

# Shared Service Initiative

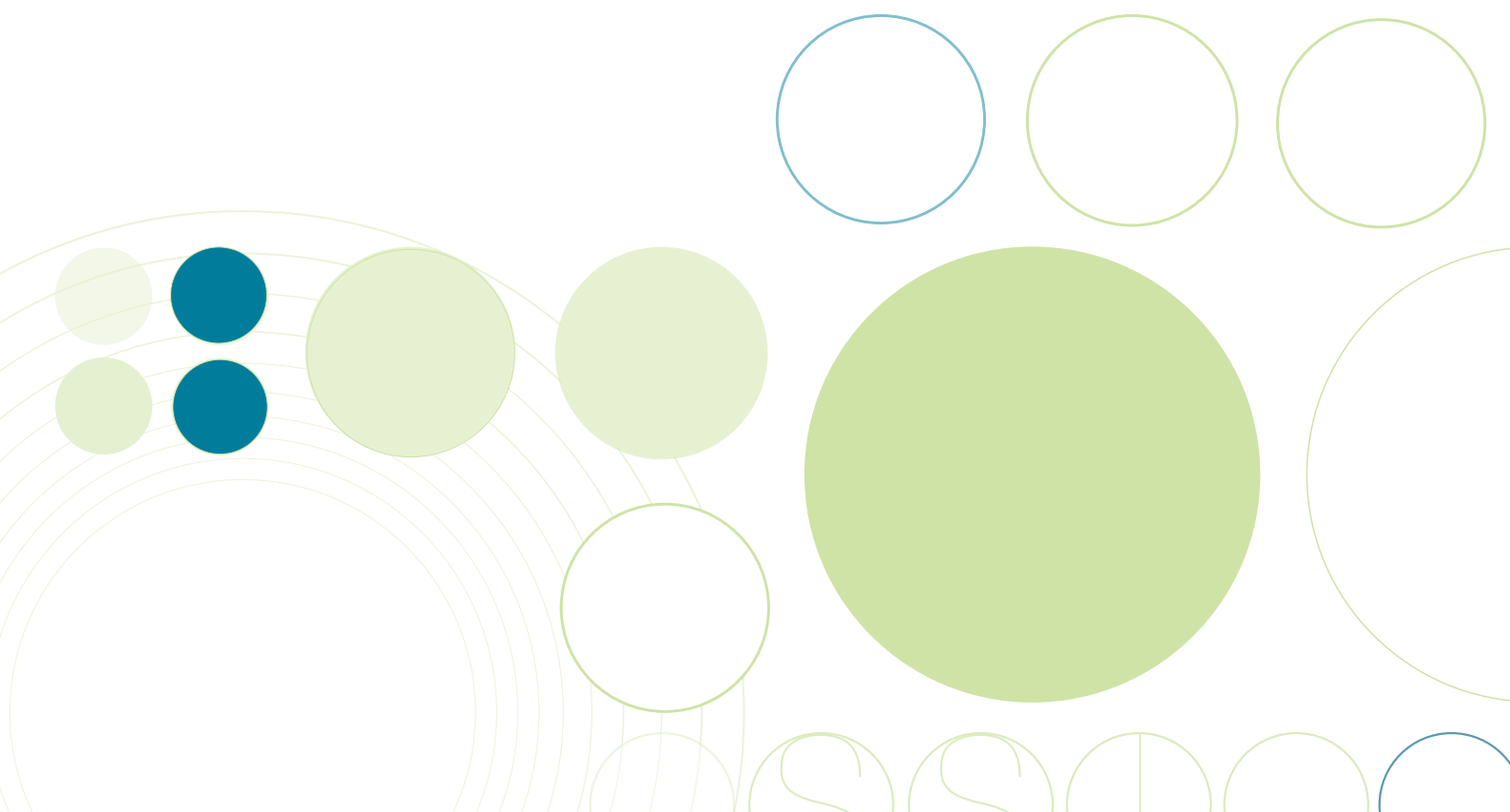
High-quality, cost-effective  
corporate services



## Shared Service Initiative Communication Framework

Supporting the Queensland Government's  
transition to shared corporate services

Last updated June 2007



# Contents

About this document .....	2
Summary of key communication principles .....	2
Communication, relationships and business outcomes .....	3
Communication strategy and planning process.....	4
Stakeholder categories .....	5
Communication framework objectives .....	5
Checklist for an effective communication plan .....	8
Performance measurement and monitoring methods.....	9
Key messages .....	10
Contact details .....	Back cover

## About this document

The Shared Service Initiative (SSI) has a vision of delivering high-quality, cost-effective corporate services across the Queensland Government. This will be achieved through leveraging economies of scale and skill, and is underpinned by standardising business processes, consolidating technology, and pooling resources and expertise across Government.

In a complex initiative with diverse projects and partners, good communication and positive relationships between stakeholders are essential to delivering the SSI vision.

This SSI Communication Framework is designed as a practical guide for managers, project teams and communication specialists to use in planning, implementing and evaluating communication activities to support the business objectives of the SSI.

The SSI Communication Framework is one of the foundation frameworks that are guiding the implementation of the SSI.

