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Subjects

Topic: 1

Velmarra Rail Engineering Turns Workshop Agreements Into Scope

Business Context

Company Background

Velmarra Rail Engineering maintains and overhauls locomotives, passenger cars, and freight wagons for operators across New Zealand. The company runs a heavy overhaul hall in Dunedin, a component rebuild shop in Hamilton, and two smaller running repair depots in Napier and Invercargill. Around 1,100 staff work across the fixed sites, and a further 140 travel as mobile crews attending breakdowns and scheduled inspections at customer sidings. Revenue comes from long-term maintenance agreements priced per vehicle-kilometre, so the accuracy of the work record behind each job drives both what the company bills and how it evidences its safety obligations.

Landscape Today

The company has run a heavily adapted ERP for maintenance orders, spare parts, and service billing since the mid-2000s, with separate depot databases holding inspection histories. A RISE with SAP agreement now covers the move to SAP S/4HANA Cloud Private Edition, and the implementation project has been set up in SAP Cloud ALM. The Explore phase ran for eleven weeks and the last fit-to-standard workshop closed at the end of that period. The first build wave covers heavy overhaul and service billing, with running repair and component work following in a second wave.

Workshop Series

Four workshop streams ran in parallel: heavy overhaul, component repair, running repair, and service billing. Each was chaired by a different depot manager and each kept its own record of what was agreed. The heavy overhaul and service billing streams filed their confirmed decisions into the project record. The component repair and running repair streams circulated summaries by mail and kept working notes in shared spreadsheets held at the depots. A consolidated view of what was adopted as standard and what was agreed as a deviation has not yet been produced.

Depot Practices

Running repair at Napier and Invercargill has always worked to a shorter inspection cycle than the overhaul hall. That stream agreed the standard process would be adopted with two exceptions covering how partial inspections are signed off. The operator's safety regime requires a named inspector to countersign before a vehicle returns to service. Both exceptions appear in the stream's own notes. The build team preparing the first wave has been working from the project record and has not seen them.

Extension Requests

Six extension requests have reached the programme's technical lead. Three come from the component repair stream and ask for changes to how repair quotations are calculated. That stream maintains its quotation logic is why its turnaround times beat the market, and the technical lead has been told the changes are small enough to deliver quickly by adjusting core objects directly. The remaining three are reporting requests from service billing. None of the six carries a record of the workshop decision it came from, and the clean core assessment for each is outstanding.

Enablement Planning

The change lead has drafted an adoption plan sized on headcount at the four fixed sites, with classroom sessions in the two weeks before each wave goes live. The mobile crews were not represented in any workshop. Their inspection paperwork is captured on paper at the siding and typed in later at a depot,

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while the target design has them recording directly against the maintenance order. The sponsor has asked for a single recommendation covering build scope, extension handling, and adoption before the first wave build begins.

Your assignment

You are the project manager assigned to Velmarra Rail Engineering's SAP S/4HANA Cloud Private Edition implementation under its RISE with SAP agreement. The Explore phase has closed and the sponsor has asked you for one recommendation covering build scope, extension handling, and adoption before the first wave build begins in three weeks. Four workshop streams reported their outcomes in different ways, six extension requests are open with no assessment, and the adoption plan has been drafted from site headcount. Your recommendations will be given to the sponsor, the four stream chairs, the programme's technical lead, and the change lead. Work only from the situation described; do not assume additional workshops, budget, or delivery capacity

1. **CHALLENGE 1 — Turning Workshop Agreements Into A Traceable Build Backlog**

• Advise the sponsor on what has to happen to the four streams' workshop outcomes before build scope for the first wave can be fixed.

• Set out how a confirmed standard adoption should be distinguished from an agreed deviation when the outcomes are brought together.

• State what has to be true of an agreed deviation before the build team can rely on it as scope, and what would make it unreliable.

• Recommend how the running repair stream's sign-off exceptions should reach the build team, given the wave date already announced.

• State what you would say to the two chairs whose outcomes are held at the depots, without reopening decisions that were already agreed.

Checkpoints

• The recommendation names one place where scope decisions are held and explains why a second place cannot be allowed to carry status.

• Each agreed deviation can be traced to the workshop decision that produced it and has been confirmed by the chair who agreed it.

• The recommendation distinguishes recovering decisions from re-taking them, and does not spend a workshop cycle on either.

• The trade-off between the announced date and a complete design record is stated openly rather than resolved by silence.

