

OIG CONTRACTOR INTELLIGENCE BRIEF™

01 | SEP-C02 | LEADERSHIP BENCH × BACKLOG | AS OF AUGUST 30, 2026

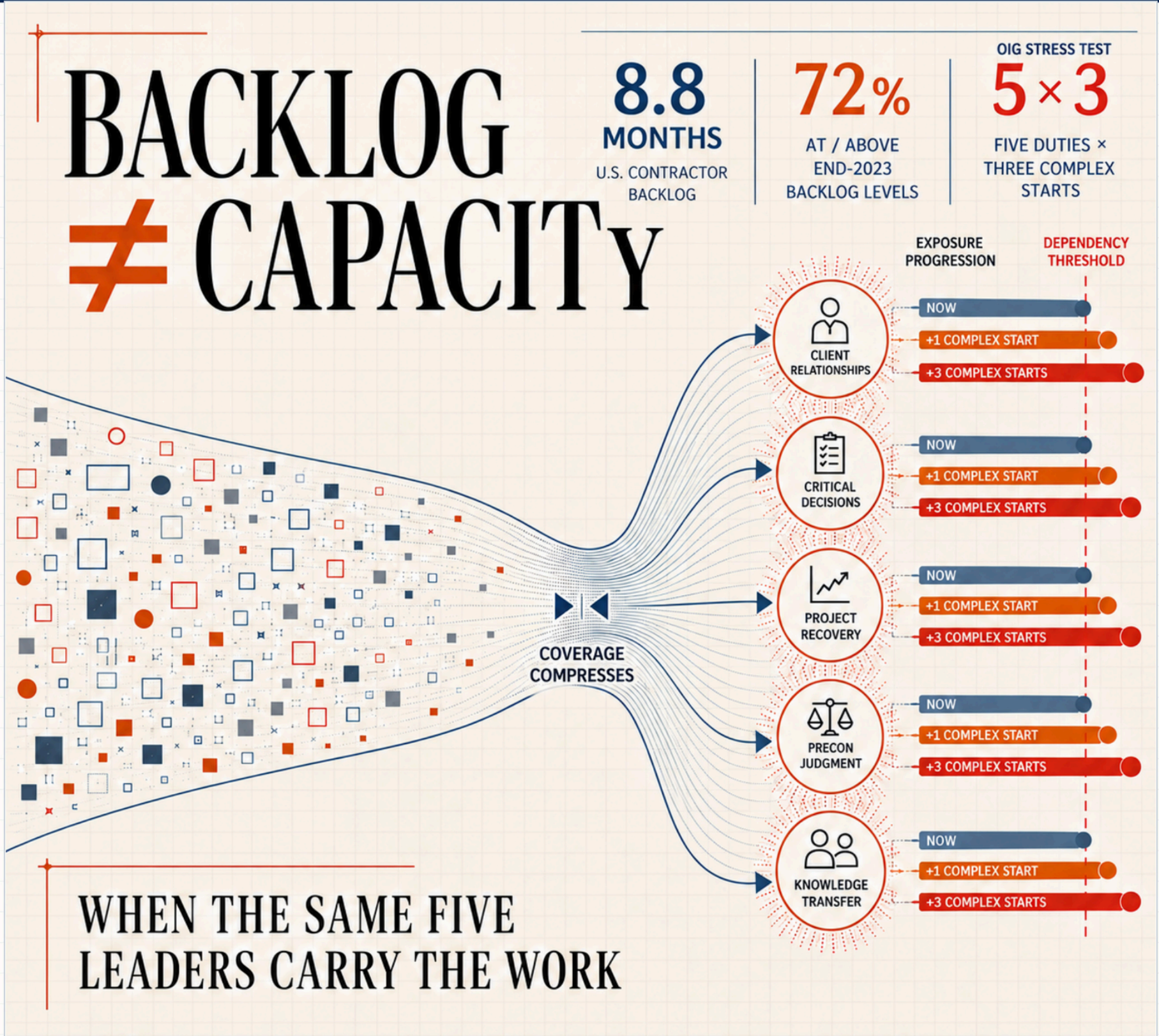
EXECUTIVE FINDING

A contractor can add work faster than it adds leadership coverage.

Backlog shows what may arrive. It does not show who carries the client, decisions, recoveries, preconstruction judgment or knowledge transfer.

