlier findings should be reevaluated as appropriate.
Phase 1: Recognize the need to act. What are the drivers?
The purpose of this phase is to assess and understand the needs that are driving this S22 initiative, the various stakeholders affected and the impact on them, and the involvement required from each stakeholder group. During this phase, the current points of reference and trigger events (S22) that are creating the need to change are further communicated, documented and embraced.

### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 1
(Refer to pages 39-41 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

**Phase objective:** Obtain an understanding of the initiative background and objectives and current ISACA approach. Define the initial initiative concepts. Obtain buy-in and commitment of all key stakeholders.

**Inputs** (indicate inputs for this initiative in the right-hand column below)

For example: ISACA vision and mission, relevant industry overviews, market position and strategy, market demand and needs as aligned to strategic objectives and goals

**Tasks** (document phase 1 tasks for this initiative in the right-hand column below)

Recognize need to act. For example:
- Identify events and symptoms triggering desire to change and need to act.
- Assess and document current stakeholder needs, referencing fact base which supports defined needs (i.e., market needs).
- Identify initiative requirements.
- Align the initiative with ISACA strategies and guiding principles.
### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 1

*(Refer to pages 39-41 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)*

- Ensure that ISACA management and board understand and approve the high-level approach.

#### Establish desire to change. For example:
- Document and understand the depth and the breadth of the change required by this initiative.
- Consider other ongoing or planned initiatives to determine dependencies or impact.
- Identify and define key internal and external stakeholders and determine level of support/involvement required from each.
- Create awareness of the initiative, its drivers and its objectives among all internal stakeholders.

#### Begin the initiative. For example:
- Set high-level objectives.
- Define and assign high-level roles and responsibilities within the initiative.
- Develop an outline business case indicating the success factors to be used to enable performance monitoring and reporting of the success of the initiative.

#### Enabler Considerations (indicate enabler considerations in the right-hand column)

Considering the seven categories of enablers described in COBIT 5, what enablers are required for review in this phase and what activities are required so that enablers provide the capabilities necessary to support this initiative?

#### Outputs (document phase 1 outputs for this initiative in the right-hand column below)

For example: documented outline indicating defined initiative objectives, requirements and stakeholder needs assessment, high-level roles and responsibilities for the initiative, stakeholder support and involvement required

#### Outcomes (document phase 1 outcomes for this initiative in the right-hand column below)

For example, achievement of objectives of phase 1:
- Understanding of the initiative background and objectives and current governance approach
- Definition and outline of the initial initiative concept business case
- Buy-in and commitment of key internal stakeholders

#### Stage-gate review

When is it anticipated this phase will be ready for HQ governance team stage-gate review?

### Phase 2: Assess the current state. Where are we now?

At this phase, the opportunities, potential issues and the scope of the initiative will be defined. It is essential to assemble effective team representation, involving appropriate areas of HQ with the knowledge, experience and expertise that will be required. It will be important to identify potential change agents within ISACA that the core team can work with in support of this initiative.
### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 2

(Refer to pages 41-44 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

**Phase objective:** Ensure the initiative team knows and understands how the initiative needs to deliver value in support of ISACA. Identify critical processes or other enablers that will be addressed. Identify appropriate management practices for each selected process. Obtain an understanding of ISACA’s present and future attitude toward risk and determine how it will impact the initiative.

### Inputs

**For example:**
- Phase 1 outputs such as high-level outline, high-level roles and responsibilities for the initiative
- Other business plans and strategies

### Tasks

**Assess the current state. For example:**
- Understand and document how this initiative needs to support current ISACA goals.
- Establish the significance and nature of the initiative’s contribution to meet ISACA’s goals.
- Identify key issues and weaknesses related to the current and required future solutions and services, and any constraints or limitations.
- Assess actual performance of key enablers (including current BAU activities as applicable) and analyze the current level of capability of these enablers and related performance goals and metrics.

