

SPSO Risk Register

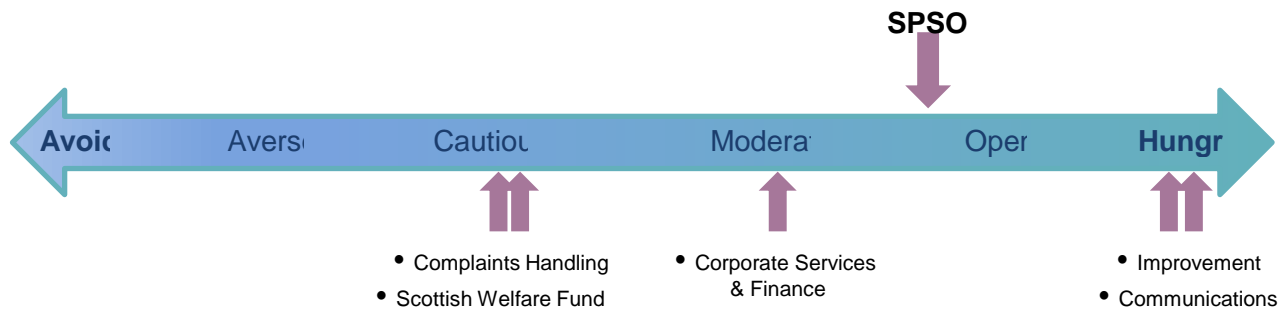
SPSO Strategic Risk Register 2023-24

Introduction

This document sets out the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman’s appetite for risk, and our assessment of the risks to achieving our strategic business plan for the period. It should be read in conjunction with our Risk Management and Incident Reporting Policies, in the Risk Management handbook published on our website here: <https://www.spsso.org.uk/spsso-policies>

Risk appetite

Our current overall risk appetite is defined as ‘Open’. This means the SPSO will continue to encourage new thinking and invest in people, systems and processes that will enable the organisation to achieve continuous improvement in the quality and user-focus of our services.



Scattergram of strategic risks

The scattergrams below show the spread of strategic risks following the quarterly review

2023-24 YE	Highly unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Very likely	Almost certain	
	<10%	11-30%	31-50%	51-70%	>70%	
5				8. Government policies and reforms		Significant
4			7. Cyber incident			Major
3	4. Public support and confidence	1. Reputation 2. Funding 6. Stakeholder confidence	3. Capacity			Moderate
2	5. Governance	9. Climate Change adaption				Minor
1						Marginal
	1	2	3	4	5	