Other frameworks include:

- Implementation Framework
- Governance Framework
- SSI Operating Model
- Funding Framework
- Change Management Framework
- Workforce Management Framework
- Service Management Framework
- Performance Management Framework.

The foundation frameworks and supporting documents, tools and templates are available on the SSI GovNet site <http://intranet.shareservices.qld.gov.au> or internet site [www.shareservices.qld.gov.au](http://www.shareservices.qld.gov.au)

This framework was developed by the former Shared Service Implementation Office in consultation with other SSI partners including shared service providers (SSPs), CorpTech, Department of Public Works (DPW) and Queensland Government agencies.

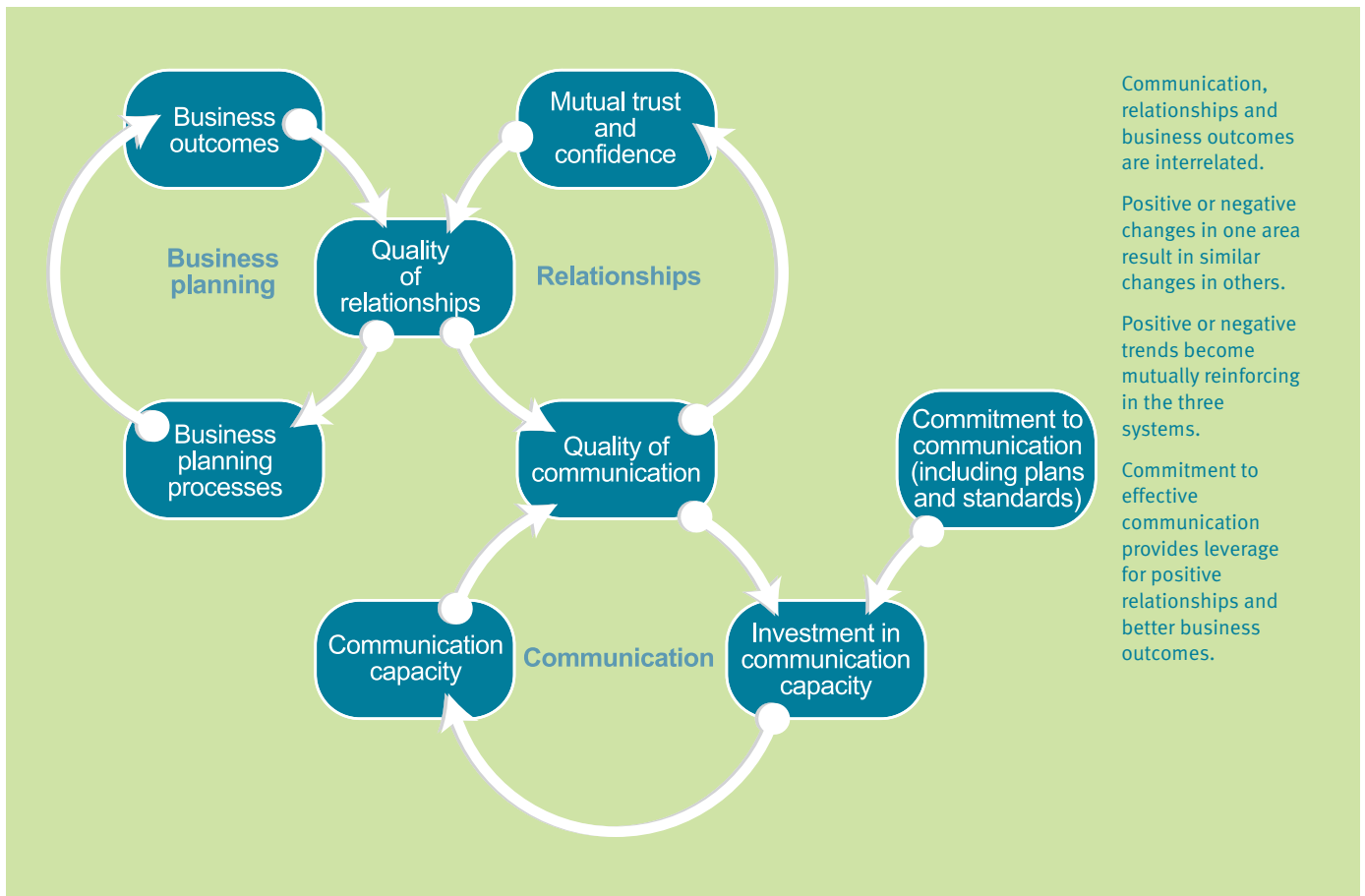
Feedback from stakeholders is essential to continuous improvement of communication across the SSI. This framework and implementation progress will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. If you have suggestions for future revisions to this framework, contact the SSI Policy and Program Office.

## Summary of key communication principles

In order to support the relationships needed to achieve SSI business objectives, SSI partners agree on the following guiding principles for communication:

- Effective communication is targeted and aligned with stakeholder and business needs, and is coordinated and consistent across the SSI.
- Communication is a two-way process involving active engagement with stakeholders.
- Good planning, coordination and evaluation of communication maximise effective use of communication resources and allow for continuous improvement.
- Shared responsibilities for communication mean that collaboration across SSI partners is essential, and this is supported by a strong SSI Communication Network.

