

**Embedding Risk Management
at Senior Management Level in
a Public-Sector Organisation
Using a Facilitation Approach:
An Exploratory Study**

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Ethical Declaration

I declare that this submission is wholly my own work except where I have made explicit reference to the work of others. I have read the relevant notes, guidelines and procedures on conducting academic writing and research and hereby declare that this submission is in line with these requirements.

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Abstract

There is now an increasing focus on the risks and costs associated with the planning and delivery of public services (Fone and Young, 2000), and this has led to calls for regulation and accountability of public bodies (Drennan et al., 2014); yet many public bodies do not have the resources or expertise to ensure that the management of risk is embedded into the everyday activities of their organisations (FERMA, 2016). Embedding risks into an organisation is a challenging task, and the focus in this study is on the use of a facilitation approach which can assist in bringing about change in organisations and helping groups achieve and exceed their objectives (Schwarz, 2017).

An exploratory case study approach was chosen which saw the author working as an External Facilitator to assist a public sector organisation in the education sector (East ETB). Relevant literature from the areas of risk management, change management, and facilitation was used to create a conceptual model for organisations seeking to embed risk management. This framework envisages that successful embedding will lead to reduced need for the facilitator as ownership is transferred to the project owner (Tavella and Papadopoulos, 2015 and Wardale, 2013). The nature of a facilitation and embedding process meant that multiple sources of evidence were considered with an interpretivist philosophy being adopted.

The findings collected over an eight month period in 2017-2018 support the role of facilitation to help drive the embedding of risks; firstly by empowering an Internal Facilitator through training and ongoing support and secondly, by directing the Senior Management Team to the priorities that need to be addressed and to the risks identified at operational level which require action. The embedding of risk management was evident in the priority given to risk management at monthly governance meetings and this was corroborated by audits of compliance and in an interview with an independent member of the ETB's Audit and Risk committee. This positive outcome is reinforced by a thematic analysis of multiple interviews gathered at this ETB which suggests that the facilitation process can provide a good balance of leadership, communication and trust which can empower staff to embrace risks. However, while risks are considered to be embedded at senior management level, it will be a considerable challenge to continue this through to lower management levels in this ETB.

The positive outcome in terms of embedding risks at this ETB contrasts with literature on change management initiatives which suggest high failure rates (Lueke, 2003; Oakland and Tanner, 2007). The contribution of the study is thus that a well-planned facilitation approach can deliver a positive outcome to the embedding of risks, and this has implications for public and private bodies seeking to address this complex task on an ongoing basis.

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Section 3: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Abbreviations

A

ACCA	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (UK)
AIRMIC	Association of Risk Managers and Insurers (UK)
ALARM	Association of Local Authority Risk Managers (UK)

C

C&AG	Comptroller and Auditor General (Ireland)
CASC	Casualty Actuarial Society Committee
CBI	Central Bank of Ireland
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERM	Client Enterprise Risk Management
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Financial Accountants
COSO	Committee of the Sponsoring Organisations of the Threadway Committee (US)
CRASP	Critical (and self-critical) collaborate enquiry by Reflective practitioners being Accountable and making the results of their enquiry public, Self-evaluating their practice and engaged in Participative problem-solving and continuing professional development

D

DBA	Doctorate in Business Administration
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Ireland)
DES	Department of Education and Skills (Ireland)
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
DofF	Department of Finance (Ireland)
DofH	Department of Health (Ireland)
DofSP	Department of Social Protection (Ireland)

E	
EC	External Consultants
EF	External Facilitator
EI	Expert Interviewee
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council (UK)
ESF	European Social Fund
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
EU	European Union
F	
FÁS	Irish National Training and Employment Authority (dissolved 2013)
FET	Further Education and Training
FOI	Freedom of Information Act, 1997 – 2014 (Ireland)
FSB	Financial Stability Board (UK)
H	
HRM	Human Resource Management
HSE	Health Service Executive (Ireland)
I	
IA	Internal Audit/Auditor
IF	Internal Facilitator
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPB	Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd (IPB Insurance)
IRM	Institute for Risk Management (UK)
ISO	International Standards Organisation
N	
NAO	National Audit Office (UK)
NHS	National Health Service (UK)
NOAC	National Oversight and Audit Commission (Ireland)
O	
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSD	Organisation Support and Development
P	
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge

S	
SAM	Senior Administrative Manager
SMT	Senior Management Team
SOLACE	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (UK)
SOLAS	Further Education and Training Authority, Ireland
SOX	Sarbannes Oxley Act, 2002 (US)
U	
US	United States
UK	United Kingdom
V	
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VFM	Value for money
W	
WHO	World Health Organisation.

Section 1:

Research Overview

1. Introduction

The introduction chapter of this Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) thesis introduces this research study which was undertaken over a five-year period 2014-2019. The research study looked at the use of a facilitation approach to embed risk management in a public body at Senior Management Team (SMT) level which can be viewed as a significant change management initiative for any organisation (SOLACE/CIPFA UK, 2000 and Berg, 2014). The chapter starts by describing the concept of facilitation, its origins and how it grew in importance in the 20th century due to a swing in the pendulum between participatory and autocratic management styles (Hogan, 2002). As facilitation is aimed at the embedding of risk management in this study, background information on risk management and its importance in public and private bodies will then be considered. This leads to an outline of the case study organisation (East ETB) which is the focus of this study and the research aim and objectives are then outlined. The chapter concludes with a look at the proposed contribution from the study.

2. Nature and Origins of Facilitation

The word ‘facilitation’ comes from the French word ‘facile’ and the Latin word ‘facilis’ and translates to ‘easy to do’ and ‘of persons courteous’ (Barnhart, 1988, p. 34). It may seem like an easy task, but it can at times be a very complex task requiring the highest levels of human interaction and communication skills (Hogan, 2002). For Hogan (2002, p. 57), a facilitator is ‘a self-reflective, process person who has a variety of human, process,

technical skills and knowledge, together with a variety of experiences to assist groups of people to journey together to reach their goals’. This is consistent with Schwarz (2017, p15) who viewed facilitation as ‘helping a group to use effective process to make decisions and increase its effectiveness’ and suggests that facilitation incorporates a range of skills and values. In this regard, Simmons (2004) examined the application of facilitation in a healthcare environment and this led to her developing five characteristics of successful facilitation as presented in Table One below:

**Table One: Five Defining Characteristics of Facilitation
(adapted from Simmons 2004)**

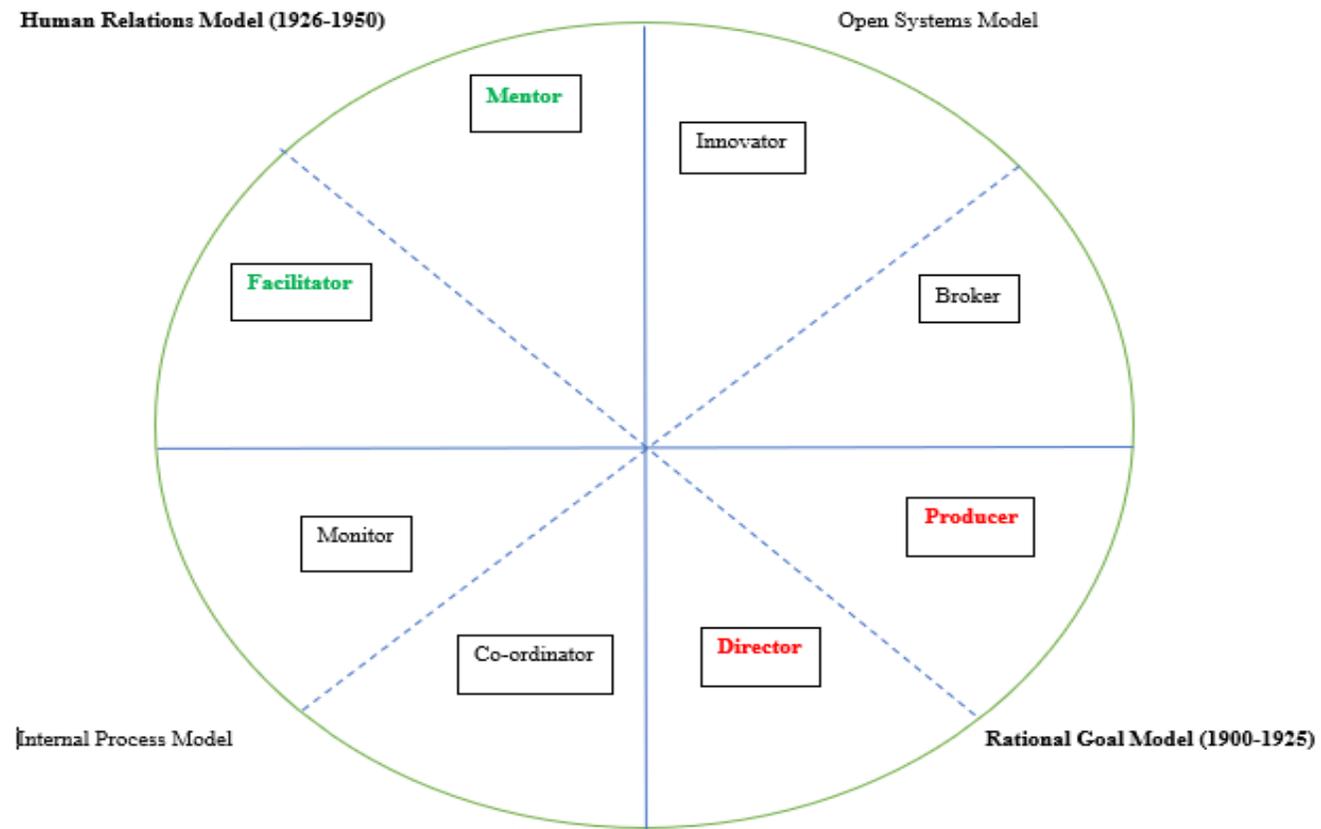
	Defining Characteristics	Context
1	Critical thinking.	
2	Communication and negotiation.	Communication and negotiations used in the context of reaching agreement.
3	Helping people by doing particular tasks and acting as a resource for others by making it easier.	Helping people and acting as a resource were identified as strategies facilitators used to make it easier for staff.
4	Managing groups prepare for change and providing a purpose.	The leadership literature identified these skills as critical for effective change.
5	Equity.	

The above characteristics suggest that facilitators possess skills which are very useful in organisations seeking to effect change programmes and this will be considered in relation to risk management programmes later in this chapter. Warner (2015, p. 45) noted that such skills include

the ‘ability to challenge participants’ however, he found that many are ineffective in managing change programmes as ‘they lacked the ability to aggressively challenge the management teams from an operational or strategic perspective’.

The origins of facilitation was reviewed by Quinn et al. (1988) who identified eight key roles of management which developed over time and these skills are shown across four 25-year spans in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Competency Framework of Management Development (Adapted from: Quinn, 1988).



In this diagram, the rational goal model dominated in the 1900-1925 time period and related to a period where people had little autonomy over their work meaning that a manager's job was to be rational and hardnosed. This was followed by the Human Relations model in 1926-1950 where unions were now a significant force and managers learned that they had to develop informal relations with workers. Kurt Lewin (1947) undertook research in the US at this time into group productivity and leadership styles; he concluded that managers needed to be sensitive mentors and facilitators of teams as opposed to controlling leaders. This led to the emergence of facilitation in management and it has remained as a key management competency. The importance attached to facilitation is linked to the need to make better use of 'knowledge workers' in complex decision making (Robson and Beary, 1995) however, Schwarz (2017) noted that the application of facilitation as a management tool was not widely adopted until the 1960s and its application is not widespread when applied to supporting the embedding of change such as risk management.

The process of facilitation can assist in bringing about change in organisations, with a focus on problem solving within the boundaries of delivering strategic objectives (Schwartz, 2017; Canbäck, 1998, and Greiner and Metzger, 1983). A facilitator should be able to bring a broad competency on change management (Buono and Jamieson, 2010) to support successful change management; this is supported by Schwarz (2017) who described facilitation as providing professional advice so that groups achieve and exceed their objectives, while also training groups to develop their knowledge and skills in a group setting.

While facilitation is a unique management philosophy, it can be frequently confused with the concept of training. Hogan (2002) argues that facilitation goes beyond training where one lets go of one's ego and the need to be the focus of all learning or expertise. Trainers fear losing control of a group and do not value experimentation or improvisation; facilitators by contrast have learned how to adapt group processes according to the needs of the group. Facilitation enables people to hear each other's viewpoint and is consistent with a move from structured courses to group learning focused on the immediate needs of participants on a 'need to know' basis. In the context of this research study the author is concentrating on facilitation rather than training. Confusion can arise when these terms are discussed, and it should be noted that there are differences. Training is described as the action of teaching a person a particular skill or type of behaviour, while a facilitator makes things easier for a person to learn or change their behaviour. Schwarz (2017, p. 4) states that 'at its core facilitation is simply a way of thinking and working with groups that increases the chance that they'll perform well, develop strong working relations, and maintain or improve members' wellbeing'. Table One below identifies some of the variances between the role of the trainer and the role of the facilitator.

Table Two: Role of the Trainer Versus the Facilitator (Adapted from Schwarz, 2017; Hogan 2002; Quinn, 1988; Kotter, 1996, Demming, 1956 and Lewin, 1947).

Trainer's Role	Facilitator's Role
Structured learning such as delivering an agreed curriculum of instruction.	Adaptation of group processes according to the needs of the group.
Skill development e.g. one-to-one training.	Support motivation.
Behaviour change.	Support team development.
Narrow focus.	Enhance team communication.
Contributes to the facilitator's role.	Enhance organisational change.
	Holistic focus.
	Enhance cultural change.
	Support embedding of organisational change.

In reviewing the role of the trainer and the facilitator it is evident that the facilitator role is broader and encompasses much of the trainer's role whereas the trainer's role is narrower in scope. It is for this reason that the author chose to adopt a facilitation approach to her research study so that a higher probability of success with embedding risk management would be achieved.

Facilitation can also be confused with consulting and a review of the use of consultants to facilitate change was carried out by Buona and Subbiah (2014). They found that External Consultants (EC) bring benefits such as a wide comparative knowledge of change processes; they are fresh and creative in their approach where they bring insights from their varied experience and they can utilise their

position to influence and solicit views. However, organisations recruiting an EC should be mindful that they frequently use the same approach in every organisation which may not work as one size does not always fit all. They may also not understand and may ignore key factors in the organisation they are contracted to while also lacking credibility and costing a significant amount of money which could have been used for other service delivery. Furthermore, Schwarz (2017) advised that when an organisation decides to employ the services of an EC, they do so for their expertise in a particular content area. Facilitators, by contrast, are catalysts for change but not necessarily the instigators of change; it is a process of guiding group members to their chosen destination (Hunter et al, 1993).

2.1 Types of Facilitator and a Co-Facilitation Approach

Facilitators can be either internal to a group, or external. An internal facilitator (IF) carries the dual role of guiding, while also being a member of the group (Hogan, 2002 and Schwarz, 2017). This is a common role for managers and supervisors. By contrast, an external facilitator (EF) is not a member of the group; this person's primary interest is to guide a process that assists the group in discussing and taking action on issues. Hogan (2002) considered the advantages and disadvantages of these types of facilitator which are summarised below in Table Two:

Table Three: Comparison between Internal and External Facilitators (Adapted from: Hogan, 2002)

	Advantages	Disadvantages
External Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less biased, fewer initial stereotypes • Easier to stay out of context • Easier to concentrate on process • Not part of political structure of group • Can prevent proceedings being dominated by individuals • Can use innocent ‘naive observer’ questions • Can confront where necessary without fear of retaliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be well briefed beforehand • Must be chosen with care • More expensive • May be difficult for some participants to accept an outsider • Needs to learn the language or concepts of the group • May not confront if only wants good evaluations.
Internal Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less expensive • Often quicker to brief because of knowledge of history, people, situation and politics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harder to stay out of context • Harder to concentrate on process • Hard to stay objective • May be difficult to confront individuals higher in the hierarchy • May be biased towards some individuals.

In many situations, a co-facilitation approach is chosen as an alternative to sole facilitation when the complexity of the problem, the number of people involved, and the length of time involved suggest that the process will be difficult for one facilitator to manage alone (Hogan, 2002). Knight and Scott (1997) define co-facilitation as two or more facilitators working in partnership to reach an agreed outcome in a way that maximises their own and others learning. Such an approach can enable less skilled facilitators to gain knowledge and experience by working with experienced facilitators and can be advantageous to a group as there are now two people with whom they can relate, enabling a closer match of their needs with the most suitable facilitator. Furthermore, an organisation that decides to resource the two roles of IF and EF will have access to a more powerful force for overcoming resistance which should ultimately build commitment to the change process (Sturdy and Wiley, 2011 and Nazari et al. 2014). However, co-facilitation approaches face challenges such as maintaining an equal workload distribution and there is the potential for disagreement over topics and structure (Hogan, 2002).

Buono and Subbiah (2014) describe the IF as the ‘poor cousin’ of the EF, but that they can be a vital organisational resource through their ability to play multiple roles as they can champion a change management initiative. The author intends to demonstrate the value of both the EF and the IF roles in this research study and to show why the roles are important to support the embedding of risk management in public bodies. While the chosen approach for this study is a form of co-facilitation, it differs from definitions of co-facilitation at the outset as it will involve an expert EF (the

author) working with an untrained IF in the chosen public sector organisation.

2.2 Author's Interest in Facilitation

The author's interest in facilitation and the facilitator's role emanated from her work in supporting public bodies in the health, local and education authorities over the past twenty years. In 2000, she was appointed as the Head of Client Enterprise Risk Management (CERM) of an Irish mutual insurance company (IPB Insurance) with the key function of supporting and facilitating public bodies to design relevant risk management systems and to embed the practice of managing risk into all business activities. This experience in the area of risk management allowed the author to act as an EF to support public bodies to deliver on their strategic objectives so that success can be demonstrated i.e. that the key risks are being mitigated (Department of Finance (DofF), 2004). The experience of the author has been that public bodies apart from those in the health sector do not employ a dedicated IF to lead and coordinate the embedding of risk management, and she has found this to be an impediment to achieving a successful outcome.

The author has found the designing of relevant risk management systems to be relatively straightforward; however it is far more challenging to embed risk management and to establish the level of progress made in embedding risk management over time. It is typically the responsibility of the Board and SMT (Nazari et al. 2014) to embed risk management as they set the 'tone at the top' while determining and influencing the ethics and

accountability within the organisation. However, due to the competing demands on these post-holders' resources, they do not have the capacity to administer, coordinate and support the embedding of risk management therefore consideration can be given to the appointment of a competent facilitator to support this function. This has led to the involvement of the author as facilitator to many public bodies as they aim to introduce new practices to embed risk management. Indeed, the trigger for this DBA research study was a desire to look critically at the facilitation process to ascertain the critical factors to successful embedding, with the aim of building a template for successful embedding of risk management in public bodies.

2.3 Risk Management in Public Bodies

Risk has been present from the origins of time; however, it was not until the Renaissance that it took on a new meaning when it was identified, measured and controlled (Bernstein, 1998). While it is recognised that organisations in both the public and private sectors manage risk daily (Fone and Young, 2000), the approach taken to the management of risks has evolved from an original model of separate risks being managed separately to a more systematic approach. In this regard, risk management can now be viewed as an integrated approach to the management of all the risks that an organisation faces (Fone and Young, 2000). It is also referred to as 'holistic, integrated or enterprise-wide risk management' (Drennan et al. 2015, p. 39). Fone and Young (2005, p. 25) referred to the model of integrated risk management as 'thinking less about risk in terms of insurable exposures and more in terms of financial,

strategic, regulatory and operational risks, and financial planning' as these account for approximately 80% of all risks, whereas the other 20% of an organisation's risks are generally reasonably well managed and insurable such as public and employer liability, and property and motor risks. However, the author's interest lies with the 80% of risks (these may include reputational, competitive and professional competency deficits) that are not insurable (Fone and Young, 2000 and 2005) as they are frequently not well recognised, understood or managed and may lead to disaster for both the public body, communities and for government (Drennan et al. 2015). These percentages may be challenged in the future as historically environmental and cyber risks were not covered by insurance, but this is changing with some insurance providers now underwriting these risks.

Public bodies were established to provide services such as utilities when private financiers were not interested because it was perceived that there was little if any profit to be made (Fone and Young, 2000). In Ireland, local authorities were established to manage risks for the health and education sector and such public bodies have become large and complex organisations with limited resource availability and dependence on government to provide the required resources to initiate and develop new initiatives. The increased emphasis on risk management in this century has led to a greater need for such bodies to demonstrate compliance with relevant legislation and this has been enhanced by the publication of guidance on corporate governance for public bodies with the first set of guidelines being published by the Department of Finance (DofF) (1992). Further updates were published in 2001 and 2009. In 2004, the DofF published Risk Management Guidance

for Government Departments to support public bodies to establish the required risk management architecture and to assess the impact of risks at the strategic and operational level of the public body as well as the impact on the body's financial status and its reputation (Fone and Young, 2000 and 2005). With the increasing obligations, commitments, agreements and contracts undertaken by public bodies, it has become increasingly relevant that the associated risks are managed; otherwise they may undermine strategic plans and could ultimately lead to organisational failure (Fone and Young, 2000). In 2016, the management of public body risk was enshrined in legislation and codes of practice such as the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) (2016). Despite the growing need for effective risk management, there has been a lack of supporting financial help for public bodies to assist with leading and coordinating the embedding of risk management. This is against a growing evidence base of failures in public bodies such as the collapse of FÁS (2009) and management of public tendering processes at Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (Comptroller and Auditor General, 2019).

2.3.1 Embedding Risk Management

The embedding of risk management is a long-term exercise to ensure that risk consideration is at the heart of the decision-making process (Hodge, 2002 and Fone and Young, 2000 and 2005). The Australian Department of Finance (2016) and DPER, (2016) recommend several practical strategies to achieve this such as beginning with the strategic objectives to be delivered, engagement of the

senior management team (SMT), the building of staff awareness, and promoting a positive risk culture. They also offer examples of levels of embedding risk management for common processes which are shown in Table Three below:

Table Four: Levels of Embedding of Risk Management in Sample Functions (Adapted from Australian Department of Finance, 2016).

Business Area	Good	Better	Best
Program Delivery	A formal project risk assessment is conducted, and a risk register maintained to monitor and report on key risks.	Project reporting incorporates near real time assessments of project key risk indicators. Decision making delegations at the project and program level are linked to the level of risk exposure in each decision.	Project dashboard reporting incorporates risk adjusted performance metrics such as risk-adjusted budget forecasts. Program managers actively allocate resources between projects based on assessments of risk against agreed tolerances.
Corporate Functions	Risk registers are maintained by corporate areas to monitor and report on key risks to the successful delivery of corporate objectives.	Collaborative workshops are conducted between corporate functions and business units/clients to identify shared risks to the achievement of the entity's objectives. The risk exposures and effectiveness of corporate functions as controls is monitored at a whole of entity level.	Delivery of corporate objectives is prioritised in part by the significance of the risks being managed in different business units.
Strategic Planning	The entity develops and maintains a strategic risk profile which assesses key risks to the achievement of its strategic objectives.	An integrated corporate planning framework links strategic risks to corporate objectives and business plans. Strategic risks are reviewed in cycle with planning activities.	An entity's strategic risks are an integral component of corporate planning. Initiatives and priorities stemming from both corporate planning and strategic risk management activities are integrated seamlessly.

This table shows that as the level of embedding risk management increases, risk becomes more prioritised and actively managed within an organisation; this resonated with the author who in her experience has found that when risks are embedded in an organisation, they are integrated into the hearts and minds of people within it. The successful embedding of risk management has been described by Berg (2014) as requiring change at all levels of an organisation where it impacts on all business activities undertaken and, on all employees. Furthermore, local authority Chief Executive Officers in the UK (SOLACE/CIPFA UK, 2000) described the embedding of risk management as probably the most significant change management initiative undertaken since the inception of local government. This change is required to support compliance with required legislation, codes of practice, standards, guidance and government circulars, and ultimately it can be applied to support organisational transformation so that the organisation remains relevant, profitable and fulfils its legislative mandate, as well as demonstrating that it is dynamic and has the capacity to respond in a timely manner to a rapidly changing environment (Nurcan and Rolland, 2002).

While all organisations may wish to successfully embed risk management, achieving such an outcome is a considerable challenge and in the case of public bodies, will require supporting evidence. In this regard, Fraser and Henry (2007) report that internal monitoring bodies such as Internal Audit (IA) functions and Audit and Risk Committees are increasingly involved, and these bodies represent a tool to measure the effectiveness of risk management. Within the Irish public sector, regulatory

bodies such as the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) scrutinise, question and clarify on any issues of concern to verify that there is probity of public monies. Such audits can be used proactively by organisations to measure progress and identify deficits which need to be managed, hopefully leading to a risk maturity state when risk management is successfully embedded throughout the organisation.

However, getting to a risk maturity state requires organisational change and the empirical evidence suggests a high failure rate for change management initiatives (Decker et al. 2012). Up to 70% of change management initiatives fail for various reasons (Lueke, 2003 and Okumus and Hemmington 1998), while Oakland and Tanner (2007) estimate that only 10% of change management initiatives are successful and sustainable into the medium to long term. Managing change programmes is challenging and certain factors are critical to a successful outcome; Royce (2018) cites seven factors including executive support, change management leadership, communication, and accountability; many of these factors are referred to in Kotter's (1996) eight stages for planned organisational change which can be used to support new practices in organisations and are echoed by Mehta et al. (2014) in their study on the value of knowledge management to support successful change management programmes. In this study, the focus will be on facilitation as a tool to assist in embedding risk management as Warner (2015) suggests that good facilitation skills increase the likelihood of successful change management initiatives.

2.3.2 Facilitation as a Tool to Embed Risk Management

The impetus for this DBA study came from the author's observation of the dearth of studies on the embedding of risk management in organisations particularly in public bodies. This may be due to the failure of past studies to consider the value of facilitation as a management function to support embedding of risk management. However, a facilitation approach can lead to a chosen facilitator using their competency base to positively influence employee empowerment and buy-in to the change initiative (Appelbaum et al, 2014 and Appelbaum and Steed, 2004). This is echoed by other studies who report that the success of the embedding process is dependent on the style adopted by the facilitator (Berg, 2014 and Schwarz, 2017).

The decision on whether to use an EF or an IF may be due to politics and/or power relationships and what will best meet the organisation's needs (Kaarst-Brown, 1999). The positive factors associated with utilising an IF is that the post-holder is known to the organisation and may be able to gain a higher level of trust (Schwarz, 2017) which can be beneficial to support embedding of change. It can also afford the employee an opportunity to enhance their professional development, but it may not be the case that the required internal resource will be available within the organisation. Furthermore, Schwarz (2017) states that the benefits and limitations of an appointment of an IF or EF needs critical examination when deciding on the best approach to adopt with facilitating the planning and implementation of change which may include: the size and value of the project, the criticality of it to the success of the

organisation, the cost of an EF, the availability of an IF, and previous experience of using an EF versus an IF.

The chosen facilitator should be trusted as they may lead or provide advice or combine these roles to design the change management process (Greiner and Metzger, 1983 and Schwarz, 2017). Chathoth et al. (2011) endorsed the importance of trust in facilitation and described it as a concept with three dimensions: (1) Integrity (2) Commitment, and (3) Dependability. These dimensions should link with the organisational ethic and culture and should be supported by the articulation of a full understanding of why change is required (Schwarz, 2017). For change to succeed such as embedding risk management, it requires a methodology for planning, introducing and managing the change process (Hammer and Champy, 1993; Leigh, 2003 and Wardale, 2013). This will also require the facilitator to be able to influence the policy and decision making of the organisation (Dutton and Ashford, 1993) by influencing the Senior Management Team (SMT) regarding the allocation of resources.

For this research study, the author identified a public sector organisation which needed support in embedding risk management into its decision-making process – this organisation is described in Section 4.1 For this organisation, there was no identified internal staff member with the required skillset to act as a facilitator for a risk management process; however, the organisation did commit to appointing an IF who would work in tandem with the author (as an EF) to improve their facilitation skills over time. This did present a challenge for the author and to understand the function of competency in facilitating the development of the novice's professional competency, she

relied on Benner's (1982) work where she described the ladder of development of professional competency in five steps: (1) Novice (2) Advanced beginner (3) Competent (4) Proficient, and (5) Expert. This study defined competency as encompassing knowledge, skill acquisition and experience. It is intended that the author will support the novice facilitator to move up the competency ladder but it is unknown at the outset how rapidly progress can be made over the short timescale of the research study (eight months); however, if successful transfer of the research project (Wardale, 2013) is to be achieved, it is expected that the IF should reach the minimum level of 'competent' (level three) at the end of the research study. Wardale (2013) identified that a key factor in contributing to project failure was the failure to transfer ownership and responsibility to the project owner – this will be a challenge in this study and the author acting as an EF will be planning to handover risk management functions to the IF and SMT during the facilitation process.

This study thus addresses a need for research into how an expert EF interacts with a novice IF as identified by Tavella and Papadopoulos (2015). It is expected that the research findings will add to the research theory and practice on facilitation in public bodies and the optimal interaction of IF and EF in supporting embedding of risk management in public bodies.

3. A Conceptual Model for Embedding Risk Management

The conceptual model for this research study will incorporate the published models for the risk management

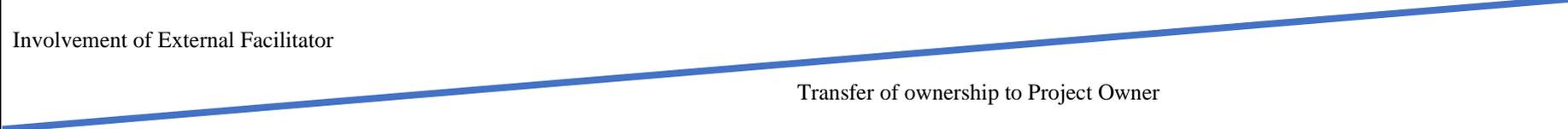
architecture (ISO 31000:2018 and Alarm/Airmic/IRM, 2010), facilitation (Schwarz, 2017), embedding (Kitson et al, 1998) and transferring ownership of change management projects from project manager to project owner (Wardale, 2013). The focus will be on the EF supporting the professional competency of an IF so that gradually the EF can withdraw from the facilitation role while the IF grows his/her professional competency and thus successful project transfer can take place (Wardale, 2013). As embedding of risk management is a change management initiative, the author will refer to the literature from Kotter (1996) and Lewin (1947) as well as change management literature (Wardale, 2013; Oakland and Tanner, 2007; Lueke, 2003 and Okumus and Hemmington, 1998). An initial conceptual model is presented in Figure Two below drawn from a range of literature sources and this will be revisited in Section Three when the research results from the chosen public sector organisation are considered.

The model did evolve over the course of the DBA study as initially the researcher was focused on the change management models postulated by Lewin (1947) and Kotter (1996) as well as the quality management model promoted by Demming (1956) and his Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) cycle. It was felt that Lewin's change model of Unfreeze-Move-Refreeze was most relevant to the public sector organisation chosen for this study and hence this is included in the conceptual model – as the author views the process of embedding risk management as starting with unlocking behaviours that are inhibiting risk management and ultimately trying to create new practices which can become established in the organisation. Published risk management standards such as the

International Risk Management Standard 31000:2009 (updated in 2018) were also considered to be relevant since the ultimate aim of this project was to embed risk management in a chosen public sector organisation; the work of Kitson et al. (1998) and Harvey (2001) was very relevant here as they reported on how to secure successful embedding of change.

The nature of a facilitation approach to embed risk management will entail a transfer of project ownership as the project approaches completion (this process was discussed earlier in the previous section 2.3.2. Authors on successful project transfer (Wardale, 2013) and empowerment (Senge, 2000 and Porter-O' Grady 1992) proved useful guidance in this regard.

Figure Two: Conceptual Model for Embedding Risk Management Using a Facilitation Approach (Adapted from: ISO 31000:2018 and Alarm/Airmic/IRM, 2010; Schwarz, 2017; Wardale, 2013; Royce 2018; Oakland and Tanner, 2007; Kitson et al, 1998; Okumus and Hemmington, 1998; Kotter, 1996; Lewin, 1947; Tavella and Papadopoulos, 2015).

Stage 1 <u>Planning</u> <i>Risk Registers in Place</i> <i>(No embedding)</i>	Stage 2 Execution	Stage 3 Monitor and measure outputs	Stage 4 Monitor and measure outcomes	Stage 5 <i>Risks Prioritised at Strategic Level</i> <i>(Risk management fully embedded)</i>
Preparation and planning. Design risk management architecture.	Promoting the ownership of managing risks.	Monitor level of risk management embeddedness.	Monitor and communicate level of risk management embeddedness.	Verification of embedding and continued monitoring.
Anchor embedding in organisational culture				
Identifying need for change. Unfreezing the organisation.	Moving the organisation Facilitation skills (guiding the team, empowering a broad-based plan, leadership, communication)			Refreezing and transfer of responsibility and promote continued embedding of risk management
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> Involvement of External Facilitator Transfer of ownership to Project Owner </div> 				

This model proposes that the process for embedding risk management involves an interaction of literature from the areas of risk management, facilitation and change management and suggests that a facilitation approach can help move an organisation from an initial stage where risks are not embedded at all to a final stage where risks are managed actively at a strategic level. Central to achieving a positive outcome is the facilitation skills shown by the EF particularly in the opening stages – these skills include leadership, empowerment and communication skills – which can assist with the transfer of ownership to the project owners.

3.1 Research Aim and Objectives

The author has reflected on her career as a risk management professional and her work with the public sector and the reasons for success or failure with supporting the embedding of risk management in public bodies. Sourcing relevant academic literature has also assisted in clarifying the research aim for this research study: *Embedding Risk Management at Senior Management Level in a Public-Sector Organisation using a Facilitation Approach: An Exploratory Study*. Literature for this research aim has been outlined in the conceptual model and draws from areas such as change management, facilitation, and risk management. A perceived gap in the literature, this study will fill a void on the dearth of studies looking at the embedding of risk management in the public sector. However, this research aim does draw on related literature such as evidence from the financial services sector (banking and insurance) (Fraser and Henry, 2007; Fraser et

al. 2015) where it was found that the emphasis was on the structures and systems required for compliance with risk management legislation and standards and there was evidence of adopting a tick-box approach to compliance being in place.

Four research objectives have been decided:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management. In this regard, this study will build on the work of Kitson et al. (1998) where an evidence-based approach was adopted to the implementation of a change in nursing practice. Harvey et al. (2002) also reported on how facilitation can be utilised to successfully get evidence into nursing practice. In addressing this objective, the author intends to interview two Experts in public sector risk management as well as securing data from a pilot study in one ETB referred to as West ETB. It is intended to source evidence to demonstrate the function of facilitation (Schwarz, 2017 and Hogan, 2002) and the role of the facilitator (Kitson et al. 1998 and Harvey et al. 2002) while demonstrating how facilitation can be a valuable tool to support embedding of risk management. The findings to support this research objective will be presented in Section Two, Paper Three.

2. To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation. Evidence in publications from management consultancies such as PWC, KPMG and Deloitte (2019) are useful for risk practitioners in advising on what processes

are required to implement risk management particularly where there is a legislative requirement for compliance and for financial probity, however they are not focused on embedding the management of risk into the organisational culture to ensure the employees own the risks they manage. They advocate the adoption of models such as ISO 31000:2018, or through the roll-out of an information management system. They also advise the appointment of a Risk Officer to support the implementation of risk management and for this study, the author intends to work as an EF to support a nominated person as IF at the research site – referred to as East ETB to protect its identity – so that she can demonstrate how the IF’s professional competency can develop from novice to expert (Benner, 1982 and Tavella Papadopoulos 2015) and how a facilitation approach can add value for the IF and the project site so that there is successful embedding of risk management. The conclusions from this work will be presented in both Papers Three and Four of Section Two and in Section Three where the author’s conclusions and recommendations will be included.

3. To assess the enabling factors on the embedding of risk management at the SMT level. A review of relevant literature suggests that a range of factors interact on the success of risk management initiatives; these include culture (Porter-O’ Grady, 1992 and Wardale, 2013), change management (Lewin, 1947; Kotter, 1996 and Wardale, 2013), leadership (Senge, 2000), communication (Porter-O’ Grady, 1992), and empowerment (Porter-O’ Grady, 1992) as important enablers to support embedding risk management. This objective will be supported by data obtained from interviews with East ETB’s SMT, a Focus Group of Senior Administrative Managers (SAM),

documentation from the research site and from observations of SMT and other employees at the research site recorded by the author. A thematic analysis will be utilised to identify key themes relevant to identifying the enablers to support the research aim and objectives. From the thematic analysis the author intends to demonstrate that facilitation as a function and the role of the facilitator are beneficial to support embedding risk management in a public body. The evidence arising from the thematic analysis will be presented in Section Two Paper Four.

4. To evaluate the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach. This objective draws from the literature presented earlier in Section 2.3.1 on the embedding of risk management such as Hodge (2002) Fone and Young (2000 and 2005), the Australian Department of Finance (2016) and DPER, (2016) which recommend several practical strategies to achieve this such as building of staff awareness, and promoting a positive risk culture. This objective is considered key in demonstrating that a systematic approach (Deming, 1956) has been adopted by the author, and it is the data from this activity that will determine the success or failure of the research study while also providing insight into how to progress and manage continued embedding and maturity of risk management. Data will be obtained from an exit interview with the IF and an interview with one member of the Audit and Risk Committee to obtain their views on the level of progress with embedding risk management since the inception of the research study. This will be supported with two desktop evaluations to assess the level of compliance with the: (1) Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015), and (2) International

Risk Management Standard (ISO 31000:2018). Wardale (2013) identified that change management projects may fail because of failure to transfer the ownership of the project from the EF to the project owner. In this research study the author will ensure there is a successful transfer so that sustained embedding of risk management is maintained from the short to the medium and longer term. The findings from the evaluations will be presented in Section Two Paper Four.

In summary, the author intends to secure evidence from the data collated and analysed to demonstrate that facilitation is a key function to support change management and in the research study, this can lead to the embedding of risk management in a public body – East ETB. It is intended that the research findings will contribute to both theory and practice while also identifying opportunities for further research that should prove beneficial to both public and private sector organisations.

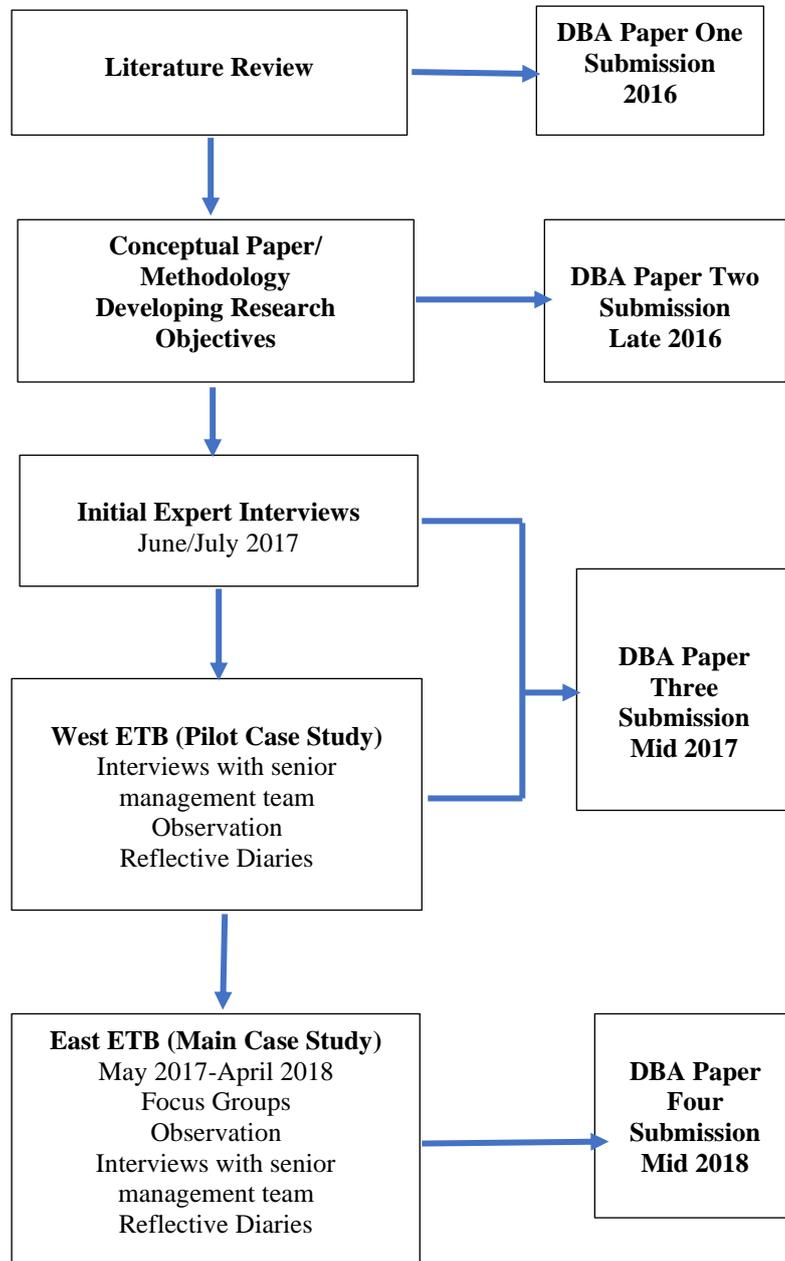
4. Research Methodology

When considering a research methodology for this study, the author used the research onion framework of Saunders et al. (2007) to outline the methodological choices that were undertaken in this study. The chosen research methodology will be an exploratory case study (Yin, 2012 and 2014 and Eisenhardt, 1989) which has been described by Yin, (2014, p. 238) as having a ‘purpose to identify the research questions or procedures to be used in a subsequent research study’. This exploratory study will utilise a combination of primary and secondary data sources and

that a range of research methods are available to the researcher. Bryman (1995) explained that an exploratory case study relies on a small number of cases to be explored and that the unit of analysis may be an organisation or a section of an organisation. It is the author's intention that the unit of analysis for exploration will be the SMT of East ETB. As a researcher she is aware of the limitations of case study research (Tellis, 1997); however, this has not deterred her from seeking out the factors that influence successful facilitation and how facilitation as a function can be utilised to support change management such as embedding risk management in a public body. The academic literature advises that case study evidence is idiosyncratic (Blau et al. 1976) and the findings cannot be replicated across other research sites. In the proposed research, the author will seek evidence of how embedding change management in East ETB can be replicated across other public bodies to promote success in embedding risk management.

An outline of how the proposed methodology maps across the four papers of the DBA Paper Series is shown in Figure Three below.

Figure Three: Overview of Research Process and Methodological Approach



The philosophies examined in Saunders et al. (2007) Research Onion include positivism, interpretivism and realism. The author examined and considered the continuum between a positivist approach compared to an interpretivist approach and noted that a positivism paradigm requires a large sample for analysis and is concerned with hypothesis testing which produces precise, objective and quantitative data with results demonstrating high reliability but low validity and where the study results can be generalised to the population. By adopting an interpretivist paradigm the author is aware that she will be using a small sample at a natural location where she will be generating rich, subjective, qualitative data with low reliability but high validity findings. Furthermore, these findings can be generalised from the research study setting to similar settings (Collis and Hussey, 2014).

While the positivism approach originated in the natural sciences (Collis and Hussey, 2014 and Bhattacharjee, 2012), interpretivism is a philosophy that emerged in response to criticisms of positivism. This developed an understanding of social phenomena within a specific context and demonstrates that 'social reality is affected by the act of investigating it' (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 343). In the context of this research, the social phenomena will be the role of the EF in developing the IF's competency to support the embedding of risk management in the research site – East ETB (Hussey and Hussey, 2014). For these reasons the author considers that an interpretivist paradigm will be applicable to this research study.

Additional details on how the researcher intends to achieve the research objectives is shown in Table Five below – this

table also includes timelines for the collection of the required data to be gathered and analysed.