THE LEADERSHIP BENCH EXPOSURE MAP

BACKLOG → COVERAGE → MARGIN RISK



THE EXECUTIVE IMPLICATION

If the next three complex projects started tomorrow, where would leadership coverage fail first?

Review the backlog by responsibility, not only by revenue or start date.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Backlog reports future revenue. Coverage determines whether the company can carry it.

EXECUTIVE READ

The leadership constraint may be visible before the project constraint is.

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02 | SEP-C02 | CURRENT STATE | AS OF AUGUST 30, 2026

WHAT CHANGED

The work expanded. Leadership coverage did not expand at the same rate.

Backlog volume is visible. The concentration of client, decision, recovery, preconstruction and learning responsibility often is not.

THE LEADERSHIP COVERAGE LAG

VISIBLE WORKLOAD → HIDDEN DEPENDENCY

SOURCE-REPORTED MARKET SIGNALS

VOLUME SIGNAL

8.8 MONTHS

U.S. CONTRACTOR BACKLOG

ABC | JUNE 2026

PERSISTENCE SIGNAL

72%

AT / ABOVE END-2023 BACKLOG LEVELS

FMI CIVIL INDEX | Q1 2025

PERSONNEL SIGNAL

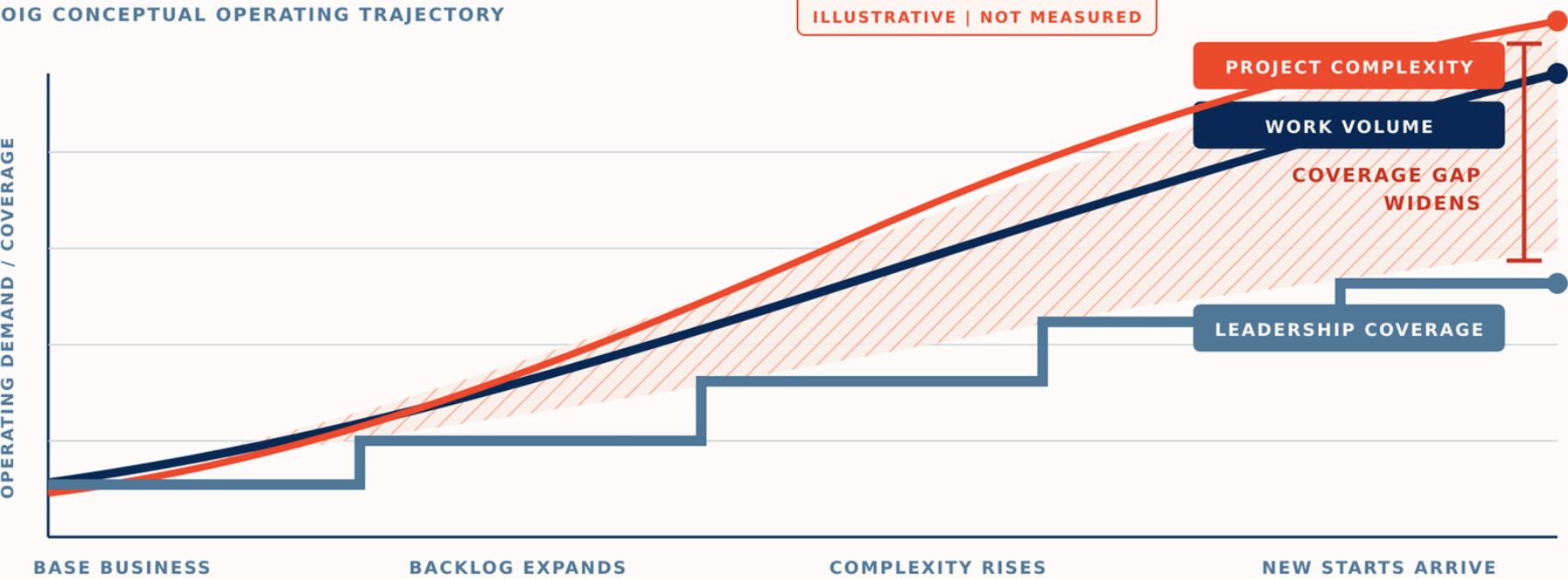
≈40%

REPORTED INSUFFICIENT PERSONNEL TO MEET 2025 BACKLOG DEMANDS

FMI | MARCH 2026

OIG CONCEPTUAL OPERATING TRAJECTORY

ILLUSTRATIVE | NOT MEASURED



CURVES SHOW THE OPERATING RELATIONSHIP, NOT A MEASURED TIME SERIES OR MARKET FORECAST.