# Communication, relationships and business outcomes



Good communication across the SSI is essential for achieving the SSI business objectives.

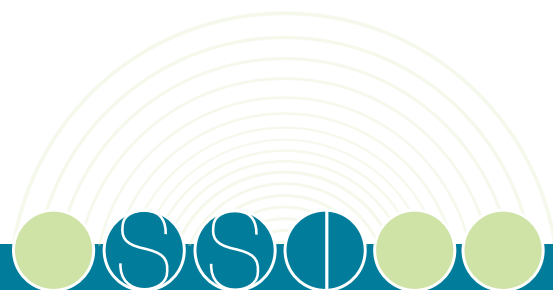
A strategic purpose of communication is to contribute to developing positive relationships in order to maximise business outcomes.

Communication, relationships and business outcomes are interacting systems. Positive or negative changes in one area result in similar changes in the others, and become mutually reinforcing.

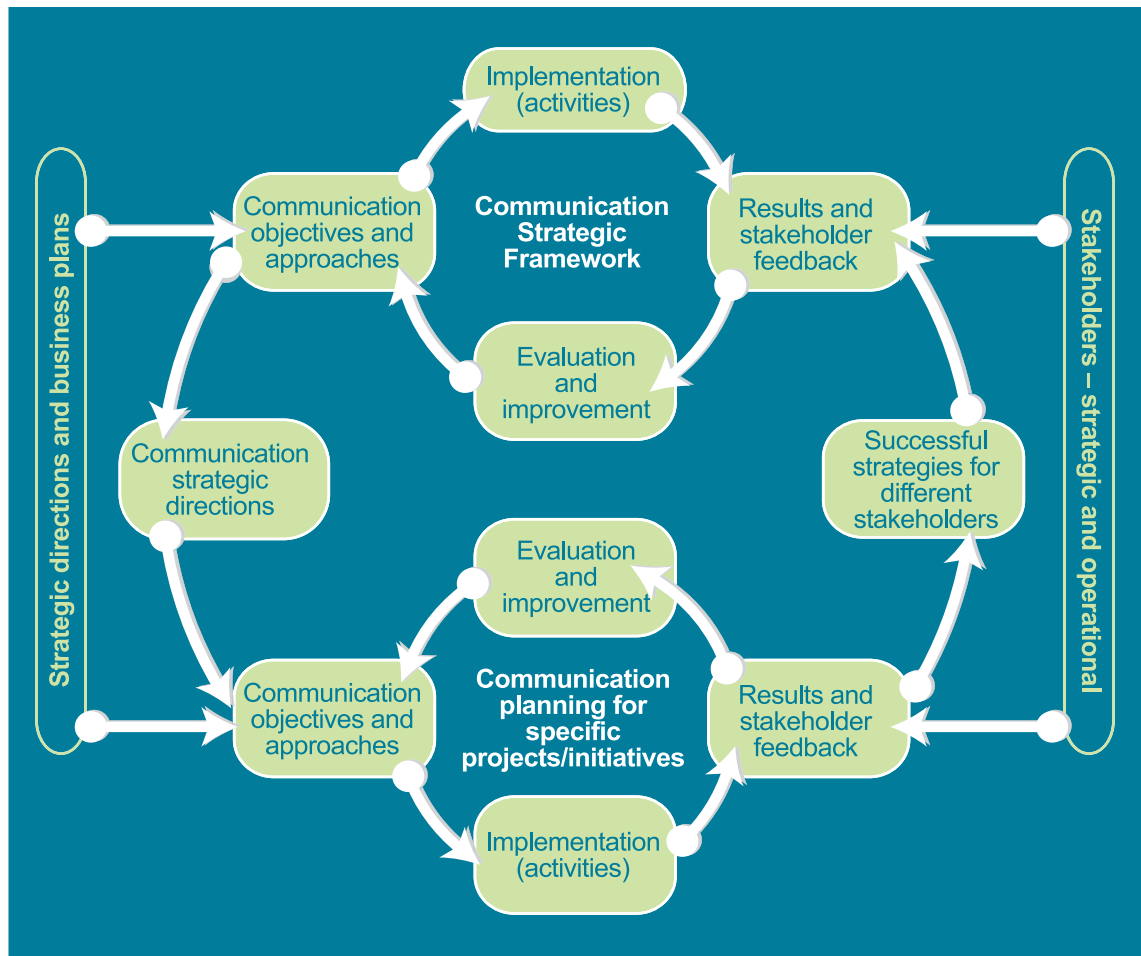
The quality of activity within the business planning cycle correlates with the quality of internal and external relationships. Positive relationships are more likely to come from effective communication, but communication often suffers when resources are stretched and all efforts focus on achieving short-term business outcomes. If this situation

continues unchecked, the resulting poor communication in turn degrades relationships and long-term business outcomes.

A core commitment to effective communication, throughout the highs and lows of business, provides leverage to maintain positive relationships and better long-term business outcomes. Positive relationships improve business planning and outcomes. Improved business outcomes further reinforce positive relationships, which again foster better outcomes for the SSI and its stakeholders.



## Communication strategy and planning process



The SSI Communication Framework provides strategic directions and approaches that guide operational communication planning for specific SSI projects and business units.