Table Five: Linking Research Objectives and Proposed Research Methods

No.	Research Objective	Research Method	Researcher's Comments	Timeline
1.	To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management.	Two interviews with experts in public sector risk management and in the facilitation process in the public sector. Interviews with the SMT in an ETB that has embedded risk management with the support of the researcher – referred to as West ETB. Observation. Reflective diary.	Despite the considerable experience that the researcher has with the facilitation process, it is felt important to develop a greater explanation of the factors needed to successfully embed risk management at the outset of this study. This will be achieved through expert interviews that will shed insight on the wealth of knowledge and experience of the facilitation process, as well as interviewing the SMT of an ETB (West ETB) where the researcher has worked to support embedding of risk management. This will allow for learning from experience going forward – such learning will be captured in the reflective diary. The learning will also support the researcher in developing a question set for interviews with the ETB research site senior management team SMT (East ETB) which is planned for Autumn 2017.	June 2017 to July 2017

No.	Research Objective	Research Method	Researcher's Comments	Timeline
2.	To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation.	Interviews with members of the SMT of an ETB referred to as a pilot site (West ETB). Interviews with members of the SMT and the IF of the research site (East ETB). A focus group of the SAMs in the ETB research site. Observations of behaviours and participation by interviewees in the ETB research site, and by focus group members. Reflective diary.	The author as researcher will support the education and professional development of the IF at the research site (East ETB) so that she will acquire the necessary competence set to be competent at the conclusion of the research study. Continued engagement with the SMT and IF of the research site ETB is viewed as essential to facilitate an orderly transition to the embedding of risk management and such discussions (to be held individually and in a focus group) will likely have to deal with potential resistance or lack of clarity on what is required to get risk management embedded. It is also felt important to spread the facilitation message to SAMs as these can be the real change agents for change programmes in organisations. Such a focus group will also serve as a check and balance to verify if the SMT are cascading the steps needed for embedding risk management downwards in their organisation. This will also be a check on how successful the IF is in coordinating the risk management function, communicating the risk management message, and in supporting those charged with responsibility for embedding risk management.	May 2017 to April 2018

No.	Research Objective	Research Method	Researcher's Comments	Timeline
3.	To assess the enabling factors on the embedding of risk management.	Collation of data from interviews, documentation, observations and a reflective diary. A thematic analysis will be used to identify the enablers to support successful facilitation of embedding risk management.	While the author has identified that facilitation is a tool that she has applied successfully to support embedding risk management in public bodies she is aware that there are other factors that are important, and it is these factors that will be sought and analysed through a thematic analysis approach.	July 2017 – April 2018
4.	To evaluate the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach.	Data will be collated to support an evaluation of the success or otherwise of facilitation in supporting embedding risk management. The data will be sourced from: 1. Desktop review of compliance with ISO 31000:2018 – International Risk Management Standard. 2. Desktop review of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015). 3. Exit interview with the research site's IF. 4. Interview with member of the research site's Audit and Risk Committee.	It will be necessary for the author to evaluate the level of success with embedding risk management at the research site – East ETB. The value of utilising a facilitation approach will be incorporated into the process. As the evaluation process will be qualitative the author intends to source evidence from different entities so that the validity of the research study can be demonstrated. The findings should also demonstrate the value of facilitation in supporting embedding of risk management in a public body.	March 2018 – May 2018

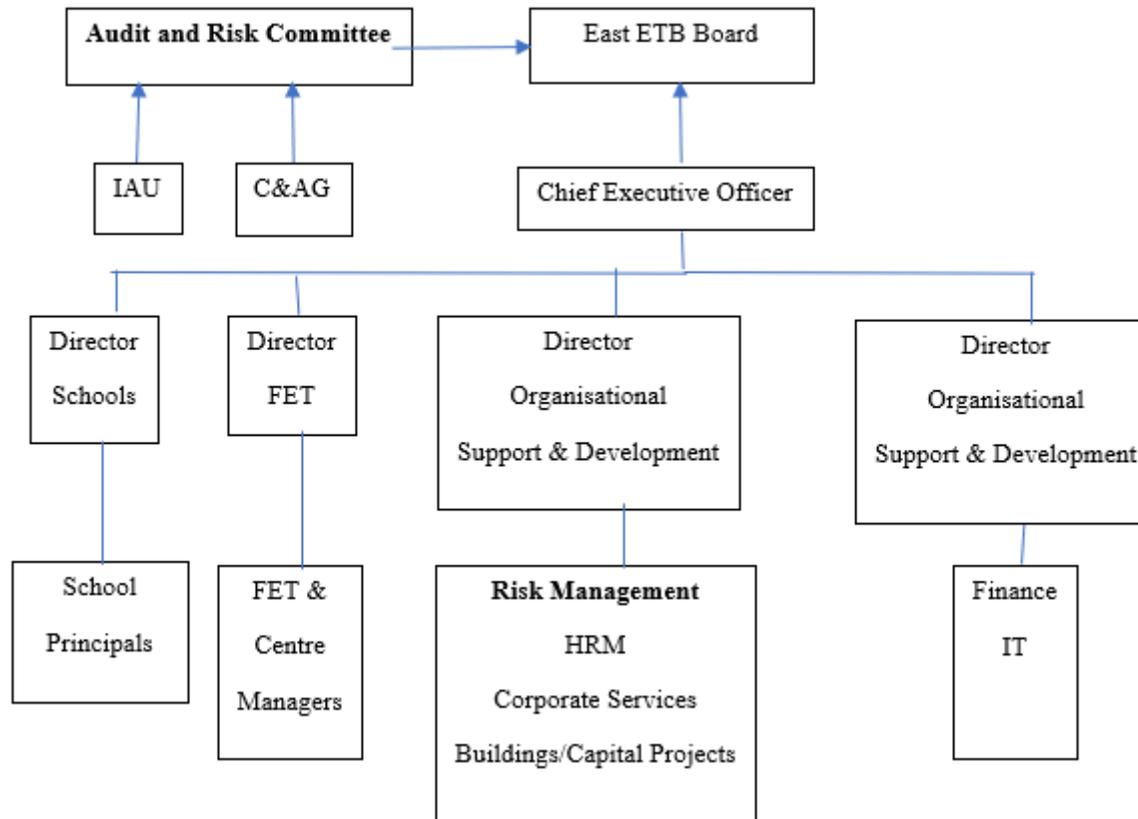
4.1 The Chosen Research Organisation – East ETB

The chosen research site for this study is an Education and Training Board (ETB) organisation and will be referred to as East ETB to protect its identity. By way of background to this sector, sixteen ETBs were established in 2013 following the aggregation of the 33 Vocational Education Committees (VECs) and the enactment of the Education and Training Board Act, 2013. This was followed by the commencement of the Education and Training Act, 2014 to facilitate the transfer of the FÁS training services to the ETB sector. As of 2019, the ETB sector provides education services at primary, secondary and tertiary level as well as adult education and training programmes. Funding is provided by the Departments of Education and Skills (DES), Health (DofH), and Social Protection (DofSP), SOLAS (public body operating under the aegis of the DES), and the European Social Fund (ESF). The 16 ETBs employ approximately 35,000 staff (Education and Training Board Ireland (ETBI), 2017) delivering education and training services at primary, secondary and tertiary level as well as adult education and training services to thousands of learners.

East ETB is one of the largest of the ETBs in Ireland covering a large geographical area with a revenue budget of circa €300m, employing approximately 4,000 staff (2017 Annual Report). It provides education at primary, secondary and tertiary level as well as further education and training (FET) services to approximately 40,000 learners. Oversight is provided by an independent board and an Audit and Risk Committee oversees the financial probity and risk management of the ETB.

The author's initial interaction with East ETB took place in 2013 when she was approached to facilitate the development of the risk management system (architecture and embedding) following its establishment. At the time, she recommended that an IF should be appointed to coordinate the embedding of risk management across the ETB due to its size and complexity. The recommendation was positively acknowledged although funding was not available at the time to create a new IF post. In early 2017, risk management was an increased priority for the SMT, and emphasis was placed on delivering its Statement of Strategy 2017-2021. To this end, an IF with a human resource background was appointed in May 2017 and the author was requested to act as an EF to facilitate the post-holder's induction and provide professional support for a twelve-month period. It was also envisaged that the author as EF would provide a range of supports to the SMT and to line managers over this period. Figure Three below provides an overview of East ETB's organisational structure and shows the reporting structures to the Directors and onwards to the CEO and Board. This reflects the recent priority given to risk management and note that the Audit and Risk Committee which reports to the Board also act as external validators of risk management practices in this ETB.

Figure 4: East ETB's Organisational Structure



C&AG Comptroller and Auditor General
 FET Further Education and Training
 IAU Internal audit unit
 OSD Organisation Support and Development.

As the author's interactions during the 2017-2018 period were primarily with East ETB's SMT along with some interaction with the line managers, this study's scope is primarily focused on the extent to which risk management is embedded in this part of the organisation but comments are added in Section Three of this thesis on the extent to which risk management can be embedded further throughout this large ETB.

In summary, the author has selected a large ETB located in the East of Ireland for this research study. It is part of a sector that has undergone significant change in the past decade in its structure, size, responsibilities and accountabilities as specified in its respective legislation and codes of practice. These changes have supported a transformation in how education and training services are delivered to support the development of learners, to supply better prepared learners for the workforce and, to enhance the attraction of Ireland as a place for investment by overseas investors. Significant challenges and risks remain such as difficulties in securing adequate resources to deliver services, to demonstrating compliance with legislation and codes of practice, and to demonstrating accountability to the government's Public Accounts Committee (PAC). In this context, failure to embed risk management may result in significant organisational failure such as failure to deliver on its Statement of Strategy as well as attracting unwanted scrutiny from government and other agencies, and adverse reputational damage. With this information to hand, the author will focus on supporting the research site and its IF to design the required risk management architecture and to embed the practice of managing risk at all levels into all business activities so that key risks to the delivery of the Statement of Strategy will

be mitigated. The chosen facilitation approach will see the author working as an EF with an IF to help the ETB to embed risk management. This requires each party to be respectful and to demonstrate trust (Schwarz, 2017 and Chathoth et al. 2011), while remaining accountable to the CEO of the research site for embedding to be successful.

5. Proposed Research Contribution

The research study findings will make both theoretical and practice contributions. From a theoretical viewpoint, this is believed to be the first study to show how facilitation can support embedding of risk management in public bodies. In this way, it builds on Tavella and Papadopoulos (2015) who identified a dearth of research on the roles of novice and expert facilitators, and Wardale (2013) who reported a paucity of research on facilitation as a tool to support change and why planning the transfer of project ownership from the EF to the IF and SMT is key to successful ownership and embedding of change including risk management. The implications of showing that a facilitation approach can deliver a positive outcome can be very significant for organisations seeking to embed risk management which entails significant organisational change. In this regard, Schwarz (2017) reported how facilitation can support successful change in organisational culture in the private sector and it is proposed that this will also apply in the public sector despite the challenging climate that exists in relation to resources, time and competency constraints. In this way it will extend facilitation into the area of risk management which will be an ongoing compliance requirement for public bodies into

the future. Furthermore, the study will shed light on how to manage the transfer of ownership from an EF to an IF/Project Owner during an Embedding Process which is essential to achieving a successful final outcome.

A number of practice-based contributions are also envisaged. Firstly, the author as an experienced risk management professional has embraced the concept of managing risk to support embedding; however, this approach has not always led to a successful outcome. Through this study, she will acquire a deeper appreciation of the key factors which drive the embedding process and arrive at a model for how to optimally use facilitation to help embed risk management in a public sector organisation. The planned approach at East ETB will involve an EF supporting the development of the IF's professional competency (Schwarz, 2017 and Hogan, 2002) and the study will also show how such an approach can assist in the transfer of knowledge to both the IF and the SMT who will assume responsibility for risk management as the project evolves. If successful, this could be a template for public bodies seeking to embed risk management. This study should also assist organisations seeking to use the services of facilitators to assist with embedding risk management as it will highlight the range of competencies needed such as communication, empowerment and leadership and it is envisaged that when facilitators possess this array of skillsets, it increases the prospect of successfully embedding risk management. Furthermore, the author intends to demonstrate that as the embedding of risk management will impact on all employees and all business activities that it will have a positive impact on organisational culture and overall success for the public body. It is expected that the

empowerment of employees by those at SMT level will enhance embedding and ownership of risk management.

In summary, the contributions to theory and practice arising from this research study are novel as the author did not find academic evidence of a similar study. The proposed contributions should also prove useful when promoting the importance of facilitation in embedding risk management in any organisation and particularly in public bodies.

6. Thesis Presentation

This thesis is presented in three sections:

Section 1: Introduction to the research study. The introduction provides insights on the role and function of facilitation to support a change in organisational culture, risk management in the public sector, the selected research site and its challenges as well as the research aim and objectives. An initial conceptual model is presented as a road map to support the research study and to assist with understanding the importance of change management, risk management and facilitation. This model envisages that an IF supported by an EF can promote and support the embedding of risk management through a facilitation approach.

Section 2: Papers One to Four of the research series with Prefaces between each paper will assist the reader to understand the dynamic nature of the research study and the rationale for change as the research study progresses.

The Prefaces provide clarification on changes between each research paper which supports the dynamic nature of the research study as it evolved over the eight months in a live environment. They also reflect the advice received from Examiners as each research paper was presented and assessed.

Section 3: Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations provides insights arising from the thematic analysis and the recommendations in respect of contributions to theory and practice.

Researcher's Reflective Diary: Section 3 is followed by extracts from the author's Reflective Diary to demonstrate the professional development and learning undertaken throughout the lifecycle of the DBA programme and the journey travelled with the support of her Supervisors and Examiners.

7. Summary

The research study proposed in this introductory paper is centred on a public body – East ETB – with the key objective of demonstrating how facilitation can be applied to support embedding risk management so that compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) and the delivery of East ETB's Statement of Strategy 2017-21 can be demonstrated. It is envisaged that this research study and its findings should prove valuable to all public bodies and to the ETB sector.

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Section 2: Research paper series (1-4)

Paper 1: Conceptual Paper

1. Introduction

This literature review has been undertaken to identify the key learning in the development and implementation of change management initiatives using a collaborative action research style with relevance to the implementation of risk management within an Irish Education and Training Board (ETB) where change initiatives are fraught with danger and frequently fail (Wardale, 2013; Oakland and Tanner, 2007; Leuke, 2003, Okumus and Hemmington, 1998).

Section two provides an overview of the literature on risk management, enterprise risk management and its development in the public sector with reference to published risk management standards and how organisations are embracing principles to support the management of risk. The value of risk management is discussed with emphasis to the public sector.

Section three examines the drivers for change in the light of significant system failures. The importance of leadership, communication and culture receive attention as they have been identified as critical factors leading to significant system failure. To prevent a repeat of these failures governments and other key stakeholders are driving a hard agenda to implement risk management. The author has focused on the role of the external and internal facilitator (IF) roles and how best to utilise such a resource to support implementation of risk management.

Section four is devoted to the function of collaborative action research as a style to support the implementation of

risk management with reflection and action learning used as the vehicle to facilitate change in organisational culture.

Section five provides an example of the conceptual model for organisational change so that risk management is implemented into the business activities of the ETB. The model incorporates the external and internal stakeholders who will be the key to the successful implementation process.

Section 6 provides the summary and conclusion to this literature review with emphasis on the relevance of the subject of successfully supporting the implementation of risk management into an ETB over a two-year period 2016 – 2018 by utilising a collaborative action research style.

2. The Evolution of Risk Management

2.1 The Nature and Importance of Risk and its Management

Risk is a phenomenon that has gained an increasing level of importance in our lives and in how business is conducted (Hemrit and Arab, 2013; Hood and Smith, 2012). Risk is the foundation of insurance (Outreville, 2014). It is estimated that 80 percent of risks are not insurable (HiTrans, UK, 2011) and it is for this reason that risk needs to be managed.

Risk has been defined by the International Standards Organisation (ISO) in their risk management standard ISO 31000 (2009) as *the effect of uncertainty on objectives*. Up to the nineteen seventies the focus was on financial and

compliance (legal) risk and since the nineteen seventies it has been on enterprise risk management or business risk (Fone and Young, 2000 and 2005).

The phenomenon of risk is difficult to conceptualise, but it is of considerable importance for the functioning of all economies and economic agents (Outreville, 2014). The United Kingdom's (UK) Treasury (2004) defined risk as *the uncertainty of outcome, whether positive opportunity or negative threat, of actions and events*, and cited the opportunities (upside) of managing risk as *achieving business objectives*, integration of the management of risk into business processes, improved organisational reputation and better management of risk to the public (Hood and Smith, 2012). The subject of uncertainty was examined by Lipshitz and Strauss (1997) who argued that decision makers conceptualise uncertainty and risk in different ways depending on the decision-making process involved.

The history of risk stretches to the commencement of the world (Bernstein, 1998) and is derived from the Italian word 'risicare', (to dare) which Bernstein described as a choice rather than a dare, and argued that the mastery of risk defined the boundary between modern times and the past which he described as revolutionary. He argued that the management of risk guides us over a vast range of decision-making, from allocating wealth to safeguarding public health i.e. the benefits of managing risk. Other benefits include enhanced professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness of resources as well as raising the ethical standards in an organisation (Jondle et al. 2013).

The development of risk into the 1970s and beyond has been described as the risk society, (Boudia and Jas, 2007)

when governments and public and private sector bodies started to express an interest in the subject (Fone and Young, 2000 and 2002). The reasons included the need to increase profits, minimise waste and maximise return on investment for shareholders (Hemrit and Arab, 2012), while eliminating fraud and protecting organisational and personal and professional reputations (Chartered Institute of Public Financial Accountants (CIPFA), Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) UK, 2002, Department of Finance (DOF), 2004). It is worth noting that it takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it (Benjamin Franklin, 1706 – 1790).

2.2 Principles and Processes of Risk Management

The principles of risk management have been espoused in literature and published by AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM (2002); ISO 31000 (2009); National Audit Office (NAO) (UK) (2012), and the Committee of the Sponsoring Organisations (COSO) of the Threadway Commission, United States, (US) (2013). The author selected these organisations because of their international professional reputation and focus on promoting risk management as effective management (SOLACE/CIPFA, 2002).

The AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM principles numbered six in 2002, while the COSO principles published 11 years later numbered 17 (Table 1). The broadening of the principles may be due to the changing global risk landscape with the international financial collapse of 2008 and high-profile corporate collapses such as: Enron (2002), WorldCom

(2003), Parmalat (2003) and others. At the same time the principles detailed in 2002 were focused on a principles-based approach to risk management whereas the principles of 2013 are more prescriptive so that nothing is left to chance.

Table 1: Risk Management Principles

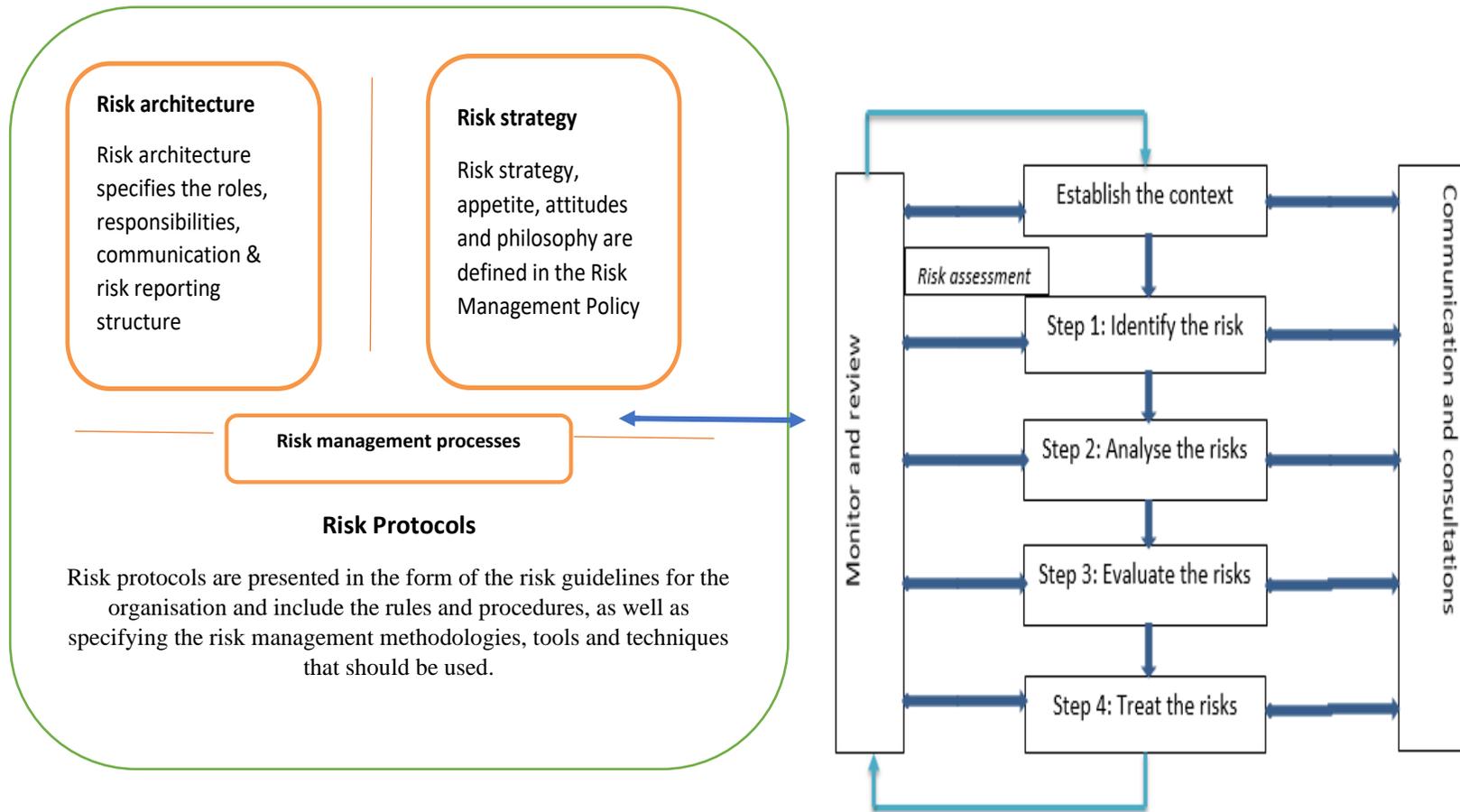
No.	AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM (2002)	ISO 31000 (2009)	National Audit Office UK (2012)	COSO & SOX Compliance (2013)
1.	Risk management is a central part of the strategic management of any organisation.	Risk managements creates and protects value.	An engaged Board focuses the business on managing the things that matter.	Control environment: demonstrates commitment to integrity and ethical values.
2.	Risk management is a process whereby organisations methodically address the risks attached to their activities.	Risk management is an integral part of all organisation processes.	The response to risk is most proportionate when the tolerance of risk is clearly defined and articulated.	Exercise oversight responsibility.
3.	A successful risk management initiative should be proportionate to the level of risk in the organisation, aligned with other corporate activities, comprehensive in its scope, embedded into routine activities and dynamic by being responsive to changing circumstances.	Risk management is part of decision-making.	Risk management is most effective when ownership of and accountability for risks is clear.	Establishes structure, authority and responsibility.

No.	AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM (2002)	ISO 31000:2009	National Audit Office UK (2012)	COSO & SOX Compliance (2013)
4.	The focus of risk management is the assessment of significant risks and the implementation of suitable risk responses.	Risk management explicitly addresses uncertainty.	Effective decision-making is underpinned by good quality information.	Demonstrates commitment to competence.
5.	The objectives of risk management is to achieve maximum sustainable value from all the activities for the organisation.	Risk management is systematic, structure and timely.	Decision-making is informed by a considered and rigorous evaluation and costing of risk.	Enforces accountability.
6.	Risk management increases the probability of success and reduces both the probability of failure and the level of uncertainty associated with achieving the objectives of the organisation.	Risk management is based on the best available information.	Future outcomes are improved by implementing lessons learnt.	Risk assessment specifies suitable objectives.
7.		Risk management takes human and cultural factors into account.		Identifies and analyses risks.
8.		Risk management is transparent and inclusive.		Assesses fraud risk.
9.		Risk management is dynamic, iterative and responsive to change.		Identifies and analyses significant change.
10.		Risk management facilitates continual improvement of the organisation.		Control activities Information and communication Monitoring.

The principles described by AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM (2002) are focused on the development of the risk management system while those described by ISO are broader and include human and cultural factors which are very relevant in changing organisational behaviour (Appelbaum et al. 2014 and 2015). The principles listed by the NAO UK are broader and include risk tolerance and appetite. Finally the principles espoused under the COSO and Sarbanne Oxley Act, 2002 (SOX) compliance framework include ethical requirements specifying processes for the management of fraud risk and communication. The author will consider all these principles when undertaking her action research project so that the broad principles are detailed and implemented.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the architecture of the risk management system (AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM 2002) and the processes described in ISO 31000 (2009). The risk management processes are referred to in the architecture of the risk management system while the ISO standard provides the insight into the processes of: establishing the context; identifying, analysing, evaluating and treating risk, the requirement for communication and consultation with key stakeholders and finally, the practice of monitoring and reviewing the risk management system for effectiveness. All of this is grounded in the risk management principles described above. Many organisations may consider the principles too onerous for compliance purposes, however they should be commensurate with the complexity of the business, and all organisations who wish to be successful should strive to comply with them.

Figure 1: Risk Architecture, Strategy, Process and Protocols (AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM, 2010 and ISO 31000:2009)



2.3 Benefits and Limitations of Managing Risk

The benefits and opportunities of managing risk can be enhanced by adopting the risk management principles which should add value and enhance opportunities and benefits (Hood and Smith, 2012) such as: reduction in insurance premium, number and severity of incidents, fatalities, additional work at the strategic and operational level (i.e. enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the utilisation of resources (UK Treasury, 2004)), and reduction in financial expenditure and enhancement of organisational reputation (DOF, 2004; ISO, 2009; World Health Organisation (WHO), 2009 and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2004). Within the public sector the emphasis has frequently been linked to compliance requirements as well as value for money initiatives (UK Treasury, 2004), however the benefits that are cited for the private sector can also be accrued in the public sector by effective leadership and management (SOLACE/CIPFA, UK, 2002). The benefits of implementing risk management can be enhanced by the adoption of a risk management standard and by the appointment of a dedicated risk officer to enhance organisational knowledge and to coordinate the risk management system and to report on its effectiveness (Hemrit and Arab, 2012; Hood and Smith, 2012; Edwards et al. 1998, and Meltzer, 2007).

Where there are benefits with managing risk that are also limitations. When significant organisational failures such as Enron (2002), WorldCom (2002), Parmalat (2003) and the financial and economic collapse of 2008 were reviewed, it was found that risk management systems had been developed but had not been implemented and

embedded into the organisational DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) (the culture) (Seeger and Ulmer, 2003). As a result there were significant leadership (Enron, 2002) and communication failures (Enron, 2002 and WorldCom, 2002), as well as an aggressive public incentives policy in the US to encourage lenders to provide mortgages at any cost (sub-prime lending in the US) (Davidson, 2010), and fraud (Parmalat, 2003; Seeger and Ulmer, 2003; Chatterjee, 2003; Currall and Epstein, 2003; Jennings, 2004; Fisk, 2008; and Davidson, 2010). The lessons from these failures have generally resulted in an expanded regulatory system such as SOX compliance in the US, financial compliance in developed countries including Ireland and stricter controls exercised by government on public bodies such as the establishment of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER, 2011).

Vinnari and Skaerbaek (2014) found that the audit of risk management systems in the UK local authority sector revealed that risk management itself created unexpected uncertainties that would otherwise not have emerged. The uncertainties related to legal aspects of risk management solutions, the definition and operationalisation of risk management, and resources available for expanding risk management. They also found that such uncertainties related to the professional identities and responsibilities of operational managers. When considering the limitations of risk management in the public sector cognisance must also be had to the political and economic risks that are present which cannot be eliminated (Fone and Young, 2002) and which place a greater responsibility on public bodies to manage them effectively within the allocated resources. The issues of audit and manager competency require

further exploration and the author will examine these in her action research project.

2.4 Enterprise Risk Management

The evolution of enterprise risk management has been described (Casualty Actuarial Society Committee (CASC), 2003; Francis and Paladino, 2008; HiTrans, 2011 and Cican, 2014) as developing from financial risk, to compliance risk, to accidental risk, to enterprise risk management between the 1970s and the 1990s. COSO (2004), and Hoyt and Liebenberg (2009) advocated that the management of risk through the application of an enterprise risk management system improves organisational performance, as it is presumed to lower an organisation's overall risk of failure, and thus increase performance and value (Gordon et al; 2009). The Society of Actuaries described enterprise risk management as: *placing a greater emphasis on an organisation's departments to manage the risks of the enterprise as it offers a framework for effectively managing uncertainty, responding to risk and harnessing opportunities as they arise.*

The description of enterprise risk management adopts a holistic and integrated approach with communication and team working to support the management of business risk. The Economist Intelligence Unit (1995) (Table Two) demonstrated a shift from the old paradigm to a new paradigm which is looking forward with the organisational strategy as the road map to guide the organisation, its people and processes and where the emphasis is on the management of the business risks for overall success (Fone

and Young, 2002; Drennan et al. 2015; Francis and Paladino, 2008 and COSO, 2012).

Table 2: Old Paradigm and new Paradigm of Risk Management (Source: adaptation from The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1995, Managing Business Risk – An Integrated Approach).

Old paradigm	New paradigm
1. Retrospective analysis	1. Strategy
2. Ad hoc activity	2. Ongoing activity
3. Accounting, treasury and internal audit	3. All management activities
4. Fragmentation	4. Centralisation and coordination
5. Financial risk	5. Business risk
6. Inspection, detection, reaction	6. Anticipation, prevention, monitoring, controlling
7. Focus on people	7. Focus on processes and people.

The development of risk management over the past fifty years has focused on the significant weaknesses and failures in the private and public sectors internationally and in Ireland. The most significant failure has been the global economic and financial collapse of 2008 (Davidson, 2010). Other significant failures have included Enron (2002), WorldCom (2002), and the failure of Arthur Anderson Accounting Consultants to Enron (2002). These collapses have raised significant issues around the ethic of those in leadership and decision-making positions (Mc Nutt and Batho, 2005). Lessons have been learnt from these adverse events which are being applied in both the private and

public sector internationally. This is contributing to organisational stability and success, while also providing a competitive advantage for those who embrace the corrective actions, and where they have robust risk management systems to support the mitigation of the impact of the risk should it materialise (ISO 31000, 2009; DOF, 2004; UK Treasury, 2004). SOLACE CIPFA (2002) summarised the positive impact of enterprise risk management as “effective management”. The limitations of the risk management system brings its own risks where the leaders and managers may not be sufficiently competent and alert to identify emerging risks, as well as understanding the limitations of all management systems to provide alerts to the changing business landscape and the warnings when the landscape is changing as was found prior to the financial and economic collapse in 2008.

2.4.1 Enterprise Risk Management in the Private Sector

A significant growth in enterprise risk management in the private sector has stemmed from developments in the insurance sector and changes in the globalisation of the world (Collier and Woods, 2011). As only about 20 percent of risks are insurable and eighty percent are not (HiTrans, 2011) it is imperative that organisations manage risk, and because there is a moral and fiduciary obligation on the organisation to do so.

The importance of internal controls to support the management of risk was cited by Collier and Woods (2011) post the global economic and financial collapse. They advocated that the internal controls framework should be

enhanced to reflect the organisational risk appetite and the validity of the risk assessments. They were supported in their argument by reports which identified one of the factors for the economic and financial collapse as attributable to identified weaknesses and absence of internal controls, lack of understanding of the level of risk versus an organisation's risk appetite and, the behaviours of those leading organisations (Rizzi, 2010). The published literature on risk management to this point was weak in its emphasis on the importance of internal controls and the necessity to build a body of assurance through internal monitoring and audit. The research on enterprise risk management encompasses Demming's (1956) work with the Japanese motor industry where he focused on the development and implementation of a systematic approach to eliminate waste while enhancing efficiency referred to as the: plan, do, check, act cycle. This is now represented in all ISO standards.

The importance of management and employee behaviour (Collier and Woods, 2011) was reported by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ESRC and ACCA) (UK) in its 2014 publication, Culture and Channelling Corporate Behaviour. They supported the promotion of a positive corporate culture in the wake of various high-profile cases of corporate misconduct in sectors and industries previously perceived to be well-governed and regulated. They described the elusive, idiosyncratic and influential nature of corporate culture and proposed the very simple preliminary steps that could be taken to get the organisational culture right, such as: identify the culture you want, while understanding the culture you have and, take actions to reconcile what exists with what is desired.

In their conclusion, ESRC and ACCA state that there is no true or right way to assess culture, although there is now a growing trend for organisations to have their culture assessed as is evidenced by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) (UK), and Central Bank of Ireland (CBI). These bodies now require financial institutions to provide a detailed report on the organisational culture that prevails, and the risks associated with the identified culture. It may only be a short time before companies listed on international stock exchanges will also be required to have an evaluation of their culture undertaken. The prevailing factors of culture, behaviour and internal controls will also be explored in respect of the public sector in this literature review.

2.4.2 Enterprise Risk Management in the Public Sector

The lessons from the private sector have been applied to many public sector organisations and governments have viewed these failures as an opportunity to enhance public sector risk management (Drennan et al. 2015). Risk management in the public sector is not a new phenomenon, it has been present throughout history since the establishment of public institutions (Fone and Young, 2005). Examples include the building of walls to defend cities and towns (Bernstein 1998), to the establishment of utilities and road infrastructure (Fone and Young, 2000).

Throughout the late 19th and into the early 20th century risk management in the public sector fell under the guise of public administration, which was characterised by the dominance of the rule of law and demonstrating

compliance, a focus on administering set rules and guidelines, and a central role for bureaucracy in policy making and implementation, as well as a commitment to incremental budgeting. From the late 1970s and into the early 1980s public administration developed into new public management. This was characterised by an attention to learning lessons from private-sector organisations, a growth in hands-on management on the one hand, and arm's length management on the other where policy implementation was organisationally distanced from the policy makers (Osborne, 2006). There was an emphasis on inputs and outputs control as well as audit, and disaggregation of public services and cost management, with a growth in the use of markets, competition and contracts for resource allocation and service delivery (Osborne, 2006) as was evidenced with the change in funding for public services in the UK from the late 1980s onwards, the advent of general management (Griffiths Report, 1983), the creation of the purchaser provider concept (UK's National Health Service (NHS)), and the contracting out of services to private providers. With the advent of new public governance critics have argued that it is a concept used to explore the internal processes and workings of new public management (Osborne, 2006) and public administration (Frederickson, 1999). New public governance and the practice of developing governance systems and structures in public bodies was enhanced by government policy and by the expansion of enterprise risk management as a discipline. Publications from the UK Treasury, DOF, OECD, COSO and the World Bank, as well as published research from developed countries such as Canada, US and Australia have enhanced thinking and research on this subject. New public sector risk management was born out of new public governance.

Palermo (2014) identified many factors which prompted the concept of new public sector risk management; among them were new public management, compliance factors with regulatory requirements, increasing number of public sector employees undertaking studies in risk management, seeking to have a positive impact on insurance premium, increasing demands for the demonstration of good governance, and the demand from central government that formal risk management should be developed by reference to existing professional standards. Evidence of this can be found in the Irish public sector with the publication of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (DOF, 1999 – 2009); and the Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards (ETB), (Department of Education and Skills (DES), (2015).

Palermo (2014) described two key challenges to the implementation of the new public service risk management agenda in the UK. The first was that public sector organisations need specific risk management tools that address the organisational complexity of public service delivery. This is due to their regulatory and professional structures and, their partnership working arrangements with other agencies in both the public and the private sector. The same challenges can be cited for the Irish public sector. The second was due to pressure applied to Risk Officers to manage risk whereas their role is to support and coordinate the risk management function however, when something does go wrong then the Risk Officer is generally to blame. The identification of these challenges opens the door to more critical evaluation as to how these should be managed into the future. Except for the health service, other sectors of the Irish public sector

(local and education authorities) do not employ full time Risk Officers and therefore the environment is challenged without such support.

The research of Collier and Woods (2011) was focused on evaluating the effectiveness of implemented risk management systems in the private sector, with an emphasis on the demonstration of compliance with legislation as a key driver for the implementation of risk management. Palermo (2014) on the other hand cited the impact of external monitoring of risk management impacting on financial resource allocation from central government. Palermo was referring to the external factors (the non-insurable risks) which was driving the internal agenda for risk management in public bodies since the early 1990s. In the Irish public sector evidence of both Collier and Woods (2011) and Palermo's (2014) research is evidenced in the approach adopted by the Irish government with the establishment of the DPER (2011). The focus of DPER is on expenditure of public monies, seeking value for money, as well as ensuring that risk management systems including the internal control functions are robust, and that they can protect public institutions in the event of a significant risk materialising. Internal controls are tested by the internal audit function and by the C&AG for all public bodies (the Local Government Auditor undertakes this function for local authorities). It is the external factors which present the greatest challenge for public bodies as they are frequently outside of their control and for this reason they need to be managed.

Regulatory bodies such as the Health and Safety Authority and the Teaching Council are focused on seeking evidence

of compliance with legislation, whereas the audit committees within the public sector with the internal audit function, and the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG)/Local Government Auditor are more broadly focused on business risk and how well the public bodies are controlling their risks so as to mitigate the impact of the risk on the achievement of the strategic plans. The audit reports published by the C&AG and the Local Government Auditor demonstrates the methodical approach adopted by the audit committees and how they delve for evidence on how risks are controlled. This new enquiring approach by the audit committee is challenging the executive of public bodies to demonstrate evidence of how it is controlling its risks and demonstrating good governance (DPER, 2014).

To enhance the audit function in the Irish local authority sector a separate statutory agency, the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) was established in 2014. NOAC acts at a higher level than the local authority council (board), its executive and its audit committee as it can enquire into any function of the local authority, while also undertaking a monitoring function to determine the level of compliance and progress with the implementation of the Corporate Plan (strategic plan). There is no similar body with oversight of the other Irish public bodies except for the government's appointed Public Accounts Committee which is made up of elected representatives. The establishment of NOAC indicates the importance of managing risk, with retaining a body of assurance of how risk is being mitigated on an ongoing basis.

2.4.2.1 The Value of Risk Management in the Public Sector

Crawford and Stein (2005) found that risk management had a positive impact on culture in UK local authorities, as well as adding value at the operational and corporate level. In understanding the impact it had on culture it is necessary to consider the ethic of the local authority. Eight years later Hood and Smith (2013) examined the quantifiable positive benefits of risk management in UK local authorities and noted that where a risk management framework had been implemented then they were more likely to be successful, and that they could provide evidence of this success in respect of the delivery of strategic plans and achieving their key performance indicators. These advances were driven largely by compliance with external control requirements and indicates that a prescriptive approach was promoted and adopted. Leung and Isaacs (2008) examined the concept of enterprise risk management in light of the pervasive nature of risk within their organisation due to the size of its budget, the number of employees and its support for research and development. They identified that a holistic approach to risk management was developing, and that it was taking place at the level where the risk occurred. They cited Demming's (1956) plan, do, check, act cycle and recommended that risk management should be as streamlined as possible to limit the administrative burden.

The literature demonstrates that formalised structures to support enterprise risk management in the private sector preceded enterprise risk management in the public sector, however (Fone and Young, 2002) risk management has been practised in public bodies and in society for centuries albeit not within a structured framework as presented in

risk management standards. Within the public sector enterprise risk management has developed significantly as a result of the development of public administration to new public risk management which resulted primarily from developments in the private sector, the global collapse of the financial markets (2008), demands for increased productivity, reduction in available resources, value for money, and avoidance of the mistakes of the past. Such mistakes have resulted in adverse reputational damage for both private and public sector institutions, as well as increased working at the corporate and operational levels and increased expenditure to correct mistakes. For all these reasons risk management should be considered as an effective management tool and its implementation should be supported at the corporate and operational level in all organisations.

3. Implementing and Embedding Risk Management

3.1 The Nature of Change Management

Every organisation needs to be aware of the constant presence of risk (Fone and Young, 2002 and Drennan et al. 2015) while at the same time being aware of the opportunities it provides if managed appropriately (UK Treasury, 2002). For this reason the design and implementation of a risk management system is a significant change management initiative and needs to be managed as such. Change is frequently linked with organisational development, and it may also be linked with resistance (Appelbaum, et al. 2014 and 2015), or with internal or external factors such as regulatory compliance,

or when implementing and embedding risk management into an organisation. The implementation and management of change in any organisation is fraught with difficulty.

Perkov et al. (2014) identified that most attempts to implement organisational changes do not achieve the desired outcomes because the change agents do not have the required competencies to implement change. Other factors contributing to failure include: aggressive leadership behaviour, inappropriate culture (Enron, 2002; Worldcom, 2002; Chatterjee, 2003, and Seeger and Ulmer, 2003), fraud, deceit and greed to increase profits (Jennings, 2004), engineering failures resulting in poorly designed systems (Fisk, 2010), loss of trust by key stakeholders (Currall and Epstein, 2003), communication failures (Appelbaum et al. 2014 and 2015), and poor staff training, staff cuts and overemphasis on targets (Appelbaum et al. 2014 and Francis, 2013). Factors that give rise to failure therefore need urgent attention at all stages in the planning, implementation and management of change.

Organisational failures have had a significant adverse impact at a global level as in the financial and economic collapse of systems in 2008, at organisational level as in Enron (2002) which gave rise to significant risk for the international stock exchanges, and for professional bodies (Francis, 2013). Other notable failures in the Irish context include scandals in the meat industry (sale of horse meat in the food chain, 2013), An Garda Síochána (police force) (Garda phone recording scandals, 2013) and the health service (Áras Attracta and the abuse of patients in a care home run by the HSE, 2014). The governance codes provided by regulatory bodies such as the CBI and the Irish Medical Council, and the Ethics in Public Office Act,

1995-2012 which governs employees in the Irish public sector set high standards in respect of professional and ethical conduct. Failure to comply with legislation and with codes has been attributed to a failure of leadership and internal controls (Fisk, 2011) and a failure to promote high ethical and moral standards (Mc Nutt and Batho, 2005).

3.2 System Failure

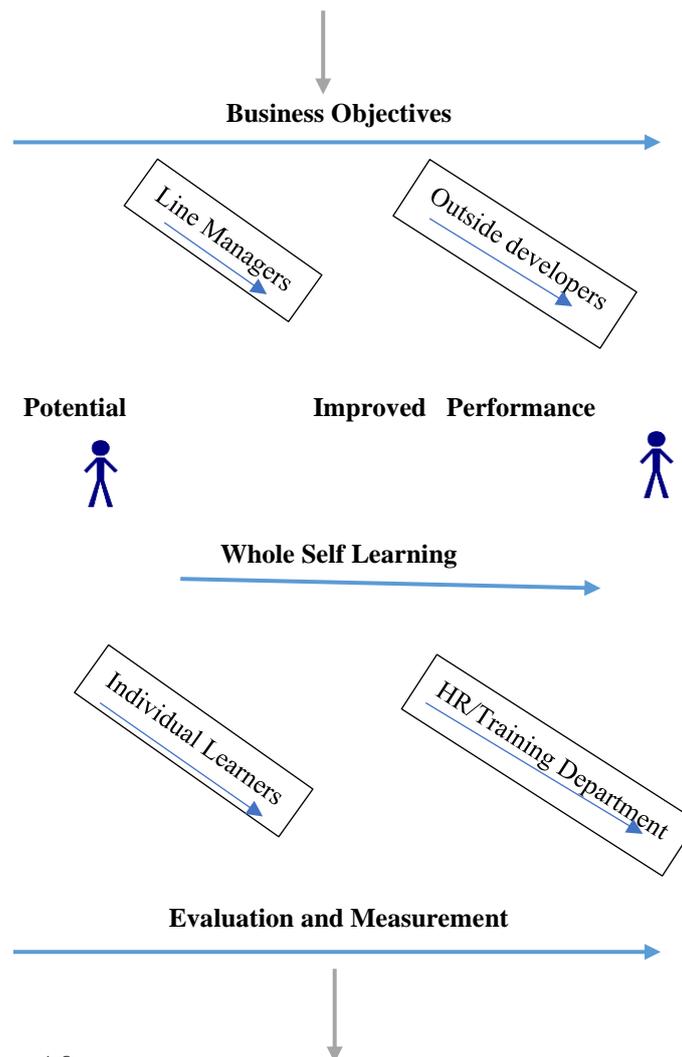
Governments and professional regulatory bodies have come under increasing pressure to implement risk management systems as a result of significant organisational failures (Mc Nutt and Batho, 2005) which is supported by an expanding compliance universe, rigorous audit and questioning, and oversight by professional bodies. Causative factors include increase in insurance premium, increase in awards made by the courts, demands from consumers such as advocacy groups, significant organisational system failures (Chandra 2003 and Boudia and Jas 2007), and mismanagement of finances and fraud (Davidson, 2010 and Jennings, 2004). Influencing external factors include the: OECD, International Monetary Fund and the European Union. Other factors include failures to investigate system errors or to listen to staff when they report escalating levels of risk (Mid-Staffordshire Healthcare Trust (Francis, 2013)), or disclosures made by employees (An Garda Síochána (O' Higgins, 2016)). Reports have identified failure and/or weakness in risk management systems or risk management systems not yet implemented and organisational culture deficits (O' Higgins, 2016).

Leigh (2013) identified the need to plan the change process, and to plan, plan, plan as otherwise failure will most likely follow. Leigh cited failure as an inability to make the change “stick” and which he later developed as the “sticky change model” (figure 2).

Figure 2: Making Development Stick (Adapted from Leigh, 2013)

Before

- Classify business needs and how the intervention serves them
- Support and commitment from senior management
- Enrol and engage people-commitment to learning
- Agree and plan follow-through strategy.



After

- Apply and implement training
- Follow-through strategy to sustain the change
- Continuous learning-support materials, practice and feedback, coaching, learning sets, interactive reminders, refreshers.

The model is focused on the before and after the change and enhanced performance while supporting the achievement of business objectives which can then be evaluated and measured.

The mapping of the process provides an image of the involvement of those that lead as well as the employees; it focuses on team working, communication, and changing the individual through a whole-self learning programme with the support of training and human resources representing an integrated model for change. Roberto and Levesque (2005) examined the requirements for planning change and advised that: *the seeds of effective change must be planted by embedding procedural and behavioural changes in an organisation long before the change initiative is launched*. This approach could be supported with role modelling, communication, leadership style (tone at the top), forethought, planning and management as well as patience for the change to take effect.

Evidence from the literature emphasises the importance of structured planning and implementation and to inform the exercise of planning for the author's research project several Irish government publications on risk management were reviewed. The Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) was the first to be reviewed as it was the most recently published and it mandates ETBs to develop a risk management policy, risk register and the placing of risk management of every management team agenda, as well as appointing an employee with responsibility for risk. These requirements refer to the development of the risk management architecture but there was no specific mention of implementing or embedding risk management so that all employees would manage risk

as part of their day to day business. The second publication reviewed was the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (DOF, 1999 – 2009) and the findings were similar, although it could be inferred that leadership of such a significant initiative is required. The third publication was the Report of the Secretaries General and Accounting Officers (DOF, 2002) where reference was made to the integration of a *system of robust internal controls into the risk management processes of government departments*. The absence of such explicit direction for embedding risk management for those that lead public bodies is a factor worthy of consideration within the author's research in respect of leadership, communication, culture and the role of facilitators which will be examined in the following sections.

3.2.1 Organisational Leadership

When the Griffiths Report on the re-organisation of the NHS was published in 1983 a quote from its author was memorable: *if Florence Nightingale were carrying her lamp through the corridors of the NHS today, she would almost certainly be searching for the people in charge*. The reference was to leadership, as there were examples of weak or absent leadership and lack of clarity on responsibility and accountability. Similar comments can be found in reports about Enron (2002), WorldCom (2002) and Parmalat (2003) (Chatterjee, 2003; Seeger and Ulmer, 2003; Jennings, 2004).

To understand what is involved in leading and what the concept of leadership means reference was made to Prentice's (1961) definition as: *the accomplishment of a*

goal through the direction of human assistants. Badshah (2012) described the complex and multifaceted phenomena of leadership, and Mintzberg (1973) described the leadership role as the most important which is undertaken by those in charge of organisations. The complexity of leadership requires attention in this complex information and digital age of the 21st century (Badshah, 2012). Significant leadership failures have been attributed to the collapse of Enron (2002) (Seeger and Ulmer, 2003); WorldCom (2002); Parmalt (2003), and to many of the banking (Anglo Irish Bank, Ireland, 2008) and insurance (Quinn Insurance, Ireland, 2010) collapses of this century. The learning from the past about leadership errors and the disregard for professional ethics should be to the forefront of all those in leadership positions (Jondle et al. 2013 and Irwin and Bradshaw, 2011) and should be communicated and embedded into the organisational culture.

