

PROJECT

Organisation design for States of Guernsey

PRACTITIONER

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APPROX. DATE

2016–2017

SITUATION AND CONTEXT

The island government needed to reform its internal structures and governance. Political and service leaders wanted a coherent, effective centre—but didn't want to impose a standard corporate model.

SYSTEM OF INTEREST

The internal governance, coordination, and delivery mechanisms of public services.

APPROACH TAKEN

We used the Viable System Model (VSM) alongside principles of organisation design and systemic inquiry to diagnose the existing structure and co-create a new model. Early interventions were focused on developing awareness and identifying appropriate application – later applications were about shaping the structure and approach of the strategy-to-implementation mechanisms, including engagement with politicians.

MODELS AND INSIGHTS DEVELOPED

- VSM revealed weak coordination functions and overloaded operational units
- Strategic and operational domains were confused or blurred
- The new design clarified systemic roles and improved viability

KEY INTERVENTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Ran diagnostic sessions using VSM
- Facilitated co-design with civil servants and politicians
- Mapped systemic functions and identified required roles and interfaces

RESULTS

- A new operating model for central government agreed
- Clarified accountabilities and reduced duplication
- Leaders gained a systemic way of thinking about governance

AFTERTHOUGHTS

VSM gave people a non-threatening way to talk about what wasn't working.

CONCLUSION

A systemic organisation design helped the government design a 'centre' that works—for its unique context.