



# **IT-Governance; A Strategic Issue**

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# Grip on ICT?

## The problem

- Costs/Benefits
  - Substantial costs of existing ICT
  - Acquisition process complex and expensive
  - Performance often medial
- ICT projects: Over time, over budget, poor results
- Prince2, CMMI, ASL, ITIL: operational/tactical level
- Strategic level?

# How bad is it, really?

- Often bad, sometimes real bad
- Example: Renewal of police ICT  
Serious problems in the areas of:
  - Goal setting
  - Business cases
  - Defining milestones
  - Defining intermediate targets
  - ‘Zero’ measurements
  - Budgetting
  - Time planning
  - Risk awareness

# Why the Study?

- Give impetus to discussion on governance of information provision
- Make top management better aware of importance of ICT
- Put Ministries on their way regarding governance of information provision and ICT

# IT-Governance: strategic Issue

- Good information crucial to functioning and performance of Government
- Government Transformation: ICT evermore a strategic asset

# IT-Governance: Definition NCA

Joint responsibility executive management and its supervisors for ICT, comprising:

- (1) Strategic planning and
- (2) Internal control
- (3) External accountability and
- (4) External supervision
- (5) Setting and supervision concerning  
Non-departmental public bodies

# Descriptive Framework

- Internal: Strategic planning and internal control
- External: Accountability and supervision
- Departmental level ...
- ... how about whole government as one single 'concern'?
- Descriptive framework, not a checklist
- Common 'language'
- Strategic, non-technical perspective

# Some findings

- Many similarities between the two ministries, while different approaches
- Definition and professionalization of customer/supplier roles and relations
- IT coordination function
- Professionalization of CIO function
- Standardize 'concern' IT architecture

## Some findings (contn'd)

- Absence of structural evaluating/updating of IT strategy
- Only first consideration of external accountability – in statement on operational management
- Absence of systematic monitoring by the parliament

# Critical issues

- Avoid 'blind spots'
- Be aware of organizational environment
- Org. policy ↔ Org. Strategy ↔ Inf. Strategy
- 'Concern' approach
- Standardize 'concern' information architecture
- Organize demand/supply of ICT services
- Grow path towards permanent process
- Leadership and central coordination

# Growth path

- Growth: from attention for strategic planning only towards fully fledged IT Governance – including internal control and external accountability
- Integration in regular planning- and control cycle
- Growth path needs time and room for learning process and change in mindset

# What can IT auditors do?

- Go beyond 'checking'
- Stimulate executive management to assume responsibility for major ICT issues
- Also, support them: P&C, Business-IT alignment, risk mngmt, budget mngmt
- Link strategic IT issues with IT management and IT processes
- Be persistent but patient (growth path)
- Most importantly: induce a change of mindset of executive management