3.2.2 Communication

Internal communication was defined by Verčič et al. (2012) as: *all forms of communication within an organisation.* They expanded this by describing its value in terms of aligning the employee goals with the organisational goals, and articulated that, *internal communication is the aspiration of achieving a systematic analysis and distribution of information at all strata simultaneously and coordinated in the most appropriate way possible.* Arkadyevna (2014) examined the concept of positive communication which she defined as: *an interaction based on positive attitude, aimed at mutual understanding and satisfying for all the parties involved.* Communication is referred to as a requirement when scoping and

implementing projects (Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), 2013), as it is important for intra-team communication which contributes to successful change management and project delivery. ISO cite the requirement for communication in their management standards as they consider it an essential pre-requisite to implementing organisational change.

Seeger and Ulmer (2003) examined the collapse of Enron (2002) and the contributory communication failures in: (a) appropriate values to create a moral climate (b) maintaining adequate communication to be informed of organisational operations, and (c) maintaining openness to signs of problems. Ten years later Mc Nutt and Batho (2014) supported these findings in their examination of organisation failures (Decker, et al. 2012). Appelbaum et al. (2014 and 2015) identified open communication as a key factor affecting the successful implementation of change. Perkov et al. (2014) identified the promotion of communication for successful change management as it supports team building and managing employee resistance to change. Potter and Potter (2014) examined Kotter's Eight Stage Process to Manage an Organisational Change Programme (1996) and identified the importance of communicating the change vision and commented that managers underestimate the amount of communication required to develop a consistent understanding of the change required. The value of utilising pre-existing communication resources in an organisation can also prove beneficial in introducing, promoting and supporting the change management initiative (Potter and Potter, 2014). The evidence indicating the high level of failure associated with communication deficits is concerning and needs to be

balanced with the positive aspects of communication and how it impacts on organisational culture.

3.2.3 Organisational Culture

Taras et al. (2009) examined the concept of culture and found that there is no simple definition as it is a multi-level construct. Hofstede (1980) represented culture as an onion with its many layers or facets. Starting at the centre lie the values of the organisation (Mc Nutt and Batho, 2014). The next layer represents the rituals or practices. The next layer represents the heroes, and the final layer the symbols of the culture are represented (van Wijk, (2008).

The prevailing culture (attitudes and behaviours) of the author's research site will be important when planning the research project. Lewin (1947) described changing behaviour as one of unfreezing, moving and refreezing which he presented as part of a project where there was an objective to change the buying behaviour and habits of housewives in the US in respect of meat. Burnes (2007) commented on Lewin's concept of refreezing as a democratic approach which sustained the decision. Lewin (1953) maintained that the ability of a group to maintain a changed behaviour (refreezing) was attributable to its own democratic decision making and self-management, and the discussions that took place to arrive at the changed position. The factors that give rise to successful implementation of change include the existence of a positive culture that embraces change (Appelbaum et al. 2014 and 2015) and should be considered as a critical success factor by facilitators of change management.

3.3 The Role of the Change Management Facilitator

The successful implementation of a risk management system will result in change at all levels of an organisation for both the employees, the activities undertaken and for its key stakeholders, and will be dependent on the style adopted by the facilitator (Berg, 2014). For this reason it may be necessary to consider an external or internal appointment of a facilitator/change agent/champion/consultant; this may be due to politics and/or power relationships (Kaarst-Brown, 1999). The facilitator should be trusted as they may lead or provide advice or combine these roles to design the change management process (Greiner and Metzger, 1983). Chathoth et al. (2011) confirmed the importance of trust and described it as a concept with three dimensions: (1) integrity (2) commitment, and (3) dependability. These dimensions link with the organisational ethic and culture and should be supported by the articulation of a full understanding of why change is required. Change may be required to ensure that the organisation remains relevant, profitable and fulfils its vision, as well as demonstrating that it is dynamic and has the capacity to respond in a timely manner to a rapidly changing environment (Nurcan and Rolland, 2002).

For change to succeed it requires a methodology for planning, introducing and managing the change process (Hammer and Champy, 1993 and Leigh, 2003) which is described as the business process of change. The question that needs to be answered is should an external or internal facilitator be appointed to deliver the change management initiative; this will be addressed in the following sections.

3.3.1 Internal Versus External Facilitator

Canback (1998) and Greiner and Metzger (1983) broadly define the role of the external facilitator (EF) as one who is focused on the provision of advice, bringing about change in organisational culture with a focus on problem solving within the boundaries of delivering the strategic objectives and should be able to bring a broad competency on change management (Buono and Jamieson, 2010). Buono and Subbiah (2014) describe the internal facilitator (IF) as the “poor cousin” of their external counterparts, but that they can be a vital organisational resource through their ability to play multiple roles as they can champion a change management initiative.

An organisation that decides to combine the two roles of IF and EF will have access to a more powerful force for overcoming resistance which should ultimately build commitment to the change process (Sturdy and Wiley, 2011 and Nazari et al. 2014). Nazari et al. (2014) described the concept of the board and executive as possible internal facilitators setting the “tone at the top” and determining and influencing the ethics, transparency and accountability within an organisation. The external motivator could be an EF, or customer or investor, or the media exerting pressure on an organisation to change.

An overview of the benefits and limitations of utilising external and internal consultants is presented by Buona and Subbiah (2014) in Table 3. These factors need critical examination when deciding on the best approach to adopt with the planning and implementation of change which may include: the size and value of the project, the criticality of it to the success of the organisation, the cost of an EF,

the availability of an IF, and previous experience of using external versus IFs. These factors need to be considered considering the high failure rate reported with implementing change management initiatives (Petrokov, 2014). It would be useful that when the project scope is agreed that each factor is risk assessed prior to deciding on the best approach to adopt for success. Miller and Subbiah, 2012 did not include these factors in their analysis but they could be added. The positive factors associated with utilising an IF is that it affords the employee an opportunity to enhance their professional development and to utilise their competency base which can be viewed as a positive influence to enhance employee empowerment and buy-in to the change initiative (Appelbaum et al. 2014 and 2015 and Appelbaum and Steed, 2004).

Table 3: Benefits and Limitations of External and Internal Consultants (Adapted from: (Buono and Subbia, 2014) (Adapted and developed from Miller and Subbiah, 2012)

Benefits	
External Consultant	Internal Consultant
Wide comparative knowledge of change processes, context and choices.	More in-depth understanding of internal systems.
Fresh, creative insights and ideas from experience.	Greater understanding of what is likely to work in the current environment.
Organisational perception of superior outside expert knowledge.	Regular, wide-ranging contact with key stakeholders.
Ability to use expert status to influence and solicit views.	Can be financially more efficient and less costly.
Limitations	
External Consultant	Internal Consultant
Danger of cookie-cutter solutions.	Could be overcautious in portraying reality due to employment-related concerns, career advancement.
Possibility of overlooking/ignoring norms of the client's business.	Limited access to top level leaders due to position in hierarchy.
Potential lack of credibility due to shortage of situation/industry-specific experience.	Potential lack of credibility with line managers - seen as an "outsider insider".
Often expensive advice.	Perception of limited expertise.
Lack of ownership; externals move on at the end of the engagement.	Consultant remains with the organisation; change initiative can be viewed as never ending

4. Action Research Overview

4.1 Nature and Objectives of Action Research

Kurt Lewin (1946) a social scientist who was interested in the relationships and problems of groups is referred to as the father of action research. Coghlan and Brannick (2003) described Lewin's contribution to management as his way of thinking, and his concerns with linking theory and practice and the high value he placed on democracy which have shaped action research. Argyris (1997) and Coghlan and Brannick, (2014, p. 46) described the charismatic approach adopted by Lewin in how he focused on: *treating his research subjects as clients so that the quality of their life would be improved, and actionable knowledge would be produced*. This description leads the reader to an understanding of Lewin (1947) adopting a collaborative approach to his research.

The literature provides many definitions for action research which include: adoption of a holistic approach to problem solving, learning and research; the application of inquiry in a participative and collaborative climate; and the research adding to scientific knowledge (Revans, p. 16, 1982; Rapoport, p. 449, 1970; Coghlan and Brannick, p. 5, 2014; Reason and Bradbury, p. 1, 2001, and Reason and Marshall, p. 413, 2001). The author will adopt Coghlan and Brannick's (p. 5, 2014) definition of action research in her project:

Action research is an emergent inquiry process in which applied behavioural science knowledge is integrated with existing organisational knowledge and applied to solve

real organisation problems. It is simultaneously concerned with bringing about change in organisations, in developing self-help competencies in organisation members and adding to scientific knowledge. Finally it is an evolving process that is undertaken in a spirit of collaboration and co-inquiry.

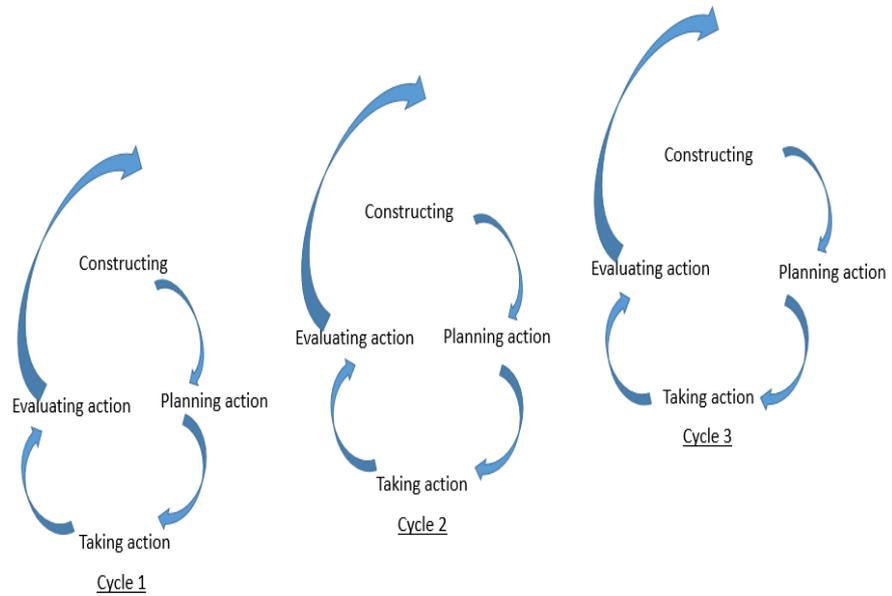
Meyer (2000) described three elements of action research: (1) The participatory character of action research (2) Its democratic impulse and (3) Its simultaneous contribution to social science. These elements reinforce the powerful participative and collaborative nature of action research.

4.2 The Spiral of Action Research

Zubber-Skerrit (2007) developed a theoretical framework of effective action research, known as the CRASP model (Critical (and self-critical) collaborate enquiry by Reflective practitioners being Accountable and making the results of their enquiry public, Self-evaluating their practice and engaged in Participative problem-solving and continuing professional development). The framework marries with the spiral of action research cycles described by Coghlan and Brannick (p. 11, 2014) as presented in Figure 3. The spiral of action involves a number of steps: Step One is the construction phase to determine what the issues are, Step Two is focused on exploring the context and purpose of the action research project so as to plan the actions to be taken, Step Three is the action stage where the plans are implemented and interventions are agreed in a collaborative manner, and Step Four is the evaluative stage to examine the intended and unintended outcomes from the

actions, with a view to determining if the original objectives were met and to plan the next phase.

Figure 3: Spiral of Action Research Cycles (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014, p. 11)



4.2.1 Action Research Utilising a Collaborative Approach

Coghlan et al. (2012) and Cassell and Johnson (2006) described the evolution of management enquiry based on varied degrees of action and collaboration which emphasised distinct scientific, or collaborative, or action features. To complement this description Shani and Passmore (1985) described four pillars of action research as: (1) How the context is assessed (2) The quality of collaborative relationships between researcher and members of the project system as cycles of action and reflection are enacted, and that the dual outcomes reflect

some level of sustainability (3) The development of self-help and competencies out of the action, and (4) The creation of new knowledge from the inquiry.

The opportunities for facilitating a collaborative action research approach within the author's action research project should provide opportunities to add value to the ETB while also supporting the implementation of a risk management system. The project should also support a shared learning approach which is supported by Cornwall's (1996) modes of action research and participation.

4.2.2 Reflection

Reflection is a key activity of action research which is developed consciously, deliberately and systematically through the introduction and use of a reflective diary (Fletcher and Zuber-Skerritt, 2008). In the author's action research project she will complete a diary and invite the ETB project participants to be co-researchers and to complete one also. The diary is used to document an individual's reflection in respect of what has been significant for them at each stage of the project. The learning points are shared and extracted by the facilitator and applied to update the planning process at each stage in the action research cycle. Reynolds (2011, p. 7) described reflection as: *involving thinking about the past or ongoing experience of events, situations or action, to make sense of them, potentially with a view to informing future choices, decisions or actions.*

4.2.3 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a circular relationship between cause and effect which Polliner (1991, p. 370) described as an unsettling, which means to critically examine our actions, the impact of those actions, and from a broader perspective, what passes as good management practice. This is referred to as behavioural change (Cunliffe, 2004) and is akin to Lewin's (1947) description of changing behaviour by unfreezing, moving and refreezing. Refreezing does not imply that a changed behaviour is permanently set in stone however, it does suggest that the group involved in the process would have to become dissatisfied with the appropriateness of their behaviour before it was ready to unfreeze it and seek more appropriate behaviours (Burns, 2007 and Lewin, 1953). When considering changing behaviour critical reflexivity and drawing upon very different ways of thinking about the nature of reality is described by Cunliffe (2004) who suggests focusing on three issues:

1. Existential: Who am I and what kind of person do I want to be?
2. Relational: How do I relate to others and to the world around me?
3. Praxis: The need for self-conscious and ethical action based on a critical questioning of past actions and of future possibilities.

These three ways of thinking can be interwoven into Lewin's concept of unfreezing, moving and refreezing which can be described as action learning.

4.2.4 Action Learning

Action learning is learning from action and concrete experience (Fletcher and Zuber-Skerrit, 2008), and taking action as a result of this learning; it is a developmental approach and the vehicle for employee learning in organisations (Coghan and Brannick, p. 55, 2014). Action learning with reflection and reflexivity is a key activity to be undertaken as part of any action research project (Zuber-Skerritt and Farquhar, 2002). Factors that will require consideration in the author's research will be the level of staff empowerment (Appelbaum et al. 2014 and 2015 and Jones and Gelling, 2013), the organisational culture (Taras, 2009) and the leadership style exhibited (Badshah, 2012).

Zuber-Skerritt and Farquhar (2002) caution that there are differences between action learning and action research. Both include active learning, searching, problem solving and collaborative inquiry; however, action research is more systematic, rigorous, scrutinisable, verifiable, and always made public (e.g. in publications, oral or written reports). Action learning links with action research and process management as an integrated process which is an academic and a multi or interdisciplinary field which affects the whole person through one's perspective of: self, mind, soul, spirituality, ethics, values and worldviews, and hence behaviour (Zuber-Skerritt and Farquhar, 2002). The linking of epistemology to action learning was described by Zuber-Skerritt and Farquhar (2002) and forced the following questions to be asked so as to probe deeply into the consciousness of the individual and to examine assumptions that are usually unrecognised:

- What constitutes knowledge?
- How do we come to know?

- How do we learn?
- How is knowledge produced?

4.3 Role of the Action Researcher

An action research project requires a researcher who will act as an external or IF and coordinator, while supporting and focusing an organisation to seek solutions to its problems, through a collaborative approach, so as to produce a transformational change that meets the organisation's objectives (Zuber-Skerritt, 1994). It involves exploration, experimenting, and trying out ideas – keeping some and rejecting others. Research activities usually start with development issues and concerns for practical improvement and organisational change while in contrast, action research activities are not linear and are seldom logical (Zuber-Skerritt and Fletcher, 2007). The action researcher needs to clearly delineate the difference between the role undertaken in inquiry and practice on one's own (first person inquiry), and the ability to inquire into and work with others on issues of mutual concern (second person inquiry), and, the creation of a community of inquiry (third person inquiry). If confusion reigns then professional and ethical dilemmas may arise (Reason and Torbert, 2001 and Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

The action researcher needs to consider ethical issues such as: (1) Whether the client organisation is acceptable to the researcher (2) Issues of confidentiality and the protection of respondents within a study (3) Conflict where the researcher is working with others clients, and (4) The involvement of the researcher in the client organisation's

affairs (Rapoport, 1970). To overcome these ethical issues Churchman, (1966) proposed the development of a value framework which would be acceptable to both the researcher and the client organisation. All the issues discussed in this section will present challenges to the action researcher and will be considered by the author within her action research project.

5. Action Research Conceptual Model

5.1 Research context

The subject of this action research project is the role of the EF in supporting the implementation of a risk management system in an ETB. ETBs were established in Ireland in 2013 following enactment of the Education and Training Board Act, 2013, the Further Education and Training Act, 2014, the aggregation of 33 Vocational Education Committees (VEC), and the transfer of the national training service FÁS. ETBs provide primary, secondary and third level education and adult training services. The funders of the ETBs are key stakeholders and include the DES, the Department of Social Protection (DSP), SOLAS (statutory agency acting as purchaser of training services from the ETBs), and the European Social Fund (ESF). ETBs have their own Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) which sets out the requirements for risk management and which will be a key driver for the development and implementation of this collaborative action research project.

Following the publication of the Code (2015) IPB's Client Enterprise Risk Manager was approached for support and facilitation with the development of the new risk management system for the newly established ETB. The support was provided, and new risk management policies and corporate and operational risk registers are being developed.

5.1.1 Initiating the Collaborative Action Research Project

One ETB has agreed to participate and support the author's collaborative action research project. The ETB is the result of the aggregation of three VECs and the transfer of two training centres from FÁS in 2013/2014. The senior management team (SMT) numbering approximately six will be the cohort. A restructuring of the SMT is underway with the appointment of a Director (IF) (Greiner and Metzger, 1983) who will be allocated responsibility for coordination of risk management.

5.1.2 Challenges to a Successful Action Research Project

The key challenges or risks identified for the collaborative action research project are:

- Time: to attend meetings and undertake required activities
- People: availability of employees at SMT level to progress the implementation of the risk management system

- Finance: if new finance is required then DES will have to be approached
- Culture: the current culture in the ETB reflects the cultures of three VECs and FÁS (Taras et al. 2009)
- Appetite for change: this varies across all sites in the ETB.

These challenges which may be described as project risks will be considered by the author within the detailed scope for the AR project.

5.2 Conceptual Design

The conceptual design is modelled in Figure 4 and is dynamic (Marshall and Rossman, 2016 and Miles et al. 2014) so that it can respond to the changing ETB environment. The model demonstrates some of the key stakeholders DES, SOLAS and the Teaching Council and their impact on the ETB. The objective of the action research project lies at the centre of the conceptual model with a risk management system which is implemented, and where the practice of managing risk is embedded into all ETB business activities.

5.3 Action Research Questions

The key questions that will be focused on initially in the action research project will be:

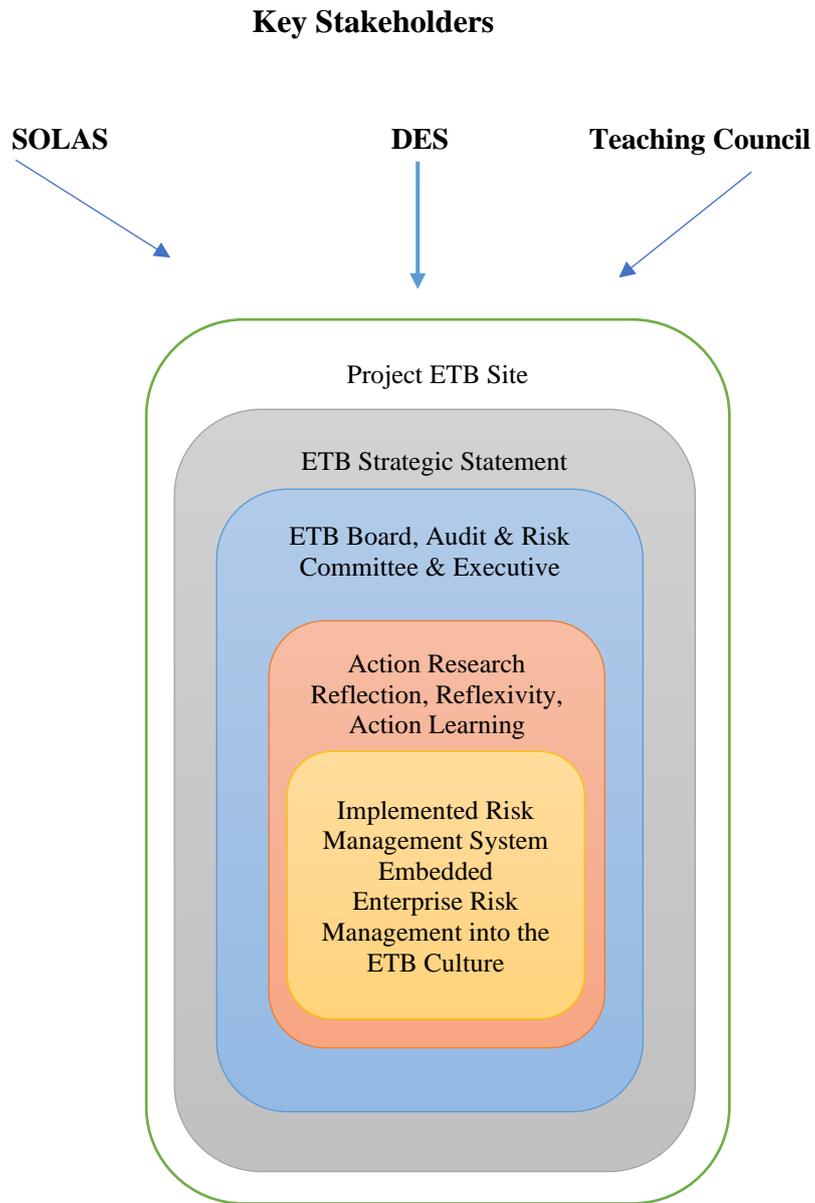
1. What are the prevailing factors that influence an ETB senior management team to engage in an action research project to support the implementation of risk management? (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014)

2. What are the prevailing factors that influence the senior management team to support the implementation of the management of risk into the day to day business activities? (UK Treasury, 2004 and DOFI, 2004)
3. What is the role of the EF in supporting the IF and the senior management team with the implementation and embedding of a culture of managing risk? (Buono and Subbia, 2014).

5.4 From Action Research Project to DBA Thesis

The action research thesis will be the output from the action research project. The action research project will have a beginning, a middle and an end, but the outputs delivered through a collaborative approach should be a transformed ETB.

Figure 4: Action Research Conceptual Model



6. Summary and Conclusion

The concept of risk (Bernstin, 1998) and its evolvement to enterprise risk management in the 1970s (Fone and Young, 2002) is the basis for this collaborative action research project (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014 and Shani and Passmore 1985). The implementation of enterprise risk

management in an Irish ETB will be the subject of a significant change management initiative that will impact all employees and activities. The drivers for enterprise risk management arise from the significant system failures (Encron, 2002 and banking and insurance industry failures) and reports on failures in leadership and communication impacting culture.

At the same time the benefits of risk management have been described (UK Treasury, 2004 and DOF, 2004) which should assist in influencing organisations to embrace risk management. Evidence is emerging of how governments and key organisations such as the OECD, World Bank and others are promoting the management of risk by all organisations in the private and the public sector which is now viewed positively. Within the public education sector in Ireland government has published its Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) while also allocating funding for the appointment of a Director equivalent to Deputy CEO to coordinate the management of risk in each of the 16 ETBs. In a climate of stagnant resources this is seen as a very significant development; it is elevating the importance of risk to the decision-making level of the ETB.

Collaborative action research (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014 and Shani and Passmore, 1985) has emerged as a style to support the successful development and implementation of risk management in one project ETB. Challenges (Taras et al. 2009) to the success of the action research project have been identified and focused on resource allocation. Cognisance will also have to be taken of employee resistance to the project and how this will be managed. The challenges are viewed by the author as the risks to the

successful achievement of the collaborative action research project.

In conclusion the author does not underestimate the task ahead in leading the significant change management initiative focused on implementing risk management in an ETB. With the support of the ETB Chief Executive and the newly appointed Director and with external facilitation provided by the author utilising a collaborative action research approach success should be possible. It is expected that in any dynamic environment where there has been significant change that this project may not be viewed positively and may be seen as “more work” rather than opening the minds of the SMT members to understand the value of the risk management system and how it can add significant value and create opportunities for the ETB.

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Appendix 1: Proposed Action Research Project Timetable

No	Activity	Responsible person	Resources	Start date	Close out date	1				1		
						6	S	C	N	D	J	F
1.	Submit outline of AR project to WIT	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							
2.	Submit outline of AR project to ETB CE	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							
3.	Provide seminar and workshop to CE & SMT on AR project and invite participation	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							
4.	Undertake needs analysis (consider nominal group technique)	Author	To be identified with CE and SMT	TBA	TBA							
5.	Facilitate the development of a communication plan with SMT	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							
5.	Introduce reflective diary model with objective of seeking co-researchers for the AR project	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							
7.	Facilitate roll out of the communications plan with the risk management policy	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							
8.	Undertake gap analysis between Corporate Risk Register and Strategic Statement	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							
9.	Undertake semi-structured one-to-one interviews with each member of the SMT	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA							

10.	Identify opportunities	Author												
11.	Develop project plan for AR project	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA									
12.	Provide individual support to each member of SMT in the management of organisation wide risks with emphasis on very high level and high-level risks	Author	To be identified with CE & SMT	TBA	TBA									

Preface to Paper Two

This preface is provided to link Paper One and Paper Two of the cumulative four paper series. An initial presentation of the paper was made to the Examiners at a Doctoral Colloquium in October 2016. The Examiners advised that further work should be undertaken on the proposed research methodology. It is also acknowledged in 2019 with the benefit of hindsight that the literature on a facilitation approach could have been better developed during paper one and this has now been addressed in Section One of this final submission.

The revised Paper Two included a change to the research methodology (Bryman, 1989 and Saunders et al. 2007) from action research (Greenwood and Levin, 2007 and Coghlan and Brannick, 2014) to a single case study (Yin, 2012 and 2014) with some refinement to the research objectives. The revised research methodology paper was re-presented in April 2017 and following some minor amendments it was accepted by the Examiners in July 2017.

The research aim was amended to: *An Exploration of the Process of Embedding Risk Management into a Public Sector Organisation Through the Use of an External Facilitation Approach*. Three research objectives were agreed to support the research aim:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of an External Facilitator in supporting a public body to embed risk management.
2. To employ a facilitation approach to exploit opportunities to embed risk management, while

seeking to support the development of an Internal Facilitator so that organisational performance can be enhanced.

3. To track and measure the success of the External Facilitator in supporting the embedding of risk management in a public-sector organisation, including a planned handover of risk management expertise to the Internal Facilitator with the objective of sustaining the embedding of risk management into the medium and long term.

The revised paper incorporated a focus on ensuring successful transfer/handover (Wardale, 2013) of the research project to the research site at completion as failure to transfer a change management project has been identified as a contributory factor in change management failure. The proposed research study would include supporting the professional development of an Internal Facilitator at the research site which had yet to be identified and agreed but which would be a public body.

Section 2: Research paper series (1-4)

Paper 2 Methodology

1. Introduction

Evidence of the practice of managing risk has been a key requirement for public bodies in Ireland since their establishment. The emphasis has historically been on the management of financial risk by combatting fraud and misappropriation of public monies. The risk landscape for all public bodies has expanded exponentially in recent decades due to increasing globalisation, developments in technology, and uncertainty in world economies (Fone and Young, 2005). Compliance requirements in respect of managing risk has generally been referred to in relevant legislation for public bodies, and it was strengthened with the publication of the first Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies in 1999 (updated 2002, 2008 and 2016). The Code requires public bodies to implement risk management systems and structures, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of these systems. The level of effectiveness of the risk management systems is examined by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) during the annual financial audit. It is acknowledged by public bodies that the compliance “bar” has been raised on an annual basis with an emphasis on continual improvement of systems (C&AG, 2016).

The focus of this paper is on one public body within the education sector, specifically an Irish Education and Training Board (ETB) whose compliance requirements in respect of risk management are specified in the Education and Training Board Act, 2013 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 2015). The Code specifically references the requirement to manage

risk and to identify one employee with responsibility for risk management. These compliance requirements have presented significant challenges for public bodies including ETBs as they do not have the required expertise within the organisation, and they do not have the resources to embed risk management into the day to day business activities.

The insurance company for the ETBs recognising this deficit and developed a Client Enterprise Risk Management (CERM) service in 2000 to support its public body clients including the ETBs by facilitating the design of the required risk management infrastructure and the embedding of risk management. The author of this research paper is the company's Head of CERM services. The post holder has many years of experience on advising ETBs on how to comply with risk management requirements. In recent years, she has questioned the value of her role as an external facilitator (EF) in supporting ETBs to demonstrate the embedding of risk management. The researcher has also observed that some ETBs demonstrate a high level of commitment and compliance while others do not, and wonders if it is attributable to the role of the facilitator or are there other factors at play that have not yet been identified. The researcher has noted the work undertaken by Wardale (2013) which identified a deficit in the evidence of how effective the transfer of projects is from project manager to project sponsor. She has also noted that the challenge of embedding risk management is in many ways like trying to implement a change management initiative. A change management initiative requires careful planning in advance to improve the chance of ultimate success and would see significant

similarities between embedding risk management and the implementation of a change programme in an organisation.

This paper is structured as follows: initially, the reader is provided with an overview of the conceptual model for this study which leads to the revised research aim and objectives. This led to discussions on the methodological approach with Saunders et al. (2007) Research Onion being chosen as a structure upon which to base this paper. Issues such as research philosophy and research design are considered where it will be shown that the preferred research strategy to be proposed for this study is an interpretive case study. This leads to a discussion of case study research methodology and research methods which are then linked back to the research objectives. The chapter concludes with discussions of other related issues such as the proposed data analysis, research legitimisation, and the ethical challenges to be faced.

2. Revised Conceptual Framework

Risk management models are described in the literature (ISO 31000:2009 and AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM, 2010) however, it is unclear as to how such models interact with facilitation models (Schwartz, 2017 and Wardale, 2013) to support the embedding of risk management. Furthermore, the connection between risk and facilitation models and change management process models (Kotter, 1996, Kitson et al. 1998 and Mc Fadzean and Nelson, 1998) is also under researched in the literature. For this reason and given the author's strong interest in the factors leading to successful embedding of risk management, this has been chosen as a

study of interest which should provide insight and learning for public bodies. These factors are shown in the revised conceptual model which is shown in Table One. In short, this framework considers risk management models, facilitation models and change management models in the context of trying to successfully embed risk management in a public body which lacks expertise and resources at the outset. The embedding of risk management will ultimately support compliance with required legislation, codes of practice, standards and guidance, and enhance organisational performance. The stages involved in facilitation (preparation and planning, execution, measuring outputs, measuring outcomes, and handover and embedding) are considered along with the role of a change champion – this is initially envisaged as being the EF (the author). Successful embedding of risk management will require this expertise to be successfully transferred to an internal change champion (internal facilitator (IF)) (Schwartz, 2017) who will ensure that risk management stays embedded when the EF has departed.

Stage one Preparation and Planning as presented in Figure One in blue type has been facilitated by the EF with the support of the ETB. An IF, who is a senior employee of the ETB will be identified. The IF will be included in the unit of analysis to be studied and will work alongside the researcher throughout the lifetime of the research project. The researcher will support the development of the competency of the IF so that the organisation will have a competent professional available to support management and employees with the continued embedding of risk management beyond the research project.

There is much literature on the role of facilitation, change management models and risk management. On the other hand, there is a dearth of studies which focus on the interrelationships between these models which could lead to a template for the embedding of risk management being generated. It is the author's intention for this Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) study to select an ETB organisation which is currently on the left of the above framework (i.e. it has not embedded risk management to date) and to explore how to successfully embed risk management with an intended handover to an IF on completion. As with any large research project, this will require key activities to be undertaken in a structured manner and the guidelines offered from the reviewed literature such as the need for communication will be considered during this research journey. This study should, if successfully completed, lead to an enhanced understanding of how to successfully embed risk management in public organisations, and should be capable of then being rolled out to other public bodies.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model to Facilitate the Embedding of Risk Management in an ETB (Ref: Lewin, 1947; Kotter, 1996; Kitson et al. 1998; Mc Fadzean and Nelson, 1998; Wardale, 2013; Schwarz, 2017; ISO 31000:2009; and AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM 2010).

Models	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Facilitation models	Preparation and planning	Execution	Measure outputs	Measure outcomes	Handover & embedding
Risk management models	Design risk management architecture Establish context Communicate the risk management model Communicate the research model.	Identify, assess and manage risk Finalise risk registers Analyse risk register content to support embedding Empower employees to own and manage risk.	Monitor level of risk management Communicate the level of risk and success	Monitor level of embeddedness of risk management Communicate level of embeddedness and other success	Consolidate risk management into the ETB organisational culture
Evolving Change Agent	<i>External Facilitator as Initial Change Agent due to lack of resources and in-house expertise Identification of Internal Facilitator/Risk Champion Training of Internal Facilitator/Change Champion</i>		<i>External Facilitator still providing direction Internal facilitator becomes the change agent</i>		<i>Handover from External Facilitator to Internal Facilitator/Risk Champion</i>
Change management models	Unfreezing Identify need for change Establish a sense of urgency	Moving Empower broad-based action Continued communication	Moving and Refreezing Generate short term wins Consolidate gains and promote change	Refreezing Assess the: Level of empowerment and ownership of risk management	Refreezing Transfer of responsibility Promote empowerment

	<p>Create a guiding coalition</p> <p>Communicate the strategy and vision</p>	<p>Develop competency base of internal facilitator</p> <p>Promote ownership of risk management among all employees</p>	<p>Anchor new approaches in the organisational culture</p> <p>Identify new activities and other data sources</p>	<p>Evidence of how risk is managed</p> <p>Integration of risk management into day to day business activities</p> <p>Draft plan for handover to internal facilitator.</p>	<p>Promote continued embedding of risk management</p>
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2.1 Research Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of this research project is: An Exploration of the Process of Embedding Risk Management into a Public Sector Organisation Through the Use of an External Facilitation Approach. The unit of analysis to be studied in the research will be the Senior Management Team (Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Directors, IF and Senior Administrative Managers). The aim of the research can be broken into the following research objectives:

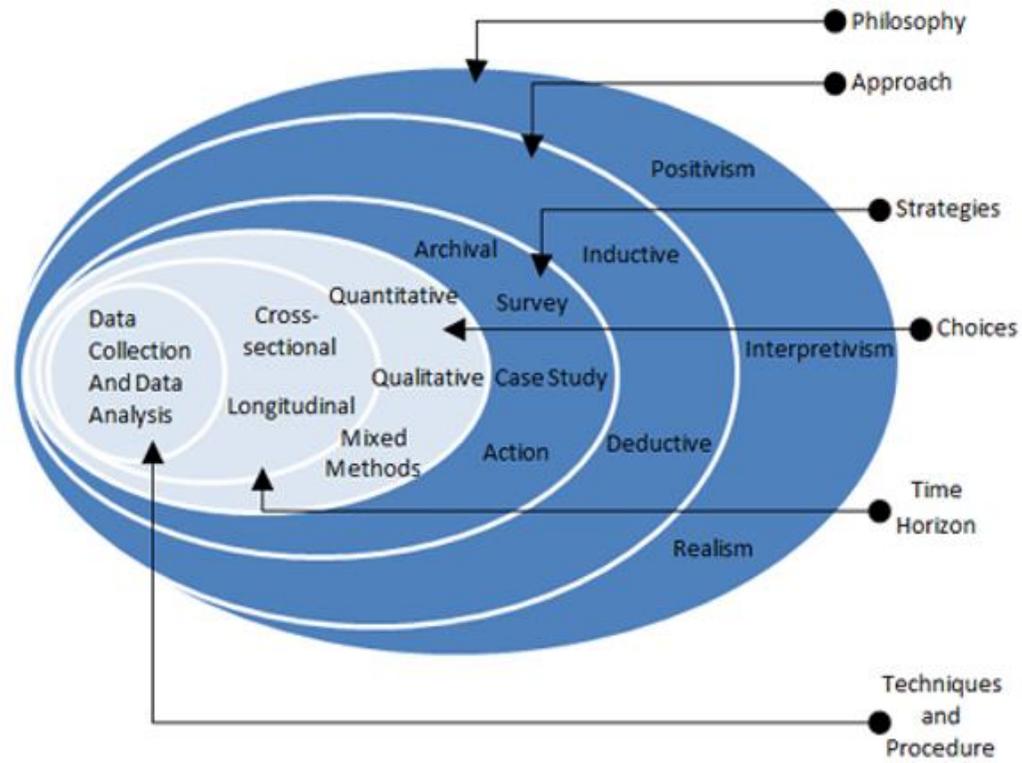
1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of an EF in supporting a public body to embed risk management.
2. To employ a facilitation approach to exploit opportunities to embed risk management, while seeking to support the development of an IF so that organisational performance can be enhanced.
3. Track and measure the success of the EF in supporting the embedding of risk management in a public-sector organisation, including a planned handover of risk management expertise to the IF with the objective of sustaining the embedding of risk management into the medium and long term.

In short, this research study will initially involve an element of upskilling/reflection by the EF (the author) on what it takes to successfully embed risk management in an organisation; this will lead to the subsequent selection of a target organisation where the EF will aim to move its embeddedness of risk management from a current low level to a desired high level. Such a study, if successfully accomplished will have many practical benefits for public bodies in the future that need to improve their own management of risk.

2.2 The Research Onion

The remainder of this paper is devoted to introducing and justifying the methodological choices that were considered by the researcher in deciding how to achieve the above research aim and objectives. The structure that has been decided for the remaining sections is largely drawn from the Research Onion (Saunders et al, 2007, p. 132) (Figure Two) as this provides an effective progression through which research methodological issues can be designed. It is also generally applicable in a variety of contexts (Bryman, 2012).

Figure 2: Research Onion (Saunders et al. 2009)



3. Research Philosophy and Research Approach

The outer layer of the Research Onion considers the philosophy to be adopted. Brockbank and Gill (2007, p. 16) described philosophy as, ‘the love, study or pursuit of wisdom’ and how it ‘relates to the principles’ (Somekh, 2006) that will be adopted in the research to be undertaken. The philosophies examined in the Onion include positivism, interpretivism and realism. The author initially found it useful to consider the continuum between a positivist approach compared to an interpretivist approach as presented in Table One.

Table 1: Features of The Two Main Paradigms (Reference: Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 50).

Positivism tends to:	Interpretivism tends to:
Use large samples.	Use small samples.
Have an artificial location.	Have a natural location.
Be concerned with hypothesis testing.	Be concerned with generating theories.
Produce precise, objective, quantitative data.	Produce ‘rich’, subjective, qualitative data.
Produce results with high reliability but low validity.	Produce findings with low reliability but high validity.
Allow results to be generalised from the sample to the population.	Allow findings to be generalised from one setting to another similar setting.

Within the positivistic philosophical school, a positivism approach originated in the natural sciences (Bhattacharjee,

2012), and ‘rests on the assumption that social reality is singular and objective and is not affected by the act of investigating it’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 343). Interpretivism, on the other hand, is a philosophy that emerged in response to criticisms of positivism. This develops an understanding of social phenomena within a specific context and believes that ‘social reality is affected by the act of investigating it’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 343). In the context of this research, the social phenomena will be the role of the EF in supporting the embedding of risk management in an ETB (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). For these reasons the researcher considers that an interpretivist paradigm is applicable to this research study.

Having selected an interpretivism paradigm the author examined the most appropriate research approach to adopt – an inductive or a deductive approach which may be referred to as the logic of the research (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 3). An inductive approach is ‘a study in which theory is developed from the observation of empirical reality; thus, general inferences are induced from particular instances’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 342). Maxwell (2013, p. 2) described how research designs ‘may be flexible rather than fixed and inductive rather than following a strict sequence or one derived from an initial decision’ and, advised that the strength of an inductive approach is to ‘focus on specific situations or people, with emphasis on descriptions rather than numbers’ (Maxwell, 2013, p. 30). This involves the author moving from ‘individual observation to statements of general patterns, i.e. from the specific to the general’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 7). The deductive approach on the other hand is ‘a study in which a conceptual and theoretical structure is developed which is then tested by empirical observation;

thus, particular instances are deduced from general inferences' (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 341). An example would be where the author had a specific interest in testing a theory. This approach would involve collecting data on the variables that the theory has identified as being important; in other words, testing a theory.

Utilising an inductive or a deductive approach can be helpful in enabling understanding of research and the preferred approach for conducting it. Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 8) recommend that a deductive approach is more applicable to an analytical study, while an inductive method may be more suitable to an exploratory and descriptive research study. The author recognises that the proposed research study will have elements of both an inductive and a deductive approach, however at this stage in the development of the methodology the study is weighted more towards an inductive approach, as the aim and objectives are about exploring the role of the facilitator and identifying the factors that contribute or inhibit successful embedding of risk management.

3. Research Strategy

The next layer of the Research Onion (Saunders et al. 2007) to be considered is the research strategy. Four research strategies were selected by the researcher for more detailed consideration: (1) Survey (2) Archival (3) Action and, (4) Case study. These considerations and the rationale for accepting or rejecting a research strategy is provided in Table Two below:

Table 2: Consideration of Research Strategies

Research Strategy	Definition	Philosophy and Approach	Suitability and Value to this study
Survey	Surveys are used to collect data from a sample with a view to analysing the data statistically and generalising the results to a population (Collis & Hussey, 2014).	Positivist and deductive.	The researcher does not intend to conduct a survey to gather data or to utilise an existing data set for analysis; it is therefore rejected.
Archival	Archival data refers to documents recording official events that are routinely gathered by a society, a community, or an organisation. This data may supplement other qualitative research methods (Marshall and Rossman, 2016).	Interpretive and inductive.	Useful in its application for case study research. Archival data when accessed should add value to a qualitative research study. As it is presented, the researcher will incorporate elements where relevant to complement the case study approach. It is envisaged that this will be secondary data rather than primary data.
Action	An emergent inquiry process in which applied behavioural science knowledge is integrated with existing organisational knowledge and applied to solve real organisational problems (Shani and Pasmore, 2010, p. 439).	Interpretive and inductive.	This method was originally considered by the researcher but was dismissed as the actions have already been undertaken; for this reason and on the advice of experts it was rejected.
Case study	The essence of a case study is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were	Interpretive and inductive.	This descriptor resonates with the researcher as the questions formulated are focused on “how”

	<p>taken, how they were implemented, and with what result (Schramm, 1971). It is undertaken when: (1) the main research questions are “how” or “why” questions (2) a researcher has little or no control over behavioural events and, (3) the focus of the study is a contemporary (as opposed to an entirely historical) phenomenon (Yin, 2014, p. 2).</p>		<p>and “why” in respect of the role of the external facilitator. The external facilitator has control over her own behaviours but has limited control over the behaviours within the research site organisation however, she will strive to positively influence these behaviours through the lifetime of the research study by evidencing arguments for change. The researcher will be researching a contemporary phenomenon. For these reasons this strategy is more suitable to adopt and is therefore considered the preferred strategy.</p>
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Table Two shows that the use of surveys and action research were rejected as it was felt that the deep understanding of the role of the EF in supporting the embedding of risk management could not be accomplished using these strategies. Action research (Shani and Pasmore, 2010 and Sharp, 1998) was strongly considered as an appropriate strategy due to its links with change programmes in organisations however, difficulties with identifying the chosen intervention within a facilitation model meant that it too was rejected in favour of a case study strategy which will be complemented by an archival strategy.

By contrast with the other strategies, case study research can be viewed as being useful for theory building and beneficial in modifying the research questions during the research process if the original questions are found to be less relevant (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 93). Case study research also helps to derive richer, more contextualised, and more authentic interpretation of the phenomenon of interest than most other research methods. This is achieved, by virtue of its ability to capture a rich array of contextual data, and the phenomenon of interest can be studied from the perspectives of multiple participants and using multiple levels of analysis e.g. individual and organisational (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 93). Furthermore, case study research is undertaken as Yin (2014) advises when: (1) The main research questions are “how” or “why” questions (2) When a researcher has little or no control over behavioural events and, (3) When the focus of study is a contemporary (as opposed to an entirely historical) phenomenon. Case study research has been described as ‘unique’ by Yin (2014, p.187) in the way observation is undertaken of any natural phenomenon ‘where only a small

geographical area or number of subjects of interest are examined', and where a case study can be technically defined as an empirical inquiry. The researcher also needs to understand that it is possible to build one or more cases to create theoretical constructs, propositions, and/or mid-range theory from case-based, empirical evidence (Eisenhardt, 1989).

One reason for the recognition of case study as a research strategy is that researchers are becoming more concerned about the limitations of quantitative methods in providing holistic and in-depth explanations of the social and behavioural problems being studied (Zainal, 2007 and, Sjoberg, 1991). It is for this reason that case study was considered an ideal strategy when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed (Tellis, 1997). Therefore, a case study should prove beneficial as the preferred research strategy. It will focus on seeking answers and explanations to support the research aim and objectives while focusing on the role of the facilitator in supporting the embedding process. It should also elicit answers as to why certain behaviours produce positive outcomes versus negative outcomes, and how beneficial the role of a facilitator can be, and what more could a facilitator do to support the embedding process.

Having decided that a case study strategy will be employed for this research project, the author then faced several additional decisions such as which type of case study, whether to use single or multiple case studies and which organisation(s) to select for the case study. These issues are now considered in the following subheadings.

4.1 Types of Case Study

Drawing from the work of Bhattacharjee (2012) and Yin, (2014), the researcher has identified three types of case study, and considered advice provided on how to select the most appropriate type of case study which should be: (1) Right for the research questions (2) Appropriate for the unit of analysis (3) Suit a single or a multiple-case design (4) Suit the site or selected sites to be studied and, (5) Suit the techniques of data collection. These types and the associated reflections are shown in Table Three below:

Table 3: Types of Case Study (Yin, 2014, p. 238; Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 94-95).

Descriptive case study	Explanatory case study	Exploratory case study
A case study whose purpose is to describe a phenomenon (“the case”) in its real-world context (Yin, 2014, p. 238).	A case study whose purpose is to explain how or why some condition came to be (e.g., how or why some sequence of events occurred or did not occur) (Yin, 2014, p. 238) such as a very serious incident. This could be an organisational failure or an employee fatality. In this circumstance a ‘root-cause’ analysis may be pursued.	A case study whose purpose is to identify the research questions or procedures to be used in a subsequent research study, which might or might not be a case study (Yin, 2014, p. 238).
Researcher’s finding: limited in approach but it has value and therefore elements of it will be incorporated by the researcher into the preferred research approach.	Researcher’s finding: not suitable and limited in meeting the research aim and objectives; therefore, it is rejected.	Researcher’s finding: the description provides the best fit for the aim and objectives of this research study and is accepted as the preferred case study approach.