Operational communication plans are highly tailored to different stakeholders' specific needs and interests and specific organisational contexts.

Successful communication methods and information about stakeholders' needs can then inform regular revisions of the SSI Communication Framework.

This provides a process for knowledge management, innovation and continuous improvement of SSI communication.

## Stakeholder categories

Relevant stakeholders from the categories below should be considered in communication planning for SSI projects. This list provides examples, and information about other stakeholders is available from <http://intranet.sharedservices.qld.gov.au>

Stakeholder category	Examples of sub-categories	
Executive government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Budget Review Committee</li> <li>• Queensland Audit Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministers</li> </ul>
SSI governance groups and subcommittees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Service CEO Governing Board</li> <li>• SSI Executive Leadership Committee</li> <li>• Health and Education Governing Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSP Partnering Forums</li> <li>• SSI Policy and Program Office</li> </ul>
SSI project teams, reference groups and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources Project team</li> <li>• Finance Project team</li> <li>• Advisory Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSI Communication Network</li> <li>• Expert Reference Groups</li> </ul>
Central agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Premier and Cabinet (and Office of the Public Service Commissioner)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasury</li> <li>• Department of Employment and Industrial Relations</li> </ul>
CorpTech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Service Solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Management</li> </ul>
Shared service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Directors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff</li> </ul>
Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host agencies</li> <li>• Other agencies</li> <li>• CEOs</li> <li>• Heads of Corporate Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors of Human Resources, Finance</li> <li>• Key contacts for SSI projects</li> <li>• Corporate services staff</li> <li>• Other staff</li> </ul>
Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QPSU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Services Union</li> </ul>
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suppliers to Government</li> </ul>

## Communication framework objectives

The diagram on pages 6–7 shows SSI communication goals and objectives and relates them to SSI business objectives. It also shows communication activities (bottom row) can achieve the linked communication sub-objectives above them. By achieving these sub-objectives, collectively they will achieve the linked objectives, and in turn the overall goal.

Coordination responsibilities are also shown for each activity, as many activities will involve more than one of the SSI partners.

The communication objectives are derived from feedback from stakeholders and identified communication issues for the SSI. They are designed for use as a starting point for project-level communication plans. SSI managers, project

leaders and communication officers should consider how they might contribute to achieving the communication objectives for the Initiative.

Depending on the type of project, project teams can select the relevant sections of the framework and amend the objectives and activities as needed to make them specific to the project.

Communication plans should be shared with other SSI projects and communication staff who would need to be aware of particular activities, or help in implementing them.



