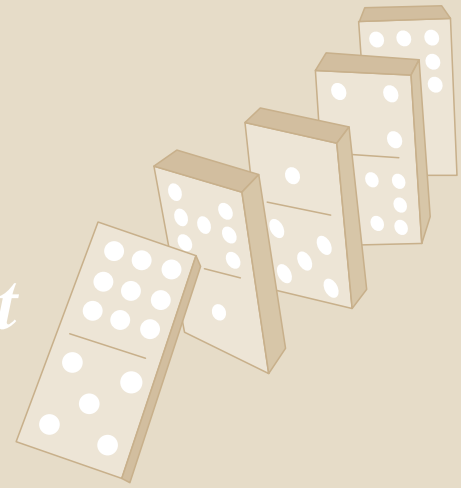


Embedding Risk Management across Offender Management

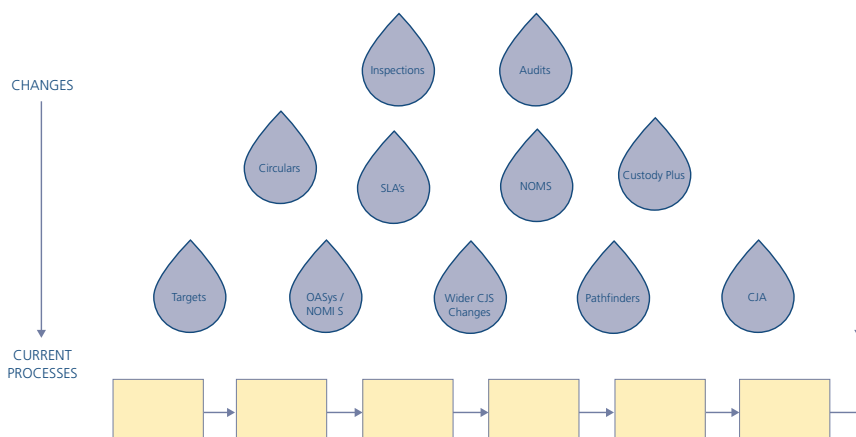


From Possibility...

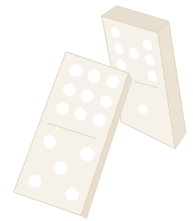
The focus on “risk” has always been strong across the National Probation Service. Whilst no amount of systems and checks can ever make a system totally risk proof, the focus on enforcing orders and protecting the public are at the heart of the service’s remit.

However, after many years of significant changes, such as the introduction of the Offender Management Model, CJA 2003, OASys, Accredited Programmes as well as cross-cutting changes such as Child Protection Panels and MAPPA, processes had started to become incredibly complex and unsurprisingly staff anxiety was high.

Rather than continuing to rain down change after change onto current processes in a piecemeal way, Cumbria decided to go back to basics and ask:



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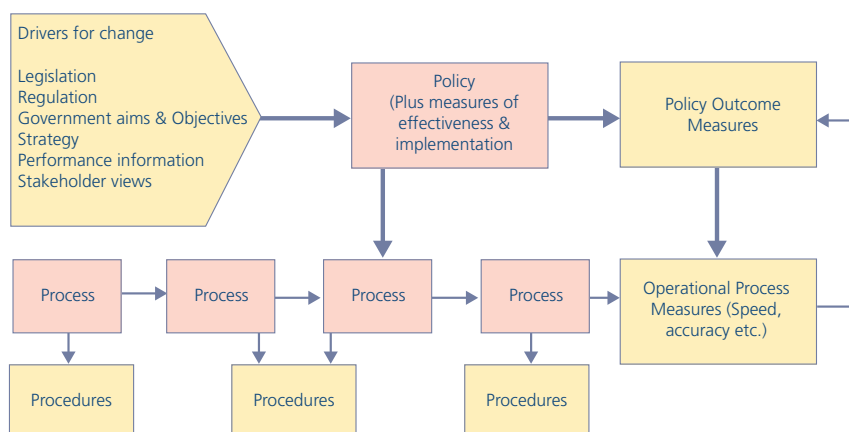
- What is our policy on Risk?
- What do we need to do to embed risk management into our current offender management processes?
- How do we ensure management oversight is appropriate and proportionate to the level of risk?
- What are people's responsibilities and roles when looking at risk?

THE APPROACH

A Project approach was adopted and the key outcomes of the project were to:

- Review the Area risk policy
- Implement the policy through end to end offender management processes
- Develop a process for management oversight
- Develop a central administrative system
- Address all accepted issues raised in the recent ESI inspection

key aim was to keep the policy simple and brief. Policies are translated into action through processes and procedures and the last thing staff needed was a 30 page document which mixed them all together and was e mailed out to everyone's (just in case) already creaking mailbox!