The descriptive case study describes a phenomenon in its real-world context. This was considered to be a limiting approach in providing the required and adequate evidence to support the research aim and objectives, but it was not completely rejected by the researcher as it does have some value. An explanatory case study was considered but it was rejected as it was felt to be more suited to an enquiry such as a root cause analysis of a serious event. The third type – an exploratory case study – has the advantage of identifying new research questions (which may be used in a subsequent research study) (Yin, 2014, p. 238). The exploratory case study was felt to be the preferred type to adopt for this research study. The researcher will also include elements of a descriptive case study. Primarily an exploratory case study fits well with the aim and objectives described in section 2.1 of this paper, while a descriptive case study should prove of value in supporting the exploratory case study approach.

4.2 Single Versus Multiple Case Study

In undertaking an exploratory case study, it was necessary to decide on whether it should be a single or a multiple case study. A single case design is ‘more appropriate at the outset of theory generation, if the situation is unique or extreme, if it is revelatory, or if it represents a crucial or contrary case for testing a well formulated theory’ (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 94). A multiple case design on the other hand is ‘more appropriate for theory testing’. In this paper the emphasis will be on single case design (Yin 2014, p. 51) and theory generation (Yin, 2014 and Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Table Four provides an overview of Yin's (2014) rationale for single case study design. The researcher will be working with one ETB therefore, the research will be confined to a natural location with a small sample. The research will generate theories about the role of an EF supporting the embedding of risk management, where the data produced will be subjective and rich with a high level of validity. This should enable the findings to be generalised from one ETB setting to another ETB setting.

Table 4: Rationale for Single Case Study Design (Yin, 2014, p. 51-53).

Rationale	Description	Researcher's Comment
Selecting a critical case	The critical nature of the case is linked to the theory applicable to the research. An example could be the implementation of organisational innovation.	The researcher has selected one ETB and will utilise an exploratory case study and some elements of a descriptive case study to expand or build new theory. The research is focused on the role of an EF supporting the embedding of risk management in an ETB.
Where the case represents an extreme case or an unusual case	This case deviates from theoretical norms or even everyday occurrences; for example, a clinical episode with a patient which may be suitable for case study research.	The aim and objectives described in this paper and applicable to an ETB have not been researched previously. The research should prove beneficial in furthering the practice of facilitators supporting the embedding of risk management and its relationship with change management and organisational culture.
The longitudinal case	This approach involves studying a case at two or more different points in time; the theory of interest would likely specify how certain conditions and their underlying processes change over time. An example may be where the case study may not deal with specific time intervals but instead it covers trends over an elongated period, following a developmental course of interest.	The exploratory case study will be undertaken over a eight-month period. For this reason, it will be longitudinal in nature and the level of embeddedness will be monitored and measured throughout this period. If the IF or another researcher decided to utilise the findings of this research to further develop this work into a longitudinal single case, then this could add value to the research body of knowledge.
The common case	The objective is to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation because the lessons learnt may provide insight into social processes related to	The unit of analysis will be the SMT, the IF and SAMs of an ETB to verify that risk management is being embedded (this is discussed further in this paper).

	some theoretical interest. An example may be a case study observing a community interacting in a community development initiative.	
The revelatory case	This situation affords the researcher the opportunity to observe and analyse a phenomenon previously inaccessible to social science inquiry. An example may be where a researcher gains access to an organisation to undertake a case study which was previously prohibited e.g. access to prisoners.	Access to a public body to undertake research presents challenges and is frequently refused, however in this research study the ETB CEO has granted access for the research to be undertaken.

4.3 Choice of Case Study Organisation and Scope of the Study

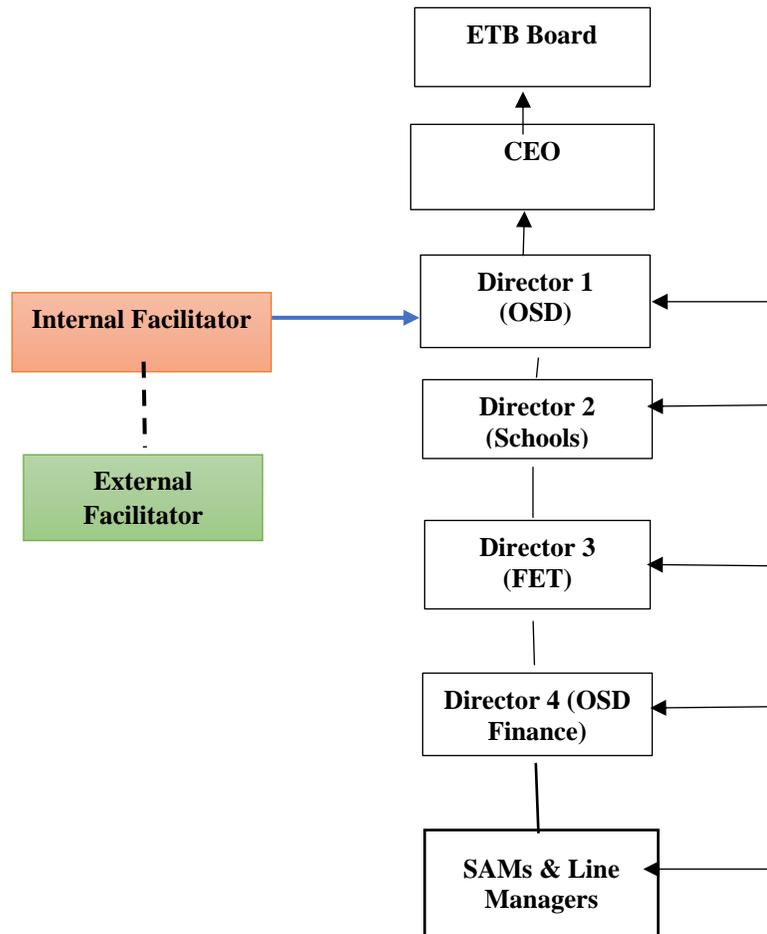
The target organisation for this study was selected via a 'purposive sampling method where the chosen organisation was identified on the strength of their experience of the phenomenon which is being studied' (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 132). The chosen research site is one of the largest of the sixteen ETBs in Ireland employing more than 3,000 staff and it manages a budget of circa €200m (2016). It was established following commencement of the Education and Training Board Act, 2013 when two former Vocational Education Committees were aggregated into one corporate body. In 2014 SOLAS transferred the FÁS training services to the ETB. The ETB provides education services at primary, secondary and tertiary level, as well as adult education and training services to approximately 40K learners per annum.

In March 2015, the DES published the Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards. Section C, Sub-section 13, mandates all ETBs to implement a system for managing risk and to appoint a person with responsibility for risk management. The Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD) has been allocated this responsibility and will be supported by an IF. Collectively the SMT comprising the CEO and Directors have responsibility for the development and execution of strategy which is detailed in the ETB's Statement of Strategy 2017-2021. The strategy is delivered to demonstrate compliance with section 27 of the Education and Training Board Act, 2013. The CEO has overall responsibility for governance including risk management and reports to the Board of the ETB, which is comprised of

21 members, and a five-member Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee has oversight responsibility for risk management in the ETB. It also liaises with the Internal Audit function (this is a limited and shared service provided to fifteen of the ETBs) and the C&AG's office in respect of financial audit. Figure Three below provides an overview of the corporate organisational structure of the ETB.

The researcher formally approached the CEO to seek access to the ETB to undertake the research project and this was granted. Within this chosen ETB single site, the unit of analysis will be the SMT of the ETB whose membership includes the CEO and Directors, IF and the SAMs. The assistance of an IF has been identified and a senior officer of the ETB will be appointed to this role. An IF/risk champion is considered essential to support the successful embedding of risk management where there is no identified competent resource to support this function. The EF will support the development of the required competency base of the IF.

Figure 3: Research Site: ETB Corporate Organisational Structure



A key responsibility of any successful facilitator is to demonstrate respect, empathy, advocacy, authenticity, credibility, access, successful negotiation of the change agenda, as well as flexibility and style in adopting and promoting a strong presence and supportive approach (Schwartz, 2017). Throughout the research the EF will promote an empowering culture (Appelbaum et al. 1998 and Senge et al. 2000) among the SMT, the SAMs and the IF, so that this approach is cascaded to all staff groups to support the ownership and embedding of risk management.

Note, that while the focus of this study (the unit of analysis) will primarily be on the structure to the right in Figure Two – from the CEO to the SAMs it will also encompass the IF. This will be discussed further in the research methods section of this paper (section five).

The conceptual model presented in Table One provided an overview of the stages in the research project. Stage one titled Preparation and Planning (blue type) has commenced and will be supported and strengthened with the activities detailed in stage two titled Execution (amber type). This stage will extend to a three-month period. Stages three and four (red type) will extend over approximately a six-month period. After stage four the EF will arrange a hand over to the IF. Measurement and monitoring of progress with the embedding of risk management will be undertaken throughout the lifetime of the research project to ensure that the plan as presented in the conceptual model (Table One) is progressing.

Throughout the project the EF will focus on enhancing the role and responsibilities of the IF. At the same time the

researcher will be evaluating the level of embeddedness of risk management from a position of a low level of embeddedness to a high level of embeddedness by the completion of the research project. This will have the added advantage for the public body of having its own competent IF. It is envisaged that the embedding of risk management will continue beyond the lifetime of the research project. The model as designed should be dynamic to respond to the continued change environment of the public sector while at the same time the outputs when measured should add value and enhance performance (Yin, 2014).

4. Case Study Research Methodology and Methods

Research methodology may be described as quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative methodology has been described as collecting quantitative data (numeric data) for a survey and analysing it using statistical methods (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Qualitative research on the other hand has been described as (Marshall and Rossman, 2016, p. 15) ‘developing over the decades where typologies have been described by methodologists’. Case study is now included as a typology following recognition by Denzin and Lincoln (2005). It sits within the qualitative methodology (Yin, 2014; Stake, 1995; Bhattacharjee, 2012; and, Tellis, 1997). The researcher has also noted that it can straddle both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms (Bhattacharjee, 2012 and Collis and Hussey, 2014) although it is largely proposed that the methodology for this exploratory case study will be qualitative.

Miles and Huberman (2014, p. 9) provided a detailed overview of the common features of qualitative research which are presented in Table Five below. Each feature listed by Miles and Huberman (2014) has been examined by the researcher to confirm the appropriateness and applicability of the feature for a case study. The researcher can confirm that she has had a long association with the ETB and that this professional relationship will continue throughout the research.

In short, it is proposed to employ primarily a qualitative research methodology for this research project, and this led to a consideration of the research methods to be adopted for this study. Research methods are the ‘approaches and techniques used to collect and analyse data’ (Maxwell, 2013, p. 4). The researcher plans to obtain data from several sources which will include interview data, focus group data, observations and documentation. The documentation will include ETB records, plans, meeting agendas and minutes where available and a diary of reflections maintained by the researcher and relevant to the research. Each of these methods will be described in detail in the following sections.

Table 5: Common Features of Qualitative Research

(Ref: adapted from Miles and Huberman, 2014, p. 9)

No.	Common Features of Qualitative Research	Evidence
1	Conducted through intense and/or prolonged contact with participants in a naturalistic setting to investigate the everyday and/or exceptional lives of individuals, groups, societies and organisations.	The researcher has knowledge of the ETB since its establishment in 2013 and has facilitated the development of its risk management architecture.
2	Gain a holistic overview of the context under study; its social arrangement, its ways of working, and its explicit and implicit rules.	The ETB is guided in its operations by legislation, codes of practice, standards, guidance and government circulars. It therefore has a high threshold of compliance that must be demonstrated and which the researcher is very cognisant of. The sourcing and availability of documentation from the ETB will be a valuable source of evidence. The documentation will include the Statement of Strategy 2017-2021, agendas and minutes of Senior Management Team meetings and any other documentation that may be referred to by the ETB during the research project.
3	Relatively little standardised instrumentation is used; the researcher is the main instrument in the study.	The researcher working as a facilitator has developed a bespoke risk management model for the ETB sector based on published models and is very aware that she has a dominant influence on how the

		model is adopted, interpreted and implemented within the ETB.
4	Researcher attempts to capture data on the perceptions of local participants from the inside through a process of deep attentiveness, of empathetic understanding, and of suspending or bracketing preconceptions about the topics under discussion.	The researcher intends to gather supporting evidence for interpretation purposes from interviews, from documentation that will be sought from the ETB, as well as a focus group and a reflective diary. If other sources of relevant data are available, they will be utilised such as documentation from meetings of the SMT.
5	Analysis is done primarily on words which can be assembled, subclustered, or broken into segments; reorganised to compare, contrast, analyse, and construct patterns out of them.	It is intended that all data collated will be structured into a database; that it will be coded for interpretation and that it will be used to provide learning and to draw conclusions from the research.
6	Reading through these empirical materials (i.e. data) the researcher may construct certain themes and patterns that can be reviewed with participants.	It is intended that a thematic approach will be adopted to analyse the data captured. This will support the development of patterns for learning and application to enhance facilitation to support embedding of risk management.
7	Description of the ways people, in particular settings come to understand, account for, act, and otherwise manage their day-to-day situations.	Data will be obtained from interviews with the SMT regarding their function in the ETB, their responsibility for implementation of risk management and the challenges encountered.
8	Many interpretations of this material are possible, but some are more compelling for theoretical reasons or on grounds of credibility and trustworthiness.	From the data collated, analysed, synthesised and interpreted it is proposed that existing theory may be strengthened or expanded, or possibly new theory may be developed.

5.1 Interviews

‘Interview is a mode of primary data collection’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 342) involving ‘verbal information from a case study participant’ (Yin, 2014, p. 239). It is ‘one of the most important research methods and sources of case study evidence’ (Yin, 2014, p. 110). The interviews may be described as elite, intensive, in-depth, un-structured or semi-structured (Yin, 2014). ‘Interviews are conversational in nature with the application of open or closed questions’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 133) with the researcher acting as the interviewer guiding the interview process. Open questions require the interviewee to think and reflect so that the interviewer can obtain opinions or information about experiences and feelings relevant to the case study (Collis and Hussey, 2014). This approach is flexible and suitable for inductive research and for the exploratory case study to be progressed in this research project (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

It is planned that interviews will be semi-structured using open questions (appendix 1) which have been drafted in advance of the interviews and where a ‘longer developed answer will be required’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.133) from the interviewees. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate when (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012): (1) It is necessary to understand the personal constructs (sets of concepts or ideas) used by the interviewee as a basis for his or her opinions and beliefs (2) The purpose is to develop an understanding of the respondent’s ‘world’ so that the researcher might influence it (for example through action research, however this will not be the purpose of the researcher) (3) The logic of a

situation is not clear, and (4) The subject matter is highly confidential or commercially sensitive, or there are issues about which the interviewee may be reluctant to be truthful.

The interviews to be conducted in this study will be linked to the research objectives (this is covered later in this paper). The first set will be elite interviews with facilitation/risk management experts. These experts include a Professor of Public Sector Risk Management in the United States who has jointly authored two texts on public sector risk as well as numerous research articles relevant to public sector risk management. The second elite interviewee is a Doctor of Risk Management who has recently retired and has worked in academia as well as practice in supporting the development and embedding of risk management in public sector organisations in the United Kingdom.

Four other interviews will be conducted with an experienced CEO and three Directors from an ETB where the facilitator has worked in the past to support the embedding of risk management. The objective of the two elite interviews and the interviews with the ETB is to obtain a greater appreciation of the role of the facilitator and to gain insight into why EFs are successful or unsuccessful in their role. The data from these interviews will enable the researcher to develop a second set of questions to support the interview process with the ETB research site CEO, Directors, SAMs and the IF. Key themes will be identified from the elite interviewees and from the ETB interviewees. These initial interviews will help the researcher to develop a question set for the ETB research site which will be focused on the unit of analysis. The researcher intends to conduct a minimum of two interviews with the CEO, Directors and IF as well as focus groups with the SAMs.

The data obtained from the interviews and the focus groups, coupled with data from documentation such as agendas and minutes from senior management team meetings and risk registers that have been developed at corporate and operational level will be utilised to inform the research. Observation by the researcher and the researcher's own reflective diary will provide the supporting evidence required to respond to the research aim and all the objectives.

All interviews will be recorded and transcribed with retention of the verbal records for analysis. 'Interviews can be time-consuming and expensive, but they offer the advantage that comprehensive data can be collected, and it may be useful if a researcher needs to ask complex or sensitive questions' (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 134). The researcher also considers from her experience that face-to-face interviews offer the opportunity to make observations about body language used by the interviewee, as well as providing opportunity for immediate access to supporting records which may be referred to in an interview.

5.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups are a method for collecting data whereby 'selected participants discuss their reactions and feelings about a product, service, situation or concept, under the guidance of a group leader' (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 341). The focus group procedure involves the 'recruitment and convening of a small group of persons where the researcher moderates a discussion about aspects of the research aim and objectives' (Yin, 2014, p. 112) which in

this research project will be on: exploring the process of embedding risk management into a public sector organisation. A procedure detailing the actions to be undertaken will be followed to support the preparation and facilitation of the focus group.

Focus group membership is advised not to exceed ten people (Collis and Hussey, 2014) and it has been decided to target ten SAMs who have responsibility for reporting directly to the Directors – this will assist the researcher in verifying that risk management is being embedded in the ETB. To achieve a target audience of ten personnel, approximately twenty SAMs will be identified and invited to volunteer to participate in the research so that an adequately sized focus group can be convened. In moderating the group, caution will be exercised to ensure the direction is kept on the issues under discussion. The researcher will need to be aware that the data obtained will reflect the opinions of the members of the focus group. Therefore, ‘the direction of the discussion will need to be kept on obtaining as full a range of perceptions and experiences as possible’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 143) to support the research aim of: exploring the process of embedding risk management into a public sector organisation. The researcher intends to record the focus group sessions with the permission of the participants. The output from the focus groups will assist the researcher to identify the factors that challenge embedding of risk management while also identifying the factors that aid the embedding of risk management.

Yin (2014, p. 112) advised that when conducting interviews and focus groups, the researcher needs to exercise caution so as to ‘minimise a methodological threat

created by the conversational nature' of interviews and focus groups as the 'conversation can lead to a mutual and subtle influence' between the researcher and the participants in the study which is 'sometimes referred to as reflexivity' where the researcher's 'perspective unknowingly influences the participants' responses', and where the participants' 'responses also unknowingly influence the researcher's line of inquiry' resulting in 'an undesirable colouring of the interview material'. The researcher will be cognisant of this advice and will work diligently to avoid reflexivity and bias in the research.

5.3 Observation

Observation is a method for collecting data in a natural setting by observing and recording people's actions and behaviours (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 343), and records and documentation maintained by the ETB. This is often referred to as 'fieldwork' (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 148) where 'the research site is a natural setting which lends itself to an interpretivist paradigm due to the importance of context and its influence on the phenomenon being studied'. There are two types of observation: (1) Non-participant observation, and (2) Participant observation. Non-participant observation is more common in business research 'where the researcher observes and records what people say or do without being involved' (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 148). When using an interpretivist paradigm, the themes relating to the actions and dialogue from the observation will emerge during the analysis of the data. The second type of observation is participant observation where the researcher is fully involved with the

participants and the phenomena being researched. The aim of this approach is to ‘obtain a more detailed understanding of the values, motives and practices being observed’ (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 148) such as when an intervention is applied. The researcher in this study will rely on participant and non-participant observation. This will involve interactions with the research site SMT, the IF and with the SAMs in the focus groups. Non-participant observation will be undertaken by observing interactions and behaviours during interviews and at management team meetings. It will be supported by reading and reviewing records relevant to embedding risk management which have been produced by the ETB research site. Examples include meeting records, the ETB risk management policy and the corporate and operational risk registers. The risk registers should reflect the changes in management actions which are supporting the embedding of risk management.

The reliability of the observational evidence can be enhanced if a second person acting as an observer documents their own observations (Yin, 2014, p. 115) and shares them with the researcher while being aware of bias by either party in the recordings. The researcher also needs to be aware of individuals (in interviews and focus groups) who are conscious of being observed as they may change or alter their behaviours which may add confusion and inaccuracy to the data gathering, and ultimately lead to misinterpretation of research findings (Collis and Hussey, 2014). The researcher will request the IF to maintain a reflective diary which should add a richness to the data observation work. Observation of the language used by those involved in the research during interviews, management team meetings and focus group meetings will

add to the richness of the data gathered for the research project.

5.4 Documentation and a Reflective Diary

Documentation will be sourced from the ETB to support the research process. Examples will include the Business Plan, Statement of Strategy, meeting records, the risk management policy, risk registers and internal risk reports. The minutes of meetings should be a useful source of data to identify how the ETB is embracing the concept of managing risk in its everyday business activities. Documentation may also be sourced from external bodies which is relevant to the embedding of risk management. Examples include reports from the Ombudsman for Children, the Department of Education and Skills, the Teaching Council, etc.

The researcher will commence a reflective diary of her 'interactions, observations, thoughts, questions, revelations', etc. (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p. 341) with the SMT. This diary will be maintained throughout the lifetime of the research project and the recordings and reflections will contribute to the pool of data for analysis. Reflective practice has been described as 'embracing a subjective understanding of reality as a basis for thinking more critically about the impact of our assumptions, values and actions on others' (Cunliffe, 2004, p. 407). Reflexivity on the other hand has been defined as 'an unsettling', referring to it as 'an insecurity regarding the basic assumptions, discourse and practices used in describing reality' (Pollner, 1991, p. 370). As with all sources of data,

the researcher will be mindful of confidentiality, the potential for bias and forming opinion which is not substantiated by evidence gathered during the research. In summary, a range of qualitative research methods have been selected for this DBA study and a synopsis of the relative strengths and weaknesses is provided in Appendix Two.

5.5 Linking Research Methods with Research Objectives

Consideration has been given to how the research methods support the researcher in collating the required data so that the overall aim and research objectives are responded to in a thorough manner within the exploratory case study. Table Six below provides an overview of how the research questions are linked to the research methods and the timelines for delivery of the required outputs. The timetable described must be adhered to so that the research project can be completed on time within the required research quality parameters (PMBOK, 2013).

In short, the researcher has carefully considered the choice of research methods which will satisfy the chosen research objectives and feels that the details provided in Tables Six and Seven provide a strong structure which will lead to a successful and rewarding research experience. These tables will be used as a check list by the researcher during the research. The next section of this paper will examine the subject of research legitimisation which will include reliability, validity and generalisability.

Table 6: Linking Research Objectives and Research Methods

No.	Research Objective	Research Method	Researcher's Comments	Timeline
1.	To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of an EF in supporting a public body to embed risk management.	Elite interviews with experts in public sector risk management and in the facilitation process in the public sector. Interviews with the SMT in an ETB that has embedded risk management with the support of the researcher. Reflective diary.	Despite the considerable experience that the researcher has with the facilitation process, it is felt important to develop a greater explanation of the factors needed to successfully embed risk management at the outset of this study. This will be achieved through elite interviews that will shed insight on the wealth of knowledge and experience of the facilitation process, as well as interviewing the SMT of an ETB where the researcher has worked to support embedding of risk management. This will allow for learning from experience going forward – such learning will be captured in the reflective diary. The learning will also support the researcher in developing a question set for interviews with the ETB research site senior management team SMT which is planned for Autumn 2017.	June/ July 2017
2.	To employ a facilitation approach to exploit opportunities to embed risk management, while seeking to support the development of an IF so that organisational performance can be enhanced.	Interviews with members of the SMT and the IF of the research site ETB. A focus group of the SAMs in the ETB research site. Observations of behaviours and participation by interviewees in the ETB research site, and by focus group members. Reflective diary.	Continued engagement with the SMT of the research site ETB is viewed as essential to facilitate an orderly transition to the embedding of risk management and such discussions (to be held individually and in focus groups) will likely have to deal with potential resistance or lack of clarity on what is required to get risk management embedded. It is also felt important to spread the facilitation message to SAMs as these can be the real change agents for change programmes in organisations. Such a focus group will also serve as a check and balance to verify if the SMT are cascading the steps needed for embedding risk management downwards in their organisation. This will also be a check on how successful the IF is in coordinating the risk management function, communicating the risk	August 2017 to April 2018

			management message, and in supporting those charged with responsibility for embedding risk management.	
3.	To track and measure the success of the EF in supporting the embedding of risk management in a public-sector organisation, including a planned handover of risk management expertise to the IF with the objective of sustaining the embedding of risk management into the medium and long term.	<p>Second interviews with SMT as risk embedding is handed over to the IF.</p> <p>Second focus group meeting with SAMs.</p> <p>Monitor reports for evidence of embedding of risk management.</p> <p>Evidence of success from observations.</p> <p>Reflective diary.</p>	<p>It is desired to see risk management embedded in the research site ETB as soon as possible. However, it is recognised that such a significant change management programme may take time in a public-sector organisation. It is anticipated that responsibility for facilitating the embedding of risk management will transfer to a suitable IF on a phased basis during the second half of 2017 and concluding in April 2018. Evidence of successful embedding of risk management will be sought from interview records with the SMT, monitoring exercises undertaken with the focus groups, records of SMT meetings, internal risk management reports, and changes in the risk registers evidencing improvement.</p>	2018 (to conclude in April 2018)

6. Research Legitimation

6.1 Reliability

Reliability as an element in qualitative research which refers to the consistency or stability of a measure. The measure utilises multiple and independent methods such as, interview and focus group data as well as observation and documentation to support the researcher in reaching the same conclusions (Denzin, 1970). This should support a greater level of reliability than a single methodological approach. The researcher plans to source and utilise data from all of these sources.

6.2 Validity

Validity is the second element that must be demonstrated in interpretive research. The data must be presented as solid descriptive data, so that the researcher leads the reader to an understanding of the meaning of the experience studied (Stake, 1995). Validation is therefore an interpretative understanding of truth (Angen, 2000). To enhance construct validity Remenyi et al. (1998) recommended that the researcher uses multiple data sources to establish an identifiable chain of evidence, and where the researcher provides a draft of all transcripts to the key stakeholders to validate the content. Within the author's research, and to comply with Waterford Institute of Technology Research Ethics Committee's requirements, all interview transcripts will be provided to the interviewees for validation as this is an essential activity to

be undertaken to strengthen validity within case study research.

6.3 Generalisability

The third element for consideration when undertaking qualitative research is generalisability. This refers to the extent to which the findings of the enquiry are more generally applicable outside the specifics of the situation studied (Kelliher, 2005). Van Maanen (1988) recommended that although a single case study may not provide sufficient evidence to make robust generalisations, it can establish the existence of a phenomenon. In qualitative terms, the research goal is to offer a case description (including data collection procedures) that would enable the repeating of the research process in another situation (Vaughan, 1992). This has been and will continue to be an objective of the researcher.

6.4 Triangulation

‘Triangulation describes the relationships that are created between the data obtained’ (Miles et al. (2014, p. 238) (interviews, focus group, observations, documentation). It is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). When the data from multiple sources are combined then reliability can be enhanced and demonstrated (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). This is significantly more important in a single case study as it ‘fortifies validation in the absence of cross case comparison’ (Kelliher, 2005, p. 123). Snow and Anderson

(cited in Feagin, Orum and Sjobertg, 1991) elaborated further on the process of triangulation ‘as occurring with data, investigators, theories, and even methodologies’. Protocols can also be used to ensure accuracy and alternative explanations can be included in triangulation (Stake, 1995). The ethical need to ‘confirm the validity of the case study process’ (Tellis, 1997, p. 6) can also be demonstrated through triangulation. This will require careful consideration throughout the research planning, execution and delivery of the research project.

In summary, when undertaking a single exploratory case study, caution will be exercised to ensure reliability, validity and generalisability in the work undertaken with the support and application of triangulation. The application of a rigorous approach to the planning, execution and delivery of the research will assist in supporting these values.

7. Planned Data Analysis

Analysis refers to the taking apart of something which can begin at any stage in the research process, and which ‘gives meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations’ (Stake, 1995, p.71). Maxwell (2013, p. 104) treats analysis as part of research design and which he advises must be ‘formally designed’ into the research from the earliest opportunity. The first step in data analysis is to know what data will be collated for analysis. In this exploratory case study the data for analysis will be obtained from interviews, focus group, observation, documentation, and a reflective diary.

All data obtained will be recorded in a database (Marshall and Rossman, 2016) so that the researcher is organised and can focus on the required data to be analysed (Yin, 2014 and Collis and Hussey, 2014). Securing a duplicate of the records is essential so that the researcher does not 'lose' data through deleting it from an electronic database or by having the data corrupted. Compliance with Data Protection legislation will be exercised throughout the collation of all data. Referencing of data with unique codes to enable access will be important and will support organisation and retrievability of data. The application of a software system to support data storage and analysis has been considered in consultation with the researcher's supervisors and Nvivo is considered a suitable application to be adopted.

7.1 Preparatory Stage of Data Analysis

As data (interview data, focus group data, observations, documentation) is obtained it will be reviewed as early as possible (within twenty-four hours) to identify if there are any gaps which need to be clarified, or if new questions arise that need to be answered, or if records provided are incomplete and further data is required to fill the gaps (Rossman and Marshall, 2016). It should then be read and reread many times by the researcher (Maxwell, 2013, p. 105). 'Taped recordings should also be listened to as early as possibly, even before they are transcribed' (Maxwell, 2013, p.105). It is useful to 'graph the data obtained' (Maxwell, 2013, p. 104) against the research project timetable so that progress can be visually evaluated by the researcher. The creation of memos at the earliest possible

stage to capture thoughts, and tentative ideas about categories and relationships of data, as well as patterns and insights is recommended.

7.2 Case Study Analytic Techniques

Case study analytic techniques refers to the analysis techniques that a researcher may employ to derive understanding of collated data. Yin (2014, p. 142) described five analytic techniques that can be applied to case study data. He cautioned that no technique is easy and whatever the selected technique it needs ‘much practice to be used powerfully’.

The first analytic technique of pattern matching involves the application of thematic analysis and has the strongest alignment with undertaking an exploratory case study. The second technique has value for explanation building and is rated at a lower value by the researcher. Time series analysis has a similar rating to explanation building as an analytic technique. Logic models and cross-case synthesis are not considered of value by the researcher for an exploratory case study. In summary, the preferred analytic technique is pattern matching and this will be adopted by the researcher. The five techniques are presented in Table Seven.

Table 7: Case Study Analytic Techniques (Reference: Yin, 2014, p. 143-150).

No	Analytic Technique
1.	<p><i>Pattern matching</i> is a technique where a pattern is created by the researcher in advance of collating data. The data when collated is then matched to the pattern and gaps/deficits are identified. ‘The recording of such patterns/themes can be done as thematic memos’ (Marshall and Rossman, 2016, p. 221). If the empirical and predicted patterns appear to be similar, then the results can assist a case study by strengthening its internal validity and it should be possible to identify themes or patterns (Aronson, 1994).</p>
2.	<p><i>Explanation building</i> is a ‘special type of pattern matching’ (Yin, 2014, p. 147-150) but the procedure is more difficult than pattern matching as described above. It requires the researcher to build an explanation about the case; therefore, it is mainly relevant to explanatory case studies but a parallel procedure for exploratory case studies has been commonly cited as part of a ‘hypothesis-generating process where the goal is not to conclude a study but to develop ideas for further study’ (Glaser and Strauss, 1967 cited in Yin, 2014, p. 147).</p>
3.	<p><i>Time series analysis</i> may be viewed as a simpler technique than pattern matching where there may only be a single dependent or independent variable. For example, where an intervention is made in a case study and the response is plotted as a time series over a defined period (days, weeks, months, years) and analysed for the effectiveness/change produced. Yin (2014, p. 151) described the ‘essential logic underlying a time-series design as the match between the observed (empirical) trend and either of the following: (a) A theoretically significant trend specified before the onset of the investigation, or (b) Some rival trend, also specified earlier’. Therefore, two opposing time patterns may have been hypothesised.</p>
4.	<p><i>Logic models</i>: Mulroy and Luber (2004 (cited in Yin, 2014, p. 155) identified the benefits of this technique especially in doing case study evaluations and in studying theories of change. A logic model is a ‘complex chain of occurrences or events over an extended period where the events are staged in repeated cause-effect-cause-effect patterns, whereby a dependent variable (event) at an earlier stage becomes the independent variable (causal event) for the next stage’ (Yin, 2014, p. 155).</p>
5.	<p><i>Cross-case synthesis</i> is a technique applied to the analysis of multiple cases whereas the previous four techniques can be applied to either a single case study or a multiple case study (Yin, 2014, p. 164).</p>

8. Ethical Challenges

In undertaking case study research, Rapoport (1970) identified three dilemmas. These relate to: (1) Goals (2) Initiatives, and (3) Ethics. These dilemmas are based in the tensions between contributing to the scientific knowledge while also protecting the research organisation. Ethical issues may relate to the ‘acceptability of the researcher to the research organisation’ (Gill and Johnson, p. 75, 1997). The researcher for this study has worked diligently over many years to build a strong, professional relationship with the ETB sector. This is demonstrated by the researcher in responding to requests for advice, support, facilitation and guidance over many years. There may be a perceived tension that the researcher is coming from an insurance company and gathering data that could be used against the ETB to increase premium. The ETBs are informed that the researcher’s role is to facilitate risk management and not any other purpose.

To support the researcher in deliberating on the ethical issues that may be encountered it is worth examining the key ethical issues (Miles, et al. 2014, pp. 58-68) as presented in Table Eight below. The researcher has analysed each issue and is confident that each of the issues can be managed and that if any new issues arise that these can be referred to her two research Supervisors and to the ETB research site’s CEO for advice. Waterford Institute of Technology’s Research Ethics Committee approved an application from the researcher to progress the research, subject to providing all transcripts to interviewees to validate the content. The researcher will provide written information about the research prior to any interaction with

an ETB employee and will seek written consent from all participants.

In summarising, the ethical issues presented with this research are similar for all qualitative research. All ethical issues are a risk for a research project but when kept under review by the researcher they are manageable. With the level of support and access to the researcher's two Supervisors, no significant issues are forecast.

Table 8: Ethical Issues for Consideration (Adapted from: Miles et al. 2014).

No.	Ethical Issue	Analysis
1.	Worthiness of the research project	The case study research has been diligently considered by the author with her Supervisors; it has been deemed worthy by all parties. The author is firmly committed to completing the research as the results should have value for other public bodies.
2.	Competence	The researcher has the required competency set as a risk management professional and this is complemented by the learning achieved on the Doctorate in Business Administration programme, and the expert support received from the research Supervisors.
3.	Informed consent	Documented information will be provided to all parties invited to participate in the research. This will be provided in advance of seeking documented consent from all parties.
4.	Benefits, costs and reciprocity	It is anticipated that there will be benefits accruing to both parties in this research. The costs of the research will be borne by the researcher and her employer (insurance company). It is also acknowledged that the ETB will have costs in respect of peoples' time. Every effort will be made to minimise the encroachment on time and consideration will be given to discussing this with the research site ETB Senior Management Team. The research findings should be of benefit to the ETB and to the wider public sector in Ireland, and others.
5.	Harm and risk	Every effort will be taken to prevent insult, harm, personal injury to any party participating in the research. Where this is anticipated, the author will discuss this with relevant parties e.g. the research supervisors, research site ETB Chief Executive Officer, etc.
6.	Honesty and trust	The researcher has a track record with the ETB sector of being an honest and trusted professional. This principle will continue to be embedded in the research project.

7.	Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity	The study findings will impact on the privacy and confidentiality of each party in the research study. For this reason, every effort will be made to anonymise data and all parties involved in this research study; this may mean that some data analysis may have to be excluded from the final report.
8.	Intervention and advocacy	At all times the researcher will fulfil her ethic to do the right thing and to ensure she does no harm to any other party. Where intervention with an individual is required this will be discussed with key parties e.g. the research supervisors and/or Chief Executive Officer. Where a person or an issue requires advocacy then consideration will be given as to how to manage it if required.
9.	Research integrity and quality	At all times the author will conduct the case study research in a careful, thoughtful and correct manner while complying with required ethical and quality requirements, and with the support and direction of the research supervisors appointed by the educational institution.
10.	Ownership of data and conclusions	The data ownership will be addressed in the documented information provided to the research site participants. The data from the research analysis will be owned by the researcher and protected (password) electronically and in hard copy in a locked, fireproof cabinet. Any documentation provided by the ETB will be owned always by the ETB and will either be returned to them or confidentially shredded within ten years of the completion of the research or earlier if required to do so. In respect of the final thesis, a discussion will be required with the project site regarding the publication of results or the quarantining of the document for ten years.
11.	Use and misuse of results	In the conclusion to the final thesis, the author will state clearly how the research findings may be utilised by public bodies and others to support embedding of risk management.

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper on research methodology has focused the researcher on how to approach the design and execution of an exploratory case study which will explore the role of an EF supporting the embedding of risk management in an ETB. A robust analysis of the decision-making process has been presented to support the choice of a qualitative methodology over a quantitative methodology, and the selection of an exploratory case study over other possible research strategies.

The researcher will employ research methods applicable to an exploratory case study including interviews, focus group, observation and documentation. Throughout the research, opportunities will be sought to enhance the data gathering so that a robust database is built to facilitate a thematic/pattern matching analysis. It is intended that this study will apply a rigorous approach to data analysis, and it is anticipated that the output from this study will be of relevance to other public bodies as they seek to embed risk management into their organisations.

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Appendix 1

DRAFT Questions to Elite Interviewees

1. I generally describe my role as an external facilitator when supporting a public body to introduce risk management. I facilitate the public body in the design of the risk management architecture so that it can demonstrate effectiveness in the management of those risks that could prevent the delivery of the organisation's plans. I am interested in how you describe the role of an external facilitator.
2. What competencies would you describe as key, or crucial for the external facilitator to possess when working with public bodies?
3. Do you consider the role of the external facilitator essential to enable an organisation to effectively design its risk management systems and structures and to embed the practice of managing risk into the business activities of the organisation, or is it a luxury?
4. What are your views on the role of an internal facilitator in supporting the continued embedding of the practice of managing risk into an organisation?
5. What should an external facilitator do to support an internal facilitator to develop the required competency base so that they have credibility in their role, and so that they are effective in their role?
6. Have you any other advice about facilitators and facilitation as a process that I should consider?

7. Risk management is often described as complex. Can you talk to me about your views on this statement and why organisations see it as complex?
8. The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE, UK) and the Chartered Institute of Public Financial Accounts (CIPFA, UK) have described risk management as effective management. How would you describe risk management, and why?
9. When working in public bodies, I have often described risk management as a ‘significant change management programme which impacts on every business activity and every employee’. Would you agree or disagree with the statement, and why?
10. What are your views on the role of leadership in the embedding of risk management into an organisation?
11. Recently I listened to Dr Peter Lachman (HSE Risk Committee, 19th May 2017) who has worked extensively in promoting safety in healthcare. He described the language used in risk management as ‘like learning a new language e.g. French’. How do you view the language of risk management?
12. Do you consider language as an obstacle that prevents organisations from embracing risk management and from embedding it into their organisations?
13. Could risk management professionals do more to explain the language or to translate it; and if so how?

14. There have been published articles on the maturity of risk management in organisations however the criteria used to evaluate the level of maturity varies across organisations. What are your views on evaluating the level of maturity of the risk management system?

15. What are the critical success factors to be measured when evaluating the success of embedding risk management?

16. Risk management has been described as transformative as it prompts and directs organisations to re-examine its processes while at the same time seeking out new and innovative ways of doing business. Do you have any views on the role of the external facilitator supporting the development of a transformative culture?

17. Culture has been described as the biggest challenge facing all change management initiatives in organisations. What role can the external facilitator play in supporting an organisation to overcome and manage this challenge?

18. What direction can you give me as an external facilitator on effective embedding of risk management so that employees own the risks they are required to manage?

19. How can I as an external facilitator measure the level of ownership?

20. Dr Peter Lachman also commented that the practice of risk management has failed; 'it is dead'. He suggested that the practice needs to move to system error investigation and to learn from the failures that have occurred. What are your views on this statement?

21. I have tried to promote the development of a register of incidents/errors; to enquire into the errors as to why they occurred and to implement preventative action; I have not succeeded very well in this area. What are your views on this?

**Appendix 2: Sources of Research Methods Evidence:
Strengths and Weaknesses (Source: Adapted from
Yin, 2014, p. 106)**

Source of the Evidence	Strengths	Weaknesses
Interviews	<p>Targeted – focuses directly on case study topics</p> <p>Insightful – provides explanations as well as personal views (e.g. perceptions, attitudes and meanings).</p>	<p>Bias due to poorly articulated questions</p> <p>Response bias</p> <p>Inaccuracies due to poor recall</p> <p>Reflexivity – interviewee gives what interviewer wants to hear.</p>
Focus Group	<p>Targeted – focuses directly on case study topics</p> <p>Insightful – provides explanations as well as personal and group views (e.g. perceptions, attitudes and meanings).</p>	<p>Limited number of willing volunteers</p> <p>Bias due to poorly articulated questions</p> <p>Response bias</p> <p>Inaccuracies due to poor recall or because of limited knowledge or deficits in organisational communication</p> <p>Reflexivity – focus group participants gives what interviewer wants to hear.</p>
Observation	<p>Immediacy – real time observation</p> <p>Contextual – can cover the case study’s context</p> <p>Comparison with third party observation for accuracy</p> <p>Richness to support other methods such as documentation, interview and focus group data.</p>	<p>Time-consuming</p> <p>Selectivity – broad coverage difficult as only small number of participants described as the ‘unit of analysis’ and similarly small number selected for the focus group</p> <p>Reflexivity – actions may proceed differently because participants are being observed</p> <p>Cost – hours needed by human observers as well as participants.</p>
Documentation	<p>Stable – can be reviewed repeatedly</p> <p>Unobtrusive – not created because of the case study</p>	<p>Retrievability – can be difficult to find</p> <p>Biased selectivity, if collection is incomplete</p>

	<p>Specific – can obtain exact details of an event, or names of persons, or references</p> <p>Broad – can cover a long span of time, many events, and many settings</p> <p>Precise – may be quantitative as well as qualitative.</p>	<p>Reporting bias – reflects unknown bias of any given document’s author</p> <p>Access – may be deliberately withheld because of commercially sensitive record</p> <p>Accessibility due to privacy reasons e.g. compliance with Data Protection legislation.</p>
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Preface to Paper Three

The revised Paper Two included a change to the research methodology (Bryman, 1989 and Saunders et al. 2007) from action research (Greenwood and Levin, 2007 and Coghlan and Brannick, 2014) to a single exploratory case study (Yin, 2012 and 2014). This change was focused to support a successful transfer (Wardale, 2013) of the research project to the research site at completion and this was emphasised in an updated conceptual model which was included in the accepted Paper Two. The proposed research study would include supporting the professional development of an Internal Facilitator at the research site which had yet to be identified and agreed but which would be a public body. It was planned that the Internal Facilitator would play a key role in supporting the embedding of risk management at the research site.

As the research study is dynamic and needs to respond to the acquisition of new evidence and the development of the study itself as well as assimilating the advice from Examiners and Supervisors the author has developed and reworded the research objectives from three to four. This change will also support the validity of the research study. The revised four research objectives that will now be the focus of the research study at East ETB are:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management.
2. To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation.

3. To assess the enabling factors on the embedding of risk management
4. To evaluate the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach.

Noting the Examiners' advice from July 2017 the researcher clarified that the unit of analysis would be the Senior Management Team (Chief Executive Officer, Directors, Senior Administrative Managers and the Internal Facilitator) at the research site. The researcher initially sourced data from two Experts in public sector risk management on the role of facilitation supporting the embedding of risk management in a public body. It was intended to support this component of the research study by undertaking a pilot research project at an Education and Training Board in the West of Ireland (West ETB – the pilot site) where the risk management architecture and embedding of risk management had commenced and was facilitated by the researcher. The data collection tools were identified to include (1): interviews with two Experts, and (2) interviews with the Senior Management Team at the pilot site including their Internal Facilitator. It was planned that the analysis of this data would support the researcher in planning and delivering her research study in a second ETB (referred to as East ETB – the research site). As this research study will be qualitative the researcher intends to adopt an interpretivist philosophy. The importance of validity in qualitative research is to the forefront of this research study and will be monitored by the researcher.

Paper Three which follows this preface describes the research design adopted for the data collection from

interviews with two Experts in public sector risk management and data from the pilot site. The collated data will be analysed to inform the research approach to be adopted at the research site – East ETB.

Section 2: Research paper series (1-4)

Paper 3 Research Design and Initial Findings

1. Introduction

This paper complements the two previous papers presented: (1) Conceptual Paper, and (2) Methodology Paper. Following feedback from the Doctoral Colloquium in October 2017, the title of the research study has been reworded to: ‘Embedding Risk Management in a Public Sector Organisation Through a Facilitation Approach: An Exploratory Study’. The research study now has four objectives:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management.
2. To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management in a public sector organisation.
3. To identify key success factors supporting and impeding the embedding of risk management in a public sector organisation.
4. To evaluate the embedding of risk management in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach.

The research design adopted for this work will be presented in section two and this will outline the approach used to achieve the research objectives. This will be followed with initial findings in relation to the objectives which will be used to inform the development of the next phase of the research study for Paper Four.

In the context of this research study, the researcher will be working in collaboration (Herr and Anderson, 2015, p. 40) with insiders in the research site (East ETB). For this

reason, it is proposed to use the “I” term from here on as I will seek to bring my competency base to enhance the embedding of risk management within the ETB sector.

2. Research Design

The research design encompasses an exploratory case study approach which was presented in paper two (Saunders et al. 2007). Case studies can straddle both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms (Bhattacharjee, 2012 and Collis and Hussey, 2014); however, it is proposed that the methodology for this case study will be qualitative. This decision is linked to the researcher’s desire in this DBA study to develop a deeper understanding between facilitation (Schwarz, 2017), change management (Kotter, 1995) and the embedding of risk management (Harvey et al. 2001). Paper two also outlined that an interpretive single site case study will be used, and this allows me to capture rich contextualised data (through reflective diary, interviews, focus groups and participant observation) that reveal the experience of embedding risk management from the perspectives of those within the chosen organisation (Stark and Torrance, 2006).

The chosen public sector organisation for this study is an Education and Training Board (ETB). ETBs were established in July 2013 from the aggregation of Vocational Education Committees (VEC) and the transfer of training services from FÁS in 2014. They provide education services at primary, secondary and tertiary level (including adult education) with funding being provided by a combination of government agencies (Departments of

Education and Skills, Health, Employment and Social Protection), SOLAS and the European Social Fund. The multitude of stakeholders and complexity of activities undertaken makes the management of risk in such organisations a challenging task.