WHAT LEADERSHIP CAN SEE BACKLOG • STARTS • REVENUE • SECTOR MIX

WHAT OFTEN STAYS HIDDEN

CLIENT LOAD • DECISION LOAD • RECOVERY LOAD • PRECON JUDGMENT • KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

SOURCE-REPORTED SIGNALS ABOVE; OIG INTERPRETATION BELOW.

THE EXECUTIVE IMPLICATION

Where is future work increasing the load on responsibilities that have no ready-now second owner?

Separate staffing capacity from leadership coverage before new starts arrive.

THE CURRENT STATE

Backlog and project complexity are growing faster than leadership coverage.

O I G

OPERATIONAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

Intelligence First. Systems Second.

EXECUTIVE READ

A staffing plan can look sufficient while leadership responsibility remains concentrated.

02

SOURCES: ABC CONSTRUCTION BACKLOG INDICATOR, JUNE 2026; FMI CIVIL INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION INDEX, Q1 2025; FMI, "THE LEADERSHIP GAP IN CONSTRUCTION," MARCH 2026; OIG ANALYSIS.

EVIDENCE BOUNDARY: MARKET FIGURES ARE SOURCE-REPORTED. THE COVERAGE-LAG CURVES AND CONCENTRATION GAP ARE AN OIG CONCEPTUAL INTERPRETATION, NOT A MEASURED MARKET SERIES OR BENCHMARK.

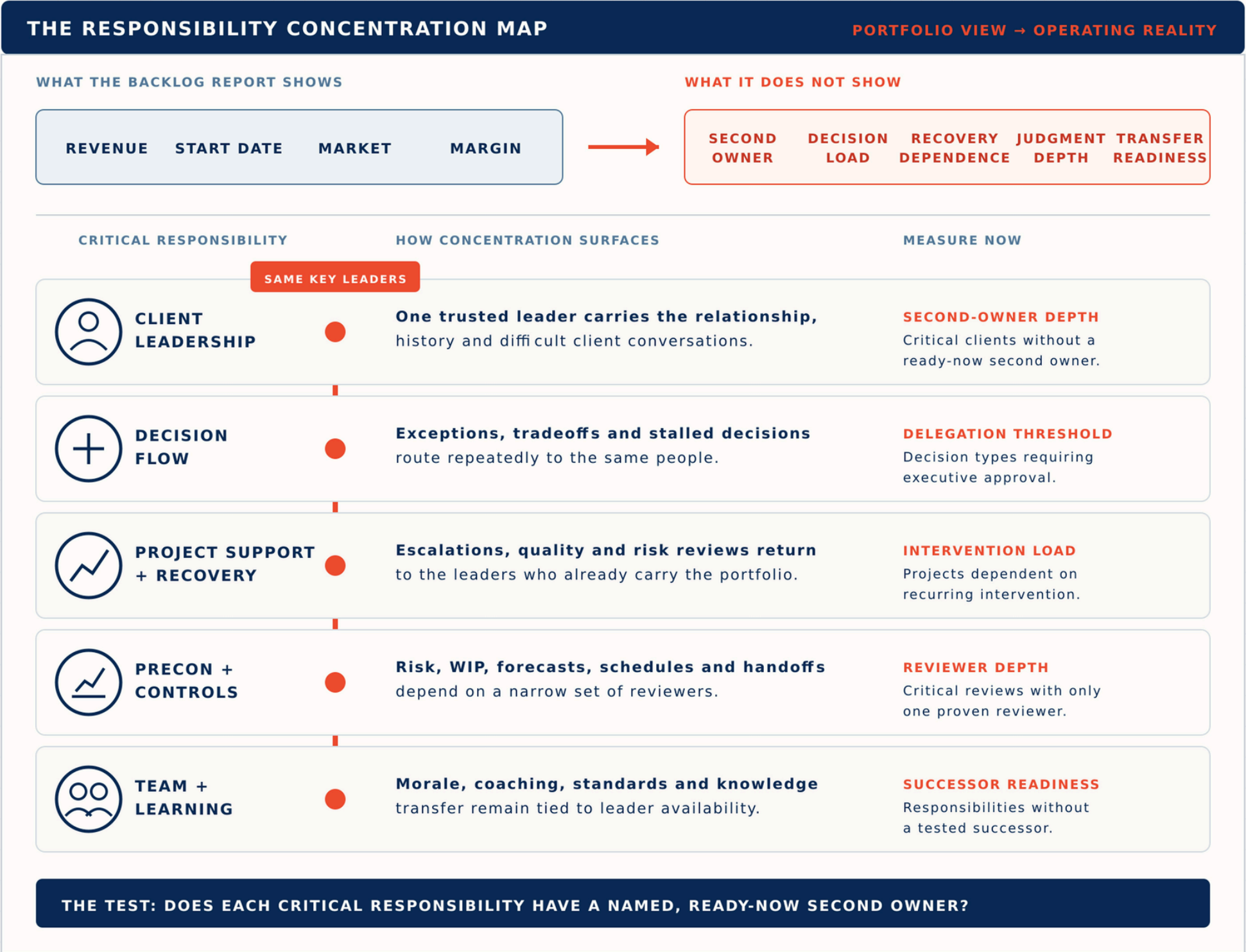
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03 | SEP-C02 | WHERE IT LANDS | AS OF AUGUST 30, 2026