Likelihood

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Risk number	Description of area of risk	Risk owner	Inherent			Control action to mitigate Likelihood	Control action to mitigate Impact	Current			Management response	Target		
			Likelihood	Impact (time, cost, quality)	Score			Likelihood	Impact (time, cost, quality)	Score		Likelihood	Impact (time, cost, quality)	Score
SR1	If the SPSO does not maintain and develop their positive reputation for effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and service delivery excellence, and communicate this effectively it will undermine confidence in the organisation and stakeholder relationships.	SPSO	3	4	12	Strong governance and innovation structures in place through for example the scheme of control, robust quality assurance processes, active member of Ombudsman's networks, regular engagement with the parliament. Strategic and annual business plans; proactive stakeholder engagement strategy; annual report; regular review of communications tools (web, leaflets, e-newsletter); sounding boards; tracking media coverage and e-newsletter open rates	Strong body of work published, open and transparent governance, engaging with the Scottish Government to deliver improvement practices. Stakeholder engagement strategy	2	3	6	Treat	1	1	1
SR2	If the SPSO is inappropriately funded because of changes to public sector funding or funding decisions by the Scottish Parliament and/ or Government, this will impact on the SPSO's ability to deliver its statutory functions to time, quality and standard. It will also impact on our ability to develop our business to improve efficiency and impact.	SPSO	2	4	8	Strategic plan sets out medium term resource planning assumptions, scenarios and impacts of various funding levels by business area.	Strategic plan sets out medium term resource planning assumptions, scenarios and impacts of various funding levels by business area.	2	3	6	Treat	2	2	4
SR3	If the SPSO does not maintain and develop capacity where, and to the standard needed, our work plan will not be delivered by sufficiently, motivated, skilled and supported colleagues to time and quality standards set.	SPSO	5	5	25	Approach to developing capacity outlined in the Strategic Plan, fully engaged in budget bid process, careful consideration of resource requirements through business planning process, engagement with staff representatives	HR and workforce plan to develop skills and capacity. Agile approaches to business development to identify and apply efficiencies	3	3	9	Treat	2	3	6
SR4	If the SPSO does not demonstrate, communicate and raise awareness of the positive impact of its work this will undermine our reputation and stakeholder confidence in the organisation and inhibit our ability to drive public service improvement.	SPSO	3	4	12	- Governance structures explicitly require impact to be integral to corporate decision making - impact reported on in ARFS - Development of stakeholder and engagement strategy	- Impact reported on in ARFS - Development of stakeholder and engagement strategy - Communication strategy	2	3	6	Treat	1	2	2
SR5	If the SPSO does not communicate clearly and openly about our role and remit, and the positive impact of our work, this will undermine public support, trust and confidence in our service, and inhibit our ability to drive public sector improvement	SPSO	3	5	15	Strategic and annual business plans; proactive stakeholder engagement strategy; annual report; regular review of communications tools (web, leaflets, e-newsletter); sounding boards; tracking media coverage and e-newsletter open rates	Acting on feedback from surveys, customers and sounding boards; regular meetings with SPCC; investing in relationships with key Scottish Parliament, Government and third sector stakeholders.	1	3	3	Tolerate	1	2	2
SR6	If the SPSO does not have in place, maintain and apply robust governance systems, clearly linked to output and performance , we will be unable to deliver and demonstrate value for money, effective and efficient service, and not meet all our statutory duties.	SPSO	2	5	10	Strong governance structures in place through the scheme of control, internal and external audit plans.	Strong relationship with the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body	1	2	2	Tolerate	1	2	2
SR7	If we cannot maintain business continuity due to a cyber incident or other external factors outside our control (at local, national and international level) and do not have effective contingency plans, this may result in systemic delivery and resourcing issues, we will be unprepared and unable to meet our statutory functions and deliver our strategic plan.	SPSO	5	5	25	Agree approach in relation to disruption to business. Monitor external sources of information and act on plans as needed.	Business Continuity Plan reviewed regularly with appropriate testing and liaison with third parties. Cyber resilience plan in place, CR accreditation confirmed with major contractors; LT and ISA to attend relevant briefing sessions and remain informed of the risk and implement appropriate protections	3	4	12	Treat	3	3	9
SR8	If the UK or Scottish governments and parliaments introduce policies, reforms or make decisions that have significant impact on the delivery of Scottish public services, this may result in systemic delivery and resourcing issues across the public sector, SPSO included, impacting on our statutory duties, and ability to deliver against them.	SPSO	5	5	25	Economic sustainability is driving public sector reform. Rights based approaches NCS UNCRG	LT and LPO horizon scan, monitor developments and attend briefing, information and discussion sessions, maintain a particular focus on post BREXIT, devolved and non-devolved matters, and wider economic policies. Monitor internal impact and respond to Scottish Government (and where appropriate UK Govt) impact surveys	4	5	20	Treat	2	3	6
SR9	If SPSO fails to understand and adapt to the threats and opportunities posed by climate change , then this may lead an inability to meet our statutory duties, reputational damage, environmental damage and potential financial penalties.	SPSO	5	5	25	Climate Change and Green group to horizon scan, monitor developments and keep LT updated. SPSO is developing a Climate Change Strategy that will plan and control this risk. Progress towards the Strategy and associated actions is managed through the Climate Change and Green group.	Climate Change and Green group to horizon scan, monitor developments and keep LT updated. SPSO is developing a Climate Change Strategy that will plan and control this risk. Progress towards the Strategy and associated actions is managed through the Climate Change and Green group.	2	2	4	Tolerate	2	2	4