Prior to this research study, the author has designed and led significant change management initiatives including embedding risk management in the health sector in the UK and Ireland. Over the past twenty years, she has led the successful facilitation of the risk management architecture for a range of public bodies although there have been instances of delays in the embedding of risk management and in some cases, it has been abandoned due to resource constraints.

2.1 Case Study Design

While adopting a single case study design as outlined above, a phased approach is planned (Kelliher, 2005) to comprise a pilot study in what will be termed West ETB with a subsequent case study at what will be termed East ETB. Within each of these two sub-units of the case (two units of observation), there will be different levels of analysis which in this study comprise the researcher's interactions with various stakeholders in the ETB. As the study evaluates the impact of an external facilitation approach to embedding risk management in the ETB, the unit of analysis is the ETB itself as shown below in Table One.

Table One: Case Study Design

Case Study Organisation and Unit of Analysis: Education and Training Board		
	Pilot Case (West ETB)	Main Case (East ETB)
Levels of Analysis	Senior Management Team (SMT) (including Internal Facilitator).	SMT (including Internal Facilitator)
		Senior Administrative Managers.

In short, the pilot study approach will permit me to explore the primary research objectives at case study level and will allow for the refinement of the research design and the validation of emergent findings on the embedding of risk management in East ETB. In this regard, replication logic has been incorporated into the single case design which allows me to induct theory (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Haugen Gausdal, 2008 and Siggelkow, 2007). An additional level of analysis is proposed for the main research site (SAMs in East ETB – findings to be covered in Paper Four) which will allow for a more extensive evaluation on the embedding of risk management throughout the ETB.

The conceptual framework for this study (outlined in Paper Two) proposes that an external facilitation approach is being employed to embed risk management. Such an approach is warranted in public sector organisations due to constraints such as deficits in resources (human, time,

competency and financial) since 2008, and more particularly in risk management expertise needed to implement what is a significant change programme in their organisation. The approach proposed for both the pilot and main research site entails me acting as the External Facilitator (EF) creating the impetus and transferring my knowledge of risk management to the research sites – in particular to an identified IF where knowledge will ultimately be transferred, and which will permit me as the EF to exit the ETB.

2.2 Longitudinal and Ethnographic Observation

Hakim (2000) reports that the appropriate duration of a case is influenced by the objectives and context of the research and the desire to embed risk management into the chosen research organisation adds a longitudinal dimension to this study. Literature considerations suggest a study of no less than eight months with the final duration dependent on the nature of the study and allowing for theoretical saturation (Hill and McGowan 1999; Eisenhardt, 1989). This will be a major consideration for East ETB which is introduced later in this paper and which will be analysed in Paper Four.

Ethnographic research translates to ‘writing about culture’ (Flick, 2014, p. 355), and it has been described as having its ‘own distinct procedures for collecting data’ (Goulding, 2004, p. 299). Given that I will be immersing myself in an ETB in ‘order to understand the meanings and significances that people give to their behaviour and that of others’ (Easterby-Smith, et al. 2008, p. 94), it is anticipated

that the analysis will involve the interpretation of meanings and functions of human actions (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994) which will result in a better understanding of the phenomenon of how to embed risk management. Ethnography, particularly observation, is a key technique for this study as it will allow me to assess the key factors driving and impeding the embedding of risk management. Under the observation mantle (Gold, 1958 and Junker, 1956), the participant as observer approach will be used, as presented in Table Two below.

Table Two: Role of the Researcher as a Participant Observer (Source: Burford, 1956 and Gold, 1958)

Complete Participant	Participant as Observer	Observer as Participant	Complete Observer
The true identity of the researcher is not known by the research subjects and the researcher adopts the role of insider.	The role of the researcher is explicit to all involved and the researcher consciously adopts the role of an outsider, but trust builds over time.	The observer-as-participant role is used in studies involving one-visit interviews. The researcher adopts the role of insider.	The complete observer role is known only to a select few and the researcher consciously adopts the role of insider.

Note that the participant as observer equates to the role of the EF in this research study. All research participants will be aware of my role and the research study will be communicated to all those involved (interviewees and focus group members). In communicating to the research participants, I will make it clear that all activities that will be undertaken within the research study are to support the delivery of the research aim and objectives. In this role, I will as an outsider work to build and gain the trust of the research participants.

2. A Deeper Appreciation of the Role of the External Facilitator

At the outset of this research study and having discussed my existing approach to external facilitation with colleagues, I felt that it would be beneficial to gather additional information on optimal facilitation approaches so as to acquire a deeper appreciation of the role of external facilitation. This encompasses assessing how the role is perceived by others outside of my employment, and it is intended to utilise the evidence acquired to help improve the likelihood of success in embedding risk management in the main research site (East ETB).

3.1 Expert Interview Selection

To assist understanding of what the role of an EF is, I identified two Expert interviewees (EI) who were known to me for approximately fifteen years from professional meetings and conferences. They were considered credible

within their profession and knowledgeable to inform on this objective. Table Three below provides an overview of the rationale for selecting the two expert interviewees.

Table Three: Expert Interviewees Selected for Research Study

Chosen Audience	Rationale for Selection
Expert interviewees	Professional credibility. Knowledge of public sector risk management internationally. Knowledge of the role of a facilitator. Leading the development of risk management in the public sector nationally and internationally. Knowledge from research of what works well to support the embedding of risk management. Research and authoring texts and papers for peer reviewed journals on public sector risk management. Facilitation of risk management projects at national and international level for governments and international non-governmental organisations.

The choice of expert interviewees was influenced by the likely familiarity that such people would have with the chosen research area which would include issues around facilitation (Schwarz, 2017 and Harvey et al. 2001 and Kitson et al. 1998), embedding (Lewin, 1947 and Kotter, 1995), measurement of effectiveness (Kotter, 1995) and transfer of change management projects (Wardale, 2013). In this regard, EI 1 has held senior positions in academia and practice. Following a distinguished career as Head of the School of Insurance, Finance and Risk Management in a UK university, EI 1 took up a position leading a professional representative body for public sector risk management. She had extensive experience of developing risk management education programmes for the public and

private sector, leading the development of risk management in public bodies throughout the UK, and authoring research papers and texts on why risk management is important to public bodies. When approached to participate in the research the interviewee was somewhat reluctant as she had been retired for two years. When information (research guide) was forwarded, she immediately confirmed her willingness to participate. The fact that this interviewee had been retired for two years was not considered a limiting factor for the research study.

EI 2 is currently employed as a Professor of Public Sector Risk Management and Finance in the United States. He has a distinguished career in research, practice and authoring research papers and texts on public sector risk and is considered an entrepreneur in establishing risk management systems and structures. His professional risk consultancy with governments and international bodies is widely respected and acclaimed. When approached by the researcher EI 2 was supportive of the research study and immediately confirmed his willingness and availability to participate as an Expert interviewee.

3.2 Development of Interview Guide

I was anxious to ensure that the interview data would yield relevant and usable output which would be valid and reliable (Farquhar, 2012). To address this, an interview guide was developed with links to the important issues to be addressed in objectives two, three and four. Relevant literature was also considered; for example, the facilitation questions were drawn from Schwarz (2017) in his

description of the role and responsibilities of a facilitator while the questions on embedding of risk management were linked to authors such as Young and Fone (2000 and 2005); Zakaria (2015) and Harvey et al. (2001). The question set was also designed to enable measurement of the maturity of a risk management system so that a benchmark for embedding could be established. Finally, the evidence was also sought of new phenomena which had not previously been discussed in the literature which would be relevant to the transfer of the risk management project, as well as providing support for the embedding of risk management in a public body – this took the form of open ended questions from which some inductive themes could emerge in the data analysis.

The full question set and the links to themes relevant for objectives two, three and four is shown in Table Four below, while evidence relevant to supporting objective one was secured from expert interviews using the same question set. Appendix One provides the full question set for the Expert and West ETB (pilot site) interviews which is underpinned by the conceptual model presented in Paper Two. An overview of the procedures to be followed when undertaking data collection (Tellis, 1997; Aronson, 1995; Neale, 2016; Braun and Clarke, 2006 and Ryan and Bernard, 2003) is presented in Appendix Two; this was followed to support standardisation and to ensure key actions were not overlooked. The information in Appendix Three was provided to all interviewees approximately two weeks in advance of the interview. This had two purposes: (1) To comply with ethical requirements prior to obtaining informed consent from each interviewee, and (2) To support an open and transparent approach to the research.

Table 4: Links Between Expert Interview Questions and Research Objectives Two, Three and Four.

Objective Number	Research Objectives	Planned Themes and Sub-Themes	Evidence base	Question Set
2.	To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management in a public-sector organisation.	Facilitation: 1. External Facilitator 2. Internal Facilitator.	Schwarz (2017) Harvey et al. (2001) Wardale (2013).	Questions 1 - 6 are focused on eliciting data on the role of the EF and the development of the competency base of the IF. Data is also sought on the interviewee's views of whether a facilitator role is essential to support embedding of risk management.
3.	To identify key success factors supporting and impeding the embedding of risk management in a public-sector organisation.	Critical Factors: 1. Leadership 2. Language/complexity of Change management 3. Culture.	Bernstein (1996) Power (2009) SOLACE/CIPFA (2002) ALARM/IRMIC/IRM (2010) ISO 31000 (2009) Lewin (1947) Kotter (1996).	Questions 7 - 13 are focused on the complexity of risk management, and the role of important factors such as culture to embed risk management.

4.	To evaluate the embedding of risk management in a public-sector organisation through a facilitation approach.	Measurement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer to Internal Facilitator • Benchmark and Risk Maturity. 	Kotter (1996, Wardale (2013) Fone and Young (2002 and 2005) ISO 3100 (2009) ALARM/AIRMIC/IRM (2010).	Questions 14 - 21 seeks the interviewees' informed views of what measurement of embeddedness would look like, and on the transfer of the research project from the EF (the researcher) to the IF.
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3.3 Managing the Data Collection

Initially, consent was obtained from the interviewees to audio record the content. Each interviewee was advised that the interview would last approximately ninety minutes. The recording was transcribed by a third-party stenography company used by the researcher's employer. Compliance with Data Protection legislation was confirmed in advance in writing by the stenography company. To comply with ethical approval (Patton, 2015) and to enhance reliability and validity all transcripts were verified and corrected/amended by each interviewee. This resulted in enhanced clarity of the data obtained which did not adversely impact the integrity of the data.

To protect the privacy and confidentiality of all interviewees (Patton, 2015), the researcher assigned a unique identifier to each. The unique identifier reference is presented in Table Five below. The table provides information on the date and duration of the interviews, the interview method adopted and the location of the interviews.

Table 5: Unique Identifier for Expert Interviewees

No.	Chosen Audience	Unique Identifier	Interview Date	Duration of Interview	Interview Method	Location of Interview
1	Expert Interviewee	EI 1	10 07 17	1 hour 29 minutes	Conference call	Researcher's office
2	Expert Interviewee	EI 2	10 07 17	2 hours 1 minute	Skype interview	Researcher's office

As the two Expert Interviewees were based outside of Ireland and not immediately accessible to the researcher for a face-to-face interview, technology in the form of conference calling and Skype were used to facilitate the two interviews. The author is conversant with both types of technology. EI 1 preferred to participate by conference call (Easterby-Smith, et al. 2008) and EI 2 elected to use Skype. The two interviews were conducted in the researcher's office on the same day. The researcher does not believe that the use of technology versus personal face-to-face interviewing significantly constrained the data collection. It was also the most efficient method to obtain the professional input of the two expert interviewees due to their geographical location.

In summary, I was happy with the interview process and did not believe that the use of technology adversely impacted the data collation. The semi structured interview process enabled me to guide the expert interviewees through the interview process so that the required data could be obtained (Easterby-Smith, 2008 and Kelliher, 2005). Both expert interviewees provided affirmation for many, but not all the tools and techniques employed by the researcher as an EF. A summary of my reflections is shown below in Table Six below:

Table 6: Reflections on the Data Collection Process

Interviewee	Researcher' Reflections
EI 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very organised interview and good time management. • Very strong views voiced on specific points e.g. role of facilitator, change management, language of risk and risk management, culture, change, transformation, etc. • Demonstrated very comprehensive knowledge of enterprise risk management, had limited experience of facilitating the embedding of risk management as work undertaken was frequently of a consultancy nature and for research purposes.
EI 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some interruptions at the interviewee's location resulting in loss of concentration by both the researcher and the interviewee for very short periods. • Very forthright in providing information with no evidence of 'guarding' by the interviewee. • Researcher's DBA study is of significant interest to the interviewee as he described it as 'an area that is under researched'. • Dearth of research on risk leadership versus availability of data on risk managers/risk champions/chief risk officers. • Detailed examples provided when answering questions which resulted in a longer interview than planned but a richness was added to the data.

3.4 Expert Interview Findings

Four key themes were initially identified from the conceptual model: (1) Facilitation (2) Embedding (3) Measurement, and (4) Transfer. These were the four a priori themes used as a framework for the discussions and this led to various subthemes being considered as will be shown in the subsequent thematic analysis of the interview findings; this analysis was conducted manually due to the small number of interviews involved.

3.4.1 Facilitation (Research Objective Two)

Questions 1-6 in the interview question set (Appendix One) focused on the function of facilitation and the required competency base for a competent facilitator. In terms of the key competencies of an EF, EI 1 described ‘*someone who assists the organisation or individuals within that organisation to achieve a particular objective, they need credibility*’ and ‘*to be knowledgeable and be very confident*’. This view was supported by EI 2 and it emphasised to me that the chosen facilitator must have a wide array of skills to be effective in this role. While this finding was somewhat expected, the view expressed by EI 2 that ‘*risk management is mainly about clarifying and articulating values*’ was somewhat unexpected – this suggests that a facilitator needs to be cognisant of the link between an organisation’s values when attempting to embed risk management – this was a point not previously considered by me or found in any of the literature studied.

Facilitation arrangements typically involve an EF working closely with a chosen IF, which led to a discussion with the interviewees on the desired competencies of an IF. Here, EI 2 stated that an IF ‘*needs to understand the psychology of human perception of risk and uncertainty, understand how cultures influence risk, the relationship between risk and values, knowledge of the industry, as many of the problems in the public sector are contextual*’. This can be inferred as largely referring to one’s competency base which was also discussed by EI 1 who felt that the IF ‘*needs to be a risk champion... as there is a constant need for reminding, refreshing, supporting ... to make everybody risk aware*’. In short, many of the skills needed to be an

effective IF were like that of an EF when seeking to embed risk management in a public-sector organisation.

In terms of the necessity for an EF to be present to support risk management in public organisations, EI 1 felt that *‘there is an essential role for a facilitator in a public service organisation’* although it was clarified that an *‘EF is required in the absence of an IF’*. In short, the EF can be very important but what is more important within such organisations is a good IF – this reaffirmed my own experiences working with public bodies in my career to date.

3.4.2 Key Factors Supporting and Impeding the Embedding of Risk Management (Research Objective Three)

Questions 7-13 in the interview question set (Appendix One) assessed issues such as the role of an EF and IF supporting the embedding of risk management. From this, a range of critical factors were identified as summarised below:

- **Leadership and a Change Champion**

Leadership was frequently alluded to when considering the key enablers and inhibitors to the successful embedding of risk – strong leadership can act as a key enabler, but weak leadership is a clear inhibitor. Such leadership was linked to effective communication to staff, *‘walking the walk and talking the talk’* (EI 1). Within this discussion, both interviewees agreed that the IF needs to be capable of assuming a leadership role for risk to be successfully

embedded. EI 2 added to this by observing that while *'leadership is aligned with the role of the facilitator, not all facilitators or risk managers are risk leaders'* which suggests that the chances of successfully embedding risk are greatly reduced if the chosen facilitator does not have good leadership skills. In reflecting further on the importance of good leadership, I have noted the many consultancies available to provide risk management systems (some are information management systems, while others provide a generic risk management package which gives an organisation the risk management architecture), but such consultancies provide no risk leadership support which makes them highly unlikely to lead to successful embedding.

- **Ability to Simplify and Appropriate Choice of Language**

An interesting divergence of views resulted when the interviewees considered the possible complexity of risk management. EI 1 felt that *'risk management is both complex and simple at the same time'* while EI 2 did not feel that *'risk management, at least the way I talk about it, is complex at all. It's critical thinking which can be hard, ... we don't do critical thinking very often, ... it's probably one of the primary problems with risk management especially'*. While it was acknowledged that EI 1 was mainly referring to the theory of risk whereas EI 2 spoke about the actual communication and practice of managing risk, I felt from these discussions that a key skill to enable successful facilitation is to be able to distil what can be perceived as a complex process into straightforward steps. Views in relation to the language used to help embed risk

into an organisation were also expressed and I was struck by the comments of EI 1 who felt that she was *'happy using the word 'change' after the fact rather than before the fact. The words change and change management are ... threatening to people'*. EI 2 felt that the process of embedding risk was *'more of a change management kind of thing that's going on'* and when amalgamating these views, the author felt that a key issue going forward would be whether to describe the embedding of risk management as a change process or not; this was certainly something to consider going forward to the case study organisation.

- **Culture**

Culture has long been recognised as being a key factor for change management initiatives; hence it was no surprise to see both Expert interviewees cite it as a critical factor to influence the embedding of risk management. EI 1 alluded to the importance of culture to a risk management initiative *'culture is a huge challenge for all different types of risk management initiatives ... this is the way we've done things in the past and why should we change it now?'* EI 2 also addressed the subject of culture by focusing on the *'organisational values as they are an expression of an organisation's culture'* so that a key challenge to successful embedding of risk management is to have *'systems and processes that are aligning with their values and the culture of the organisation'* (EI 2).

3.4.3 Evaluation of Embedding of Risk Management (Research Objective Four)

When discussing the measurement of embedding risk management (interview questions 14-21), all agreed that one aspect of successful embedding of risk management is when risk management has been successfully transferred to a competent IF. In addition, both interviewees referred to both qualitative and quantitative measurement, but the discussion was more broad ranging around issues such as risk maturity and benchmarking. EI 2 referred to risk maturity as a *'state that organisations reach when they are embedding risk'*. This was reaffirming to me as I have promoted risk management as an enabling practice to empower employees and where organisational performance is enhanced. When organisations achieve this state and where employees state that it helps them to *'do my job better'* (EI 2) then risk management is being embedded into the culture of the organisation. EI 1 felt that *'one can then see more clearly what needs to be done as you have a benchmark'*. It is this benchmark that can be measured against over time to ensure embedding of risk management continues.

Benchmarking tools may be quantitative or qualitative and to date I have mainly supported the adoption of qualitative tools for benchmarking. Exceptions to this would be where there is financial risk such as fraud or where an organisation is striving to reduce incidents, then in such cases quantitative tools are more useful. Benchmarking tools can be applied at any time in the life cycle of risk. Risk maturity on the other hand refers to the maturity of the organisation to own and manage its risks. Examples can

include the risk proofing of plans and decisions prior to finalisation.

3.4.4 Summary of Expert Interviews

In reflecting on the expert interviews, I noted that while most of the views expressed reinforced my prior beliefs on the chosen issues, I was most struck by the importance attached to risk leadership in trying to implement what is a relatively large change programme in organisations. The view that an IF is most important to successful embedding of risk management somewhat contradicted my view of the role of the EF as being pivotal to supporting public bodies to embed risk management, but this is based on my own past observations that many public bodies do not have a dedicated full-time IF resource available to them. A range of factors were uncovered as being critical to successful embedding of risk management which can lead an organisation to achieving a state of maturity.

4. West Education and Training Board

As outlined in Table One, I decided to use a pilot ETB organisation (to be called West ETB) in addition to the main research site (East ETB) in attempting to achieve research objectives two, three and four of this study. The rationale for this decision was that it was felt that evidence gathered from the embedding of risk management in West ETB where I had worked from 2015 to 2017 would allow for the refinement of the research design and the validation

of emergent findings on the embedding of risk management in East ETB.

4.1 Background to Researcher Involvement

It is useful to provide context in advance of analysing the findings from the West ETB primary data. I was approached in May 2015 by the Education Officer to advise on how West ETB could demonstrate compliance in respect of the requirements for risk management (legislation and Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs). This led to a proposal being presented to the CEO and SMT of the ETB to engage with me as an EF which was accepted. From 2017 onwards the ETB appointed Directors to replace Senior Officers. Within the SMT in this ETB, each Senior Director is supported by several middle line managers e.g. School Principals report to the Director of Schools, Further Education and Training (FET) centre managers' report to the Director for FET, while finance, human resources, procurement and estates have similar reporting structures to a Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD). The three Directors report to the CEO who reports to the ETB Board and to the ETB Audit and Risk Committee on the embedding of risk management.

The initial output from the facilitation process in 2015 was a Risk Management Policy. This was followed by a Corporate Risk Register in 2015 detailing the key risks that could prevent the delivery of the ETB's Statement of Strategy. The Corporate Risk Register was developed over two one-day workshops with the SMT. The Risk

Management Policy and the Corporate Risk Register were accepted by the CEO and presented to the Board's Audit and Risk Committee in September 2015. The Audit and Risk Committee provided positive comments and complimented the CEO and SMT on the significant output achieved in a very short period. The comments provided momentum and energy to proceed with support for the development of the operational risk registers for the schools and for the FET sectors. During quarter four of 2015 and quarters one and two of 2016, risk registers for the schools and the FET sector were developed and accepted by the SMT and the Audit and Risk Committee. Later in 2016, I facilitated work on the development of the ETB's Values and Behaviours.

To consolidate much of the progress made, the CEO decided in the fourth quarter of 2016 to appoint an IF to support the coordination and management of risk for the ETB and to take over this responsibility from the Education Officer (this position ceased to exist following the establishment of three new Director positions). However, the position of IF was not filled until May 2017 and during this seven-month delay, the coordination and management of risk slowed. This was exacerbated by the presence of other significant risks for the ETB at the time which required a high level of senior management time, and comments were made to me during this period by the CEO that the *'eye has been taken off the ball'* and that the risk management initiative had stalled. Over this period, the updating of the risk register did not occur, and the planned embedding of risk management did not take place. However, since the appointment of the IF in May 2017, momentum has been re-established and I have been

facilitating the induction programme for the IF which is progressing satisfactorily although somewhat slowly due to the post-holder's other work commitments.

4.2 Pilot Case Study Data Collection

Having decided to use West ETB as a pilot case study in advance of the main research site (East ETB), permission was sought from the West ETB's SMT (the Chief Executive and three Directors) to participate in the research study as I had established relationships with these people since 2015. At this stage, it was explained that the purpose of the data collection would be to evaluate how facilitation is viewed by the SMT and to determine if the role performed by the researcher as an EF has been successful in supporting West ETB to embed risk management. Feedback was received from the CEO that all Directors consented to be part of my planned research. I was also interested to learn what more could have been done to ensure greater success in terms of facilitating the embedding of risk management, as I was aware that there were disappointments experienced over this thirty-month period.

To ensure a standardised approach to the research in West ETB, a similar process was applied as to the Expert interviews. The same question set (Appendix One) was applied where the emphasis was strongly on acquiring data to support objectives two, three and four although one question (Q21) was not asked as it was not considered relevant. Table Seven below provides information concerning the West ETB interviews, the assignment of a

unique identifier for each interviewee, and the interview date, duration of interview, interview method and location for the four interviews.

Table 7: Unique Identifier for West ETB Interviewees

No.	Unique Identifier	Interview Date	Duration of Interview	Interview Method	Location of Interview
1	W ETB 1	05 07 17	1 hour 27 minutes	Face to face	Interviewee's office
2	W ETB 2	06 07 17	53 minutes	Face to face	Interviewee's office
3	W ETB 3	25 07 17	1 hour 19 minutes	Face to face	Interviewee's office
4	W ETB 4	25 07 17	1 hour 53 minutes	Face to face	Interviewee's office

A key issue of concern when drafting the interview question set was interviewer bias given my considerable history of working with the chosen interviewees. Bias is evident when there is ‘an attempt by an interviewer to introduce bias during the conduct of an interview’ (Saunders et al. 2007, p. 600). I was conscious that the interviewees may try to articulate a positive story, rather than relaying all the deficits and true learning that as a researcher I needed to acquire for my research as well as adding to the available body of research knowledge and enhancing my own professional development and facilitation role. Noting the advice of Marshall and Rossman (2016, p.117) of ‘reflecting on one’s identify and one’s sense of voice and perspectives, assumptions and sensitivities’, I have kept this advice to the forefront at all

times and particularly during the analysis of this interview data.

Initial reflections on the four semi-structured interviews are shown below in Table Eight; some of these substantiated and in other instances contradicted what I had experienced during my time as an EF.

Table 8: Reflections on West ETB Interviews

Ref. No.	Initial Reflections
W ETB 1	Evidence demonstrated of reflection on how the ETB organisational culture has changed. Used the word 'trust' and attributed it to the professional relationship with the researcher.
W ETB 2	Observed a hesitancy in answering questions which could be described as cautious. Not fully conversant with the ETB risk management system that was being embedded.
W ETB 3	Supportive of the researcher's facilitative approach with reference to 'trust' and 'process'. Open, honest views on the risk management process expressed. The value of bringing employees together in the workshops was described as an added value.
W ETB 4	Views expressed differed somewhat to those of colleagues. The risk management process was about engaging with staff rather than a 'tick-box' exercise. Referred to the process of reflection as important in risk management.

Note that the questions prepared for the West ETB interviewees followed a similar structure to that of the Expert interviews, and hence the issues raised can be tracked to objectives two, three and four as outlined in Table Four earlier in this paper. In general, the West ETB

interview process ran smoothly with evidence of West ETB 4 having undertaken a significant amount of preparation for the interview. West ETB 3 and 4 expressed their desire to provide honest, useful and relevant information to assist me in my research although it must be noted West ETB 2 was more guarded in answering the interview questions.

The next section will present the findings from the thematic analysis of the interview transcripts from the West ETB interviews based on themes of facilitation, critical factors to embedding risk management, and measurement/transfer of risk management.

4.3 Analysis of Senior Management Team Interviews

The opening questions for each member of the SMT (Appendix One) revolved around my role as an EF and how I supported the competency base of the IF. This is now discussed under the heading of facilitation which then leads to a discussion of critical success factors and measurement issues.

4.3.1 Facilitation (Research Objective Two)

The findings from the interviewees suggested that the EF was very competent. W ETB 2 indicated that the EF had helped immensely '*working with you, it's a proactive piece of work ... it's adding a lot of value*'. This view was also corroborated by W ETB 3 and 4 who both felt that the EF was highly competent and very important and necessary in

the process. W ETB 3 posited that *'I knew very little about risk management ... God, it was just fantastic there was an outside facilitator'*, while W ETB 4 highlighted that an IF may not be as effective *'when you're trying to get something across ... that's as important as risk management ... if you just had some risk guru inside ... it mightn't be as effective as having somebody from outside'*. Building up trust was alluded to by W ETB 1, *'we had a trust that had built up because we liked the way you had delivered a number of facilitations'*.

Overall it was found that the West ETB interviewees supported the role of the EF and found her to be extremely competent and credible in the process.

- **Supporting the Internal Facilitator's Competency Base**

The appointment of an IF to West ETB was agreed in quarter four of 2016 although the post-holder only commenced work in May 2017. I am currently facilitating the development of the IF's competency. W ETB 4 described the requirements for the IF's development programme which incorporated many of the requirements expressed by the West ETB interviewees:

Getting the preparation right. Linking risk to strategy and understanding the link ... helping to focus on the risks in the context of strategy. Manage the personalities and dynamics of the different Directors' priorities and the CEO's expectations. Leading risk reduction ... add some other value associated with the work (W ETB 4).

A consensus appeared here which suggests that the IF's competency should not just be assessed on the person's risk management knowledge; the person also needs to understand strategy formation and possess strong interpersonal skills.

4.3.2 Key Factors Supporting and Impeding the Embedding of Risk Management (Research Objective Three)

A wide range of views were expressed in relation to factors which can enable or impede successful embedding of risk management and these include:

- **Leadership: Having the Right Facilitators in Place**

A key finding from the West ETB interviewees was the importance of good leadership. This started with feedback on my own role as EF from W ETB 1 who described the challenge of the EF not adequately scoping the risk management project:

You sat down with us and we worked through the day ... as it was moving along you were evaluating ... documenting ... articulating and presenting ... we'd always say leaving that day that we didn't sit around talking, we actually got to a number of agreements, a number of actions, a number of decisions which we had discussed in that process.

The importance of leadership was also discussed by W ETB 4 who alluded to 'a nervousness' about bringing in somebody who may not engage with the employees and

who may actually *'do damage, which can result in a challenge for the organisation to recover from and manage'*.

While the EF role did receive positive feedback from the interviewees, it was also clear that an internal risk management champion is necessary to get risks embedded in this ETB as all acknowledged that momentum stalled with the delay in appointing the IF. This lack of a risk management champion was compounded by the range of services offered by ETBs in so many locations with so many employees – this makes it hard to keep risk management on the agenda for everyone: *'so I would suggest that somebody with the appropriate responsibilities as the champion of risk'* (W ETB 2). Furthermore, W ETB 3 articulated that *'risk management is ... something that really needs to be on the agenda of all of the meetings for people to realise the importance of it'*. Thankfully this situation has improved with a new IF in place from May 2017.

- **Communication and Avoidance of Complex Language**

W ETB 1 suggested that communication was important and argued that *'communication and delivery is a two-sided thing'*. Similarly, W ETB 3 indicated that communication is a tool that can facilitate bonding within teams and was therefore viewed positively - a *'kind of a bonding or communication where we got to know one another and that was absolutely fabulous'*. Overall the importance of communication was referred to as an enabler but when messages are not communicated or poorly communicated then challenges may arise which eat into the time of

managers so that corrective action must be taken to avoid further damage to the embedding of risk management.

The likelihood of successful embedding of risk management is increased when simplified, non-threatening language is employed by the change leaders. W ETB 2 described how change can be threatening: *'one of the big words that causes great trouble in the public service is change'* which is generally related to *'fairly significant cultural changes'*. He elaborated by stating *'there's a lot of political emphasis where it creates a kind of a top down culture of change rather than change coming from the bottom up'*. The members of the SMT generally agreed that the language of risk management was not complex and suggested that they had been exposed to it in their current roles and previous employment. W ETB 1 argued that *'you are talking about risk management ... it's on the desk anyway, the language of it wouldn't be in any way off-putting'*. W ETB 2 supported this view that the language was not complex but highlighted the importance of being aware of risk, *'we use the word risk ... downstream word, not an upstream word ... it's just being aware'*, while W ETB 3 reinforced this view by stating that *'I didn't find any of the language difficult'*. Interestingly, W ETB 4 suggested that *'language like risk is kind of heavy-duty stuff.'*

It was also acknowledged that staff in West ETB have become more accustomed to change programmes and to increased demands for accountability in the public service. W ETB 3 described that *'there are a number of people who their whole thinking has matured with regard to risk management, ... there has been huge change'*. The

interviewee in this scenario was linking change management to changing the attitude and behaviour of employees towards the management of risk. W ETB 4 confirmed: *'we have changed, and you can focus on what the key bits are and some of them for me are our accountability in the public service and governance'*. This was strengthened by an additional statement: *'it's not over exaggerated to think risk management should be a really significant change for people'*.

- **Culture and Getting People to Pull Together**

Successful embedding is also linked to having an organisational culture that is receptive to change and where all can see the ultimate benefits. W ETB 1 described linking the embedding of risk management to *'the culture and to the ETB's Statement of Strategy'*. W ETB 4 described bringing groups of people together to support the transfer of risk as *'it opened communication channels ..., in an indirect way it actually was a good way to have that common corporate thing that got everybody talking'*.

4.3.3 Evaluation of Embedding of Risk Management (Research Objective Four)

As outlined earlier in this section, the embedding of risk management at West ETB slowed over the past twelve months due to a delay in appointing an IF, and the diversion of resources to manage other important organisational risks. In this context, it was not surprising to note W ETB 1's suggestion that measurement was difficult as it was not known what level of success had been achieved with

embedding risk management: *'I suppose the big challenge in terms of putting this in place was the evaluation, was how well that filtered down and how it cascaded into the wider organisation, and I don't know the answer'*. On the other hand, W ETB 3 outlined that people have bought into the process and that measurement could potentially be gauged in terms of whether requirements have been met:

People have bought in to this ... when you consider what your success is, if we're meeting all of our requirements and we haven't had any major issue then that's success. The process has been delayed a little bit by the change in personnel. There are a number of people who their whole thinking has matured with regard to risk management'.

During the period that I have worked with W ETB I have observed significant changes such as the appointment of Directors and an IF as well as changes in responsibility and accountability for the SMT. This occurred at a time when a significant financial risk had to be managed and this was done successfully. My observation is that the ETB was progressing the embedding of risk management at the corporate level however, the record keeping was not available to substantiate the work done. This situation was exacerbated by the delay in appointing the IF. In terms of a transfer from the EF to the IF, the handover was delayed. In the past, I would have empowered the SMT to embed risk management by giving ownership of the risks to individuals. I have now changed my approach by developing a formal methodology which is integrated to the induction plan for the IF which should prove successful.

4.3.4 Summary of West ETB

The interviews and observations from this pilot case study have provided insights for the researcher on how best to embed risk management going forward to East ETB; these insights are summarised below:

- Embedding risk management starts with the choice of EF and IF who will be the risk champions across the ETB. An IF is a critical factor to successful embedding and this needs to be accompanied by the SMT giving appropriate attention to the management of risk. It is also important to be aware of the IF's competency base as the post-holder needs to possess good interpersonal skills and an understanding of strategy and how strategy links to risk and embedding of risk management.
- Risk management can be viewed as complex if the language is not managed appropriately however, it can also be transformative in changing the organisational culture of the ETB.

In summary, several lessons have been learned for the next stage of the research (East ETB). Firstly, the importance of communication to support team working and embedding of risk management cannot be underestimated and must be included in the induction programme for the IF. Finally, the EF needs to be flexible and available to support the IF and the SMT with embedding of risk management. From my learning with West ETB I am significantly more conscious of some of the challenges that will present at East ETB and which I will need to plan for and manage.

5. East ETB: Initial Steps

Having strengthened my understanding on the role of an EF and acquired some practice in the data gathering and analysis needed for a case study, I am now ready to progress to the main research site for this DBA study – East ETB. To date, this has involved the following steps:

- Securing access to undertake an exploratory case study by formalising the request in writing to the CEO (Appendix Five). The CEO confirmed access by email within one week of receipt of the letter.
- Developing a timetable of activities to guide the research study and to ensure all key activities are undertaken in a timely manner (Appendix Six). This was communicated to East ETB in a short presentation which also allowed me to establish the communication process for my DBA study.
- Developing an initial interview question set which would assist me in establishing a baseline of how far progressed the East ETB is in embedding risk management. This is included in Appendix Seven.

These steps are described in more detail in the accompanying comments after a background to the development of the risk management architecture at East ETB has been provided.

5.1 Background to Risk Management at East ETB and Securing Access for DBA Study

East ETB was established in July 2013 following the commencement of the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013. This resulted from the aggregation of two Vocational Education Committees (VEC) becoming one ETB. In 2014, the training services previously provided by FÁS (a state funded agency for the provision of training services) were transferred to East ETB by SOLAS (statutory body under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills). This left East ETB as one of the largest ETBs in Ireland, and it provides education services at primary, secondary and tertiary level, as well as FET services to adults.

My involvement with East ETB commenced in September 2013 when I supported the updating and review of the corporate risk register. This was followed by a seminar and workshops to facilitate the development of a combined operational risk register for secondary schools and FET centres. In the period from 2013 to 2017, facilitation of risk reviews, audit, seminars and workshops, presentations and provision of advice on embedding risk management has been provided. It has been evident from these interactions that there is an appetite by the SMT to embed risk management, but that due to the reduction in resources (time, money, human) and competing priorities that the risk management architecture has not been updated to remain relevant. This is despite the work of the ETB's Audit and Risk Committee which have driven a hard agenda to seek evidence of how embedding risk management is progressing and how risks are being mitigated.

There have been organisational changes at the end of 2016 with the allocation of funding from the Department of Education and Skills for the creation of four new Director positions to report to the CEO. The Directors have responsibility for Schools, FET, Organisation Support and Development (OSD) and Finance. One of the appointed directors (Director for OSD) was allocated responsibility for the embedding of risk management. At one of its earliest management team meetings in quarter one of 2017, the team agreed the necessity to appoint a dedicated IF to coordinate the embedding of risk management, and to ensure the risks to the achievement of the ETB's Statement of Strategy were being managed. The post of IF was created by converting an existing position as there was no new funding made available by government. The post-holder was appointed in quarter two 2017 and reports to the Director for OSD. Given the findings from the expert interviews on the importance of a good IF, this clearly is a very important and positive step to support the embedding of risk management in the ETB.

In June 2017, the SMT established a Governance SMT to meet on the first Monday of each month. A set agenda has been agreed and the objective is to support embedding of risk management and to demonstrate mitigation of risks that could threaten the delivery of its Statement of Strategy 2017-2021. The newly appointed IF is a member of the Governance SMT. Her responsibilities include administering the meeting, advising on reports required from departments for each meeting, and maintaining and updating the corporate risk register as well as many other governance and compliance responsibilities.

In July 2017, I was invited by the CEO to present my DBA research proposal. Unanimous support was given to operate both as an EF and as a DBA researcher in the coming months, and I was invited to attend the monthly Governance SMT meetings from September 2017 in an observational role. The opportunity to act in a participant observation role was viewed as being very helpful to assist me in achieving the research objectives at this ETB.

5.2 Developing a Timetable of Activities

A timetable to identify the research activities and timelines for delivery was developed so that the research project was managed within scope, in a timely manner, while meeting quality parameters for my DBA research. Data will be gathered in two stage which are discussed below:

i. Stage One Planned Activities and Timeline

A range of data gathering activities and methods are planned in the latter part of 2017 as shown below in Table Nine:

Table 9: Stage One Planned Activities and Timeline

Timeline	Activity	Research Method	Target Audience
September 2017	Ongoing facilitation/ liaison with IF.	Initial interviews (stage 1) to establish a benchmark. Maintaining reflective diary. Participant observations.	SMT
October 2017	Ongoing facilitation/ liaison with IF.	Focus Group 1 to assess initial progress and challenges in embedding risk management. Maintaining reflective diary. Participant observations.	SAMs SMT
November & December 2017	Ongoing facilitation/ liaison with IF.	Maintaining reflective diary. Participant observations.	SMT.

A considerable part of my initial role as EF in the latter months of 2017 will be devoted to supporting the development of the IF's competency base so that risk management can be embedded. To this end, I have compiled an induction programme which is flexible and dynamic to respond to East ETB's changing requirements. The appointed IF is a competent professional with more than twenty years of senior administrative experience in the education sector. The early stages of the induction have commenced and will continue throughout the lifetime of the research study. The IF has responsibility for several key functions which are all grouped within the function of governance and risk management. She is conversant with the statutory requirements placed on the ETB to ensure risk

management is embedded at all levels, while acting as a resource and a coordinator to the CEO, Directors and their direct reports to ensure risk management is embedded. It is the responsibility of the EF to ensure the induction programme that has been planned is successfully delivered. During this period, I will also liaise closely with the SMT (particularly the IF) and to a lesser extent with the SAMs to ensure that correct plans and procedures are being put in place to embed risk management into East ETB. At this stage, a question set (Appendix Six) to establish a baseline of where East ETB is on the progression from the development of the risk architecture to embedding risk management has been developed. This will lead to what are referred to as stage one activities which are SAMs that have been assigned responsibility for cascading the embedding of risk management within their respective portfolios. The resulting output will be viewed as ‘having high face validity: because the method is readily understood, as the findings appear believable’ (Marshall and Rossman, 2016, p. 154).

The analysis of the information gathered at stage one will enable me to address research objective two of this DBA study while it should also shed light on important factors to successfully embed risk management which is the focus of research objective three. It is planned to analyse this data using the Nvivo software system. This will be important as it is anticipated that copious amounts of data will be gathered from interviews, focus groups, participant observations and documentation including my reflective diary. The use of Nvivo will facilitate the management of data and the comparison of themes across interviewee transcripts (Gibbs, 2014).

5.2.2 Stage Two Planned Activities and Timeline

Given the desire to embed risk management in East ETB, it was always envisaged that there would be a longitudinal element to this case study, and this is reflected in a range of stage two activities which are summarised below in Table Ten:

Table 10: Stage Two Planned Activities and Timeline

Timeline	Activity	Research Method	Target Audience
January & February 2018	Continued facilitation of induction programme for IF. Commence formal handover to IF.	Follow up interviews (stage 2) to assess if embedding of risk management has progressed (January/February 2018). Participant observation. Maintaining reflective diary.	SMT.
March 2018	Ongoing facilitation of induction programme for IF. Continued handover to IF.	Focus Group 2 to assess ongoing progress with embedding risk management. Participant observation. Maintaining reflective diary.	SAMs.
April 2018	Envisaged formal handover to IF.	Participant observation. Maintaining reflective diary.	SMT. SAMs. IF.

The planned activities at stage two which will be conducted in the early months of 2018 are designed to help finalise objective three (the critical factors which either enable or impeded the embedding of risk management) as well as objective four (evaluate the embedding of risk management). To achieve this, a new question set will be developed in January 2018 which will build on the key themes used in the first stage data collection and which will be adapted to allow the measurement of embeddedness of risk management in East ETB. It is also envisaged that in April 2018 that a formal handover of the project from the EF to the IF will take place, signifying that the management of risks has reached a mature stage in East ETB. This plan to handover in April 2018 has been discussed with the SMT, and it is expected that this target can be achieved given that the IF has been warmly embraced and is being supported so far in her role at East ETB.

My reflective diary was commenced in October 2014 at the start of the DBA journey. During the past three years, the diary has been used to record learning, frustrations, lack of knowledge, fear of failure, questions and most important of all to document progress during the DBA journey. Progressing now on the journey with East ETB, I am aware that I need to be disciplined in recording my reflections so that lessons learned are not overlooked or discarded as being of little value. The reflective diary will also be important to support the delivery of the research as documented in this thesis.

6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, paper three initially presented the research design for an exploratory single case study with initial advice from two Expert interviewees in the area of risk management being followed by a pilot case study at West ETB. Useful information was gathered from both activities; the importance of leadership and the need to carefully manage the language used were important takeaways. The importance of risk leadership and communication was strongly articulated by the Expert interviewees and endorsed by the West ETB interviewees to support embedding of risk management.

The lessons from the Expert interviews and the West ETB case study will now be brought forward to the main research site (East ETB). A timeline of activities up to April 2018 has been presented which will enable the achievement of the research objectives.

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Appendix One

Questions to Expert Interviewees and to West ETB Senior Management Team

1. I generally describe my role as an external facilitator when supporting a public body to introduce risk management. I facilitate the public body in the design of the risk management architecture so that it can demonstrate effectiveness in the management of those risks that could prevent the delivery of the organisation's plans. I am interested in how you describe the role of an external facilitator.
2. What competencies would you describe as key, or crucial for the external facilitator to possess when working with public bodies?
3. Do you consider the role of the external facilitator essential to enable an organisation to effectively design its risk management systems and structures and to embed the practice of managing risk into the business activities of the organisation, or is it a luxury?
4. What are your views on the role of an internal facilitator in supporting the continued embedding of the practice of managing risk into an organisation?
5. What should an external facilitator do to support an internal facilitator to develop the required competency base so that they have credibility in their role, and so that they are effective in their role?
6. Have you any other advice about facilitators and facilitation as a process that I should consider?
7. Risk management is often described as complex. Can you talk to me about your views on this statement and why organisations see it as complex?

8. The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE, UK) and the Chartered Institute of Public Financial Accounts (CIPFA, UK) have described risk management as effective management. How would you describe risk management, and why?
9. When working in public bodies, I have often described risk management as a 'significant change management programme which impacts on every business activity and every employee'. Would you agree or disagree with the statement, and why?
10. What are your views on the role of leadership in the embedding of risk management into an organisation?
11. Recently I listened to Dr Peter Lachman (HSE Risk Committee, 19th May 2017) who has worked extensively in promoting safety in healthcare. He described the language used in risk management as 'like learning a new language e.g. French'. How do you view the language of risk management?
12. Do you consider language as an obstacle that prevents organisations from embracing risk management and from embedding it into their organisations?
13. Could risk management professionals do more to explain the language or to translate it; and if so how?
14. There have been published articles on the maturity of risk management in organisations however the criteria used to evaluate the level of maturity varies across organisations. What are your views on evaluating the level of maturity of the risk management system?
15. What are the critical success factors to be measured when evaluating the success of embedding risk management?
16. Risk management has been described as transformative as it prompts and directs organisations to re-examine its processes while at the same time seeking out new and

innovative ways of doing business. Do you have any views on the role of the external facilitator supporting the development of a transformative culture?

17. Culture has been described as the biggest challenge facing all change management initiatives in organisations. What role can the external facilitator play in supporting an organisation to overcome and manage this challenge?
18. What direction can you give me as an external facilitator on effective embedding of risk management so that employees own the risks they are required to manage?
19. How can I as an external facilitator measure the level of ownership?
20. Dr Peter Lachman also commented that the practice of risk management has failed; 'it is dead'. He suggested that the practice needs to move to system error investigation and to learn from the failures that have occurred. What are your views on this statement?
21. I have tried to promote the development of a register of incidents/errors; to enquire into the errors as to why they occurred and to implement preventative action; I have not succeeded very well in this area. What are your views on this?

Appendix Two
Procedure for Undertaking Data Collection
Interview Method

1. Confirm ethical approval
2. Draft and agree interview question set to support research objective one
3. Identify interviewees for:
 - a. Expert Interviews
 - b. ETB Interviews
 - c. Research Site Interviews
4. Prepare documented information for interviewees
5. Prepare documented consent form for informed consent
6. Provide information, consent form and question set to interviewees two weeks in advance of interviews
7. Source appropriate recording technology (audio recording, video recording, etc.)
8. Confirm availability of Skype and test system for expert interviews
9. Agree date/time/location/method of interview recording and duration of interview in advance with interviewee
10. On the day of interview:
 - a. Check and test recording equipment and ensure all required documentation is available for the interviewee and the interviewer

- b. Advise interviewee of time commitment and manage time to ensure there is no abuse of time management by the interviewer
 - c. Confirm the voluntary willingness of interviewee to participate in the research process
 - d. Clarify interview process, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality of data obtained
 - e. Seek approval from the interviewee to return draft interview transcript for amendments and confirmation of accuracy
11. Obtain signed consent from interviewee
 12. Maintain a professional approach while undertaking the interview while also providing a relaxed atmosphere to obtain the maximum benefit from the interviewee
 13. Check the recording after the introduction to the interviewee and again at least once during the interview process to ensure the recording is working
 14. When interview complete listen to the audio recording as early as possible (ideally on the same day as the interview)
 15. Arrange transcription of the interview (can be undertaken by interviewer or a third party while confirming privacy and confidentiality of data)
 16. Read transcript with audio recording and undertake any required corrections
 17. Return corrected transcript to interviewee for their confirmation of accuracy and to make any corrections/amendments
 18. Finalise transcript

19. Secure the transcript electronically with use of password or when held in hard copy format secure in a locked fireproof filing cabinet when not in use
20. Ensure a second copy of all interview records are available in the event of a file being corrupted
21. When a second interview is undertaken with an interviewee the same approach as described above should be followed i.e. signed consent, etc.