2. **CHALLENGE 2 — Anchoring Project Tasks In A Single Management Base**

• Recommend how the four streams should report progress and decisions for the remainder of the programme.

• Explain to the sponsor what the implementation project already set up in SAP Cloud ALM is expected to give the programme, and what it cannot give while status sits at the depots.

• Address the two chairs' preference for their own spreadsheets in a way that keeps them working and keeps status in one place.

• Advise whether a one-off catch-up of the depot records is enough on its own.

• State what you would expect to observe once the weekly reconciliation step has genuinely gone rather than moved elsewhere.

Checkpoints

• The recommendation separates a stream's working notes from the decision status the programme is governed by.

• The proposal removes the reconciliation step rather than assigning someone to perform it every week.

• The evidence offered for that removal covers both where the status pack is drawn from and where a new decision lands.

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• The response to a one-off catch-up addresses what happens to the next decision taken after it.

3. **CHALLENGE 3 — Routing Depot Extension Requests To The Right Layer**

• Recommend how the six extension requests should be handled before any of them is scheduled for build.

• Advise on the component repair stream's argument that its quotation logic is a commercial differentiator that an extension layer would slow down.

• Advise on the countersignature requirement, where a safety record obligation and the clean core commitment point in different directions.

• State what evidence you would expect to see attached to each request before a routing decision is recorded.

Checkpoints

• The recommendation applies the same assessment to all six requests rather than exempting the ones described as small.

• The advice neither treats clean core as a rule that outranks the business nor treats a commercial claim as a reason to modify the core.

• The safety obligation is resolved through a route that keeps the evidence attached to the maintenance order.

4. **CHALLENGE 4 — Sizing Change Impact For Mobile Field Crews**

• Advise the change lead on what has to be established before the adoption plan can be approved.

• Explain what the mobile crews' change from paper capture at the siding to direct recording means for the sizing of the plan.

• Recommend how a group that attended no workshop should be brought into the change impact assessment at this point in the programme.

• State how you would present the revised sizing basis to a sponsor who has already seen a plan that looked complete.

Checkpoints

• The recommendation sizes enablement from assessed impact per group, not from headcount at the sites that were easy to count.

• Every affected group is accounted for, including groups whose work is removed rather than redesigned.

• The advice keeps change work ahead of the wave rather than deferring it until the build is finished.

Question: 1

CHALLENGE 1 — Turning Workshop Agreements Into A Traceable Build Backlog

The sponsor has asked for the first wave build to start in three weeks. Two of the four workshop streams filed their confirmed decisions into the project record; the component repair and running repair streams kept theirs in depot spreadsheets.

What should the project manager recommend as the immediate next step for build scope?

A. Ask the two depot streams to re-run their fit-to-standard workshops so every outcome is captured the same way, accepting that the wave build starts a cycle later than planned.

B. Freeze the build scope to the decisions already in the project record and raise the depot streams' outcomes as change requests once the first wave is live, protecting the announced date.

C. Bring the depot streams' adopted standards and agreed deviations into the same project record now, so the wave build is scoped from one complete and traceable set of decisions.

D. Release the depot spreadsheets to the build team as supporting material so configuration can start, and reconcile them into the project record while the wave is being built.

Answer: C

Explanation:
Fit-to-standard workshops in the Explore phase produce two things the build depends on: what was adopted as standard and what was agreed as a deviation. Until all four streams' outcomes sit in the same project record, nobody can see the real scope, so consolidating first is what makes the wave scope defensible rather than partial.

Question: 2

CHALLENGE 1 — Turning Workshop Agreements Into A Traceable Build Backlog
The four streams' outcomes have now been brought together in the project record. The sponsor asks what still has to happen before an agreed deviation such as the partial-inspection sign-off can be relied on as build scope. Each set below contains three actions.
Which set is the minimal complete set of actions required before an agreed deviation can be relied on as build scope?

A. Link the deviation to the workshop decision that produced it, have the chair who agreed it confirm the wording, and reflect it in the wave's scope item.
B. Link the deviation to the workshop decision that produced it, have the chair who agreed it confirm the wording, and raise it as an extension request for the build team.
C. Link the deviation to the workshop decision that produced it, circulate the consolidated list to all four chairs for comment, and reflect it in the wave's scope item.
D. Have the chair who agreed the deviation confirm the wording, reflect it in the wave's scope item, and brief the depot inspectors on how the exception will work in practice.