# SSI communication framework objectives

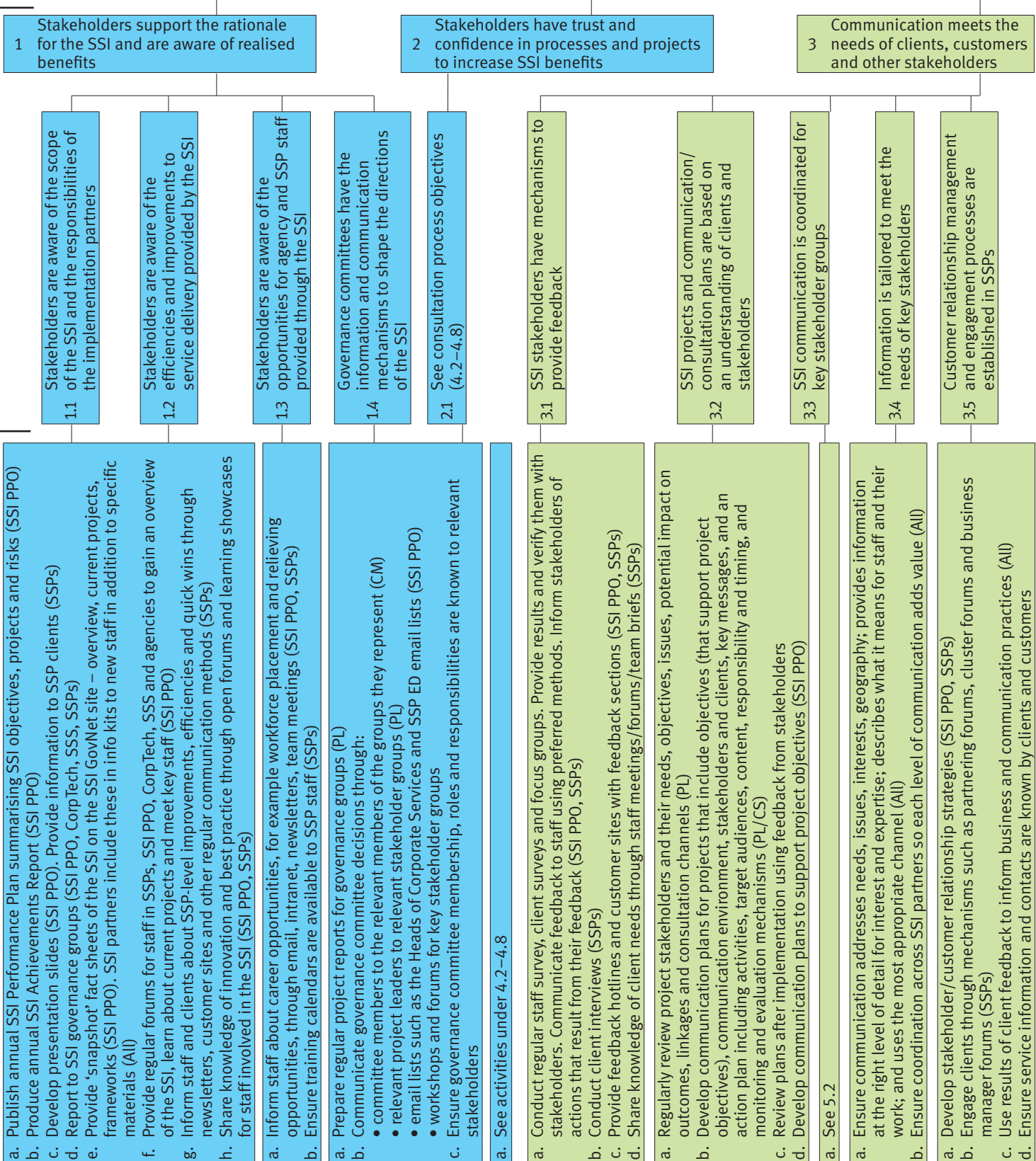
## Key to acronyms

Key to acronyms  
 CM – Committee members  
 CS – Communication staff in SSI partners  
 ED – Executive Director  
 PL – Project leader (SSI PPO/SSS/DPW)

SSI – Shared Service Initiative  
 SSI PPO – SSI Policy and Program Office  
 SSP – Shared service provider  
 SSS – Shared Service Solutions

Goal
Positive relationships between stakeholders strengthen outcomes of the Shared Service Initiative

## Objectives



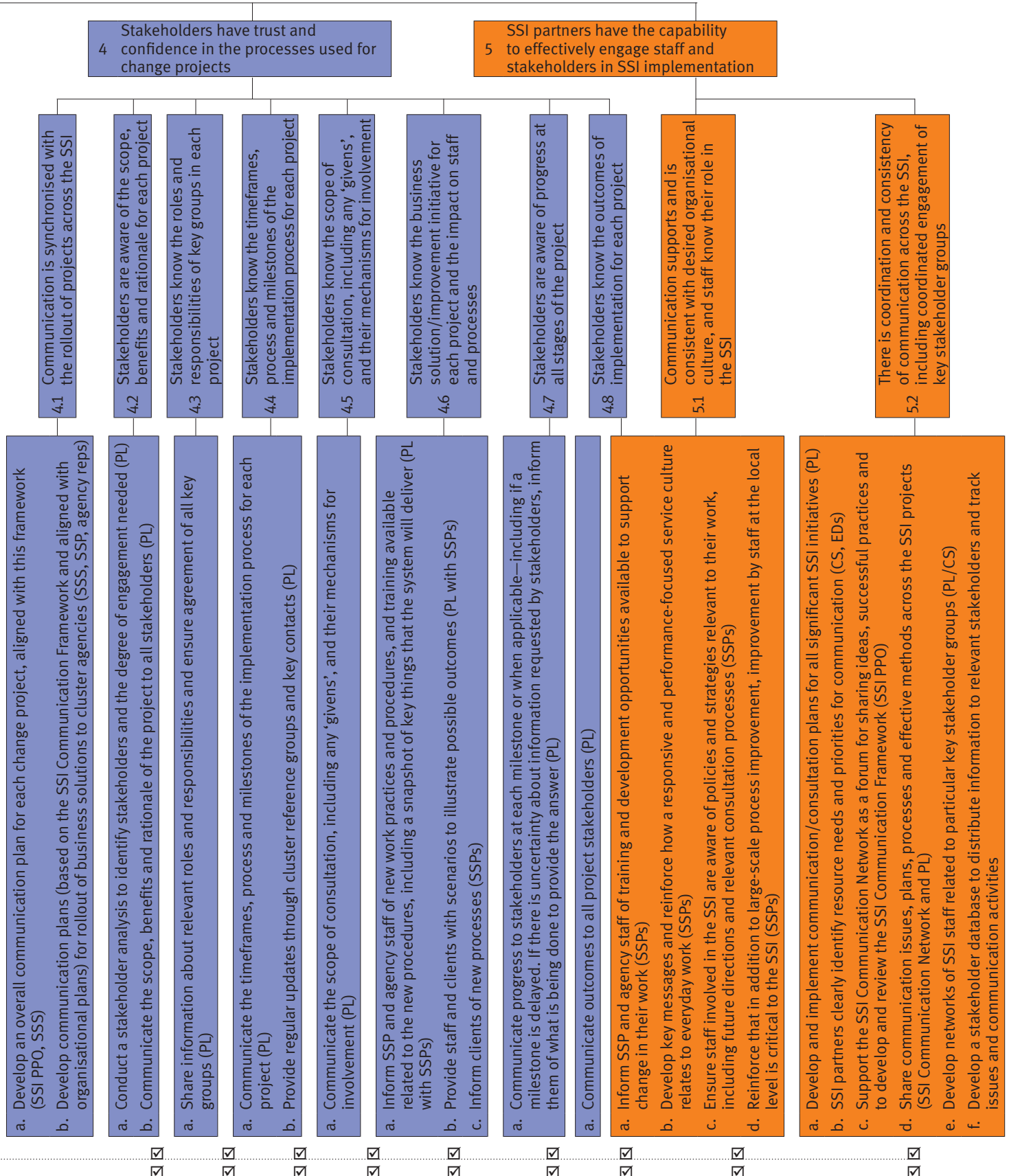
## Activities (and responsibilities for activity coordination)