(Adapted from: Tellis, 1997; Aronson, 1995; Neale, 2016, Braun and Clarke, 2006 and Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

Focus Group Method

A similar approach will be adopted for implementation with focus groups except that it may be beneficial to use a video recorder as well as audio recording. The use of flip charts and post-its can also be beneficial to assist in capturing the required data.

Appendix 3

Information to Research Participants and Consent Form

Thank you for reading this information about my research. I am a third-year student at Waterford Institute of Technology studying for a Doctorate in Business Administration. The aim of my research is: *An Exploration of the Process of Embedding Risk Management in a Public Sector Organisation Through the Use of An External Facilitation Approach.*

The research objectives for the study are:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of an External Facilitator in supporting a public body to embed risk management.
2. To employ a facilitation approach to exploit opportunities to embed risk management, while seeking to support the development of an Internal Facilitator so that organisational performance can be enhanced.
3. To track and measure the success of the External Facilitator in supporting the embedding of risk management in a public sector organisation, including a planned handover of risk management expertise to the Internal Facilitator with the objective of sustaining the embedding of risk management into the medium and long term.

The research will commence in July 2017 and complete in 2018. I am seeking your participation in my research. You will be required to participate in face to face interviews with the researcher (Rosemary Ryan); to have the interview recorded; to verify the transcript of the interview; and for the researcher to observe your participation at meetings.

The first interview will take place during August 2017; the second interview will be undertaken during 2018 (data to be agreed).

Waterford Institute of Technology Research Ethics Committee has granted approval for the researcher's study provided that all transcripts are provided to the interviewees for verification purposes; therefore, if you agree to participate in the research, the researcher will require you to comply with this requirement. The researcher confirms that all personal data obtained will be secured as required for compliance with Data Protection legislative requirements. The confidentiality of the Education and Training Board and its employees will be protected during the research. There will be no publications undertaken without the express permission of the Chief Executive. You are required to read the following information prior to providing consent to participate in this research.

Consent for Participation in Interview Research

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Rosemary Ryan, Doctor of Business Administration Student, Waterford Institute of Technology. I understand that the research is designed to gather information about the role of an external facilitator in supporting the embedding of risk management into an Irish Education and Training Board. I will be one of the ETB staff interviewed for this research.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary.
2. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation.

3. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty. If I decline to participate or withdraw from the study, no one in my organisation will be told.
4. I understand that most interviewees will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.
5. Participation involves being interviewed by Rosemary Ryan, Doctorate in Business Administration student, Waterford Institute of Technology. The interview will last approximately 90 minutes.
6. I agree to the interview being recorded and transcribed.
7. I agree to verify the transcript of the interview.
8. I understand that the researcher may record observations during the interview.
9. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure.
10. I understand that subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.
11. The two Supervisors for the Doctorate in Business Administration student will have access to the data recorded from interviews.
12. The data may also be required by the Examiners to verify the research findings.
13. I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by Waterford Institute of Technology Research Ethics Committee and approval has been granted to undertake the research, subject to the interviewees verifying the interview transcripts.

14. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me.
15. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction
16. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
17. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Signature of Interviewee

Date

Please print your name

Signature of Interviewer/Researcher

Date

Please print your name

NOTE: If you as a participant in this research study are concerned about the conduct of the researcher please contact either of the two Supervisors for the student at:

Dr Tom Egan: tegan@wit.ie

Dr Richard Burke: rburke@wit.ie

Appendix Four

Operational Plan and Timetable for Initial Data Gathering from Expert Interviewees and West ETB

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Activity	Resp.	Start date	Close out date	Comment	26	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25
Presentation of revised methodology paper to Examiners	RR	30 06 17	30 06 17	Approval to proceed with research subject to some minor amendments														
Present to research site Senior Management Team on research aim and objectives	RR	03 07 17	03 07 17	Approval received														
Set up expert interviews	RR	03 07 17	31 07 17	Write to expert interviewees														
Conduct expert interviews	RR	10 07 17	31 07 17	Arrange all expert interviews; record all expert interviews; arrange transcription of expert interviews														
Commence analysis of expert interview data	RR	10 07 17	ongoing	Listening to tapes and reading transcripts														
Set up database for expert interview data	RR	10 07 17	ongoing	Manual system initially; consider application of NVivo														
Set up West ETB Senior Management Team interviews	RR	14 08 17	21 08 17	Difficulty due to annual leave commitments of interviewees														
Conduct West ETB Senior Management Team interviews	RR	05 07 17	25 07 17	Interviewees open with data provided although some caution observed														
Commence initial analysis of West ETB Senior Management Team interview data	RR	05 07 17	Ongoing	Trying to comprehend the data obtained														
Set up research site East ETB Senior Management Team interviews	RR	01 08 17	31 08 17	Write to research site interviewees														
Conduct East ETB Senior Management Team interviews stage 1	RR	31 08 17	30 09 17	Difficulty due to annual leave commitments of interviewees														
Set up database for East ETB Senior Management Team interview data	RR	04 09 17	ongoing	Consider application of NVivo														
Set up Focus Group 1 meeting for East ETB	RR	01 09 17	30 09 17	Write to all senior administrative managers; select 10 from agreed list with representation from each group														
Write up reflective diary for research project	RR	01 07 17	Ongoing	Learning and questioning the meaning of the data														

Appendix 5

Application Letter to Research Site East ETB Chief Executive

Mr [REDACTED]

Chief Executive Officer

[REDACTED] Education & Training Board

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

23rd June 2017.

Dear [REDACTED]

I am studying for a Doctorate in Business Administration at Waterford Institute of Technology. The aim of the research is: *An Exploration of the External Facilitator Role in Embedding Risk Management in an Irish Education and Training Board.*

Following on from our brief conversation on Monday 20th March 2017 I am now writing formally to request your support with my research and to access Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board for this purpose. The scope of my research will be to work with you, your Senior Management Team and senior staff to participate in interviews and focus groups. The research should provide a value-added service to you in the support of embedding of risk management.

I submitted a proposal to the Business Research Ethics Committee in Waterford Institute of Technology in

advance of commencing the research to ensure compliance with required ethical standards. Approval has been granted for the study to proceed subject to all interviewees verifying interview transcripts. All participants will be fully informed of the scope of the research, its purpose, compliance requirements in respect of Data Protection legislation, privacy and confidentiality. All participants will have the opportunity to opt out of the research at any time. The duration of the research will be approximately eighteen months with a view to commencing the research in July 2017.

I trust this brief outline of my research is acceptable to you and I would welcome the opportunity to make a short presentation to you and your Senior Management Team colleagues in the near future.

I look forward to hearing from you confirming your support and that of your colleagues.

Kind regards and thanks

Rosemary Ryan

Head of Client Enterprise Risk Management

Mobile: 087 967 2124

Direct: 01 6395 519

Email: rosemary.ryan@ipb.ie

CC. Director of Organisation Support and Development.

Appendix Six

Stage One Interview Questions for Research Site East ETB

1. I am coming in here to your ETB with your permission as an External Facilitator to support the embedding of risk management. Can you tell me about the policies/procedures/guidelines that currently exist to support the management of risk in the ETB?
2. How would you describe your knowledge of enterprise risk management?
3. What organisational values have been agreed upon to support the ETB in managing its risks?
4. What level of importance is given to the management of risk in the ETB? Has the level of importance changed in the past twelve months and if so why?
5. To date the risk management architecture (risk management policy, corporate and operational risk registers, audit of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) has been facilitated. Based on this work can you describe the level of embeddedness of risk management in the ETB?
6. What enablers have supported the embedding of risk management?
7. What challenges have existed to prevent embedding of risk management in the ETB?
8. Could you describe your appetite for risk management in the ETB and how has this been developed and informed?

9. What are your expectations of me as an External Facilitator to support the ETB in embedding risk management across the ETB?
10. What level of importance is attached to the role of the Internal Facilitator supporting the embedding of risk management?
11. What are your expectations of me supporting your Internal Facilitator to coordinate the embedding of risk management?

Appendix Seven

East ETB Proposed Focus Group Subjects for Discussion

Focus Group Number 1: October 2017

The objective of the first focus group will be to:

1. Identify the current risk management knowledge base among the focus group members that will be described as senior administrative managers with responsibility for embedding of risk management
2. Identify the challenges they envisage
3. Their proposals on how they will support the embedding of risk management
4. Identify the supports required to ensure success.

Focus Group Number 2: March 2018.

The objective of the second focus group will be to:

1. Establish progress with embedding of risk management
2. Lessons learned from the embedding process
3. Any value add that can be identified
4. Planning for the remainder of 2018 when the risk management project will be transferred to East ETB.

Preface to Paper Four

This preface is provided to link Papers Three and Four of a cumulative Four Paper series to support a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA). Paper Three was focused on the data collated in 2017 from interviews with two Experts in public sector risk management and a pilot study encompassing interviews with the Senior Management Team at an Education and Training Board in the West of Ireland (West ETB – pilot site). A revised Paper Three was subsequently submitted in November 2017 and it was accepted by the Examiners providing some further minor amendments were made.

The researcher undertook significant restructuring of Paper Three to enable a tightening of the research aim to: *Embedding Risk Management at Senior Management Level in a Public-Sector Organisation: An Exploratory Study using a Facilitation Approach*. The research objectives were expanded from three to four:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management.
2. To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation.
3. To assess the input of factors on the embedding of risk management at the SMT level.
4. To evaluate the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach.

The restructured Paper Three now demonstrates the linking of the research objectives to the question sets used for the expert interviews and the pilot site Senior Management Team interviews (West ETB) as well as providing significantly more supporting literature to support an academic study. This in turn has enabled a more structured and in-depth analysis of the data so that a coherent report is provided of the data analysis findings on embedding risk management in a public body.

It was noted that the analysis of the expert interview data supported the findings from the West ETB interview data and vice versa. Examples of this were the need to focus on risk leadership if facilitation of embedding of risk management is to be successful. Secondly, that an External Facilitator is not required if an Internal Facilitator is already in situ in the public body but in the absence of an IF then an EF could be useful. Thirdly, that the researcher acting as an External Facilitator (Schwartz, 2017 and Senge et al. 2000) needs to provide a structured approach to the competency development of the Internal Facilitator for embedding to be successful and so that the Internal Facilitator develops the required professional competency as a risk expert (Benner, 1982). The fourth key message obtained from the data analysis was the importance of language (Schwartz 2017) when explaining risks and the management of risk to employees in organisations where they are not familiar with embedding risk management.

The unit of analysis for the research study was clarified in the revised Paper Three as being the research site's Senior Management Team (Singer, 1961 and Yurdusev, 1993). This enabled a focused approach to the data gathering and analysis as well as seeking evidence to support the research

aim and objectives. Another key finding from the Examiner's comments was for the researcher to be clear regarding her role as a researcher versus her role as the Head of Client Enterprise Risk Management in an insurance company supporting her clients through a facilitative approach to embed risk management. The researcher's adoption of this advice resulted in her providing significantly more academic literature to support the research study. In addition, the restructuring of Paper Three enabled a more coherent approach around the key themes emerging from the expert interviews and the pilot site (West ETB) interviews to support the first research objective: To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation to support public bodies to embed risk management.

On reflection, the redrafting of Paper Three enabled the researcher to refocus her research study so that a more succinct approach could be adopted when proceeding to undertake her research study at East ETB (research site). It also enabled a more questioning approach to be adopted regarding the rationale for the research study while emphasising the importance of learning throughout the DBA journey. Paper Four which follows this Preface will present the research findings from the research site (East ETB). The data obtained from interviews with the Senior Management Team, the Internal Facilitator and one member of East ETB's Audit and Risk Committee, a Focus Group with Senior Administrative Managers, documentation collated from the research study, observation of behaviours and interactions during all on-site meetings between the External Facilitator and the Senior Management Team, and finally data recorded by the

researcher in her reflective diary will be used for thematic analysis.

Section 2: Research Paper Series (1-4)

Paper 4 Findings and Discussion

1. Introduction

Public bodies were initially established to provide education, health and local government services to populations as they were not viewed as profitable activities for the private sector to provide due to the significant risks and costs associated with the planning and delivery of such services (Fone and Young, 2000). The significance and importance of managing risk escalated in the second half of the twentieth century as the demand to manage risk in all sectors and specifically in the public sector increased exponentially (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2016) due to the complexity of organisations, rapid development in communication and technology and services delivered. This trend was accompanied by increased calls for regulation and accountability of public bodies (Drennan et al., 2014) with some regulatory bodies such as the Central Bank of Ireland (CBI) specifying the requirement to appoint a responsible person such as a Chief Risk Officer to ensure appropriate Fitness and Probity in respect of all senior post-holders (CBI, 2017). However, while state/public bodies are committed to managing the risks that could prevent the delivery of their strategic objectives, they frequently do not have the resources to appoint competent personnel to lead the management of risk and they do not receive additional resources to ensure the practice of managing risk is embedded into the everyday activities of their organisations (Federation of European Risk Management Associations (FERMA), 2016). This FERMA report contrasted the high propensity of risk managers in the manufacturing, energy/utilities and banking and financial services sectors (42%) with the low propensity (4%) in the public and non-profit sector. A

consequence of this dearth in full time risk manager positions in the public sector is that while support is often available to develop and communicate a risk management policy, the subsequent and more important embedding of risk management is left to individuals in an ad hoc manner with little follow up audits to establish if improvements have taken place.

In Ireland, a mutual insurance company (IPB Insurance) was established in 1926 to facilitate public bodies to manage both insurable and non-insurable risks in a strategic manner (Schwarz, 2017). In 1999, the company agreed a strategic approach to support its members/clients to manage insurable and non-insurable risks. In 2000, the author was employed as the Head of Client Enterprise Risk Management (CERM) with the key function of supporting and facilitating public bodies to design relevant risk management systems and, to embed the practice of managing risk into all business activities. From her experience to date, she has found the designing of relevant risk management systems to be straightforward, however it is far more challenging to embed risk management and to establish the level of progress made in embedding risk management over time. The approach adopted by the author has been that of facilitation (Schwarz, 2017) which can be used to introduce new practices such as embedding risk management and which can also enable a cultural change (Kotter, 1996) needed to support such new practices. The focus of the author's Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) thesis and this Paper Four is the adoption of a facilitation approach to support embedding of risk management at the Senior Management Team (SMT) level, and the paper summarises the findings when this

approach is applied to a public sector organisation East Education and Training Board¹ (ETB).

The overall research aim of this research is to explore how risk is embedded at the SMT level in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach. The following research objectives emanated from this overall research aim:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management.
2. To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation.
3. To assess the input of factors on the embedding of risk management at the SMT level.
4. To evaluate the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach.

The first paper of this DBA paper series reviewed literature on facilitation and risk management, culminating in a conceptual model (Appendix One) which will be revisited later in this paper. Paper Two considered an appropriate methodological approach to adopt and concluded that an exploratory case study where a facilitation approach will be used to embed risk management in a public-sector organisation would be appropriate. Paper Three provided some initial findings to address the first research objective in two stages which can be summarised as follows:

¹ East ETB is the anonymised name given to the ETB used in this study.

- Stage one involved interviews with two Experts in public sector risk management and revealed key insights such as the significance of risk leadership, the importance of the role of an Internal Facilitator (IF) inside the organisation in supporting successful embedding of risk management, the need to manage the complexity of language around risk management and the importance of the value of communication to ensure a successful outcome.
- Stage two involved a pilot case study conducted at West ETB where the author worked during 2015-2017. Some findings from the pilot included the need for the External Facilitator (EF) to work closely with the IF to develop the competency of the IF and the need for the SMT (Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Directors, IF and Senior Administrative Managers (SAM)) to prioritise risk management as a key management activity for the organisation.

Paper Four will complement these findings by presenting the findings from a facilitation approach which was adopted in a public sector organisation (East ETB) where the author has an established working relationship. The paper is structured as follows: section two gives an overview of this ETB along with details of the research approach adopted to achieve the research objectives at this site. Sections three, four and five will outline the process followed and results obtained to address the second, third and fourth research objectives before the conceptual model is revisited in the conclusion to this paper.

2. East ETB Research Site

The DBA research site is called East ETB and it is one of the largest ETBs in Ireland with a revenue budget of circa €300m, employing approximately 4,000 staff (2017 Annual Report). It provides education at primary, secondary and tertiary level as well as further education and training (FET) services. The ETB was established in 2013 following commencement of the Education and Training Board Act, 2013 and it spans a large geographical site covering three local authority areas. Oversight is provided by an independent board. An Audit and Risk Committee oversees the financial and risk management of the ETB as specified in legislation and in the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 2015). Independent audit is undertaken by the ETB Internal Audit Unit (IAU), the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) and the European Union Auditors (EUA).

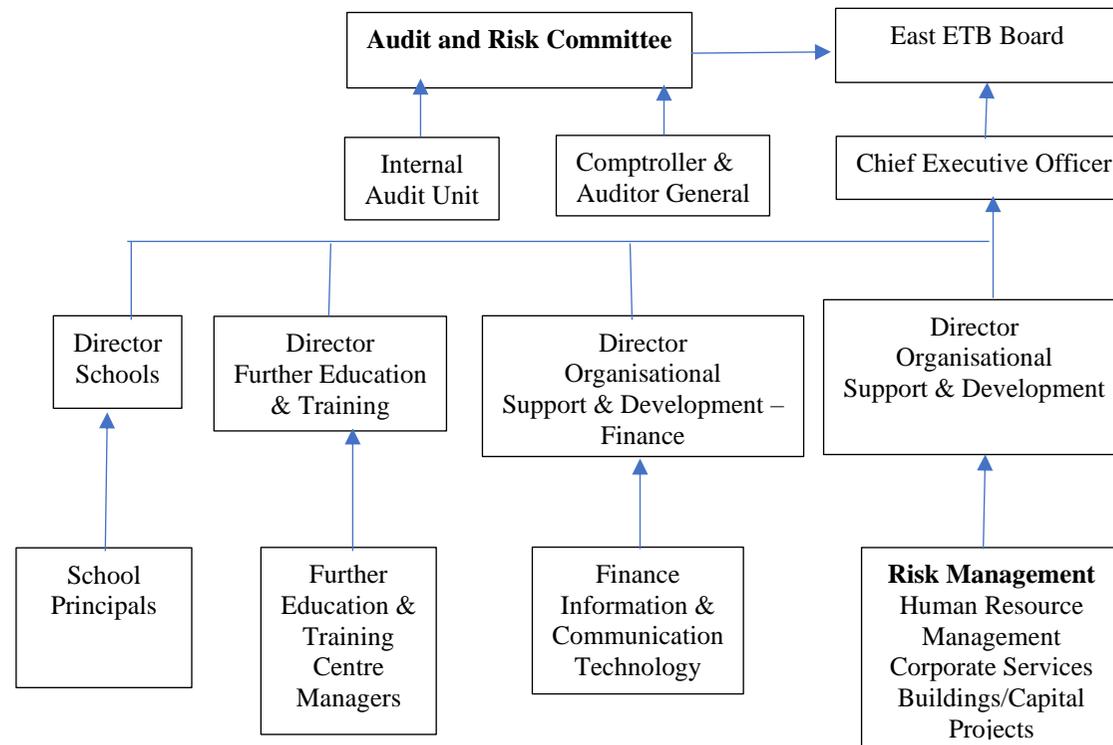
The author's initial interaction with East ETB took place in 2013 when I was approached to facilitate the development of the risk management system (architecture and embedding) following its establishment as an ETB. At the time, I recommended that an IF should be appointed to coordinate the embedding of risk management across the ETB due to its size and complexity. The recommendation was acknowledged however, funding was not available to create a new post for an IF. Then in late 2016, the SMT decided that risk management was a priority if the ETB was to succeed in delivering on its Statement of Strategy 2017-2021. In May 2017, an IF was appointed and at the request of East ETB, I agreed to act as an EF to facilitate the post-

holder's induction and provide professional support for a twelve-month period. This time period is the focus of Paper Four of this research study as permission was given by the ETB for the findings obtained over this period to be used in my DBA study.

Figure One below provides an overview of the ETB's organisational structure and shows the reporting structures to the Directors and onwards to the CEO and Board. This reflects the recent priority given to risk management and note that the Audit and Risk Committee which report to the Board also act as external validators of risk management practices in this ETB.

As my interactions during the 2017-2018 period were primarily with East ETB's SMT along with some interaction with the line managers, this study's scope is primarily focused on the extent to which risk management is embedded in this part of the organisation, but comments will be added later in this paper on the extent to which risk management can be embedded further throughout this large ETB.

Figure One: East ETB's Organisational Structure



2.1 Research Approach Adopted

This study is aimed at facilitating the embedding of risk management in East ETB (research site), drawing on the work of Kitson et al. (1998); Harvey et al. (2001); Wardale et al. (2013) and Schwarz (2017). It was envisaged in the conceptual framework (Appendix One) that an organisation can grow its competency in embedding risk management over time while ensuring a structured handover from an EF to an IF to support continued success. Such an approach can accelerate the development of a risk management system that fosters collaboration and shared accountability to meet the challenges of today's risk landscape (PWC, 2017).

To achieve this, a qualitative interpretative approach is adopted (Saunders et al., 2009) with a single exploratory case study (Yin, 2012 and 2014) which will provide an insight into 'what is happening and to seek out new insights and to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light' (Robson, 2002, p. 59 and Patton, 2015). My own role as an EF over a twelve-month period allows some longitudinal findings to be assessed and it also enables an ethnographic approach (Flick, 2014 and Saunders et al. 1997) to be adopted as I had regular opportunities to observe the culture of East ETB. Flick (2014, p. 355) states that 'the strength of this approach, compared to close-ended surveys or experimental designs is that it allows the researcher to directly observe the many nuances and contingencies of human behaviour as they become manifest in a natural setting'.

In gathering data to meet the research objectives, I have adopted the role of a participant observer (Flick 2014) with

the agreement of East ETB's SMT. A range of data was obtained over the time period 2017-2018 which is shown in Table One – this includes individual interviews with the SMT (at the start of the study period), one member of the Audit and Risk Committee, the IF (at the start and end of the study period), a Focus Group with SAMs (at the start of the study), as well as observations from the monthly Governance SMT which I attended on nine occasions. This data is related to the research objectives in Table One.

Table 1: Research Objectives and Planned Methodological Approach

Research aim: Embedding Risk Management in a Public-Sector Organisation Through a Facilitation Approach			
Research Objective Number	Research Objective	Methodological Approach	Time Frame
2.	To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation.	<p>Delivery of structured induction programme to newly appointed IF in East ETB (research site).</p> <p>Facilitated support for the development of the risk management system.</p>	May 2017 – December 2017
3.	To assess the input of factors on the embedding of risk management at the SMT level.	<p>Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with East ETB SMT (research site) and of facilitated Focus Group with SAMs.</p> <p>Observation of behaviours and practices from facilitation engagements 2017-2018.</p>	May 2017 – April 2018
4.	To evaluate the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public-sector organisation through a facilitation approach.	<p>Observation and reflection on facilitation engagements including Governance SMT meetings 2017-2018.</p> <p>Interview with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF • Member of East ETB Audit and Risk Committee • Observations at Governance SMT meetings. 	Sept. 2017 – April 2018

3. Development of Facilitation Approach

It was envisaged in the conceptual framework that a facilitation approach would involve a significant amount of support to an IF (within East ETB) to develop that person's professional competency and that such support should decrease over time as the IF becomes capable of managing risks within the organisation. I had also envisaged from experience such as at West ETB that my role as an EF would extend to engagements with other staff members – such as the SMT and the SAMs – in providing guidance and support to assist these people to lead the embedding of risk management in the ETB. It was understood that the research project would last at least eight months and that this period should allow for the commencement of embedding of risk management (Eisenhardt, 1989 and Hill and McGowan 1999). These facilitation supports are now described to support research objective two which is focused on: *exploring the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation* with reflections on progress being made from them.

3.1 Development of Internal Facilitator's Competency

Experience from the health and local authority sectors had shown me that where a dedicated IF was appointed to coordinate the embedding of risk management, then significant progress can be made with the embedding of risk management in a relatively short period of time. This view is consistent with Goldsmith (2010) who stated that

leaders can build an environment that empowers people when they give power to those who have demonstrated a capacity to handle the responsibility. In this regard, the decision of East ETB in May 2017 to appoint an IF was viewed by me as a very positive and essential step to support the embedding of risk management and to support the delivery of East ETB's Statement of Strategy 2017-2021.

At the commencement of the induction programme, the IF stated that she *'did not know anything about risk management'*, and the Director of Organisational Support and Development (OSD) had stated that East ETB would be *'relying [on me] to provide guidance, direction and support'*. The subject matter discussed at our one-to-one meetings included the history of risk management in the public and private sector, how embedding of risk management is linked with change management and changing the organisational culture. We also discussed the challenges that arise with change management and the strategies for overcoming these.

Following the appointment of the IF in May 2017 and up to December 2017, a total of eighteen interactions were held with the post-holder through face to face meetings, emails and telephone calls as well as seminars and workshops. Table Two below provides a summary of these interactions undertaken with the IF.

Table 2: Summary of Interactions with Internal Facilitator May 2017 – December 2017

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Appointment of Internal Facilitator	■							
Commencement of induction programme	■							
Review of Corporate Risk Register		■						
Clarification on risk management issues			■					
Planning for next Audit & Risk Committee meeting in September 2017			■					
Planning with IF for progression of development of Operational Risk Registers				■				
Review of FET Risk Register with IF and Director of FET				■				
Significant progress made with induction programme, facilitation of risk management architecture and planning for the next twelve months					■			
Facilitation of School's Operational Risk Register - opportunity for IF to observe seminar and workshop with School Principals.						■		
Facilitated workshop with SAM – IF in attendance						■		
Facilitated Audit of Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015). Evidence of increasing professional knowledge of risk management from IF							■	
Evidence of embedding of risk management demonstrated at Governance SMT meetings.								■

It was very encouraging to observe the IF rapidly develop her professional competency over the period May – December 2017 as she responded well to all supports provided by myself and in addition, she commenced a one-year course of study – Diploma in Public Governance – which further enhanced her competency. As the IF’s professional competency was developing over this period, it became possible for me, from December 2017 to reduce my input, but to be available to provide advice and support when required. I was also pleased to be able to witness her growing confidence with risk management assignments such as interactions with her colleagues at Director and SAM levels, and the use of her initiative to initiate new risk management projects such as managing the risk of safeguarding of children across the school sector in the autumn of 2017. Indeed, by early 2018, the IF was identifying new key risks that had not previously been listed on the corporate risk register, but which had the potential to prevent the delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-2021. These risks included the compliance requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations, 2018 (GDPR), and the risk of not having competent teachers for certain subjects in September 2018 at the commencement of the new school year. Such a development reinforced my own belief as echoed by Goldsmith (2010) that when a favourable environment is created where people are encouraged to grow their skills, employees will be empowered to make decisions and try new things.

3.2 Priority for Risk Management at Monthly Governance Meetings

An initiative introduced by the IF towards the end of 2017 as her competence levels improved was to give risk management increased priority at the SMT's monthly governance meetings (see last line of Table 2). This initiative led to risk management being on the agenda at the start of these meetings and issues such as the identification and assignment of responsibility for managing key risks were discussed. Findings from these governance meetings are reported later in this paper as I was given permission to attend these meetings in 2017-18 in an observational capacity – but from the outset, I felt this initiative by the IF was a very positive move – as per Kotter's (1996) model of organisational change, it created a sense of urgency on the need to address risk management and also showed that top management were prepared to follow through on their promises to help embed risk management.

3.3 Other Facilitation Supports Provided

In addition to supports for the IF, other engagements (meetings, seminars and workshops) were undertaken with members of the SMT, SAMs, FET Managers and School Principals and Deputy Principals to help progress the process of embedding risk management in this ETB. These engagements are presented in Table Three. It should be noted here that while the focus of this DBA study is to assess the embedding of risk management at SMT level, my wider role working with this ETB entailed interactions with staff at middle management level – and while these interactions are not considered core to the main research

objectives, they are included to give perspective on the wider challenge facing this ETB on completion of this research study – to embed risk management throughout the whole ETB.

Table 3: Additional Facilitation Supports Provided to East ETB May 2017 – April 2018.

No.	Nature of Engagement	Findings and Comments
1.	<p>Facilitated seminars and workshops (two) for Community National Schools (CNS) to develop their risk register.</p> <p><i>(Four Principals attended half day session on risk management, and its relevance to schools).</i></p>	<p>Low level of interaction initially but improvements observed as it progressed (more questions asked). Disagreements on who should take responsibility to coordinate each risk. (referred to the Director of Education for advice).</p>
2.	<p>Facilitated seminars and workshops (two) for secondary schools to develop their risk register.</p> <p><i>(Forty-eight Principals / Deputy Principals attended two half-day seminars/workshops).</i></p>	<p>High level of engagement at seminar/workshop days where members welcomed opportunity to talk to colleagues and explored the causes and approaches to mitigate risks. This led to IF working with the group on updating and developing a system for safeguarding children and vulnerable persons in the care of East ETB.</p> <p>E ETB employees acting as participants advised that they had been instructed by their staff representative bodies (trade unions) not to engage with embedding risk management including safety, health and welfare risks. As a result of this research study, there has been increased dialogue between the SMT and the staff representative bodies to discuss solutions.</p>
3.	<p>Facilitated seminar and workshops (two) for FET and Adult Education Managers to review and update their risk register.</p> <p><i>(Twenty-two Managers / Deputy Managers (including Director of FET) attended).</i></p>	<p>High level of interaction and engagement between members in workshops and high level of familiarity with FET strategy and new quality standards to be implemented over the coming twelve months (high risk for sector)</p> <p>This led to the CEO commencing discussions with funding bodies (DES/SOLAS) for finance to replace unsafe equipment</p> <p>Director of FET commented after the seminar that the approach adopted by me as EF was positive and</p>

		engaging and the answers provided to questions supported the Managers and Deputy Managers in their managerial roles.
4.	<p>Delivery of two seminars to support compliance with Safety, Health and Welfare legislation in schools.</p> <p><i>(One hundred and twenty-two delegates attended from management and schools. The objective of these half day seminars was to raise awareness among employees of their individual and collective responsibility to comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work legislation).</i></p>	<p>Mixed levels of knowledge noted – many attendees aware of their responsibility to keep students safe however principals thought that the criminal liability rested with the CEO and not at their level – this was a surprising revelation for many.</p> <p>Many schools ‘buy-in’ consultants to develop and update their Safety Statements and yet are not aware of the overall content of the Safety Statement and some are not communicating it to all their employees. Discussion on stress and where did responsibility lie for the Principals and Deputies.</p>
5.	<p>Seminar for FET and Adult Education Managers to support compliance with Safety, Health and Welfare legislation. The objective was to raise awareness among managers and employees of their individual and collective responsibility to comply with relevant legislation.</p> <p><i>(Fifty-six attendees)</i></p>	<p>Attendees demonstrated a developed knowledge base with questions focused on keeping adult learners safe while undertaking programmes.</p> <p>Queries on what information to provide to adult learners where there is an increasing amount of ‘dangerous’ equipment in use (e.g. car repairs garages).</p>
6.	<p>Facilitation of audit of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015).</p> <p><i>(Fourteen attendees which included the CEO, Directors, IF and SAMs, and the objective was to obtain their input on how they are complying with the requirements of the Code of Practice for ETBs.)</i></p>	<p>Initial questions mainly answered by the Directors but SAMs did contribute more as the session progressed and they also identified opportunities to raise their level of compliance above the minimum requirements. Some SAMs commented that they ‘learned a lot from this exercise’ as it helped them to focus on the important compliance requirements in the ETB.</p> <p>CEO was present but did not overpower the Directors and SAMs – I felt he was empowering them to utilise their knowledge base and contribute which I viewed positively.</p>

7.	<p>Provision of half day conference for all management and administration staff on Managing Risk in the Education Sector to share learning from the risk registers development and governance SMT meetings.</p> <p><i>(One hundred attendees – CEO, Directors, SAMs, Principals and FET Managers with some staff from the various sections).</i></p>	<p>A very interactive session where some delegates expressed alarm at the amount of legislation that must be complied with and the onerous responsibilities placed on them while no new resources have been allocated.</p> <p>Concerns noted and acknowledged by the CEO and Directors with advice on how new legislative compliance requirements are now being led from Head Office; however, it was noted that responsibility could not be removed from post-holders and evidence/records must be maintained to demonstrate that reasonable actions have been taken to comply and manage risks.</p>
8.	<p>Provision of telephone advice on managing two separate breaches of the Data Protection Acts including sourcing a Criminal Legal Advisor to assist in managing the investigation into the breaches as well as liaising with An Garda Síochána and the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner.</p> <p><i>(It is my responsibility to respond in a timely manner with evidence-based advice to all members and clients on how to manage risks including legislative breaches such as those associated with Data Protection legislation).</i></p>	<p>Positive to note prompt action taken by principals to inform the Head of Corporate Affairs of data breaches – this led to prompt action to prevent risks escalating and impacting at the strategic level and on the financial position of the ETB as well as its reputation.</p> <p>Felt that the facilitation support has increased awareness of the risks that could impact the delivery of the Statement of Strategy.</p>
9.	<p>Facilitation of audit of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), 2016).</p> <p><i>This audit was undertaken with the IF and Director of OSD. However, it should be noted that the ETB were not at this time required to demonstrate compliance with this Code as it has its own Code of Practice for ETBs.</i></p>	<p>Expected that compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies will become mandatory during 2018/19 and heartening to see how East ETB was striving to ‘be ahead of the curve’.</p> <p>Audit demonstrated that there is further work to be undertaken and it is intended that when the 2019 work plan for embedding risk management is drafted that the additional work activities will be included.</p>

In reviewing the facilitation efforts made from May 2017 through to the end of 2017, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- While there was a requirement for this ETB to be seen to be compliant with risk management requirements, the approach adopted through facilitation was to try and achieve the embedding of risk management as an incremental change process through successive, limited, and negotiated shifts (Burnes, 2004). I was also conscious of a consensus of authors (Bond, 1999; Grundy, 1993; Holloway, 2002; Luecke, et al., 1998 and Taylor and Hirst, 2001) who argue that discontinuous change initiatives do not last and that it can create defensive behaviour and an inward focus.
- The supports provided had increased the confidence and professional competence of the IF, the SMT and the SAMs to embed risk management. This was evident in the willingness by many managers to engage with the risk management process at seminars and workshops with frequent constructive discussions on risks that could prevent the delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21. In short, I felt that all groups in this ETB were accepting of the need to embrace risk management and that there was little resistance evident in moving the organisation from its initial 'Preparation and Planning' phase (shown in the Conceptual model – Appendix One).
- I also felt that as this facilitation unfolded, there was a strong sense of empowerment in the ETB – and this reinforced the work of Geroy et al. (1998) who described the benefits of empowerment as being where employees

armed with the necessary guidance and skills can make autonomous decisions – supported by the IF.

- However, constraints on resources is a significant obstacle to fully embed risk management particularly in secondary and community national schools (CNS) – this led to resistance amongst lower level managers in accepting responsibility for managing risks. This will be a challenge going forward as the PWC report (2017) found that a collaborative approach to risk management with accountability as the first line of defence is crucial to organisational resiliency and growth.
- In addition, lower level managers commented on the need to review the risk management language and identify how to make it easier for employees to understand the concept and benefits of risk management. This suggests that while my experiences at the senior management level has largely been positive from an embedding risk management perspective, there is an ongoing considerable challenge going forward to embed risk management throughout the whole of this ETB.

In conclusion, evidence to support the delivery of research objective two: *exploring the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation* has been demonstrated through my work engaging with and supporting the development of the IF's professional competency. Secondly, my attendance and presence at the monthly Governance SMT meetings added an extra emphasis to the embedding process. Thirdly, the engagement with line managers facilitated

dialogue on how they can support the embedding of risk management in East ETB.

4.0 Key Factors Driving the Embedding of Risk Management

The third research objective of this DBA study involved an assessment of the key factors influencing the embedding of risk management at the SMT level. A thematic analysis approach was adopted when reviewing the data sources utilised for this research study (see Table Seven below) – this is described by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) as ‘a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data’. The six stages in this rigorous approach are presented in Table Four below:

Table 4: Stages of Thematic Analysis (Ref. Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Stage	Description
1.	Familiarisation with the data – this involved reading my initial reflections recorded after each interview, reviewing the interview question set, listening to the interview tapes, reading and re-reading the interview transcripts and identifying similarities in the texts.
2.	Generating initial codes – codes were initially identified to assist in analysing the data.
3.	Searching for themes – themes emerged from reading and re-reading the transcripts and from reviewing the initial codes generated; these were then discussed with my Supervisors.
4.	Reviewing themes – on reading and re-reading the transcripts, listening to the interview tapes and following discussion with my Supervisors some of the deductive and inductive themes (deductive themes were those that were found by the researcher following the literature review in the first instance while the inductive themes emerged when analysing the data from the questions posed at interviews with the SMT and the Focus Group, (Flick, 2014), these were amended and the number was reduced and they are now presented as deductive and inductive themes.
5.	Defining and naming themes – the deductive and inductive themes were named, and some minor changes occurred during the writing of this paper to ensure the titles presented would provide clarity and were relevant to the research study.
6.	Producing the report – the report on identified deductive and inductive themes is presented in Table Eight and it shows the links to the research objective, the interview question set, the conceptual design (Appendix One) and to the evidence base which was relied upon for the selected research methodology.

4.1 Data Collection Process

Data was collated from a range of data sources to obtain a good insight into the key factors driving the embedding of risk management in East ETB. Firstly, Table Five provides an overview of the number of individual face-to-face interviews conducted with members of the SMT.

Table 5: Schedule of Senior Management Interviews

No.	Interviewee Identifier	Date of Interview	Gender	Experience	Duration of Interview
1	E 1 Director	31 08 17	Female	>30 years	48 minutes
2	E 2 Director	31 08 17	Male	>15 years	1 hour 10 minutes
3	E 3 Chief Executive Officer	01 09 17	Male	>25 years	1 hour 35 minutes
4	E 4 Director	04 09 17	Male	>35 years	46 minutes
5	E 5 Internal Facilitator	21 11 17	Female	>20 years	36 minutes

To get a balanced perspective on how risks are being embedded throughout the whole of the ETB, a Focus Group of SAMs was conducted on the 17th October 2017 with the objective of obtaining their insights into the embedding of risk management – details of the professional groups represented in the Focus Group are shown below in Table Six. It should be noted that the tenure of the SMT and the SAMs is very high with all members being employed in the education sector for more than fifteen years and one member having tenure of more than 35 years.

Table 6: Focus Group Participants on the

17th October 2017

No.	Job Title	Gender	Experience - Years	Unique Identifier
1	APO* Finance	Female	>20 years	SAM 1
2	Head of Corporate Services	Female	>20 years	SAM 2
3	Head of ICT	Female	>20 years	SAM 3
4	Head of HR	Female	>20 years	SAM 4
5	Second Level Principal	Female	>15 years	SAM 5
6	Training Centre Manager	Male	>30 years	SAM 6
7	CNS Principal	Female	>15 years	SAM 7
8	Internal Facilitator	Female	>20 years	SAM 8
9	Administrative Manager – General	Male	>15 years	SAM 9

*APO = Assistant Principal Officer

In addition to these sources of data, additional information obtained through the facilitation process was gathered – these are added to the suite of primary data available for analysis in Table Seven.

Table 7: Primary Data Available for Thematic Analysis.

Senior Management Team	Senior Administrative Managers
Interview transcripts x 5.	Focus Group.
Review of relevant documentation.	Review of relevant documentation.
Reflective diary notes.	Reflective diary notes.
Observation at monthly governance meetings.	

In advance of presenting the key themes to emerge from this analysis, a guide to the approach taken to the analysis is provided:

- Initial familiarisation with the data – a process of listening to the recordings, checking for accuracy, and reflecting to identify important parts of the data.
- Coding and identifying themes – the Nvivo package was used to identify appropriate codes, and an aggregation of codes into ‘second order’ themes was then conducted to capture related codes. Note that some of these codes were deductive (driven by the questions asked at interviews and the Focus Group meeting) while other inductive themes emerged from the analysis of the replies received.
- Allocation of descriptive text to each theme; here, I followed Bazeley’s (2009) approach to forming, comparing and relating themes to avoid merely descriptive reporting with selective quotes.
- This process continued until it was felt that a point of data saturation was reached – this is defined as a point beyond which it is no longer possible to gain new insight (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).
- Sample codes (deductive themes) were initially identified from the literature which resulted from the questions posed to the SMT interviewees and to the Focus Group participants. From the sample codes first order themes (inductive themes) were identified. These followed the grouping of naturally occurring elements from the deductive themes. Finally, a key second order theme was identified. The key second order themes identified were: (1) Leadership (2) Trust (3) Culture (4) Resources, and (5) Communication. These will be presented in Section 4.2 below.

In short, the thematic analysis undertaken was a rigorous application to the process of data analysis which is important for qualitative research (Patton, 2015).

4.2 Key Themes Identified from Thematic Analysis

A total of five second order themes emerged from this analysis and these are shown below:

4.2.1 Leadership

Leadership was the first of the second order themes that emerged from the thematic analysis. It is described and recognised in the literature as essential for cultural change to take effect (Senge et al. 2000) and it is identified in Table Eight below. Initially ten sample codes were identified from the interview tapes and transcripts, which led to the identification of five first order themes and ultimately to the decision that leadership was a second order theme of importance to the embedding of risk management. Schwarz (p. 209, 2017) referred to the importance of choosing words carefully so that ‘jargon is avoided’ and that the correct meaning of words is used to avoid confusion. Comments reinforcing the importance of leadership to the embedding of risk management included reference to the IF’s role; E2 Director spoke positively of the IF role and how it has enabled progress towards: *‘improved systems to manage risk’*.

Table 8: Thematic Formation of Leadership Theme

Sample Codes	First Order	Second Order
<p>IF gave prominence to risk management.</p> <p>Some Directors* very much embraced risk management but others less so.</p> <p>The governance meetings put an onus on the senior management team to discuss risk management.</p> <p>CEO and Directors encourage staff to take ownership of risk by providing the appropriate infrastructure while also mentoring them in their role and encouraging continued professional education and development.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to question Senior Management regarding new approaches.</p> <p>Empowerment is promoted by the CEO and Directors so that system improvements occur.</p> <p>Staff training and development are promoted to enhance leadership at all levels.</p> <p>The SMT support integration of systems such as quality and risk.</p> <p>Staff can be reluctant to embrace new initiatives as they cite deficits in professional competency.</p> <p>Focus Group Managers supportive of embedding risk management.</p>	<p>Priority given to risk management.</p> <p>Positive versus negative influence.</p> <p>Role of DES and SOLAS (statutory agency under the DES) and their influence on leadership and decision making.</p> <p>Challenging senior management team at governance meetings.</p> <p>Over-reliance on prescriptive approaches to embedding risk management rather than exploring new approaches such as principles-based approaches.</p>	<p>Leadership.</p>

*Directors were appointed in 2017 with responsibility for the following functions: Organisation Support and Development, Finance, FET and Schools and they are members of the SMT.

The role of the monthly governance meetings was also crucial in giving visibility to risk management within this ETB; the IF explained how this *'ensures attention is given to it and its not glossed over'*. Director E4 elaborated that: *'risk management needs to be an agenda item at every management team meeting'*, at SMT level, with SAMs, with School Principals and with FET Managers. While he expressed this, he was also aware that: *'many line managers do not want risk management on their agenda as they do not view it as their responsibility and thus, they are shirking their leadership responsibility'*.

The role of leadership in promoting empowerment was discussed by E3 CEO when he stated that he supports the empowerment of School Principals *'to manage the risks within their schools, to complement them when things are done well as it reflects well on the ETB's reputation and all schools'*. He also described his style of leadership: *'by walking around Head Office on a Friday afternoon and sitting with any one employee to understand the work they are doing, the processes that they follow and to identify with the employee how opportunities could be created to do the job better'*. This approach was supported by all members of the SMT in their individual interviews. Overall these actions demonstrated effective leadership by the SMT against an environment of imposed constraints by government. However, it was noted that this full support for the embedding of risk management did not extend to all the SAM group as they saw other priorities within their scope of responsibility needing greater attention at this time.

4.2.2 Trust

Trust emerged as the second of the second order themes (Table Nine). Schwartz (2017, p. 83) describes this as the ‘foundation for relationships’ and arises when ‘individuals rely on each other’. Schwartz (2017) also described it as an important element for successful facilitation. The Focus Group meeting on the 17th October 2017 referred on several occasions to giving ‘*ownership of risk to staff at the appropriate level*’ in the ETB and ensuring staff ‘*understand their level of responsibility*’ – in other words trusting the staff.

Table 9: Thematic Formation of Trust Theme

Sample Codes	First Order	Second Order
<p>Trust within the SMT identified as important for successful embedding of risk management.</p> <p>Focus Group members very aware of resistance from line managers to embedding risk management – they don't always trust the system that operates.</p> <p>Trust linked with confidentiality, personal and professional values and ethics.</p> <p>Building trust is like a journey – it takes time.</p> <p>Reduction in trust between corporate and operational staff linked to significant change and increased workload over the past five years.</p> <p>Staff reluctant to always express trust in SMT as it may be contrary to Staff Representative Organisations' agendas.</p> <p>Line managers concerned that trust is eroded by implementation of new controls system by Finance.</p> <p>Trust needs to be nurtured to succeed into the long term.</p> <p>Foster trust to support embedding of risk management and integration of systems.</p> <p>Listening to staff is important for the growth of trust.</p>	<p>Good within senior management team (SMT).</p> <p>Poor between SMT and line (administrative) managers.</p> <p>Damaged by series of organisational changes.</p> <p>Support the growth of trust through staff development programmes.</p> <p>Trust expected and delivered between the EF and the SMT and the IF.</p>	<p>Trust</p>

E2 Director described the living of an organisation's values and the growth of trust: *'it's knowledge-base, it's values; you can get people up to a standard to understand the theory of risk management, but you can't get them to live it – that is a journey they must take themselves'*. He elaborated further on whether you could trust the staff to live the ETB's values and embed risk management successfully, and I interpreted this as saying that there needs to be an on-going exercise of promoting trust to ensure risk management gets embedded (as per Schwarz, 2017 and Burns, 2014). E 4 discussed the concept of trust and described it as: *'a fundamental part'* of embedding risk management.