WHERE LEADERSHIP EXPOSURE LANDS

Leadership exposure sits in critical responsibilities, not in the backlog total.

A healthy backlog can still depend on a small group for client trust, decision flow, project recovery, preconstruction judgment and knowledge transfer.



THE EXECUTIVE IMPLICATION

For each critical responsibility, who is the ready-now second owner?

If the answer is a future hire, an untested name or the same leader again, coverage is exposed.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The exposure is not that leaders are busy. It is that critical outcomes depend on the same people.

SOURCE: OIG ANALYSIS; FMI, "THE LEADERSHIP GAP IN CONSTRUCTION," MARCH 2026.

EVIDENCE BOUNDARY: THE RESPONSIBILITY CONCENTRATION MAP IS AN OIG DIAGNOSTIC FRAMEWORK, NOT A MARKET BENCHMARK.

NO COMPANY-SPECIFIC EXPOSURE IS INFERRED UNTIL THE MAP IS APPLIED TO COMPANY DATA AND LEADERSHIP JUDGMENT.

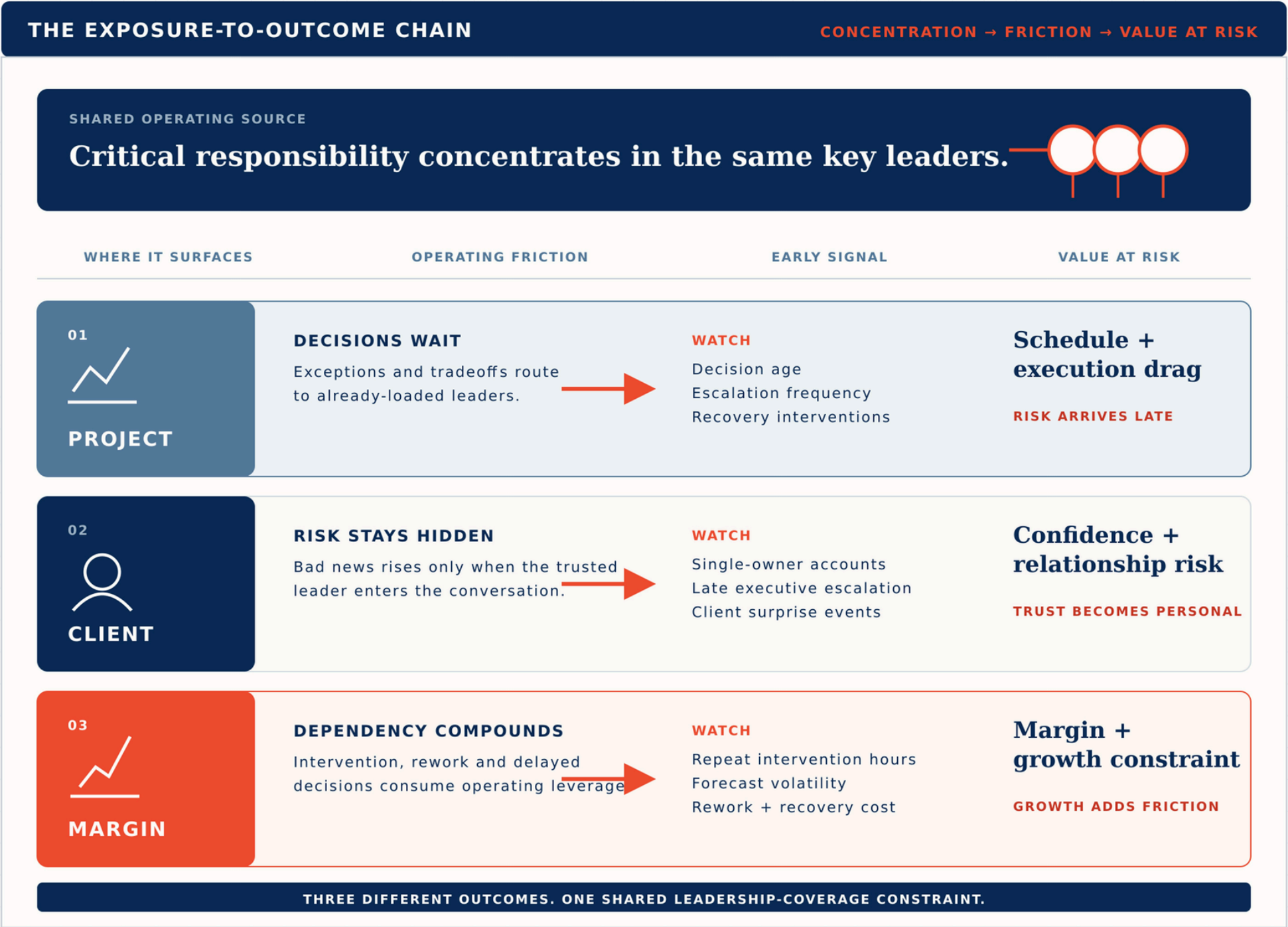
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04 | SEP-C02 | OPERATING EFFECTS | AS OF AUGUST 30, 2026