- a. Publish annual SSI Performance Plan summarising SSI objectives, projects and risks (SSI PPO)
- b. Produce annual SSI Achievements Report (SSI PPO)
- c. Develop presentation slides (SSI PPO). Provide information to SSP clients (SSPs)
- d. Report to SSI governance groups (SSI PPO, CorpTech, SSS, SSPs)
- e. Provide 'snapshot' fact sheets of the SSI on the SSI GovNet site – overview, current projects, frameworks (SSI PPO). SSI partners include these in info kits to new staff in addition to specific materials (All)
- f. Provide regular forums for staff in SSPs, SSI PPO, CorpTech, SSS and agencies to gain an overview of the SSI, learn about current projects and meet key staff (SSI PPO)
- g. Inform staff and clients about SSP-level improvements, efficiencies and quick wins through newsletters, customer sites and other regular communication methods (SSPs)
- h. Share knowledge of innovation and best practice through open forums and learning showcases for staff involved in the SSI (SSI PPO, SSPs)
- a. Inform staff about career opportunities, for example workforce placement and relieving opportunities, through email, intranet, newsletters, team meetings (SSI PPO, SSPs)
- b. Ensure training calendars are available to SSP staff (SSPs)
- a. Prepare regular project reports for governance groups (PL)
- b. Communicate governance committee decisions through:
  - committee members to the relevant members of the groups they represent (CM)
  - relevant project leaders to relevant stakeholder groups (PL)
  - email lists such as the Heads of Corporate Services and SSP ED email lists (SSI PPO)
  - workshops and forums for key stakeholder groups
- c. Ensure governance committee membership, roles and responsibilities are known to relevant stakeholders
- a. See activities under 4.2–4.8
- a. Conduct regular staff survey, client surveys and focus groups. Provide results and verify them with stakeholders. Communicate feedback to staff using preferred methods. Inform stakeholders of actions that result from their feedback (SSI PPO, SSPs)
- b. Conduct client interviews (SSPs)
- c. Provide feedback hotlines and customer sites with feedback sections (SSI PPO, SSPs)
- d. Share knowledge of client needs through staff meetings/forums/team briefs (SSPs)
- a. Regularly review project stakeholders and their needs, objectives, issues, potential impact on outcomes, linkages and consultation channels (PL)
- b. Develop communication plans for projects that include objectives (that support project objectives), communication environment, stakeholders and clients, key messages, and an action plan including activities, target audiences, content, responsibility and timing, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (PL/CS)
- c. Review plans after implementation using feedback from stakeholders
- d. Develop communication plans to support project objectives (SSI PPO)
- a. See 5.2
- a. Ensure communication addresses needs, issues, interests, geography; provides information at the right level of detail for interest and expertise; describes what it means for staff and their work; and uses the most appropriate channel (All)
- b. Ensure coordination across SSI partners so each level of communication adds value (All)
- a. Develop stakeholder/customer relationship strategies (SSI PPO, SSPs)
- b. Engage clients through mechanisms such as partnering forums, cluster forums and business manager forums (SSPs)
- c. Use results of client feedback to inform business and communication practices (All)
- d. Ensure service information and contacts are known by clients and customers

SSI GovNet site   
 SSI e-newsletter

Links to business objectives – Shared Service Initiative balanced scorecard

<b>Benefits</b>	Benefits are realised that meet stakeholder requirements and savings are available to assist Government priorities. The sector model for corporate service delivery is self-sustaining.
<b>Customers</b>	Corporate services are reliable and responsive to client needs and accountabilities. Quality services are designed and delivered collaboratively.
<b>Improvement</b>	Cost-effective, standardised business processes and systems are innovative and improvement-focused. Corporate service performance is routinely measured and compared.
<b>Capability</b>	People are skilled and motivated to deliver quality corporate services. Corporate service providers have the necessary infrastructure and resources to meet service demand. Corporate service delivery is effectively managed.



# Checklist for an effective communication plan

Effective communication plans include the following elements.

## Content

- ☑ **Business objectives** that the communication plan supports—These are the relevant objectives from SSI Performance Plan or objectives for your business group or project.
- ☑ **Communication objectives**—These show how communication helps achieve, or adds value to, your business objectives. Use the objectives in this framework as a starting point and amend them where needed to make them specific to your project. Also consider what performance measures are appropriate for your plan—how you will know if your objectives have been achieved.
- ☑ **Communication environment**—For the benefit of people involved in implementing aspects of the communication plan, summarise the relevant issues, trends, risks, stakeholder needs and current communication activities undertaken.
- ☑ **Stakeholders and clients**—List the clients to whom you are delivering services and other stakeholders that can influence your activities and strategic directions. These are ‘target audiences’ for communication.
- ☑ **Key messages** that you wish to communicate to particular stakeholders and clients.
- ☑ **Action plan** based on the major phases of your plan, such as preparation of materials, implementation of activities and monitoring and evaluation. The action plan is usually shown as a table and should where possible list communication activities chronologically as a schedule. For each activity list the target audience, key issues and risks, messages and content, responsibility, budget, when the activity will take place, and the priority (high, medium or low).

