IT Change Management

Request For Change (RFC)

Change can be initiated by anyone within the organization. An RFC should specify the details of the change, including the risks, benefits, costs and proposed scheduled for implementation. The level of detail required in the request will depend on the nature of the request itself. It may be that the relevant details cannot be provided at the point of request, so there needs to be clear guidance on the minimum content required.

The raising of an RFC will trigger a change record. The details and updates captured in the change record will be managed through the configuration management system (CMS).

Keeping an accurate change record provides an audit trail for the actions carried out in the lifecycle of the change. All RFCs should be logged with a unique identifier, and where the trigger for the change is captured in another record (e.g. an incident or problem) the original reference number of the initiating document should be captured as part of the change record.

A good service management tool will have the functionality to link these records and be able to capture the relationship between the RFC and any associated configuration items, records and other service components. It is the responsibility of change management to ensure that the change record is created and logged correctly.

Once the RFC has been accepted into the change process, the next step is that of evaluation and assessment. If the change has a significant impact, it may require a specific and separate formal evaluation activity, otherwise the assessment can be managed as part of the normal change process.

Assessment should include all potential factors that may impact on the success of the change. This may require the RFC to be reviewed by a number of people, and it is the responsibility of the change manager to ensure that the assessment is completed. This is where the Change Advisory Board is used.

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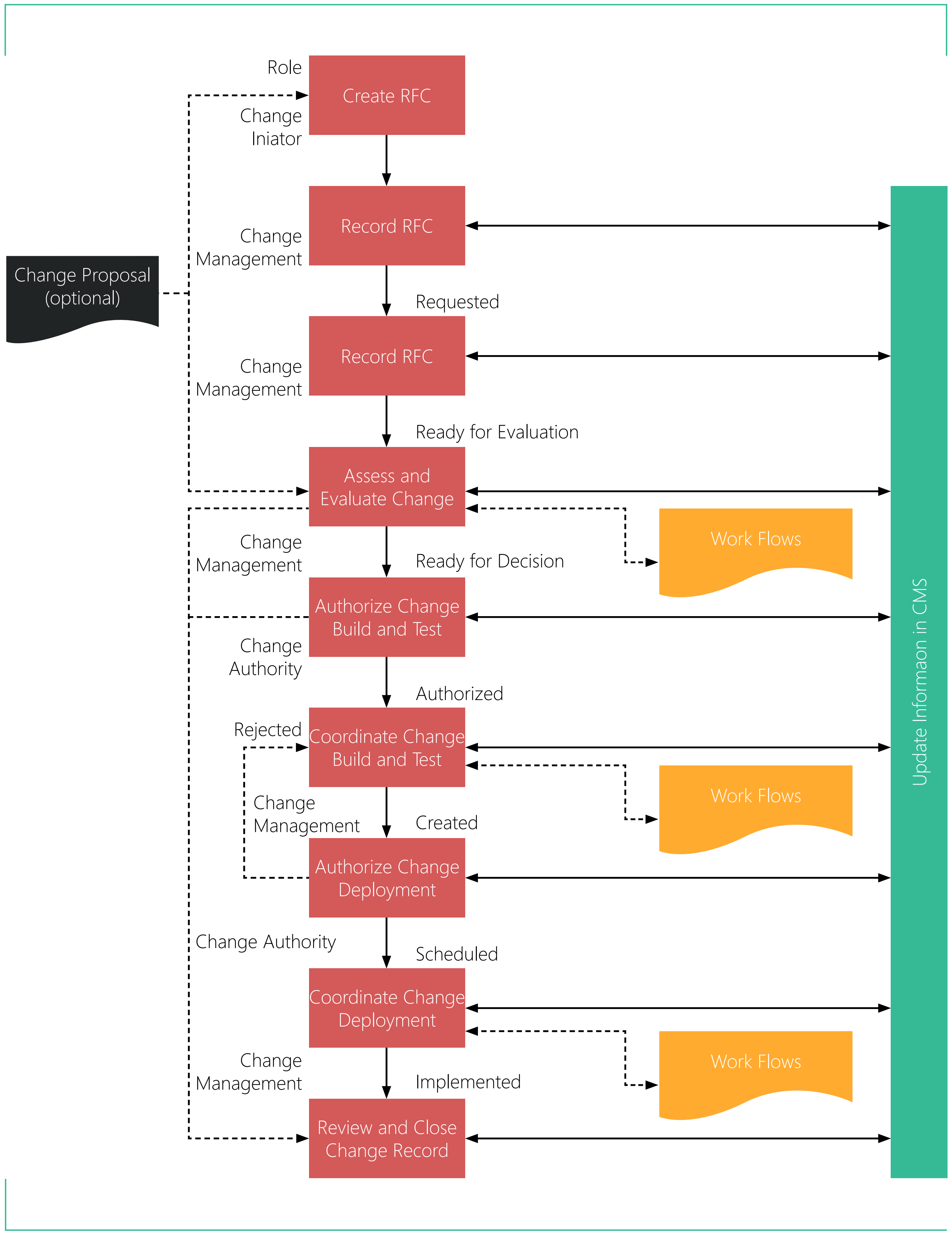

Review and Closure

You can see work flows in the diagram associated to the coordination of deployment step, indicating that activity outside the change management process may take place.

Change management's responsibility during deployment is coordination of the activity being carried out if it is a simple change that is not part of a release.

Change management is responsible for ensuring that the changes are deployed as scheduled. The role of coordination will be shared with release and deployment management. Any release activity should be scheduled to minimize the impact to the business.

Finally we come to the review and closure of the change. In this step the change is evaluated to ensure that the actual performance has been achieved. If this has been realized, the change can be closed.

But closure should only take place after a period of time has passed, so the true effects of the change can be assessed. All feedback should be captured and presented to the CAB or the change authority via the change process.

Approval

Once a recommendation has been made for a change to be authorized, either by the change management team or by the CAB, it is time to engage the Change Authority for approval for the change to be built and tested. This includes prioritization of the change amongst other changes and releases.

Following authorization of the build and test of the change, the coordination of the build, test and implementation of the change can take place.

During this stage, the change will be assessed for release, either as part of a release package through the Release and Deployment process, or as part of operational release into the production environment.

You can see that there are work flows associated to this step in the process, so that engagement of technical resources can be managed and coordinated to deliver the required activity. Change management is responsible for ensuring that this step` in the process takes place efficiently.

Once the build and test has been approved, then authorization for the deployment can take place.