**Form implementation team. For example:**
- Assemble core team with appropriate knowledge, expertise, profile, experience, credibility and authority to drive the initiative.
- Consider the need and use of external parties, such as consultants, as part of the team to address any skill gaps that may exist.
- Create the appropriate environment for optimal teamwork; this includes ensuring that necessary time and involvement can be given.

**Define problems and opportunities. For example:**
- Review and evaluate business case outline, initiative feasibility and potential ROI.
- Assign roles, responsibility and process ownership and ensure commitment and support of stakeholders in the definition and execution of the initiative.
- Identify current goals, challenges and success factors.

### Enabler Considerations

Considering the seven categories of enablers described in COBIT 5, what enablers are required for review in this phase and what activities are required so that enablers provide the capabilities necessary to support this initiative?

### Outputs

**For example:** agreed-on selected processes and goals, strengths on which to build, core team and assigned
### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 2

(Refer to pages 41-44 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles and responsibilities, updated business case, agreed-on understanding of the issues and challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Outcomes

For example, achievement of objectives of phase 2:
- Understand how the initiative needs to deliver value in support of ISACA.
- Identify critical processes or other enablers that will be addressed.
- Identify appropriate management practices for each selected process.
- Understand ISACA’s present and future attitude towards risk and how it will impact the initiative.
- Current business context for initiative approval/PID submissions

#### Stage-gate review

When is it anticipated this phase will be ready for HQ governance team stage-gate review?

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### Phase 3: Define the target state. Where do we want to be?

During phase 3, an improvement target is set, followed by a more detailed analysis to identify gaps and solutions. An important component of this phase is the communication to core audiences of the benefits and rationale for the initiative, including both cultural and logical aspects.

#### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 3

(Refer to pages 44-46 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase objective: Define the targeted to-be state. Determine the gaps between the as-is and the to-be positions and translate these gaps into improvement opportunities. Create a detailed business case and high-level initiative plan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Inputs

For example:
- Phase 1 and 2 outputs such as definition of initiative goals, core team and assigned roles and responsibilities
- Stakeholder analysis
- Challenges and success factors

#### Tasks

Define target state and analyze gaps. For example:
- Define target to-be state (including ISACA’s goals, objective and subjective, final and interim as appropriate).
- Analyze gaps, leveraging existing strengths.
- Identify potential improvements.
- Identify residual risks and propose approach (e.g., accept, watch, mitigate).

Describe and communicate desired outcome. For example:
- Describe high-level change enablement plan and objectives.
### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 3

(Refer to pages 44-46 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

- Articulate the rationale for, and benefits of, the change.
- Link back to objectives for the initiative and demonstrate how the change will realize the benefit.
- Communicate through action.

#### Define road map. For example:
- Set initiative direction, scope, benefits and objectives at a high level.
- Ensure alignment of the objectives with ISACA’s business strategies.
- Consider risk and adjust scope accordingly.
- Obtain necessary budgets and define initiative accountabilities and responsibilities.
- Create and evaluate a detailed business case, budget, time lines, and high-level initiative plan.

#### Enabler Considerations

Considering the seven categories of enablers described in COBIT 5, what enablers are required for review in this phase and what activities are required so that enablers provide the capabilities necessary to support this initiative?

#### Outputs

For example: description of improvement opportunities, capability ratings of key activities, risk response documentation for the initiative, high-level initiative plan

#### Outcomes

For example: clearly defined view/picture of where ISACA wants to be in relation to the initiative and its scope (to include in subsequent initiative planning and applicable PID submissions).

#### Stage-gate review

When is it anticipated this phase will be ready for HQ governance team stage-gate review?

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**Phase 4: Build improvements. What needs to be done?**

Phase 4 defines practical solutions supported by justifiable business cases. A change plan for implementation is also developed. A well-developed plan helps to ensure that the initiative’s benefits are identified and monitored.

### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 4

(Refer to pages 47-49 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

**Phase objective:** Translate opportunities into justifiable contributing projects. Prioritize and focus on the high-impact projects. Integrate projects into the overall initiative plan. Execute quick wins.
### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 4

(Refer to pages 47-49 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example, phase 1 – 3 outputs such as:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Description of opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High-level initiative plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detailed business case</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design and build improvements. For example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider potential benefits and ease of implementation; identify priority actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on alternatives, showing high benefit/high ease of implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prioritize and select improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Analyze selected improvements to the detail required for high-level project definition, approach, deliverables, resources required, estimated costs, estimated time scales, dependencies and project risk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Empower role players and identify quick wins. For example: |
| • Engage those affected by the change and give them responsibility to accept the quality of results. |
| • Design change response plans proactively. |
| • Identify quick wins that prove the concept of the initiative. |
| • Identify strengths in existing processes that could be leveraged; build on existing strengths. |

| Develop initiative plan. For example: |
| • Organize potential projects into the initiative. |
| • Guide the allocation and prioritization of business resources necessary to achieve initiative and project objectives. |
| • Define the required deliverables, considering the full scope of activities required to meet objectives. |
| • Establish project plans (including baselined schedules) and reporting procedures to enable progress to be monitored. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabler Considerations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considering the seven categories of enablers described in COBIT 5, what enablers are required for review in this phase and what activities are required so that enablers provide the capabilities necessary to support this initiative?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Project definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Defined change response plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identified quick wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Project plans (including baselined schedule) and reporting procedures enabled through committed resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Success metrics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example: approved plan for initiative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase 5: Implement, operate and use. How do we get there?

Proposed solutions are implemented into practice in phase 5. Measures are defined and used to ensure that business alignment is achieved and performance can be measured. Success requires the engagement and demonstrated commitment of the HQ team and other key stakeholders. As solutions begin to be rolled out, it is important to revisit the change requirements and objectives that were set during the start of the initiative, to ensure they were adequately addressed.

Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 5

(Refer to pages 47-49 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

Phase objective: Implement the detailed projects, leveraging enterprise initiative and project management capabilities, standards and practices. Monitor, measure and report on project progress.

Inputs

For example:
- Project definitions (e.g., design documents, PID)
- Defined change response plans
- Initiative plan with allocated resources, priorities and deliverables
- Success metrics
- Integrated initiative plans and project plans

Tasks

Implement Improvements. For example:
- Develop and, where necessary, acquire solutions that include the full scope of activities required.
- Test the practicality and suitability of the solutions in the real working environment.
- Roll out solutions.

Enable operation and use. For example:
- Implement change response plans.
- Ensure that a broader base of role players has the skills, resources and knowledge, as well as buy-in and commitment to the change.
- Plan cultural and behavioral aspects of the broader transition.
- Communicate roles and responsibilities for use.

Execute plan. For example:
- Ensure the execution of the initiative is based on an up-to-date and integrated plan of the projects within the initiative.
- Direct and monitor the contribution of all the projects in the initiative to ensure delivery of the expected outcomes.
- Provide regular update reports to stakeholders to ensure that progress is understood and on track.
Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 5

(Refer to pages 49-51 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

- Document and monitor significant initiative risk and issues, and agree on remediation actions.
- Approve the initiation of each major initiative phase and communicate to all stakeholders.
- Approve any major changes to the initiative and project plans.

Enabler Considerations

Considering the seven categories of enablers described in COBIT 5, what enablers are required for review in this phase and what activities are required so that enablers provide the capabilities necessary to support this initiative?

Outputs

For example:
- Implemented improvements
- Implemented change response plans
- Defined and communicated roles and responsibilities in the business-as-usual environment
- Project change logs and issue/risk logs
- Defined business and perception success measure
- Benefits tracked to monitor realization

Outcomes

For example: implemented projects, and an understanding necessary to move into phase 6

Stage-gate review

When is it anticipated this phase will be ready for HQ governance team stage-gate review?

Phase 6: Embed and measure new approaches. Did we get there?

Phase 6 focuses on sustainable operation of the initiative and monitoring of the achievement of expected benefits. As concrete results are produced from the initiative, new ways of needing to work may need to become part of ISACA’s culture, for example, implementation of new policies, procedures and resources to effectively support the changes required by the initiative. Such changes will be sustained by conscious reinforcement and ongoing communication.

Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 6

(Refer to pages 51-53 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

Phase objective: Integrate the metrics for project performance and benefits realization of the overall governance improvement initiative into the performance measurement system for regular and ongoing monitoring.

Inputs

For example:
- Implemented improvements
- Implemented change response plans
## Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 6

(Refer to pages 51-53 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

- Defined and communicated roles and responsibilities in the business-as-usual environment
- Project change logs and issues/risk logs
- Define business and perception success measures
- Business case benefits

### Tasks

**Operate and measure.** For example:
- Set targets for each metric for an agreed-on time period.
- Gather actual measures and compare them to targets on a regular basis.
- Adjust long-term targets based on experience.

**Embed new approaches.** For example:
- Ensure new ways of working become part of the enterprise’s culture.
- Revise job descriptions.
- Monitor whether assigned roles and responsibilities have been assumed.
- Leverage pockets of excellence to provide a source of inspiration.
- Where still required, enforce change through management authority.

**Realize benefits.** For example:
- Monitor overall performance of the initiative against the business case objectives.
- Monitor investment performance.
- Document lessons learned for subsequent improvement initiatives.

### Enabler Considerations

Considering the seven categories of enablers described in COBIT 5, what enablers are required for review in this phase and what activities are required so that enablers provide the capabilities necessary to support this initiative?

### Outputs

For example:
- Updated project and initiative scorecards
- Change effectiveness measures
- Improvements entrenched in operations
- Key metrics added to business unit

### Outcomes

For example:
- Realization of benefits
- Integrated metrics for project performance and benefits realization of the initiative into the performance measurement system for regular and ongoing monitoring.
- Understanding necessary to move into phase 7
- Required approvals obtained

### Stage-gate review

When is it anticipated this phase will be ready for HQ?
### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 6
(Refer to pages 51-53 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>governance team stage-gate review?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Phase 7: Sustain, monitor and evaluate. How do we keep the momentum going?

As S22 initiatives are implemented, lessons learned need to be captured and knowledge shared among other S22 teams, ISACA staff and volunteers as appropriate. The momentum and changes from the initiative will be sustained through conscious and continuous reinforcement.

### Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 7
(Refer to pages 53-55 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase objective: Assess the results and experience gained from the initiative. Record and share any lessons learned. Improve organizational structure, processes, roles and responsibilities to change the enterprise’s behavior. Ensure that new required actions drive further iterations of the life cycle.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Inputs

**For example:**
- Updated project and initiative scorecards
- Change effectiveness measures
- Post-implementation review report
- Business strategy

#### Tasks

**Monitor and evaluate.** For example:
- Identify new governance objectives and requirements based on experience gained, current business objectives or other trigger events.
- Identify lessons learned.
- Communicate requirements for further improvements to stakeholders and document for use as input to the next iteration of the life cycle.

**Sustain.** For example:
- Provide conscious reinforcement and an ongoing communication campaign.
- Confirm conformance to objectives and requirements.
- Continually monitor the effectiveness of the change itself, change enablement activities and buy-in of stakeholders.
- Provide feedback on performance, reward achievers and publicize successes.

**Review initiative effectiveness.** For example:
- Ensure that an initiative review takes place and approve conclusions.
- Review program effectiveness.

#### Enabler Considerations

Considering the seven categories of enablers described in COBIT 5, what enablers are required for review in this phase and what activities are required so that enablers provide the capabilities necessary to support this initiative?
Initiative Number and Brief Description—Phase 7
(Refer to pages 53-55 of COBIT 5: Implementation when completing this section of the template, considering whether there are additional inputs, tasks or outputs from within the fuller content of the Implementation guide that are applicable and should be addressed for a specific initiative. The example inputs, tasks and outputs below are a subset of that content.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recommendations for further activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stakeholder satisfaction survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Documented success stories and lessons learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ongoing communication plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Performance reward scheme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example: achievement of objectives of phase 7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage-gate review</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When is it anticipated this phase will be ready for HQ governance team stage-gate review?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>