## Processes

- ☑ The plan is based on an analysis of client/ stakeholder needs and supports business objectives.

- ☑ A copy of the plan is provided to:
  - all people with ‘responsibilities’ listed in the action plan, and they have an opportunity for feedback on the activities.
  - relevant managers and project governance groups, for approval.
  - SSI PPO Communications staff to allow for coordination of SSI communication initiatives.
- ☑ The success of the plan and its activities are evaluated to inform future communications.

Advice and feedback on SSI communication plans is available from the SSI Policy and Program Office.



Strategic directions and business plans

# Performance measurement and monitoring methods

Processes for evaluation and continual improvement have been built into the communication strategy and planning process (page 4) at both strategic and operational level.

Evaluation methods for communication activities include ongoing stakeholder feedback through:

- hard copy feedback forms and online feedback mechanisms
- stakeholder forums and workshops
- stakeholder interviews and focus groups
- existing annual surveys of SSP staff and agency clients (measuring awareness and level of support)
- governance groups
- key contacts
- internal and external network meetings for projects, communications, change management and training
- informal stakeholder feedback
- peer assessment by staff and managers.

SSPs/CorpTech should analyse results and evaluate communication activities to determine whether strategies are working, how efficiently they are being executed and how effective they are in achieving organisational objectives.

Improvement strategies can be developed to ensure communication objectives and activities remain meaningful and appropriate.

Data from monitoring communication activities and other business functions should inform the organisation’s business plan and improvement strategies. The SSI Performance Management Framework provides more information in this regard.

The SSI Policy and Program Office will monitor and assess the success of the communication activities at SSI level, and progress towards this framework’s goal of: *Positive relationships between stakeholders strengthen outcomes of the Shared Service Initiative.*

Information provided through these monitoring and evaluation processes will be used to improve operational communication activities and future versions of this framework, as outlined in the *Communication strategy and planning process* section (page 4).



## Key messages

The Shared Service Initiative key messages are succinct statements of the message implementation partners aim to deliver to stakeholders. These key messages can be expressed as a single statement or a series of statements. They encapsulate content, but are not necessarily the final text that might be used in communications. The messages are intended to be simple for better retention by the audience, but without oversimplifying or failing to do justice to the desired message.

The delivery of these key messages needs to be tailored for individual audiences based on their current awareness, needs and issues, and the response wanted from the audience—for example informing, seeking support or involvement.

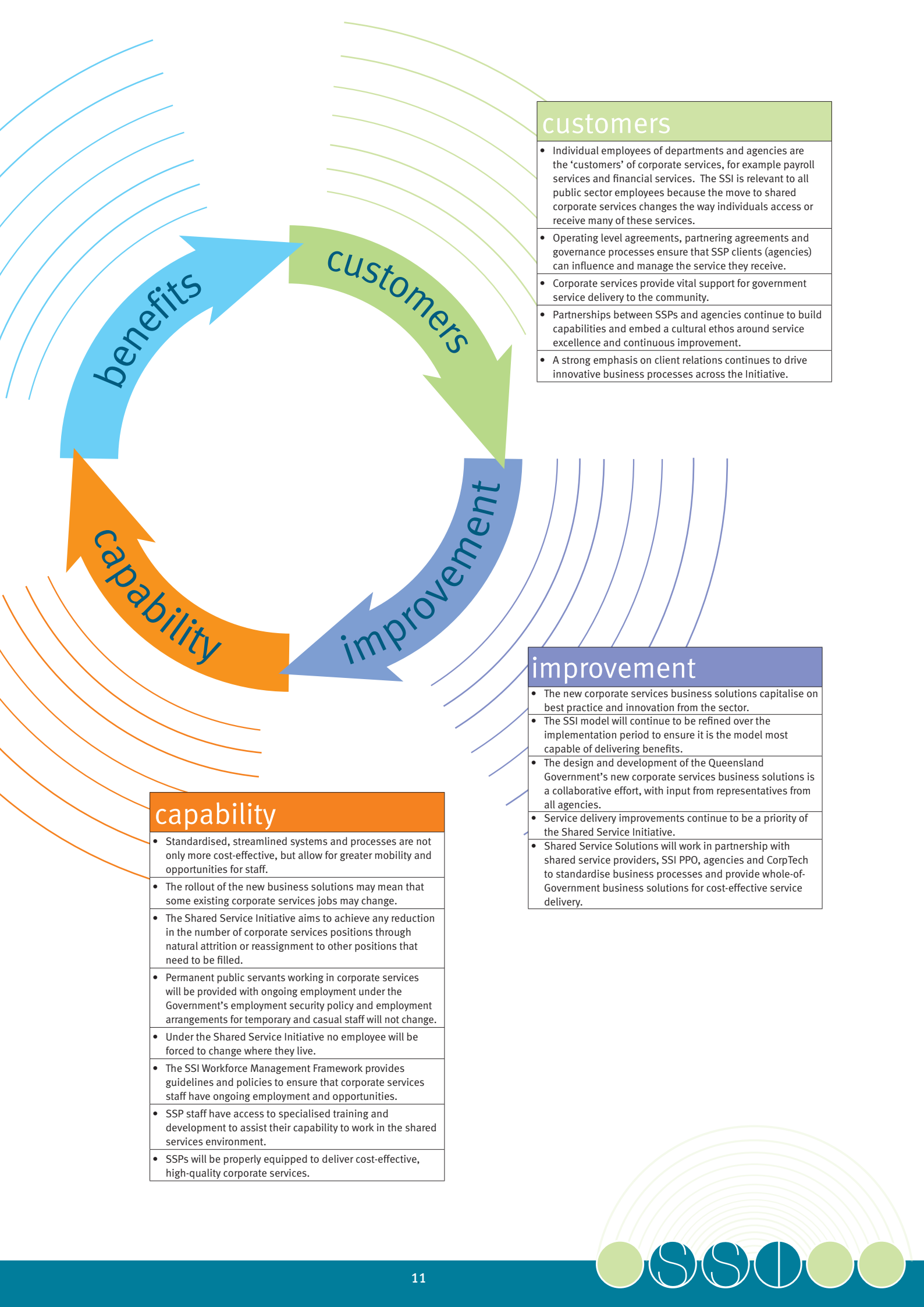
Other key messages specific to particular projects are detailed in project communication plans, fact sheets and other project documents.