Answer: A

Explanation:
A deviation is usable as scope only when its origin is traceable, the person who agreed it has confirmed the wording, and it appears in the wave's scope item. Those three actions are each necessary and together sufficient; routing, extension handling, and depot briefing all depend on them rather than substituting for them.

Question: 3

CHALLENGE 1 — Turning Workshop Agreements Into A Traceable Build Backlog
The build team reports that its draft configuration for running repair matches the standard process. The Napier and Invercargill depot managers say the draft does not reflect what their workshop agreed.
What is the most likely reason for the difference the depot managers are describing?

A. The running repair workshop rejected the standard sign-off process outright, so the build team should have configured a depot-specific variant instead of the standard flow.

B. The build team configured from an earlier version of the standard process content, so its draft needs to be rebuilt against the version now in programme scope.
C. The depot managers are describing their shorter inspection cycle, which is an operational scheduling matter rather than something the build configuration reflects.
D. The two sign-off exceptions agreed in that stream stayed in its own notes, so the build scoped from a record showing only the standard adoption.

Answer: D

Explanation:
The running repair stream agreed the standard process with two exceptions covering partial-inspection sign-off, and those exceptions live in the stream's notes rather than the project record. The build team read the record, saw a clean standard adoption, and configured exactly that, so the difference is a second-order effect of where the decision was stored.

Question: 4

CHALLENGE 2 — Anchoring Project Tasks In A Single Management Base
The sponsor asks how the four streams should report progress for the rest of the programme. Two chairs say the depot spreadsheets are convenient and they would rather not change how they work mid-programme.
Which recommendation should the project manager give the sponsor?

A. Let each stream keep its own working notes and have the programme office copy stream status into the project management base every week, so established stream habits are not disturbed during the build.
B. Move all four streams onto the project management and task monitoring already set up in SAP Cloud ALM, keeping stream working notes as private drafts that carry no decision status.
C. Standardise on one depot spreadsheet template for all four streams and reference it from the project record, so a single format applies without moving anyone's working method.
D. Keep the project record for milestone reporting only and let each stream manage its own detail, since stream-level detail changes too often to be worth maintaining centrally.

Answer: B

Explanation:
The implementation project is already set up in SAP Cloud ALM, so the base for project management and task monitoring exists and only the streams' reporting behaviour has to move onto it. Letting notes remain as drafts respects how the chairs work while making sure decision status lives in exactly one place.

Question: 5

CHALLENGE 2 — Anchoring Project Tasks In A Single Management Base
The programme office proposes to close the gap by exporting the two depot spreadsheets into the project record once, at the end of the current week, and then continuing as before.

How should the project manager respond to that proposal?

A. Accept the export as sufficient and also ask the programme office to repeat it monthly, so the record is refreshed without changing how the two depot chairs prefer to work.
B. Reject the export and require the two depot streams to maintain both the spreadsheets and the project record, so nothing is lost if either source later turns out to be incomplete.
C. Defer the export until after the first wave is live, since the build team already holds the depot notes and changing the source mid-build would disturb configuration work.
D. Require that decision status stops being held in the depot spreadsheets once the export lands, because the record drifts again as soon as the next decision is taken.

Answer: D

Explanation:
The export corrects today's contents but not tomorrow's behaviour, so on its own it is a partial remedy. Stopping decision status from being held at the depots is what turns a one-off catch-up into a record that stays accurate for the rest of the build.

Question: 6

CHALLENGE 2 — Anchoring Project Tasks In A Single Management Base
The four streams have been moved onto the project management and task monitoring set up in SAP Cloud ALM, and the programme office says its weekly reconciliation step is no longer needed.
Which observation would confirm that the reconciliation step has genuinely gone rather than moved?

A. The weekly status pack is produced without anyone opening a depot file, and a decision taken at Napier yesterday is already visible in the project record today.
B. The four stream chairs confirm at the weekly call that their spreadsheets and the project record agree, and any difference between them is corrected before the pack is issued.
C. The two depot spreadsheets have been archived to a read-only location, and the programme office reports that no chair has asked for them to be restored since the export.
D. The project record holds a task for every decision taken during the workshop series, and each of those tasks carries the name of the chair who raised it.

Answer: A

Explanation:
The step has gone only when the pack can be produced from one source and a fresh depot decision reaches the record without an intermediary. Both halves matter: the first shows nothing is being consulted elsewhere, the second shows the base is where decisions now land.