Trust was also explored in respect of how the role of the EF was viewed by the SMT, with all members of the SMT confirming that trust between an EF and East ETB was *'an essential component'* for effective working relationships. It was also encouraging to note that my own role as EF was associated with high levels of trust; the IF and the Head of Corporate Affairs confirmed their experiences of seeking advice from me knowing that their *'business would not be discussed publicly as you are always looking out for us'*; if there was a breach of confidence then personal and professional reputations could be damaged and trust would be undermined.

4.2.3 Culture

The third of the second order themes identified was culture (Table Ten). It refers to the attitude and behaviours expressed by an organisation and its employees. It is also

linked to power and how it is displayed and exploited within society and organisations (Flick, 2014). The culture of an organisation expressed in the commitment of its employees can ultimately lead to success or failure (Lok et al. 2005). In East ETB, the SMT are striving to align the organisational culture so that the Statement of Strategy 2017-21 can be delivered successfully including the embedding of risk management. This is a difficult challenge for any organisation and particularly one that has absorbed many different cultures from different organisations over the past five years.

Table 10: Thematic Formation of Culture Theme.

Sample Codes	First Order	Second Order
<p>Different cultures have merged over the past five years because of significant organisational change with the aggregation of two VECs, and FÁS.</p> <p>Impact of changing patronage of Community National Schools on ETB culture.</p> <p>New management structures and the appointment of Directors has had cultural impacts.</p> <p>Reduction in staff numbers since 2008 has led to deficits in professional competency in some sections.</p> <p>Staff get confused between the culture of the Staff Representative Bodies and the ETB culture.</p> <p>The funders of the ETB (DES, SOLAS and the ESF) behave differently to East ETB</p> <p>Statement of Strategy 2017-21 encompasses what East ETB is aspiring to in respect of culture and values.</p> <p>Standards of quality are linked to organisational culture and organisational success.</p> <p>Some obstacles cited as to why risk management should not be embedded at this time.</p>	<p>Sub-cultures at different levels.</p> <p>Changing group norms.</p> <p>Readiness for risk management.</p> <p>Standardising organisational culture.</p>	<p>Culture</p>

E4 Director referred to the challenges of embedding a risk culture across East ETB: *'the size of our organisation is a big, big challenge for us in disseminating the risk culture and the risk guidelines and all the practical aspects of risk management'*. This is linked to *'how we win-over employees'* so that they see the value of risk management. E2 Director referred to the challenge of promoting a risk culture in the school sector: *'it's not that they don't care ... it's just their values are aligned separately to the right circumstances'*.

It is evident that the size of the ETB, the various activities that must be undertaken, the demands placed on the organisation and the challenges that it faces from the DES, SOLAS (statutory body funded by DES), DPER and the ESF, Teaching Council and staff representative bodies can impact either positively or negatively on the standardisation of a preferred organisational culture. To date the adoption of an open, inclusive, empowering culture has been evidenced at SMT level where the CEO and Directors support and encourage the SAMs to embed the preferred culture for success however, the SAMs encounter resistance from the staff and cite many obstacles that either adversely impact or have the potential to adversely impact on the embedding of a positive risk culture.

4.2.4 Resources

The fourth second order theme identified was resources (Table Eleven). The term encompasses the financial position of the ETB and how it receives its funding, while

also referring to the employees and their competency as well as available time to undertake work professionally and effectively (Schwartz, 2017). Schwarz (p. 148, 2017) explained that resources are important when facilitating change. If the required resources are not available, then it is difficult to succeed and deliver on objectives.

Table 11: Thematic Formation of Resources Theme

Sample Codes	First Order	Second Order
<p>Staff cite resource deficits as obstacles to embedding risk management where resources include time, people, competency and finance.</p> <p>Staff do not always have the competency to comprehend the concept of managing and embedding risk management.</p> <p>Challenges in daily routine for all staff</p> <p>Controls imposed on how resources allocated by DES, SOLAS and ESF can be used.</p> <p>Financial resources allocated for education staff development but no ring-fenced funding for administration staff development.</p> <p>Funding for IF role had to be met from existing resources as no new funding allocated.</p> <p>When organisational failure/s occur, and resources are cited as a contributory cause there is no automatic allocation of funding to prevent a recurrence of the failure.</p> <p>The successful delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21 and the embedding of risk management are linked to available resources.</p> <p>Prioritisation by management of allocation of resources may result in slowness of embedding of risk management.</p>	<p>Competency base of senior management team.</p> <p>Not equitable across parts of ETB.</p> <p>Overload of other commitments.</p> <p>Organisational failures and resource commitment.</p>	<p>Resources</p>

The CEO and Directors explained how financial resources are allocated by the DES, SOLAS and the ESF. E3 CEO explained that the *'funds are ring-fenced for specific purposes and any funds not utilised must be returned to the appropriate funding source, they cannot be transferred and used for another programme'*. He said a second factor influencing resources is the reduction since 2008 when the financial collapse occurred and *'the moratorium on recruitment to the public service was instituted'*. A third factor has been *'the reduction in the number of competent persons available for recruitment to the public education system'*. E4 Director explained that these factors have resulted in *'a reduction in staff numbers at administrative level, loss of posts of responsibility in the school sector and a reduction in the number of managers in the FET sector'*. These changes have occurred against a backdrop of significant change in the ETB sector following the aggregation of Vocational Education Committees (VEC) and the transfer of FÁS training services as well as the creation of the CNS sector. Challenges such as these have placed a significant strain on East ETB and other public bodies in their quest to enhance professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness and the embedding of new practices such as risk management.

E2 Director acknowledged the role of resources as a challenge for all managers in the ETB when he empathised that *'a significant reduction in resources has occurred since the implementation of the public sector moratorium on recruitment in 2008, and to date it has not been possible to correct these deficits'*. E1 Director also confirmed that *'resources must be a priority for the ETB in the coming years if the Statement of Strategy 2017-21 is to be delivered*

and if risk management is to be embedded successfully, but it is *'about prioritising the resources'*; this was interpreted as using the resources effectively. These significant challenges will require management on an ongoing basis if risk management is to be embedded successfully at all levels of the ETB so that discontinuous change is avoided (as per Bond, 1999; Grundy, 1993; Holloway, 2002; Love et al., 1998 and Taylor and Hirst, 2001).

4.2.5 Communication

The fifth of the second order themes identified was communication (Table Twelve) and this is understood to include the importance of listening and interpreting communication correctly as well as providing information when required.

Table 12: Thematic Formation of Communication Theme

Sample Codes	First Order	Second Order
<p>Requirements for a corporate communications plan.</p> <p>Regular reinforcement of messages.</p> <p>Linking communication to delivery of Statement of Strategy objectives.</p> <p>Encourage employees to talk to us – we need to hear what they are saying.</p> <p>Clarity in communication is important for understanding.</p> <p>Risk management language needs to be made simple.</p> <p>Use of technologies to enhance communication.</p> <p>Ensure risk management on all management team agendas so that embedding of risk management is promoted.</p> <p>IF and EF need to delivery strong messages to support embedding of risk management.</p> <p>Encourage third parties such as suppliers, parents/guardians, DPER, etc. to support embedding of risk management in East ETB.</p>	<p>Messages need constant reinforcement.</p> <p>Frequency of message.</p> <p>Different approaches needed (levels, language).</p> <p>Listening is important in the communication loop.</p>	<p>Communication</p>

Communication as a subject was raised on several occasions throughout the research study (SAM's Focus Group) and at seminars and workshops. A large part of my facilitation role was to enhance communication levels throughout the ETB but particularly at SMT level. An issue that was raised during this facilitation work was around the language of risk management which was described as: '*difficult to understand*'. I examined this comment with the IF so that we could look at simplifying the language. I observed that it was a challenge as the research study progressed, particularly when comments were made by some SAMs that the language of risk management was '*challenging for their staff*'. This was an issue that had never been raised with me in the past however, it is useful feedback to consider when seeking reasons for failures to embed risk management. Furthermore, at the governance meetings, all interactions between the EF and the SMT included question and answer sessions which were useful to inform, to clarify and to support the embedding of risk management. E1 Director commented positively about the question and answer sessions and the value of the information imparted by me in '*clarifying issues*'. This Director also explained her approach to communication by involving staff to embed risk management by '*involving them in the review of the risk register*'. She also described how documented policies and procedures can be reviewed to enhance communication as '*it is a starting point.*' E2 Director explained how communications are delivered through training sessions when new electronic systems are being rolled out and the challenge this can pose: '*they don't all turn up and then they don't get the message*'.

4.3 Summary of Objective Three

In summary, research objective three required an assessment of the input of factors for embedding risk management at the SMT level in East ETB. A total of five second order themes were identified: (1) Leadership (2) Trust (3) Culture (4) Resources, and (5) Communication. The evidence demonstrated that leadership linked with empowerment of staff was an important theme to support and promote for the embedding of risk management. This was linked with trust between the CEO, Directors, SAMs and East ETB staff at all levels. The culture observed in East ETB was mixed with some sub-cultures evident where some members of the SMT were not fully supportive of the embedding of risk management as a strategic imperative to the successful delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21. Empowerment of staff was supported by the CEO and Directors where employees are encouraged to speak out and voice their thoughts on how processes could be improved (E3 and E4). Resources are frequently cited as an obstacle to change, and the public sector has had significant resource restrictions imposed over the past ten years (2008-2018) following the financial collapse. It was evident from the data collated that the majority of East ETB's SMT were committed to the embedding of risk management at all levels and that this process has commenced and continued with the support of the IF. It is also evident that there are significant challenges that will need to be discussed and management action plans agreed if successful embedding of risk management is to occur in a timely manner across East ETB.

5. Evaluating the Embedding of Risk Management at Senior Management Level

The final objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of the facilitation initiatives undertaken to support the embedding of risk management in East ETB. At the outset of this analysis, I was aware that the information used for the previous two objectives was largely positive in terms of risk management getting increased priority within the ETB - this was reinforced by records from the Governance SMT meetings, and from my observations as a participant observer. However, I did have concerns that as someone with a vested interest in successful embedding of risk management, I was likely to be given positive stories of what I would like to hear rather than perhaps a different reality. Having considered this matter, an approach to gather additional independent sources of information was decided at the evaluation stage, and this included:

1. Undertaking two desktop audits of East ETBs risk management system to assess the level of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) and with the International Risk Management Standard (ISO 31000:2018).
2. An interview with a member of ETB's Audit and Risk Committee.
3. It was expected that this additional information would provide a different lens on the level of embeddedness of risk management in the ETB, and that it will contribute to developing a risk maturity model which will be of interest to other public bodies.

5.1 Evaluation of Compliance with the Code of Practice and Risk Management Standards

The first evaluation undertaken was to establish the level of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) – see Appendix Two for further details. The methodology adopted was to review each requirement of this Code for risk management, internal audit and the Audit and Risk Committee and to seek evidence of compliance or non-compliance. Evidence was sourced from data already collated and where this was not available then the IF was requested to provide it. The evidence confirmed that East ETB was 100% compliant with the requirements of the Code – this is important as the Code is underpinned by legislation and it is mandatory that the ETB can demonstrate full compliance.

The International Risk Management Standard (ISO), ISO 31000 was relaunched in Spring 2018 and this updated version was used to evaluate the level of compliance of East ETB's risk management system. The methodology adopted was focused at the SMT level in East ETB. Each of the 162 clauses of the standard were reviewed, and evidence of compliance or non-compliance was sought. East ETB was found to be fully compliant (green) for 76% of the clauses, partially compliant for 22% (amber) of the clauses, and non-compliant for 2% (red) of the clauses. Appendix Three provides an extract of a detailed report on the audit with ISO 31000:2018 and shows that the overall level of compliance was very high however, the factors that mitigated against full compliance related to: (1) Resource allocation which is dependent on government to provide adequate resources to embed risk management (2) Absence of a documented risk appetite statement, and (3)

Communication – this has been addressed at the SMT level, but a considerable body of work will need to be undertaken to communicate the risk management policy and the practice of embedding risk management across East ETB and it will be a significant challenge due to the large geographical area involved and the number of employees. Overall, it was clear that the ETB demonstrated a high level of compliance with ISO 31000:2018 requirements, and these requirements are more onerous than those specified in the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) – therefore providing a greater reassurance that risk management is being embedded in this ETB.

5.2 Interview with Audit and Risk Committee Member

In addition to the audit reviews, an interview was undertaken with a member of the Audit and Risk Committee who was known to the researcher. This member was appointed in 2013 and is considered a respected and competent person on enterprise risk management. He agreed to be interviewed as part of this research study and an interview template was again used to guide the discussions which are now discussed.

Firstly, he confirmed that the appointment of the IF *'is producing results with evidence of progress'*. He stopped short of stating that an IF is essential in all situations to drive risk management as he felt that *'the management and embedding of risk is the responsibility of every manager and staff member however, I do understand that in an organisation as big as East ETB that probably some resource is required'*. These comments complemented the

views of Expert Interviewee one (part of paper three of the DBA) who felt that such an IF was not required unless there was no other person in a public body capable of undertaking this role.

This interviewee went on to say that his experience with the ETB had at times been frustrating as he sought to improve accountability for risk management to his committee. At the outset, he felt that he *'had to drive the agenda at every meeting, for example asking for the risk register; asking to have it updated – all that sort of thing'*. Furthermore, he felt that the Directors and SAMs should present themselves at the Audit and Risk Committee throughout a given year, *'but so far, we have only met one Director – she certainly seemed to have a good grasp of what must be done. What I would really like to see is the Director coming with his/her staff to report on how they are approaching and mitigating the risks to the Statement of Strategy 2017-21'*.

In terms of the level of embeddedness to date, this interviewee felt that *'there has been definite improvement but there is still a long way to go. There has been about a 50% improvement or maybe a bit more in the past year – that's improvement from a very low base but there is still a lot to be done ... they need the managers to be taking responsibility for embedding – it's not all down to the IF as she is coordinating the embedding process'*.

In interpreting this comment from the Interviewee, I viewed it as being more appropriate to the middle management level than to the SMT as indeed the analysis for the previous objective had also highlighted that the level of embeddedness of risk management declines as you

go from SMT down to middle management level. This is linked to the accountability role previously described and how embedding means integrating the practice of managing risk into all ETB business activities. An independent verification of improvements was certainly encouraging to hear but, it was also clear from this interview that there is still a considerable body of work to be undertaken in the months and years ahead in East ETB for embedding of risk management to take place at the operational levels.

5.3 Final Interview with Internal Facilitator

Given the prominent role played by the IF throughout the embedding process, a second interview was conducted with her on the 9th April 2018 to coincide with the conclusion of the research study. This acted as a review of the embedding process as well as extracting useful lessons which could be applied with other public bodies. A summary of points raised at this meeting is given below:

The IF initially did not have a background in risk management and commented positively on having access to me at all times which was important when key risks needed to be discussed and resolved such as child safeguarding risks and data protection breaches. She felt the induction programme met her needs however, she would have preferred me to slow the process so that she could have had *‘more time to absorb the information imparted’*.

She had worked frequently with the *‘CEO to support the delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21 and found this work to be beneficial in understanding the enterprise*

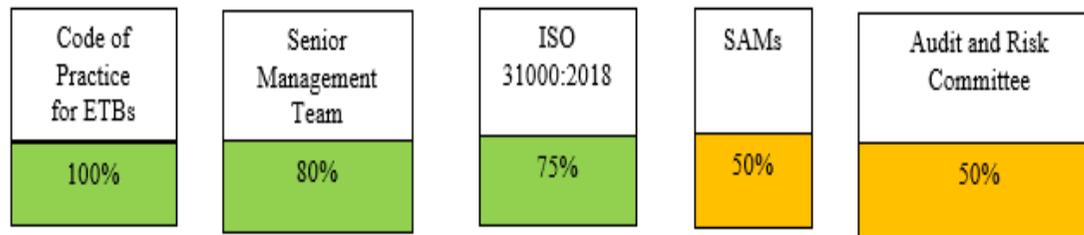
risks, but it reduced the time available to support the embedding of risk management at operational level in the schools and centres. This led her to say that ‘more resources will be required in the future as otherwise the embedding of risk management could slow down, and the momentum may be lost’. This issue has been and will continue to be addressed by the CEO with the DES.

The governance meetings were ‘very good, but we have a long way to go yet ... we still need to embed the practice of managing risk at school and centre level, but it is very difficult in an organisation of this size’.

5.4 Summary of Embeddedness of Risk Management

In concluding Section Five, Figure Two below provides a summary of the level of embeddedness of risk management in East ETB as estimated from the preceding analysis.

Figure 2: Summary of the Level of Embeddedness of Risk Management in East ETB.



The percentages allocated in this diagram are subjective estimates based on analysis of extensive data sources; for example, it was the view of the IF that the level of support provided by the Governance SMT was 80%. This was compared with the level of support provided separately by the SAMs which was described as: *'mixed – they don't always understand but it is about 50%.'* In comparison when asked about the level of support provided by the Audit and Risk Committee, the IF described them as: *very supportive and demanding with a percentage rating of more than 50%.* While it is encouraging to note that the embedding process is almost complete at the highest levels, there is still a considerable body of work to be undertaken to ensure embedding transcends the whole ETB.

6. Revisiting the Conceptual Model

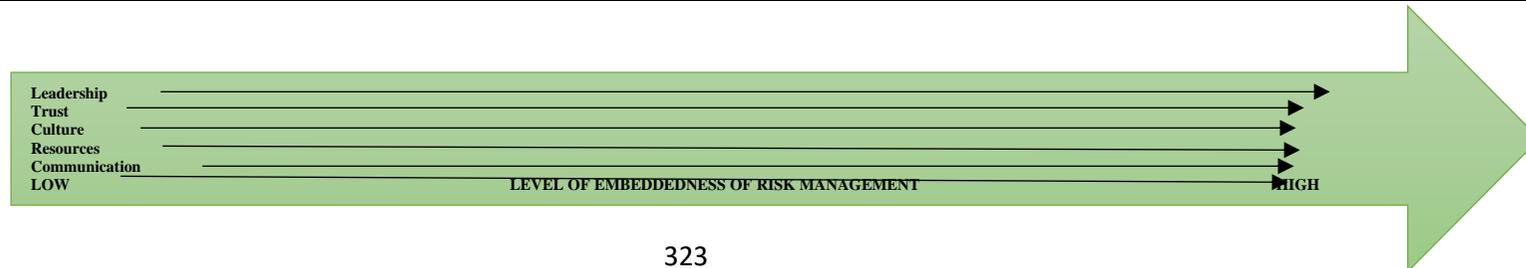
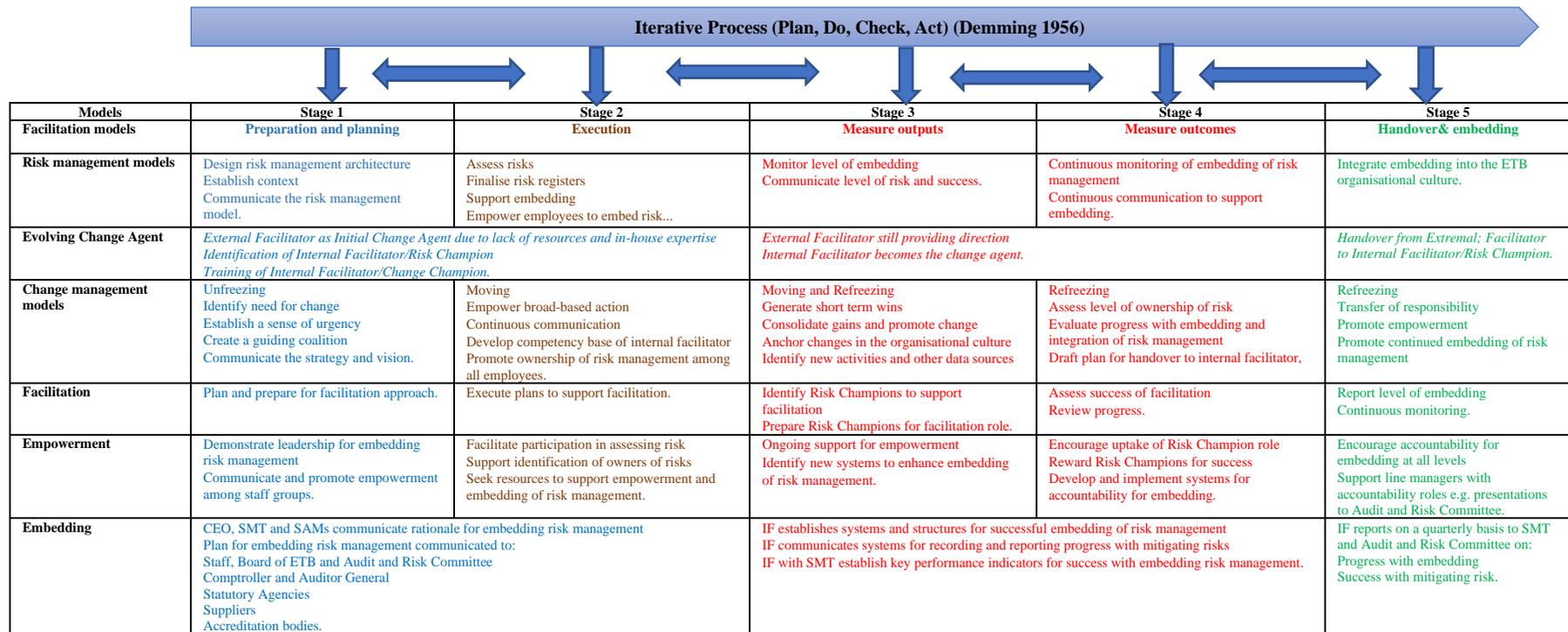
The Conceptual Model (Appendix One) was used to guide the development of this research study. At its conclusion it was appropriate to revisit the model to determine its applicability and relevance to embedding risk management in other organisations. While many aspects of the model worked well at this ETB, there were some emergent findings such as the lack of a clear sequence between the stages of a facilitation model (I have found that an iterative approach was prevalent). It also became clear to me that there are linkages between embedding risk management, facilitation and empowering staff as well as ensuring all managers demonstrate accountability for the embedding of risk management; this has now been built into the revised model. The five key themes that emerged from the thematic analysis (leadership, trust, culture, resources and

communication) require attention at all stages of the facilitation and embedding process. Although it was not incorporated considerably in the original conceptual model, accountability among line managers emerged from the findings as being important during the evaluation stage of the embedding of risk management and has thus been incorporated in more detail into the revised conceptual model. The revised conceptual model now represents a workable model to guide the embedding of risk management at the SMT level and at operational level which I feel is relevant for organisations in both the public and the private sector. The revised model is shown in Figure Three below. In using this model, I would advise that risk management practitioners should view it as a dynamic model which can be adjusted to meet the changing circumstances that arise at any time. The model that was developed for East ETB and underpinned by the various published standards has enabled the ETB to remodel some elements of its Corporate Risk Register to meet statutory, and Audit and Risk Committee requests without loss of its integrity, and it also enabled a speedy response to the management of emerging risks such as child safeguarding and the requirements of GDPR (2018) requirements.

In conclusion the research study's aim and objectives have been evidenced in this Paper Four. The findings are argued to be reliable and valid (further details of this are shown in Appendix Four), and the evidence confirms that a well thought out plan (Appendix One Conceptual Model) when implemented can succeed in embedding risk management in a large public body. Considerable work remains to be done to fully embed risk management throughout East ETB, but this organisation is in my view now in a strong

position to proactively manage risks and achieve its strategic objectives in the coming years.

Figure 3: Revised Conceptual Model (Adapted from Deming, 1956; Harvey et al. 2001; Kitson et al. 1998; Senge, et al. 2000; Wardale, 2013; Patton, 2015 and Schwarz, 2017).



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Appendix 1

Conceptual Model to Facilitate the Embedding of Risk Management in an ETB (Ref: Lewin, 1947; Kotter, 1996; Kitson et al. 1998; Mc Fadzean and Nelson, 1998; Wardale, 2013; Schwarz, 2017; ISO 31000:2018; and AIRMIC/ALARM/IRM 2010)

Models	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Facilitation models	Preparation and planning	Execution	Measure outputs	Measure outcomes	Handover& embedding
Risk management models	Design risk management architecture Establish context Communicate the risk management model Communicate the research model.	Identify, assess and manage risk Finalise risk registers Analyse risk register content to support embedding Empower employees to own and manage risk.	Monitor level of risk management Communicate the level of risk and success	Monitor level of embeddedness of risk management Communicate level of embeddedness and other success	Consolidate risk management into the ETB organisational culture
Evolving Change Agent	<i>External Facilitator as Initial Change Agent due to lack of resources and in-house expertise Identification of Internal Facilitator/Risk Champion Training of Internal Facilitator/Change Champion</i>		<i>External Facilitator still providing direction Internal Facilitator becomes the change agent</i>		<i>Handover from Extremal; Facilitator to Internal Facilitator/Risk Champion</i>
Change management models	Unfreezing Identify need for change Establish a sense of urgency Create a guiding coalition Communicate the strategy and vision	Moving Empower broad-based action Continued communication Develop competency base of internal facilitator Promote ownership of risk management among all employees	Moving and Refreezing Generate short term wins Consolidate gains and promote change Anchor new approaches in the organisational culture Identify new activities and other data sources	Refreezing Assess the: Level of empowerment and ownership of risk management Evidence of how risk is managed Integration of risk management into day to day business activities Draft plan for handover to internal facilitator,	Refreezing Transfer of responsibility Promote empowerment Promote continued embedding of risk management

Low

Level of Embeddedness of risk management

High

Appendix 2

Extract from ETB Audit of Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015: Sections 13-15)

Ref. source	Key requirement	Full compliance	Partial compliance	No compliance	Not applicable	Comments
Department of Education & Skills (2015)	C. RISK MANAGEMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, INTERNAL CONTROL AND INTERNAL AUDIT					
	13. Risk Management					
	<i>An effective risk management system identifies and assesses risk in the context of the operation of an ETB, identifies appropriate responses and then provides assurance that the chosen responses are effective.</i>					
	13.1 The Chief Executive should appoint a member of staff with overall responsibility for risk management.					
	13.2 Each ETB should develop a Risk Management Policy and the Board should approve that policy, the related framework and monitor their effectiveness. The Risk Management Policy should take account of the risks to the ETB that would significantly obstruct or undermine the achievement of its objectives as set out in the strategy statement.					
	13.3 Key elements of the Board's oversight of risk management would include:					
	making the management of high-level risk a standing meeting agenda item;					
	providing for the overview of risk in the terms of reference of the audit committee or a separate committee;					
	seeking expert advice externally, if risk management experience/ expertise is not in the competencies of at least one member;					
	approving the Chief Executive's Risk Management Policy and approve the risk management business plan and risk register at least annually;					
	requiring external review of effectiveness of the risk management framework on a periodic basis;					
	ensuring that the CE has appointed a member of staff with overall responsibility for risk management;					

Appendix 3

Extract from East ETB Audit of Compliance with ISO 31000: 2018 Risk Management Standard

Ref. source	Key requirement	Full compliance	Partial compliance	No compliance	Not applicable	Comments
ISO 31000:2018	ISO Risk Management Standard					
	5.2. Leadership and commitment					
	5.2.1. General					
	Top management and oversight bodies should establish the intent of the organisation to manage risk and demonstrate leadership and commitment by:					
	aligning risk management with the objectives and strategies of the organisation					
	ensuring that risk management and the organisation's culture are aligned		Developing			
	defining and endorsing the risk management policy					
	ensuring that the necessary resources are allocated to the management of risk		Resources allocated but further resources required			Discussions with DES
	assigning accountabilities, responsibilities and authority at appropriate levels within the organisation					
	recognising and addressing contractual obligations as well as voluntary commitments		Developing			
	establishing risk criteria, risk appetite and risk tolerance, ensuring that they are understood, articulated and communicated to stakeholders			To be commenced		
	ensuring that the risk management performance indicators are part of the performance indicators of the organization including communicating these indicators		No evidence found			Discussions with DES
	communicating the value of risk management to the organization and its stakeholders					
	promoting systematic monitoring of risks					
	ensuring that the framework and process for managing risk continue to remain appropriate					
	Top management can demonstrate leadership by tracking continual improvement of risk management within the organization by emphasising the setting of organisational performance goals, measurement, review and the subsequent modification of processes, systems, resources, capability and skills.					
	Assessing the progress of risk management within an organisation is an integral part of the organization's governance.					
	5.2.2. Integrating risk management					

Appendix Four

Verification of Research Finding's Reliability and Validity (Ref: Guba and Lincoln, 1981 and Morse et al. 2002)

Reference Source	Elements
Guba and Lincoln (1981)	1. Credibility
	Is the research study credible?
	<p>Yes.</p> <p>It was proposed following a literature review, development of a conceptual model, evaluated at three Doctoral Colloquium's, revisited when questions were raised by the researcher regarding the reliability and validity of the research findings. Concerns discussed with Research Supervisors and changes made to the research methodology so that more objective evidence could be obtained to substantiate the research findings. The findings have been derived from real-world settings (Strauss and Corbin, 1990 and Patton, 2001). For these reasons the research is considered credible (Patton, 2001) as it is dependent on the effort of the researcher supported by the Research Supervisors.</p>
	2. Transferability
	Could the research study methodology be transferred to other public bodies?
	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The researcher is confident that with the appointment of an Internal Facilitator and the support of an External Facilitator that the research methodology (case study) could be transferred to other public bodies to achieve similar or enhanced results (Hoepfl, 1997).</p>
	3. Dependability
	Is the research methodology dependable?
	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Relying on Lincoln and Guba's (1985) advice that reliability in qualitative research could be referred to as dependability, they reference 'inquiry audit' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 317) as a measure to enhance the dependability of qualitative research. Inquiry audit examines the process and the product (output and outcome) of the research for consistency. The findings from the audits of</p>

	compliance and the semi-structured interview with the member of East ETB's Audit and Risk Committee support the dependability of the research study. Further supporting evidence is found in the records and reflective diary of the researcher.
	4. Confirmability
	Are the research findings objective and can they be substantiated?
	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Reliance for evidence of this can be found when the researcher questioned the data analysis findings from the semi-structured interviews with the SMT and the Focus Group outputs. When concerns were identified by the researcher and discussed with her Research Supervisors it was agreed to remodel the research methodology by obtaining objective evidence from one member of the Audit and Risk Committee and from two evaluations (Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) and ISO 31000:2018) of embedding of risk embedding.</p> <p>In addition, when triangulation is applied i.e. output from semi-structured interviews with Exert Interviewees, pilot site (West ETB) SMT interviews, research site (East ETB) SMT interviews and Focus Group outputs, observation of progress and human behaviours at monthly Governance SMT meetings in East ETB, semi-structured interview with member of East ETB's Audit and Risk Committee and evaluations of compliance with the Code of Practice for ETBs (DES, 2015) and ISO 31000:2018).</p>
Reference Source	Element
Morse, et al. (2002)	1. Verification
	<p>The research process included checking, confirming and making sure so that as a researcher the findings could be confirmed (Morse et al. 2002). This involved integrating (Kvale, 1989 and Creswell, 1997) checks and balances at all stages of the research such as:</p> <p>Agreeing a Conceptual Model.</p> <p>Agreeing a dynamic research aim and objectives so that changes could be made throughout the research based on data analysis at each stage of the research study.</p> <p>Liaising with my Research Supervisors on a regular basis and acting on their advice.</p> <p>Presentations at Doctoral Colloquium's and acting on the advice/feedback from the External and Internal Examiner.</p> <p>Developing a research project plan to guide the research study.</p> <p>Ensuring an ethical approach was adopted by the researcher at all stages of the research process.</p> <p>Developing semi-structured questionnaires for all interviews.</p> <p>Maintaining consistency in all activities so that a standardised approach was adopted to the interview process.</p> <p>Facilitating a Focus Group at East ETB.</p> <p>Providing all transcripts to interviewees and Focus Group members to verify the accuracy of the content.</p> <p>Remodelling the project plan when concerns were raised with the Research Supervisors regarding research rigour and adapting the research project plan to respond to these concerns.</p>

Section 3: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

1. Introduction

This introduction to Section Three of this thesis provides the discussion, conclusions and recommendations arising from an exploratory case study in an Irish public body. This study investigated the role and function of facilitation in supporting the embedding of risk management at Senior Management Team (SMT) level in a public body referred to as East ETB. Undertaking this study allowed the author to develop an area of professional interest which involved reviewing academic literature, discussions with experts in public sector risk management and initial analysis of data from a pilot ETB (referred to as West ETB) to prepare the author for the challenge of undertaking her research study in East ETB. The main research study involved multiple interactions with a variety of stakeholders in East ETB. East ETB was chosen as her research site as she had prior knowledge of it when she assisted them to develop appropriate policies in 2013-2014 and it was a progression when she was then asked to assist with the implementation and more difficult embedding of these policies in 2017 at the ETB.

Each of the four cumulative papers contained within Section Two of this thesis addressed an element of the overall research study, starting with Paper One which outlined the conceptual design for the study. The paper drew on facilitation literature (Kitson et al. 1998; Hogan, 2002; Wardale, 2013 and Schwarz, 2017), change management literature (Lewin, 1947 and Kotter, 1995) as well as published risk management standards (ISO 31000:2018 and AIRMIC/Alarm/IRM, 2010) in presenting a framework for the embedding of risk management.

It was recognised at the conceptual design stage that successful embedding of risk management would be a considerable challenge as it would involve changes to work practices and adjustments to the organisational culture (Kotter, 1996). Furthermore, Irish public bodies were being asked to report on how they were managing risk in supporting the delivery of their strategies and were being asked to show evidence of compliance with required legislation, codes of practice, standards, guidance and government circulars. Facilitation literature (Hogan, 2002 and Schwarz, 2017) suggested that while external facilitation can help initiate the process, there was limited research on how the novice and expert facilitator develop their competency (Tavella and Papadopoulos, 2025), and that long term success with embedding change would require an appropriate handover (Wardale, 2013) to an Internal Facilitator (IF) which was included in the initial conceptual design. The model applied at East ETB has elements of a co-facilitation approach to support change management – as an expert EF assisted an untrained IF with a view to a final handover to the IF on completion of the research study. The author acting as EF also sought evidence of embedding and drew the conclusion that the embedding of risk management at East ETB over a short period of time (eight months) was successful at the Senior Management Team (SMT) level.

Research Paper Two presented the proposed research methodology for this study, and the initial intention was to apply an action research methodology to support a public body to embed risk management. However, the advice from Examiners and following discussion and reflection with the researcher's Supervisors led to an exploratory case study methodology being chosen. Such an approach was

outlined using Saunders et al. (2009) research onion as well as case study literature (Yin, 2012 and 2014 and Eisenhardt, 1989). The nature of a facilitation and embedding process meant that multiple sources of evidence were envisaged within this case study approach, with an interpretivist philosophy being adopted.

Research Paper Three presented an updated research design (2017) which included some initial findings. It was explained that while the main research site was East ETB, it was decided to satisfy the first research objective (developing a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management) initially, via some preliminary interviews with known Experts in public sector risk management from the United Kingdom and the United States. This led to new insights being generated on how to successfully embed risk management such as the role of risk leadership and the need to simplify the language of risk management during the embedding process. These findings were complemented by a pilot study undertaken in a public body located in the West of Ireland (referred to as West ETB) where the researcher acted as an EF between 2015-17. The author had facilitated the design of the risk management architecture and had supported the embedding of risk management over this period and interviews with the SMT at West ETB highlighted the importance of communication, language of risk management and leadership as key elements to support the embedding process.

Research Paper Four was presented in 2018 and reported the findings from the facilitation of risk management at East ETB over an eight-month period. The evidence

gathered was used to address research objectives two, three and four. Initially objective two looked at the development and management of a facilitation approach at this ETB – and the findings included details of an extensive induction programme with the IF as well as additional supports provided to the SMT and to line managers. The findings were largely positive as the IF considerably improved her professional competency over this period and the inclusion of risk management at monthly Governance SMT meetings gave risk management a voice at the top table.

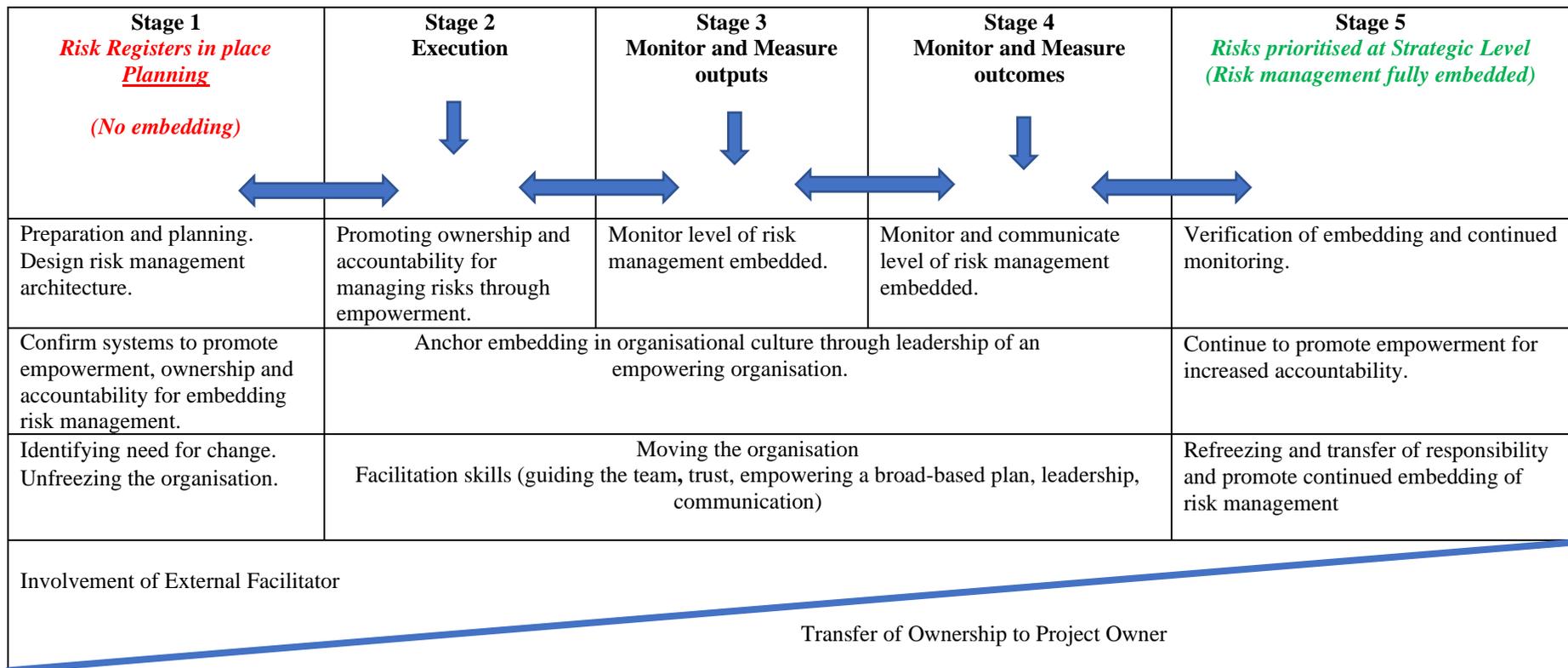
Research objective three assessed the key factors which impact on the successful embedding of risk management, and a thematic approach was adopted to analyse the themes from multiple sources of evidence – these themes are discussed further in this paper. Finally, the fourth research objective assessed the level of embedding of risk management at East ETB while noting the evidence from the Australian Government’s Department of Finance (2016) publication on the benchmarking process for risk management. The assessment was satisfied through multiple independent sources such as an interview with one member of East ETB’s Audit and Risk Committee which indicated that the level of embedding of risk management was high at the SMT level. The evidence also highlighted that there are impediments to the cascading of the embedding process to the operational level and that this will require ongoing work to be achieved.

Research Paper four concluded with a revised conceptual model which is presented below (Figure One) and which is proposed as a template for successful embedding of risk management in public bodies. The model evolved in response to actions and observations undertaken by the

Internal and the External Facilitator and advice from the Examiners and Supervisors. The revised model largely draws from the initial conceptual model which was presented in Section Three in the Introduction chapter with two adjustments as follows:

- It was felt at the outset of this study that the process for embedding risk management would be a sequential process as one moves from Stage One (Preparation and Planning) through to Stage Five (Handover); however, it was found that this process is iterative in nature where messages need to be constantly reinforced at all levels and where it is necessary to review progress regularly and even sometimes go backwards before eventually moving forward towards stage five.
- Two additional enabling factors (accountability and empowerment) have been added; these were felt to be subsumed in other themes in the initial model but on the advice of examiners, they are now explicitly referred to in the revised conceptual model.

Figure One: Conceptual Model for Embedding of Risk Management using a Facilitation Approach Adapted from: ISO 31000:2018 and Alarm/Airmic/IRM, 2010; Schwarz, 2017; Wardale, 2013; Royce (2018); Kitson et al, 1998; Kotter, 1996 and Lewin, 1947).



The overall research aim: *Embedding Risk Management at Senior Management Level in a Public-Sector Organisation Using a Facilitation Approach: An Exploratory Study*, was broken into four supporting research objectives as follows:

1. To develop a deeper appreciation of the role of facilitation in supporting public bodies to embed risk management.
2. To explore the development and management of an external facilitation approach to support the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation.
3. To assess the enabling factors on the embedding of risk management.
4. To evaluate the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in a public sector organisation through a facilitation approach.

2. Discussion of Key Research Findings

The findings in relation to each of the four objectives will now be discussed with reference to relevant literature:

2.1 Objective 1: To Develop a Deeper Appreciation of the Role of Facilitation to Support the Embedding of Risk Management

The research findings to support research objective one were obtained from interviewing two Experts in public sector risk management and from a pilot study undertaken in West ETB. This analysis was undertaken as although the author had considerable professional experience in her role as Head of Client Enterprise Risk Management at an

Irish mutual insurance company, she recognised the need for new perspectives in advance of the main research study at East ETB. A review of relevant literature (Kitson, 1998; Fone and Young, 2002 and 2005; Harvey et al. 2002; ALARM/Airmic/IRM, 2010, Hogan, 2002 and Schwartz, 2017) had already been undertaken. The author had identified that the role of the facilitator as described in empirical literature largely related to the health and social care environment where clinical and social care professionals were involved in supporting patients to adapt their behaviours however, there was a dearth of literature on facilitation as an effective management tool to support embedding within the public sector. It was felt that supplementing the insights from the literature with some expert views on embedding risk management as well as capturing some experiential learning from a pilot case study could capture additional learning points for the main research study.

A major theme to emerge from both data sources was the need for someone to assume a leadership position to drive the embedding process; both Expert interviewees felt that a competent IF is needed for this to occur which would involve reminding, refreshing and supporting employees so that everyone would be risk aware. Nazari et al. (2014) promoted the importance of leadership when embedding change as it is the SMT that ‘set the tone at the top’ however, there was no evidence found in the empirical literature of the importance of ‘*risk leadership*’ which Expert Interviewee 2 described as an essential competency for the Internal Facilitator (IF).

Furthermore, West ETB Interviewee 4 alluded to how the IF would need to manage the individual personalities

evident within the SMT and to ensure that the objectives as set out in the organisation's Statement of Strategy 2017-21 were met. These findings are supported by Sykes, et al. (2014, p. 1396) when they advised that facilitation is more likely to be successful 'when people are asked, informed and persuaded rather than told' by a facilitator. However, there was some disagreement amongst these data sources on the need for an EF or an IF to drive the embedding process. Expert Interviewee 1 did feel that if the IF was competent, then an EF may not be needed; however, this was contradicted by Expert Interviewee 2 and by West ETB Interviewee 1 who felt that an EF helped immensely. This view was also corroborated by West ETB Interviewee 3 who posited that in the absence of having a competent person then an EF is needed. It can be summarised that in most cases, an EF can bring a level of expertise around risk management to the organisation, thus supporting Buono and Jamieson (2010) who argue that an EF can bring a broad competency on change management.

Both the Expert interviewees and the pilot case study interviewees largely agreed that regardless of whether an IF or an EF is used, the chosen person must have an appropriate skillset to help drive the embedding process. Part of this skillset is a leadership role although it was noted by Expert Interviewee 2 that it would not be right to assume that all facilitators are risk leaders. This suggests that the chances of successfully embedding risk management are greatly reduced if the chosen facilitator does not have good leadership skills. The literature predominantly discusses the implementation of change management including risk management rather than the embedding of it into the organisational culture and how the practice of facilitation can assist where it is acknowledged that implementation

implies the development of the systems and structures required to facilitate embedding of change. Where reference is made to facilitation in the published literature there is minimal discussion on the competency requirements that should be evident in both the EF and the IF – it is assumed that anyone can be a facilitator but when the literature from Schwartz (2017) and Hogan (2002) is reviewed it is evident that there is a significant competency base that must be displayed if the facilitator is to be successful in their role.

Furthermore, the author's experience with West ETB was that where delays occurred with the appointment of the IF, then progress on the embedding process stalled considerably. When one chooses to use an EF to drive the embedding process, a risk is created as to whether the chosen person will have the required skillset – West ETB Interviewee 4 alluded to this when describing a nervousness being experienced in the organisation and where an EF may cause damage when they do not engage effectively with the employees. This reinforces Kitson et al. (1998) who proposed that facilitators need to assist individuals and teams to understand what they need to change, and they need a range of interpersonal and group skills to achieve the desired change (Hogan, 2002 and Schwartz, 2017). These skills include personal characteristics and having a clearly defined role and appropriate styles of working with individuals or teams.