## benefits

- The SSI is a collaborative effort across the sector. It is guided by SSI PPO and is being implemented in partnership with CorpTech, the SSPs and their client agencies.
- The SSI is a whole-of-Government initiative with the vision of providing high-quality cost-effective corporate services to agencies.
- The SSI will free up resources previously expended on corporate service delivery that can be redirected to Government priorities and direct service delivery to the community.
- Common systems and standardised, streamlined processes create efficiencies and a whole-of-Government focus.
- Specialist services are effectively provided across Government through centres of skill.
- Significant achievements to-date have forged a solid foundation for the Shared Service Initiative.
- With \$42 million in returns to Queensland Government in the first three years, the Initiative is on track to achieving the projected \$100 million in annual savings when fully implemented.
- All shared service providers are trading successfully.

## Communication plan content

- ☑ Business objectives
- ☑ Communication objectives
- ☑ Communication environment
- ☑ Stakeholders and clients
- ☑ **Key messages**
- ☑ Action plan



### customers

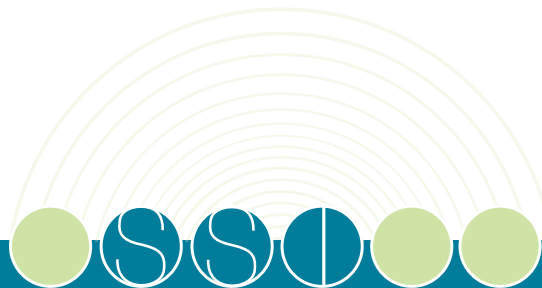
- Individual employees of departments and agencies are the 'customers' of corporate services, for example payroll services and financial services. The SSI is relevant to all public sector employees because the move to shared corporate services changes the way individuals access or receive many of these services.
- Operating level agreements, partnering agreements and governance processes ensure that SSP clients (agencies) can influence and manage the service they receive.
- Corporate services provide vital support for government service delivery to the community.
- Partnerships between SSPs and agencies continue to build capabilities and embed a cultural ethos around service excellence and continuous improvement.
- A strong emphasis on client relations continues to drive innovative business processes across the Initiative.

### improvement

- The new corporate services business solutions capitalise on best practice and innovation from the sector.
- The SSI model will continue to be refined over the implementation period to ensure it is the model most capable of delivering benefits.
- The design and development of the Queensland Government's new corporate services business solutions is a collaborative effort, with input from representatives from all agencies.
- Service delivery improvements continue to be a priority of the Shared Service Initiative.
- Shared Service Solutions will work in partnership with shared service providers, SSI PPO, agencies and CorpTech to standardise business processes and provide whole-of-Government business solutions for cost-effective service delivery.

### capability

- Standardised, streamlined systems and processes are not only more cost-effective, but allow for greater mobility and opportunities for staff.
- The rollout of the new business solutions may mean that some existing corporate services jobs may change.
- The Shared Service Initiative aims to achieve any reduction in the number of corporate services positions through natural attrition or reassignment to other positions that need to be filled.
- Permanent public servants working in corporate services will be provided with ongoing employment under the Government's employment security policy and employment arrangements for temporary and casual staff will not change.
- Under the Shared Service Initiative no employee will be forced to change where they live.
- The SSI Workforce Management Framework provides guidelines and policies to ensure that corporate services staff have ongoing employment and opportunities.
- SSP staff have access to specialised training and development to assist their capability to work in the shared services environment.
- SSPs will be properly equipped to deliver cost-effective, high-quality corporate services.



## Further information

Shared Service Initiative Policy and  
Program Office

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SSI GovNet site  
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<http://intranet.sharedservices.qld.gov.au>

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