THE CONSEQUENCE OF CONCENTRATION

Leadership concentration reaches projects, clients and margin before it appears as a staffing problem.

The same operating constraint travels through three different channels. Each can look isolated until leadership sees the shared source: critical responsibility without enough ready-now coverage.



THE EXECUTIVE IMPLICATION

Do not wait for the staffing plan to reveal the constraint.

Track where decisions age, risk escalates late and intervention repeats. Those are operating signals that leadership coverage is already behind the work.

EXECUTIVE TEST

WHERE DOES THE SAME LEADER APPEAR IN ALL THREE RISK CHANNELS?

THE BOTTOM LINE

Leadership exposure becomes project friction, client risk and margin leakage before staffing reports show it.

SOURCE: OIG ANALYSIS. SEE BRIEF EVIDENCE REGISTER FOR SUPPORTING MARKET CONTEXT.

EVIDENCE BOUNDARY: THE EXPOSURE-TO-OUTCOME CHAIN IS AN OIG DIAGNOSTIC INTERPRETATION, NOT A MEASURED MARKET SERIES. COMPANY-SPECIFIC CONSEQUENCES REQUIRE VALIDATION AGAINST PROJECT, CLIENT, FINANCIAL AND LEADERSHIP DATA.

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05 | SEP-C02 | FUTURE STATE | AS OF AUGUST 30, 2026

THE OPPORTUNITY STATE

Capacity becomes real when responsibility can move without the work slowing down.

A larger bench is not a list of successors. It is tested operating coverage for the responsibilities that protect client trust, project flow, recovery judgment, preconstruction quality and learning.

THE LEADERSHIP COVERAGE BUILD

NAME IT → TRANSFER IT → TEST IT → SCALE IT

01 CONCENTRATED

One proven owner

The responsibility stops when the leader is unavailable.

➔

02 NAMED

Second owner assigned

Authority + expectations are explicit.

➔

03 TESTED

Responsibility transferred

Performs under live operating pressure.

➔

04 COVERED

Repeatable leadership depth

Work expands without returning upstream.