Once the policy was defined, the current end-to-end offender management process was mapped and staff and managers highlighted where problems in respect of risk occurred and what solutions could be implemented.

Problems included:

- A lack of clarity on oversight of cases which did not fall into MAPPA level 2 and 3
- Limited centrally accessible and consistent ways of recording and tracking high-risk offenders. Lots of people had set up their own systems but it was difficult to share information
- Issues with recording on IT systems and how reports were generated which showed the correct "owner" of a case

- A “flagging” system which had evolved as more and more categories had been added, making it difficult to see the “critical few” cases.

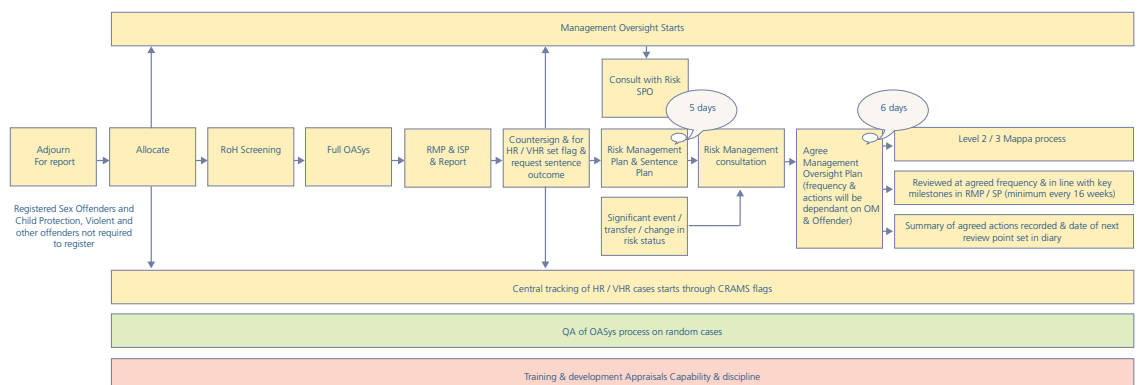
To Actuality...

Once the problems were fully understood, and prior to looking at redesigning the processes, the project team set out a number of “design principles” for the new approach.

These included:

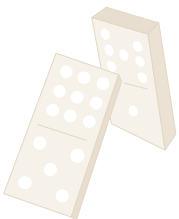
- Creating a devolved system
- Defining a clear set of responsibilities at each level (OM/ SPO/ ACO)
- Ensuring robust management oversight
- Based on clear assessment of Risk of Harm using OASys and leading to a Risk Management Plan and Sentence Plan
- Continuity
- Consistent application across the Area
- Reviews and recording linked to cases

Using these principles, the project team developed the following process and defined the responsibility of each grade of staff in respect of risk management.

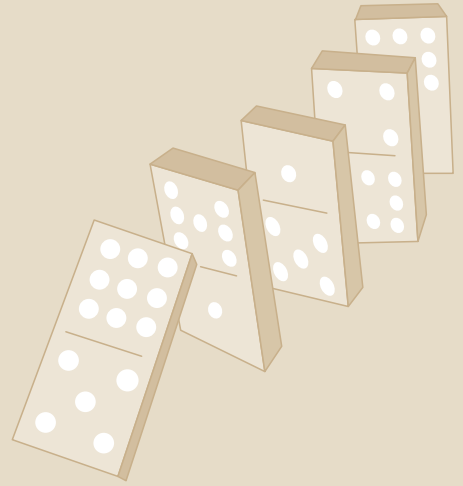


The solutions included:

- Introducing a role of “risk consultant” to support the operational SPOs and ensure consistency of application
- Requesting sentencing outcomes early in the process and holding a risk meeting regardless of sentence outcome
- Starting the central tracking of cases at the earliest possible stage
- Developing a “management oversight plan” with frequency of oversight based not simply on the level of risk but also the experience and competence of the Offender Manager



Embedding Risk Management across Offender Management



THE BENEFITS

Taking some time out to step back and challenge the policy and processes has enabled Cumbria to create and ensure alignment between the high level policy, processes and roles and responsibilities across those processes. Because they have been kept simple, streamlined and visual future changes (and there will be many!) can be more easily impacted and communicated.

Annette Hennessy, Offender Management ACO commented:

“This has been an invaluable, timely opportunity to review risk management in Cumbria, ensure a process of risk management and management oversight that is fit for the purpose”.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

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