Question: 7

CHALLENGE 3 — Routing Depot Extension Requests To The Right Layer

Six extension requests have reached the technical lead: three change how repair quotations are calculated and three add service billing reports. None carries a record of the workshop decision it came from, and the clean core assessment for each is outstanding.
What should the project manager recommend for handling the six requests?

A. Deliver the three quotation changes by adjusting the core objects now because they are small and well understood, and route only the three reporting requests through an extensibility assessment.
B. Hold all six requests until after the first wave goes live, then reassess them against real usage so that effort is not spent on requirements which may not survive the new processes.
C. Establish for each request the workshop decision it came from and complete its clean core assessment, then route it to the least intrusive extensibility option that meets the requirement.
D. Send all six to side-by-side development on SAP BTP, since keeping every extension away from the core is the safest way to protect the programme's clean core position.

Answer: C

Explanation:
Nothing can be routed sensibly while a request has no traceable origin and no clean core assessment, because those two things are what a routing decision is made from. Once they exist, the discipline is to choose the least intrusive option that actually meets the requirement rather than to default toward or away from the core.

Question: 8

CHALLENGE 3 — Routing Depot Extension Requests To The Right Layer
The component repair stream argues that its quotation logic is the reason its turnaround times beat the market, and that reproducing it through an extension layer would be slower to build and slower to run.
How should the project manager weigh the stream's argument?

A. Accept the stream's position and allow the core adjustment for the quotation logic only, recording it as an approved exception so that the turnaround advantage is not put at risk.
B. Treat the turnaround claim as a reason to keep the requirement in scope, then test whether an extensibility option can carry the quotation logic at the speed the stream relies on.
C. Reject the requirement and adopt the standard quotation process, since any deviation from the standard weakens the clean core position the programme committed to at the outset.
D. Ask the stream to prove the turnaround claim with measured data before the requirement is considered further, and leave the request unrouted until that evidence has been produced.

Answer: B

Explanation:
A differentiating capability is a legitimate reason to keep a requirement in scope, but it is not by itself a reason to place it in the core. Testing the claim against the available extensibility options keeps the commercial advantage on the table while protecting the ability to take future releases cleanly.

Question: 9

CHALLENGE 3 — Routing Depot Extension Requests To The Right Layer
The two running repair exceptions exist because the operator's safety regime requires a named inspector to countersign a partial inspection before a vehicle returns to service. Adopting the standard sign-off unchanged would remove that countersignature from the record.
Which recommendation best resolves the tension between the clean core commitment and the safety record obligation?

A. Keep the countersignature requirement in scope and route it through the least intrusive extensibility option available, so that the obligation is met inside the maintained solution.
B. Adopt the standard sign-off unchanged and record the countersignature outside the system in each depot's own register, so the core stays clean and the obligation is still met on paper.
C. Grant a core modification for the countersignature, because a safety obligation outranks the clean core commitment and no other route could be justified to the regulator.
D. Defer the countersignature requirement to a later wave and run the standard sign-off first, so that a single design decision does not hold up the date the sponsor has announced.

Answer: A

Explanation:
Both positions are governance positions, so the resolution is to satisfy the obligation through the least intrusive route rather than to rank one above the other. Meeting it inside the solution keeps the safety evidence attached to the maintenance order, which is what the billing and the safety case both rely on.

Question: 10

CHALLENGE 4 — Sizing Change Impact For Mobile Field Crews
The change lead's adoption plan is sized on headcount at the four fixed sites, with classroom sessions in the two weeks before each wave goes live.
What should the project manager recommend before that plan is approved?

A. Approve the plan as drafted and add one mobile crew session to the classroom schedule, since the crews' tasks change less than the depot roles the plan already covers in detail.
B. Replace the classroom sessions with on-the-job coaching at every site, because a workforce spread across depots and customer sidings will not reliably attend scheduled classroom time.
C. Assess how each group's daily work actually changes, starting with the crews' move from paper capture at the siding to direct recording, and size the effort from that assessment.
D. Hold the adoption plan until the build is complete, so that the training material reflects the configured processes rather than the design that was agreed in the workshop series.

Answer: C

Explanation:
Organizational change management starts from the people-side impact on each affected group, and the enablement effort follows from that assessment. Sizing from site headcount counts how many people

there are rather than how much their work changes, which is why the crews with the largest change fell outside the plan.

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