CRITICAL RESPONSIBILITY	DEPENDENCY PATTERN	COVERAGE PROOF	COVERAGE PATH*
CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS TRUST + HISTORY		Second owner leads a difficult client conversation without rescue.	
HIGH-STAKES DECISIONS AUTHORITY + TRADEOFFS		Decision rights hold when speed, risk and margin are in tension.	
PROJECT RECOVERY INTERVENTION + STABILIZATION		Recovery leadership diagnoses, acts and stabilizes without escalation.	
PRECON JUDGMENT RISK + HANDOFF QUALITY		Risk and assumptions survive review, challenge and turnover.	
KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER STANDARDS + LEARNING		Teams apply the lesson without the original leader in the room.	

*ILLUSTRATIVE PATH

DEPENDENT

ASSIGNED

TESTED

COVERED

A NAME IS A SUCCESSION CANDIDATE. TESTED RESPONSIBILITY IS OPERATING COVERAGE.

THE EXECUTIVE IMPLICATION

Use future work to test coverage before demand requires it.

Assign responsibility before the project starts. Define the escalation boundary and observe whether the work moves without returning to the same leader.

THE PROOF

AUTHORITY HOLDS.

JUDGMENT HOLDS.

OUTCOMES HOLD.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Leadership capacity is built when responsibility transfers successfully before demand requires it.

SOURCE: OIG ANALYSIS. SEE BRIEF EVIDENCE REGISTER FOR SUPPORTING MARKET CONTEXT.

EVIDENCE BOUNDARY: THE LEADERSHIP COVERAGE BUILD IS AN OIG DIAGNOSTIC MODEL, NOT A MARKET BENCHMARK.

COVERAGE STATUS REQUIRES COMPANY-SPECIFIC VALIDATION THROUGH OBSERVED RESPONSIBILITY TRANSFER AND OPERATING RESULTS.

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06 | SEP-C02 | WHAT TO DO | AS OF AUGUST 30, 2026

THE EXECUTIVE MOVE

Turn the next three complex projects into a leadership-coverage plan before they start.

Do not begin with titles or headcount. Begin with the responsibilities the work will require, where they are concentrated and what proof would show that a second owner is ready.

THE NEXT-THREE-PROJECT COVERAGE TEST

BACKLOG → RESPONSIBILITY → PROOF → ACTION

01 SELECT

Next 3 complex starts

Use complexity + client risk, not project size alone.

→

02 MAP

Critical responsibility

Name primary + ready-now second owner.

→

03 TEST

Coverage under live load

Transfer authority. Observe whether outcomes hold.

→

04 ACT

Close the exposure

Develop, transfer, redesign or add capacity.

RESPONSIBILITY	PRIMARY OWNER	READY-NOW SECOND	PROOF TEST	EXPOSURE SELECT H / M / L
CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS TRUST + DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS	-----	-----	Leads a difficult client conversation without rescue.	H M L
HIGH-STAKES DECISIONS AUTHORITY + TRADEOFFS	-----	-----	Decision rights hold when speed, risk and margin conflict	H M L
PROJECT RECOVERY DIAGNOSIS + STABILIZATION	-----	-----	Diagnoses, acts and stabilizes without executive intervention.	H M L
PRECON JUDGMENT RISK + HANDOFF QUALITY	-----	-----	Assumptions survive challenges review and turnover.	H M L
KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER STANDARDS + LEARNING	-----	-----	Teams apply the lesson without the original leader present.	H M L

DECISION RULE

If the same primary owner appears repeatedly and the second-owner field is blank, growth is increasing dependency.

WHAT TO DO IN THE NEXT 30 DAYS

1

Map the next three complex starts.

2

Assign one responsibility transfer per critical leader.

3

Define the proof test and escalation boundary.

4

Review evidence monthly, before exposure becomes recovery.

OUTPUT: A RESPONSIBILITY-LEVEL COVERAGE PLAN TIED TO REAL WORK, NOT A GENERIC SUCCESSION LIST.

CONTINUE THE INTELLIGENCE

Apply the Leadership Bench Exposure Map. Share where coverage fails first. Subscribe: oigops.com/brief

SOURCE: OIG ANALYSIS. INPUT INVITATION: OIG WELCOMES OPERATOR PERSPECTIVES TO REFINE FUTURE ISSUES.

EVIDENCE BOUNDARY: THE COVERAGE TEST IS A DIAGNOSTIC WORKSHEET, NOT A MARKET BENCHMARK OR COMPLETED COMPANY ASSESSMENT. COMPANY-SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS REQUIRE LEADERSHIP JUDGMENT AND VALIDATION AGAINST PROJECT, CLIENT AND OPERATING EVIDENCE.