An additional important skillset that emerged in the Expert interviews and commented upon by West ETB Interviewee 2 was the ability to communicate in simple language, and this was considered important as risk management language (examples change and change management,

culture change) can be perceived as complex to many people. These findings confirmed Schwarz's (2017) advice that a facilitator needs to choose words carefully, to avoid jargon and that descriptive words should have one correct meaning. It also resonated with Wardale's (2013) writings on why change management projects may fail if the transfer phase has not been planned and actioned and the author feels on reflection, that a clear planning and communications process can help overcome this potential resistance to change management projects. Such a view is consistent with the work of Kitson et al. (1998) and Harvey et al. (2001) when they identified that a facilitation approach can support the implementation of change as it is a function of the interplay of three core elements: (1) The level and nature of the evidence (2) The context or environment into which the change is to be placed, and (3) The method or way in which the process is facilitated. The author was conscious of these advices from Kitson et al. (1998) and Harvey et al. (2001) as the research study at East ETB commenced and progressed. One example of this was the decision to repeat key messages on many occasions to members of the SMT so that they had a full understanding of the rationale for embedding risk management. Such a finding conflicted with the advice in change management literature such as Kotter (1996) who suggests that change occurs in a sequential manner. By contrast, the researcher encountered many situations where she had to repeat messages and go backwards with groups who had perhaps missed a training seminar before she could proceed forwards again. The author sought to embed new practices into the everyday activity of the ETB and did not find this message reinforced in other sourced literature and on reflection, the author feels this is a key message for

those seeking to achieve a high success rate will be with embedding risk management.

2.2 Objective 2: To Explore the Development and Management of an External Facilitation Approach to Support the Embedding of Risk Management at the Senior Management Team level in a Public Sector Organisation

Evidence to support research objective two was reported in Paper Four and was collated from the research study undertaken in East ETB. Initially, this involved the researcher (acting as the EF) delivering a structured programme of teaching and training to the IF to build her professional competency in a safe and secure environment within a relatively short timescale. Over time as the IF developed her competency the EF observed that the professional relationship was moving towards one of co-facilitation (Hogan, 2002 and Schwarz, 2017). This enabled the EF to delegate more responsibility to the IF while supervising her work as a facilitator. This approach also confirmed that the IF had developed from the level of novice to advanced beginner (Benner, 1982) in a six-month period (May 2017 – December 2017). This development was complemented by the IF undertaking a Diploma in Public Governance and by May 2018, she was demonstrating evidence of progressing to the competent level – as per Benner’s (1982) competency ladder.

The rationale for developing the competency of the IF was linked to the fact that this person was going to become the main change agent for a large-scale project in East ETB and this would require an array of skills – not just risk management knowledge but also skills on risk leadership,

strategy formation and interpersonal skills. In this regard, it was pleasing to observe the growing confidence of the IF with risk management assignments such as interactions with her colleagues at SMT and Senior Administrative Manager (SAM) levels and the use of her initiative to initiate new risk management projects with school Principals such as managing the risk of safeguarding of children across the school sector in the autumn of 2017. This reinforced the author's belief as echoed by Senge (2000) that when a favourable environment is created such as through facilitation (Hogan, 2002 and Schwarz, 2017) where people are encouraged to grow their skills, then employees will be empowered to make decisions and try new things. The author envisages that because the IF has experienced working as a facilitator on the embedding of risk management at SMT level that she will adopt this approach when working with Further Education and Training (FET) Managers and School Principals in supporting the roll-out of embedding of risk management to the FET centres and schools.

In addition to supporting the IF over an eight-month period, the author as EF also undertook several other engagements (meetings, seminars and workshops) with members of the SMT and with line managers to help progress the process of embedding risk management. While this did reveal some areas of concern (such as middle managers stating that they felt they were being asked to do more work with no additional resources), it did help reinforce the message that risk management was the responsibility of all staff within East ETB.

East ETB had experienced several change programmes prior to the embedding of risk management and this latest

initiative could thus be seen as another step on the incremental change ladder to be undertaken in small steps (Luecke, 2003), initially at SMT level and then to all levels of the ETB. This approach could be viewed as a continuous change approach which is fundamental when keeping pace with a fast-moving environment (Burnes, 2004). When the research study commenced, it was viewed that the support and guidance provided by the EF to the IF, SMT and Senior Administrative Managers (SAM) motivated and encouraged them to proceed with the embedding of risk management in a planned and structured manner.

At the SMT level where this research study was aimed, it was particularly pleasing to see risk management being allocated increased priority at the monthly Governance SMT meetings; this saw risk management being on the agenda at the start of these meetings and issues such as the identification and assignment of responsibility for managing key risks were discussed. Such a move created a sense of urgency on the need to address risk management (as per Kotter's change management model, 1996), and showed a willingness by SMT members to follow through on their promises to lead and support the embedding of risk management.

The author attended a number of these monthly Governance SMT meetings in an observer role and witnessed signs of change when individuals stated in March 2018 that new risks had emerged for the ETB such as the planning for a new payroll system which was to be introduced within a very short timescale with limited time for detailed planning. This prominence for risk management at SMT level reflected the growing influence of the IF within the management team – she was using her influence to help mitigate risks. This supports Hall et al.

(2013) who identified that in the financial services that influencing was an important function of risk managers to ensure success and advocated creating relationships with key influencers in the organisation such as compliance experts and risk champions. In East ETB, the IF reported to the Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD) and interacted with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Directors and line managers on a daily basis and was therefore exerting influence on the day to day management of the ETB which was reflected in successful embedding of risk management at the SMT level and delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21.

Hall et al. (2013) observed the function of influencing on decision making. The author was conscious of her role as EF in East ETB when she was involving and engaging staff to obtain their support at all levels and to this end, she facilitated several workshops with middle managers during 2017. This allowed her the opportunity to influence all those she engaged with and to link the embedding of risk management to strategy development (Burnes, 1996 and 2004), which in the case of East ETB was linked to the successful delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21. In this regard, the author was conscious that functional managers (middle managers) can attract the attention of SMT members to issues that need attention (Dutton and Ashford, 1993), and thereby influence the thinking and understanding of the SMT. In this way, the EF was achieving an indirect impact on the work of the SMT.

In summary, the evidence accrued to support research objective two demonstrated that the role of an EF can be beneficial and add value in supporting a public body (East ETB) to embed risk management by empowering the IF

through training and ongoing support. Secondly, the EF can support the IF by directing them to the priorities that need to be addressed so that embedding risk management is successful such as supporting the delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21. Thirdly, the EF can influence change such as the embedding of risk management by articulating the risks identified at operational level upwards to the SMT for action. Finally, the EF can assist the IF in articulating the risks that need to be prioritised for management such as the safeguarding of children and compliance with new legislative requirements.

2.3 Objective 3: To Assess the Enabling Factors on the Embedding of Risk Management.

The evidence to support research objective three was reported in Paper Four in 2018 and it was focused on the enabling factors that give rise to the outputs from a thematic analysis of five factors (second order themes) on the embedding of risk management at the SMT level in East ETB. The enabling factors evolved over the lifetime of the research study. Empirical evidence was reviewed and guided the development of the conceptual model which was adopted as the roadmap for the research study. These enabling factors included the need for an organisation to be change ready however this is not defined while Kotter (1996) advised on capitalising on a crisis to implement successful change. In East ETB there was no crisis however there was a need to demonstrate compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015).

The analysis of the collated data was based on a range of data sources: semi-structured interviews with the SMT and IF, a Focus Group with SAMs (at the start of the study), interviews with the IF and with a member of the Audit and Risk Committee (at the end of the study), and relevant documentation and observations at monthly Governance SMT meetings at the research site. The five second order themes are now discussed along with additional themes of empowerment and accountability which are viewed as having a strong influence on the embedding of risk management.

Leadership with specific emphasis on the IF's risk leadership role was found to be closely linked to successful embedding, and indeed, the successful embedding of risk management at the SMT level in East ETB is a vindication of the leadership skills shown by the IF. Examples of such skills include ensuring that risk management is prioritised in SMT discussions and the inclusion of risk management as one of the first subjects at monthly Governance SMT meetings was a big step in the embedding process as articulated by the IF. East ETB's CEO described the IF as the person with responsibility for risk leadership and for coordinating the embedding of risk management. This was supported by the Audit and Risk Committee member who also commented that every manager and employee has responsibility for embedding risk management. This approach resonates with Baker (2015, p. 299) who discussed the importance of understanding why public servants and politicians may be risk-averse and recommended that the mind-set needs to move from being 'risk averse' to being 'risk-aware', and finally to being 'risk-smart, where risks are embraced, well-managed and mined for opportunities'. The embracing of risks at the

monthly Governance SMT meetings is consistent with Baker's (2015) study as it has helped transition from a risk averse mindset to one where risks at this ETB are now embraced and managed. In further support of the importance of risk leadership an independent review (2018) of the operation of the Australian Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act, 2013 noted the importance of leadership in moving a public body from a compliance position to one where the organisational culture demonstrated that it had embraced the management of risk and had embedded the practice into its culture. They also noted that where the culture embraced the management of risk then there was a higher level of risk maturity in the public body.

Trust was the second of the second order themes that emerged from the thematic analysis and it was evident on several levels within the ETB starting with the SMT's agreement to engage with the researcher in her research study and to accept her as an EF and then in the allocation of responsibilities to individual managers to embed risk management. Schwarz (2017, p. 83) described trust as the 'foundation for relationships' and arises when 'individuals rely on each other', while Ellonen et al. (2005) linked the presence of trust to positive expectations that one party has of another such as integrity, capability, truthfulness, goodwill and the ability to undertake one's role. These principles were espoused by most SMT members and the IF in East ETB while recognising that staff need to be supported and to ensure that they are linked to the organisation's values.

Palanski et al. (2015) found a correlation between leadership, courage and behavioural integrity – with

leadership, courage and integrity being positively viewed by employees. Similarly Expert Interviewee 2 advised in his interview of the importance of trusting employees. An example of this occurred at the end of the first six months of the research study when the CEO and Director 4 in East ETB decided to rotate the Governance SMT chairperson role among the SAMs so that a developmental opportunity could be provided and nurtured – this also showed a level of trust in the SAMs to be able to assume this role while also supporting team working across the SMT.

Culture was the third of the second order themes identified from the thematic analysis and this refers to how the organisation conducts its business and how its employees respond to the mandates of the organisation (Porter-O’Grady, 1992). Many significant changes have been embraced by East ETB since its establishment in 2013, and the embedding of risk management was another challenge on the continuum of change for this organisation. Zakaria (2014) in his study on embedding key performance indicators identified that cultural interventions can be successful in supporting the embedding of change which he observed by conducting an ethnographic study. The activities undertaken at his research site simulated many that the researcher observed in East ETB such as the CEO and the Directors having an open-door policy to encourage employees to discuss issues of concern. Secondly the CEO led by example – ‘he walked the walk and talked the talk’ – which was a similar trait to that described by Zakaria (2014) and observed by the researcher. The third factor was the role of meetings and how they can be used to change culture. The researcher found evidence of this approach when the Governance SMT meetings were established and when risk management was included as a

specific item on the agenda which acted as a stimulus to support embedding of risk management.

Although Zakaria (2014) observed that a change in organisational structure supported embedding, the researcher did not observe this in East ETB as a structural change was not needed for embedding risk management to occur. The researcher feels that while embedding risk management is a significant change programme involving cultural change, this ETB was largely change ready at SMT level – the CEO when discussing culture stated that they had imported a positive risk management culture from FÁS while Director 4 referred to the open culture promoted by the SMT in operating an open-door policy for all employees. Such a cultural mindset greatly assisted the embedding of risk management at this ETB.

Resources was the next theme derived from the thematic analysis which is viewed by the researcher as encompassing the time, finance, and staff competency and availability to support embedding risk management. Resources were cited as a challenge by East ETB when the EF initially suggested the appointment of an IF in 2013 but it was not until late 2016 that the SMT agreed to the appointment to support the delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21. The IF commenced work in May 2017. The shortage of resources was cited on many occasions by interviewees and employees at seminars and workshops as an inhibitor to successfully embed risk management however, East ETB Interviewee 1 advised that it was important to prioritise the available resources to support the delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21.

Schwarz (2017) referred to the importance of having the available resources when facilitating change as they can have a positive or a negative impact on the function of facilitation, therefore all facilitators need to keep this in mind when planning a change management project. Senge, et al. (2000) identified the importance of systems and structures to support change. The EF noted the recently implemented systems and structures following the establishment of the ETB in 2013 and considered that they were working well at SMT level; however, resources is much more of an issue at line manager level where many cited a lack of resources as constraining their ability to complete tasks including risk management tasks.

Communication was the fifth of the second order themes arising from the thematic analysis, and this is viewed by the researcher as including skills of listening/receiving messages, the imparting of information, as well as observing body language during meetings and correctly interpreting the messages received. Communication was commenced initially with a presentation and a question and answer session on the research study to the SMT in April 2017 which was facilitated by the researcher as the EF. As the research study progressed, communication was enhanced through the delivery of seminars, workshops, conferences, attendance at meetings, responses to telephone calls and emails as well as the production of evidence-based risk management guidance and posters. This approach is supported by Porter-O' Grady (1992) who advised that facilitators should be aware of the need for lateral rather than hierarchical communication and relationship patterns when promoting a collaborative culture which enhances communication. As the language of risk management was proving a challenge for staff at the

operational level, the researcher noted the advice of Schwarz (2017) that facilitators should be aware of nonverbal communication and clearly clarify all issues for groups. This was identified by some SAMs who reported that the language of risk management was challenging for their staff, and all interactions at governance meetings between the EF and the SMT included question and answer sessions which were useful to inform, to clarify and to support the embedding of risk management and which was affirmed by East ETB Interviewee 1.

In addition to the five aforementioned factors, it is also now considered that two additional factors (empowerment and accountability) are worthy of being added to this list – these had previously been included as part of the leadership theme during the paper four findings.

Empowerment was identified as one of the key models within the conceptual model and is closely linked to the facilitation work carried out in this research study – in that the author’s work as an EF (which enabled groups such as the SMT to work cooperatively and effectively) also involved disseminating information to the SMT to enable them to make decisions to improve their risk management capability – this is essentially the empowering of staff and in this way, the work of Geroy et al. (1998) and Rivers, et al. (2015) is supported where it was found that the benefits of empowerment include arming employees with the necessary guidance and skills to make autonomous decisions. This is complemented by the work of Hogan (2002) and Schwarz (2017) in promoting facilitation as an empowering tool to support change and embedding risk management.

Senge et al. (2000) referred to the importance of staff empowerment when promoting the adoption of new practices if effective change is to occur while Porter-O'Grady (1992) advised that the appropriate systems and structures need to be implemented if appropriate levels of empowerment are to be allocated to groups of employees. Evidence of supporting empowerment in East ETB occurred when in early 2018 the CEO proposed that the chairman of the Governance SMT should rotate among the SAM members so that everyone had an opportunity to enhance their competency and to understand in a fuller manner what empowerment and accountability meant.

Accountability is linked to empowerment in that empowerment also involves making staff responsible for the outcomes of their actions to improve their competence – this worked well at the SMT level when risk management was prioritised at governance meetings but is more of a challenge for middle management in the ETB as such managers do not feel that they have complete control of their resources to mitigate risk, however they do carry responsibility for the control of the allocated resources as well as demonstrating compliance with required legislation, codes of practice, standard, guidance and government circulars within their scope of responsibility. For this reason accountability has been included in the final conceptual model presented on page 234, Figure 1 of Section Three. The author feels on reflection that in order to get the long term cultural change needed to embed risk management in this ETB, the approach of getting senior and middle managers to take responsibility and be held accountable for the management of risks was critical – this was linked to the prominence of risk management at Governance SMT meetings and this is consistent with

Cohen (2015) who found that good governance practices will ensure accountability, fairness and transparency in an organisation's relationship with its stakeholders.

To enhance the accountability role at School Principal and Further Education and Training (FET) Manager level, the CEO mandated that risk management must be the first item on all agendas for meetings with staff and for the schools' Boards of Management. In addition, he stipulated that the school's and FET's annual reports must contain information on how they are managing their key risks – this was done with the objective of enhancing accountability at all levels of the ETB. The IF working with the FET Managers and School Principals in a facilitation role can support the embedding of risk management while also supporting the CEO's mandate.

In summary, the above themes have been found to be key drivers of the embedding process at East ETB and a good combination of these factors has led to a positive outcome at SMT level. While each theme was important, it was also found that many of these were interrelated – good leadership can lead to staff being empowered and a positive cultural change being achieved with Directors now being held responsible for embedding risk management. The researcher and the SMT acknowledge that embedding will be an ongoing process and that the risk management model as described in the conceptual model must be kept under review going forward to meet East ETB's requirements.

The largely positive outcome in terms of embedding risk at SMT level contrasts with much of the published literature which estimates that in excess of 70% of change management initiatives fail for various reasons (Lueke,

2003 and Okumus and Hemmington, 1998), while Oakland and Tanner (2007) estimate that only 10% of change management initiatives are successful and sustainable into the medium to long term. The author was aware of this evidence at the outset of her research study and sought to take proactive steps from the outset to prevent such an outcome for this study. At the SMT level, the outcome has been positive, but it was also found that the communication process could be improved to ensure successful cascading of the embedding of risk management at line manager level in East ETB. In short, the factors which led to a positive outcome at SMT level were not as good for lower levels of the organisation and this needs to be addressed going forward.

A final point of note for this research study was that internal and external drivers were creating the sense of urgency for change programmes that Kotter (1996) argues is critical. The primary internal driver was successful delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21 (this was helped with the appointment of an IF to support the embedding process) and the primary external driver was demonstrating compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) as it was underpinned by legislation and therefore a regulatory compliance requirement. This supports Oakland and Tanner (2007) who identified internal and external drivers as one component to support successful change.

2.4 Objective 4: To Evaluate the Embedding of Risk Management at the Senior Management Team Level in a Public Sector Organisation Through a Facilitation Approach

The fourth and final research objective evaluated the level of embeddedness of risk management at SMT level at East ETB. This was considered possible in this longitudinal, study where multiple sources of evidence were gathered at different time intervals and the conclusions drawn for this objective stemmed from two main areas which will now be discussed.

The first of these was an audit of compliance with ISO 31000:2018 (International Risk Management Standard) which confirmed that East ETB was fully compliant for 76% of the standard's clauses, partially compliant with 22% of the clauses and non-compliant with 2% of the clauses. The compliance deficits were largely attributed to resource deficits and linked to the allocation of resources by government departments.

The ETB was found to be 100% compliant with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015). Such a finding was not surprising to the researcher as this is a regulatory compliance requirement for East ETB and the author has witnessed SAM members identifying emerging risks during the project: for example identifying the child safeguarding requirements in December 2017 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) requirements for May 2018. In addition, many emails and telephone calls were received by the EF looking for advice and support in managing complex problems such as data breaches. In

short, most of the evidence obtained suggested that risk management has been embedded at the SMT level in East ETB although further work will be required to ensure it matures and remains dynamic to meet the requirements of its key stakeholders. It will also be important that the monitoring process continues to incorporate measurement so that continuous improvement can be demonstrated to all key stakeholders. In many respects, the ETB could be considered to be at the Strategic Planning area in how it manages risk management (as per the Australian Department of Finance, 2016) but while it does have an integrated planning framework linking strategic risks, it still has some road to travel before it could be considered at the 'Best' level of performance. However, such a framework can be a useful guide to the ETB on how to further improve its risk management processes in future years.

The second of the data sources used to evaluate the embedding process involved an interview with a member of the Audit and Risk Committee. This was considered important as the researcher had concerns that there may be bias in the findings if she proceeded with her original approach to re-interview the SMT members at the conclusion of the research study – in that the SMT, having developed a close working relationship with the researcher, may be reluctant to give their full opinion on the facilitation approach – and that the views of an independent person with no allegiance to the researcher would provide a different perspective. This interviewee felt that it was the responsibility of each manager and employee to embed risk management which Porter-O'Grady (1992) described as essential for understanding the concept of change and sharing the responsibility and accountability among the

team members. The interviewee did say that he had experienced frustrations in getting updates on the progress with embedding, but he felt that the leadership shown by the IF was a critical factor – he felt that there had been a 50% improvement with embedding of risk management since the appointment of the IF. These findings are consistent with the views of the IF in her exit interview when she stated that embedding of risk management at the SAMs level was at about 50% compared to the SMT where she felt it was at 75%. This evidence confirmed to the researcher that her own perception of successful embedding at SMT level was largely correct – and this has allowed the planned transition from EF to an IF approach to occur as per Wardale (2013). The importance attached to communication (Senge et al. 2000), the clear definition of roles and responsibilities (Porter-O’ Grady, 1999), the adoption of a facilitation approach to support the development of the IF’s competency, and the regular monitoring of progress to ensure the change is taking place (Oakland and Tanner, 2007); all of these have also contributed to a successful embedding experience at SMT level.

3.0 Implications of the Research Study

The implications arising from this research study are considered under the following headings: (1) Public Bodies (2) Senior management (3) Middle management and staff, and (4) Facilitators.

3.1 Implications for Public Bodies

Public bodies are charged with responsibility for the delivery of services and probity of public money allocated for the delivery of services as specified in legislation. The compliance requirements placed on them can be onerous; for example, ETBs which were the subject of this study are required to comply with a significant body of legislation including the Education and Training Board Act, 2013, Education and Training Act, 2014 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015). The additional responsibilities and accountabilities being placed on public bodies is occurring with little change in resources (human, financial, time and competency) which makes the embedding of risk management very challenging. In advance of this study, the evidence suggests that while many public bodies developed the required risk management policy and architecture, very few have successfully embedded risk management.

The largely positive outcome in terms of employing a facilitation approach to embedding risk management at SMT level in East ETB contrasts with much of the published literature which estimates that in excess of 70% of change management initiatives fail for various reasons (Lueke, 2003 and Okumus and Hemmington, 1998), while Oakland and Tanner (2007) estimate that only 10% of change management initiatives are successful and sustainable into the medium to long term. For this research study, a combination of internal and external drivers were creating the sense of urgency for change programmes that Kotter (1996 and 2012) argues is critical. The primary internal driver was successful delivery of the Statement of Strategy 2017-21 (this helped with the appointment of an

IF to support the embedding process) and the primary external driver was demonstrating compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015) which was described by East ETB's Director 4 as a 'regulatory compliance requirement' specified in legislation and codes of practice. This supports Oakland and Tanner (2007) who identified internal and external drivers as one component to support successful change.

A critical initial step which occurred in this ETB was the recognition by the Board and SMT that they did not have the in-house expertise necessary to drive this large change project – and that they would consequently seek the support of the author to act as an EF to initially drive the process. This initial decision was then complemented by a resource commitment in the form of appointing an IF who worked closely with the author over several months as part of an extensive induction programme – and this IF then became the internal change agent driving the process. This approach worked very well at East ETB and should work for other public bodies seeking to embed risk management, the implication is clear: assess the available expertise in terms of IFs to drive such a process and consider the use of an EF to work with an IF in a co-facilitation partnership if there is a perceived deficit of skills in this area. The facilitation process is less obtrusive for an EF in that the IF assumes more of a background role helping staff to assume responsibility for risks themselves – and it is envisaged that the involvement of the EF will decrease as the in-house expertise of the IF starts to grow. For successful embedding to occur, some prioritisation of available resources is needed such as the appointment of an IF for this ETB – and this includes the allocation of leadership roles for risk management (Alexander and Thodey, 2018)

to ensure that the management of such a significant change project has a driving force who will coordinate the required inputs and demonstrate their accountability to the Board.

The need for sustained leadership cannot be understated as the author's experience with a pilot ETB study (West ETB) was that while great progress was made in the initial induction phase with the Education Officer acting as the IF, this progress stalled when the post-holder changed roles and there was a delay in transferring responsibility to another employee for a period of twelve months. This was like what Wardale (2013) described as a causative factor leading to failure of change management initiatives when ownership and accountability is not transferred from an EF to an IF. When West ETB noted this failure, they appointed an IF that would take responsibility to lead and drive the embedding of risk management – this approach proved successful.

Finally, public bodies should be aware that embedding risk management will involve changing ingrained behaviours and thus has implications for the underlying culture of the organisation. In this regard, the success at East ETB can in part be attributed to the positive embracing of change encountered particularly at Board and SMT level and this needs to be considered when embarking on large scale change projects such as this – a pre-assessment of organisational culture can be of help in ascertaining if the public body is amenable to a risk management project such as this.

3.2 Implications for Senior Management

As stated in the previous section, embedding risk management requires that leadership roles be assumed and while this may be focused on an appointed IF, it is important that all members of the SMT carry responsibility for managing risk and conveying the message that managing risk is the business of everyone in the organisation. In this change process, it is important that there are structures for communication and support for employees at all levels to demonstrate compliance – the evidence at East ETB was very good with demonstrated SMT support for risk management but the supports available to line managers could have been better. Note that if there are competency deficits at various levels, consideration can be given to the sourcing of an EF who can support employees in a facilitative mode at all levels in embedding risk management.

At East ETB, the author acting as EF was asked to liaise with line managers through several seminars to help garner support for embedding risk management. The role of the EF is partly to empower staff at this level and an example of this occurred when the SAMs proposed to the EF that if posters on managing risk were displayed then messages could be communicated to employees – the EF agreed and supplied posters in both the English and Irish language that had been agreed with the SAMs. In addition, the IF supported the revision and redevelopment of the child safeguarding system for schools in 2017 which focused on the management of risk – this was positively received and supported by the line managers and was a positive step in communicating the embedding of risk management. In short, there were extensive efforts to embed risk

management throughout East ETB led by the SMT although it is acknowledged that more needs to be done here.

A key part of the successful embedding at SMT level in East ETB related to the communication and organisational structures that were adopted and implemented through the leadership of the IF. This led to monthly Governance SMT meetings where risk management was always the first item on the agenda for discussion. All these examples demonstrate that East ETB was committed to embedding risk management so that the Statement of Strategy 2017-21 could be successfully delivered.

3.3 Implications for Middle Management and Employees

This study also has implications for middle management and employees in terms of their understanding of risk and the responsibilities they face in embedding risk management practices within the available resources. For East ETB, middle managers included FET Managers and School Principals who were given information at seminars organised by the EF which contained several practical assessments to assist the application of managing risk to practice. The objective for School Principals for example was to get them to take ownership and responsibility for managing risk at the school level. The author proposed to the CEO and IF during the risk management study that risk management should be the first item on all meeting agendas at board level, in FET centres and schools, and hopes in time to see a system evolve where incidents which currently lead to incident reports to head office would in

time be managed as risks materialising and which are dealt with at local level. There was progress in this regard at East ETB, but further time is needed for embedding risk management to occur at school level. An important factor to consider here for public bodies is the industrial relations climate which represents a challenge in the ETB sector where middle management are reluctant to assume additional responsibilities without appropriate compensation and the addition of resources such as posts of responsibility.

In short, many of the skills required at SMT level for embedding risk management (leadership, trust and accountability) also apply to line managers as they analyse risks down to operational level. Appropriate training and information needs to be provided to such managers and how the message is conveyed is crucial in that risk management needs to be an area which is in the interest of all to get right rather than an additional workload for managers who are already subject to onerous resource demands.

3.4 Implications for Facilitators

Given that this research study primarily employed a facilitation approach to support embedding risk management, the findings have many implications for the application of such an approach, both for EFs and IFs. Both types of facilitator need to ideally be trusted and knowledgeable confidantes who can provide support and ongoing direction to ensure risk management is successfully embedded. For EFs, it is helpful if the chosen facilitator already has an existing relationship prior to

assuming the facilitation role – as was the case for the author who had assisted East ETB in developing the risk management architecture and policies before being asked to help embed the policies – as this can make trust easier to establish from the outset. In the case of the IF, she was appointed after an open competition for the role (advertising followed by interview) which gave her credibility as someone who had showed competence and interest in the role rather than someone who was given the role as a chosen appointee of senior management.

The skillset required for successful embedding also needs consideration – in the case of the IF, the chosen candidate had a Human Resource Management (HRM) background which proved very useful in explaining and motivating staff to embrace change and risk management challenges. This skillset extends to being capable of assuming a leadership position and being a clear communicator – both the EF and IF provided seminars, workshops and conferences for middle management and employees to introduce the subject of risk management and to seek their support. These events provided opportunities to clarify issues for employees so that they understood their specific responsibilities, but it also supported good communication so that employees at all levels were aware of the risk management project at SMT level where the goal was to embed risk management across East ETB. This could be a difficult role at times particularly in a climate where employees at every level cite the challenge of resource deficits to embedding risk management.

A related issue for facilitators to address is the language of risk management. While those at SMT level did not find the language difficult, those employees reporting to the

SAMs cited it as challenging and therefore it is important that this learning is taken forward for future embedding projects. Finally, it is important for EFs to understand that they are not in a decision-making role and therefore should advise SMT on what needs to be done and then coach/support employees to embed risk management with the support of those leading the public body. This means that the EF needs to be willing to stand back and allow the IF to assume increased responsibility for embedding risk management as his/her competence grows.

4.0 Contribution of the Research Study

This research study explored the role of facilitation in supporting the embedding of risk management in an Irish ETB. To the author's knowledge, this is the first such study to explore and provide affirmation of the role of an EF supporting an IF to embed risk management in a public body and therefore it makes a unique theoretical and practical contribution which is explored in the following sub-sections.

4.1 Contribution to Theory

Two main theoretical contributions to theory are proposed from this study as follows:

- **Facilitation as a tool to support embedding risk management.**

In advance of this study, the researcher was unable to source empirical evidence of how facilitation can support

embedding of risk management in public bodies despite many prescriptive publications from Irish government departments (Departments of Finance, Education and Public Expenditure and Reform, Ireland) and other international statutory bodies such as the UK Treasury and the International Standards Organisation specifying the architecture that should be implemented. Tavella and Papadopoulos (2015) identified that there was a dearth of research on the roles of novice and expert facilitators, while Wardale (2013) identified that there was a paucity of research on facilitation as a tool to support change and that failure frequently occurred due to deficits in the transfer process from EF to IF and the SMT.

Commenting positively Schwarz (2017) described how facilitation can be used to support successful change in organisational culture in the private sector. The evidence from East ETB suggests that facilitation can be an effective bridge between the knowledge deficits faced by public bodies in seeking to meet risk management challenges and the need for staff at the public body to assume responsibility for risk management (which should be in place if risk management is to be embedded).

Furthermore, the use of facilitation has proved to be a valuable tool for changing organisational culture in a public body despite the challenging climate that existed with inadequate financial resources, time and competency constraints. In this regard, it extends the facilitation work into the area of risk management which will be an ongoing compliance requirement for public bodies into the future. For this reason the author has concluded that the research study was novel in its design and implementation. The researcher also observed that despite the challenges of

resource constraints there was an appetite at SMT level to embed risk management and evidence also existed that there was an appetite to lead the embedding of risk management by some line managers. Finally, the evidence has shown how the roles of the EF and IF can be complementary and successful in embedding change such as risk management.

- **Facilitation as an iterative rather than a sequential tool**

When reviewing the academic literature and the published risk management models, the author noted that the advice given read more like a step by step approach to reach a goal (Wardale, 2013 and ISO 31000:2018) rather than a model that was dynamic to embrace the variabilities that occur in an organisation as it develops and transforms. Generally the advice was prescriptive to support the development of the risk management architecture but did not embrace the change management requirements that need to be managed. However, throughout the research study the author found that instead of facilitation being a sequential tool it was instead an iterative tool as it needed to be dynamic to respond to the changing environment of a large complex organisation such as East ETB. This meant that as each step was taken towards the goal of embedding risk management, there was frequently a need to go back and review work undertaken to ensure objectives were being met. The author also observed that when the iterative approach was adopted, it enhanced learning and therefore contributed to the professional competency of the ETB's SMT. In addition, while the process of embedding has commenced at the SAMs level it is acknowledged that all steps towards embedding at the school and FET sector have yet to be completed to ensure risk management is

embedded throughout East ETB. These findings suggest that the facilitation literature needs to be updated to reflect these findings of an iterative versus a sequential approach.

4.2 Contribution to Practice

As a DBA researcher, the author has uncovered several practice-based contributions as follows:

- **Facilitation can be an effective tool to address competency deficits in terms of risk management for public bodies.**

The author has worked as a risk management professional for almost twenty years and in that time, she has trained employees in the health, education and local authorities to embrace the concept of managing risk and to support embedding the practice so that a change occurs in the organisational culture. This has proven successful in many instances however; this has not always been the situation and the author sought to find out why – hence she undertook this research study.

In East ETB, evidence accrued over the lifetime of the research study of the significant value that was added using a facilitation approach to the embedding of risk management. The author in her role as EF supported the development of the IF's professional competency (Schwarz, 2017 and Hogan, 2002) by planning and delivering an evidence-based training programme, implementing a facilitation approach to support the development of the IF's competency, and jointly the EF and IF were supporting the development of the professional

competency of the SMT, SAMs, FET Managers and School Principals. The transfer of knowledge and the provision of support provided by the EF to the IF, as well as acting as an expert coach enabled risk management to become embedded at SMT level in East ETB. A similar approach could be promoted for other public bodies seeking to embed risk management successfully.

- **Facilitators (external and internal) need an advanced level of leadership, change management, communication and facilitation competencies to be able to support organisations to successfully embed risk management**

The EF had an advanced level of professional competency in leadership, facilitation, risk management, change management and communication when she commenced the research study in 2017, while the IF was at the novice level (Benner, 1982) although she did have a background in human resource management and was known to East ETB's employees. In addition, the IF had a passion for her role to assist East ETB to embed risk management and to deliver on its Statement of Strategy 2017-21. To assist the IF in her role, the EF developed an evidence-based training programme to support the development of the IF's professional competency which provided a legitimacy to her role which led to increased respect for her knowledge by both the SMT and line managers. This was complemented by adopting a facilitation approach to the development of the IF's competency. Throughout the embedding process, a range of competencies were demonstrated by both the IF and EF such as risk management, change management, communication,

facilitation, and leadership – and it can be concluded that where both facilitators possess this array of skillsets, it increases the prospect of successfully embedding risk management.

- **The choice of language used when seeking to embed risk management within organisations is critical.**

Expert Interviewee 2 cautioned the author to be aware of the language of risk management and how this could alienate employees when embedding risk management. This was tested in West ETB during the pilot study where one member of the SMT (Director 3) agreed that the language could be difficult for employees while the CEO and the other Directors did not agree. In East ETB the members of the SMT did not find the language of risk management difficult however, both Director 3 and one SAM did comment at the conclusion of the research study (April 2018) that staff at operational level were having trouble with the risk management language as it was different to what they used in their everyday work in the education sector. It can be concluded that the choice of language is important at all stages of the embedding process and the use of a taxonomy of risk management terms and definitions may be useful in supporting employees particularly during the early stages of the embedding process.

- **Successful embedding of risk management requires staff at all levels of an organisation to take ownership and assume responsibility for risk management.**

During the research study, the findings from the interview with the member of the Audit and Risk Committee found that the Directors and all employees need to take responsibility for embedding risk management. To assist East ETB employees in this regard, the EF delivered a programme of seminars, workshops and conferences throughout 2017 to enhance communication and understanding at line management level. This approach supported open and transparent communication while providing a secure and safe environment for line managers to question and clarify issues where risks were present and the CEO in turn then communicated to the line managers that they must seek evidence on how key risks were being managed and to document this evidence. The whole approach can be viewed as a process of empowering staff to embrace risk management and the author considers that the open communication, the documenting of roles and responsibilities as well as the ability to clarify issues and provide reassurance assisted in assigning responsibility and accountability for risk management in East ETB.

- **The acceptance of the need for risk management within organisations is enhanced if staff feel they are applying best practice risk management models.**

The model for embedding risk management in this research study was evidenced based and employees viewed this as professional and commented positively at seminars, workshops and conferences. The author concluded that

educational staff understood the importance of evidence-based models and could appreciate the model proposed by the author. Employees also found it interesting that the revised International Risk Management standard (ISO 31000:2018) was being adopted as the framework by East ETB as part of the research study – there was evidence of pride in how this was discussed and accepted. Another positive point to note was that the same risk management model was being promoted across the ETB sector by the author – this meant that if an employee in one ETB transferred to another ETB then they would not be leaving this competency behind but rather they would be able to utilise and develop it further in their new employment. It was also positive for East ETB staff to report that other ETBs were seeking advice and direction from East ETB on how to progress the embedding of risk management across their organisations.

In summary, the contributions to theory and practice arising from this research study are novel as the author did not find academic evidence of a similar study. The research findings have created an appetite for further research which should prove a positive contribution to all facilitators and those embarking on a change management programme. The contributions identified in this study should also prove useful when promoting the importance of facilitation in embedding risk management in any organisation and particularly in public bodies.

5.0 Recommendations for Future Research

This study has involved extensive engagement with a significant number of employees in East ETB at SMT and operational level and has led to several interesting findings which have been articulated in earlier sections however, as with any research study, it leaves ground for future research. This study did adopt an exploratory case study (Yin, 2014 and Bhattacharjee 2012) as the chosen methodology which had ‘the purpose of identifying the research questions or procedures to be used in a subsequent research study which might not be a case study’ (Yin, 2014, p. 238). Utilising Yin’s (2014) guidance the author is aware that there are a significant number of areas that could be researched in the future but has identified three key areas for future research as follows:

- **Assess the embedding process at middle management and frontline employee level.**

The research study at East ETB had a short time frame of eight months and was focused at the SMT level which was the unit of analysis for evaluation of the level of embeddedness of risk management. The author did undertake several engagements with staff at middle management throughout this period to enhance communication and employees’ knowledge and understanding of embedding risk management. Due to limitations on time and resources, it was not possible to assess embedding at operational level, although some evidence did emerge that embedding of risk management was taking place although it was ad hoc and not always in a structured and disciplined manner. However, it is

considered that with the continued leadership of the IF and the support of the SMT, embedding of risk management at middle management and operational level should be delivered within a relatively short period, for example twelve months. A follow up study could research this outcome and would shed light on how the embedding of risk management cascades to operational management levels.

- **Extend the facilitation approach to other ETBs and public bodies to assess if the key factors found to drive the embedding of risk management in East ETB also apply to other public bodies.**

Further research could also consider extending the facilitation approach of embedding risk management to other public bodies to see if the combination of factors which support embedding of risk management at East ETB will apply in other settings. This could take the form of a follow up longitudinal study to assess if similar factors contribute to successful embedding; for example, it may be that the positive outcome in East ETB is strongly linked to the positive culture at SMT level to embrace risk management despite its inherent challenges – and this may not apply in other contexts.

- **Examine a facilitation approach over a longer timeframe to see if a state of risk maturity can be reached.**

The research study covered a period of eight months in the lifetime of East ETB and therefore the evaluation to identify indicators of success was considered somewhat limited although it was positive to identify indicators of success and risk maturity at the conclusion of the research study. It would be useful to re-evaluate the level of risk maturity on an annual basis over a longer time period to identify if the embedding process remains successful while also identifying opportunities for further work to support embedding of risk management.

In summary, these recommendations for further research will permit a stronger understanding of facilitation as a tool to embed long term change such as risk management into an organisation and to evaluate the developing professional competency of the IF. There is ample opportunity for such additional work due to the dearth of research about both facilitation and the role of the facilitator (Tavella and Papadopoulos, 2015 and Wardale, 2013). The findings will also be useful in the practical sense when facilitating public bodies with change management programmes in the future.

6.0 Limitations of the Research Study

While this study has taken reasonable steps to adopt best practice, it is like all research studies subject to some limitations as follows:

- **The study is an exploratory study of how risk management was embedded in a public sector organisation and this means one cannot generalise the findings to all organisations.**

In this research study the exploratory case study was focused on one public body – East ETB. The author was aware of criticism in the academic literature (Zivkovic, 2012) of the value of case studies for research purposes however she applied an evidence-based methodology of sourcing data from multiple sources through face-to-face interviews (experts, pilot site and research study site), focus group meeting, observation, records and by maintaining her own reflective diary. While it is acknowledged that significant learning can be imported to other organisations in both the public and private sector, it also must be accepted that the findings from case studies may not be generalisable to other settings.

- **The timeline used to evaluate the embedding of risk management was relatively short – eight months.**

The timescale allocated for this research study was eight months and this study extended beyond this so that the author could: (1) Provide an induction programme to the IF (2) Obtain an exit interview from the IF, and (3) To interview one member of East ETB's Audit and Risk Committee. In terms of evaluating the success or failure of the facilitated change management initiative – embedding risk management – it was only possible to evaluate the short-term outputs. While an element of the study was longitudinal where it was possible to observe changes in

organisational culture, it would be more beneficial to evaluate the change over a period for example three to five years to ensure the change and embedding of risk management was sustained into the medium and long term.

- **The positive outcome in terms of the embedding of risk management at SMT level may have been influenced by the positive prior relationship which the author had with the SMT at East ETB.**

From the commencement of the research study the author was very conscious of the positive favourable relationship that pre-existed the research study due to the professional relationship that existed between the mutual insurance company and her client – East ETB. In capitalising on this relationship, there was a strong bond of trust and thus the author considered this an advantage as East ETB's SMT demonstrated commitment to embedding risk management. This was complemented by the author responding to all requests and interactions in a timely manner which further enhanced the trust relationship. In this respect, it must be acknowledged that the positive outcome to this study could be interpreted as being strongly influenced by the prior professional relationship and means that facilitation might not have been as successful if this prior relationship did not exist. Future studies could examine organisations where a prior relationship did not exist in order to assess the impact of this prior relationship on a successful facilitation experience.

- **The gathering of largely qualitative data from many individuals at the ETB may be subject to a positivity bias in that a positive outcome would reflect well on all involved.**

Qualitative data can be accused of generating biased findings which may be linked to the manner in which data was gathered; and in this ETB, it can be argued that the prior positive relationship between the ETB and the author could lead to a positivity bias in that the author and the ETB had a vested interest in a positive outcome. To address this, the author did evaluate the consistency of all data sources (interviews, documentation, observation, thematic analysis and the use of a reflective diary) when presenting her research findings. The interpretation of the data was undertaken using a thematic analysis to identify similarities but also to identify new theories emerging. Finally, being very cognisant of the likelihood of the research findings being positive in her favour the author sought advice from her Supervisors and changed her approach to the evaluation process which resulted in an exit interview with the IF at the conclusion of the research study, an interview with one member of the Audit and Risk Committee, and two desktop evaluations to compare the level of compliance with ISO 31000:2018 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (DES, 2015). The findings from all sources were largely favourable and positive and the author concluded that her approach to prevent bias was managed in a professional manner while also adhering to the ethical principles espoused for her research study.

7.0 Chapter Summary

In summary, the author as a DBA researcher was aware that there is no perfect research and did strive to overcome the limitations of qualitative research with a methodical approach which involved strict adherence to an ethical code, commitment to openness and transparency in sharing the interview transcripts and some of the research findings to test for accuracy, and in embracing the advice and recommendations of both her Supervisors and Examiners. For these reasons the author is confident that the research methodology was robust and could be replicated in both the public and private sector while acknowledging the limitation of resources in both sectors so that similar positive results could be obtained with embedding a significant change project such as embedding risk management.

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Section 4: Reflective Log - Extracts

Introduction

Undertaking a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) requires passion, stamina, resilience and an appetite to discover new things akin to Neil Armstrong landing on the moon on the 16th July 1969 (NASA) when he said, ‘that’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind’. The astronauts landing on the moon resulted from a long and difficult journey of research, trials and questioning stretching over many decades. The DBA journey although shorter at four years rather than decades is a journey of questioning and research aided and supported by Supervisors, Examiners, fellow DBA students, work colleagues, family and friends.

The DBA has been a transformational journey resulting in many opportunities and challenges with significant learning occurring on the journey. There have been many questions, doubts, times when confusion has reigned, and other times when clarity suddenly abounded. The clarity resulted from significant searching for answers and dialogue with my Supervisors and colleagues, as well as feedback and direction from Examiners. As the DBA journey is ending, I feel my learning is only beginning as I can see many opportunities for further research which I had never envisaged to the same depth and degree. In this short paper I will provide some insights on what occurred during my DBA journey and which should create new opportunities for me and others to explore.

Reflection 1: Knowing All and Knowing Nothing

I was encouraged to apply for the DBA programme by a wonderful work colleague who had completed the programme and felt that the study and research would open new ways of thinking about my professional work in risk management. At the time I was sceptical and felt I had learned as much as possible and acquired the requisite wisdom throughout my professional career however – I now know I was wrong as Mahatma Gandhi (1917-1985) said: ‘It is unwise to be too sure of one’s own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err’. I quickly realised that I did not have the broad breath of wisdom in respect of my role as a risk management professional and as a facilitator of change. Secondly, my focus of interest at the start of my DBA journey was on the value of audit and how it can contribute to learning and improvement – little did I realise in 2014 at the start of my journey that while audit is important it would only be one component of my research study.

Recommendation: remember that you are never too old to learn and no matter how long you have been doing a job you will not know everything.

Reflection 2: Early Learning

At the start of my DBA journey one of my lecturers described the DBA journey as ‘swimming or threading glue’. I tried to visualise such a scenario and while I thought I understood what she meant, I now realise that the

struggles and difficulties of keeping my head above water, maintaining my timelines, reading copious amounts of literature without at times understanding its relevance and value, and producing outputs at regular intervals were only some of the activities that would help me 'thread the glue'. The maintenance of my Reflective Diary enabled me to see how I was progressing with 'threading the glue' and whether I was making progress. One example was that my first assignment submission was marked very high and my second assignment was marked much lower. I was devastated and thought this must be wrong, so I made an appointment to meet with two of the DBA course coordinators who listened attentively to me, discussed my concerns and recommended that I read more material and recommended a text which I found useful. This interaction helped me regain some confidence to proceed with the course of study. At the conclusion of my DBA journey I now realise the importance of reading and re-reading the literature and questioning its relevance and application to my research. Having said this there is still much literature that I have not understood, and I may never do so, but I will continue to 'thread the glue'!

Recommendation: understand what Plato (427 BC – 347 BC) said: 'all learning has an emotional basis' and to know this is a valuable insight to support learning as we are all emotional human beings.

Reflection 3: Listening

I have always classified listening as important in the communication cycle. Ernest Hemmingway (1899-1961)

said: 'I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen.' I have tried very hard to listen more attentively to what is said by my lecturers, Supervisors, Examiners and to those who have made my research possible (expert interviewees, pilot site and research site employees). There have been times that I was convinced I was listening attentively however, I was only hearing the noise and not clarifying to gain understanding and to expand my knowledge base. Listening was important to me when I listened to the interview tapes as they enabled me to hear the nuances of speech, where emphasis was placed in dialogue, and to hear the frustration and sometimes anger expressed. Listening also enabled me to consider questions relevant to the messages I was hearing. This exercise provided an opportunity to gain a new awareness of listening and understanding the messages communicated.

At the research site's monthly Governance Senior Management Team meetings I listened and heard the excitement of progress, the empathy expressed when individuals required support, and the frustration when an individual should have completed an activity and had not done so resulting in project delay for others. When listening I also heard individuals express their deficits which provided me with an opportunity to provide additional material to support them in embedding risk management.

My significant learning on the DBA journey occurred when I presented Paper Two to the Examiners and they did not recommend it for progression. They provided me with valuable advice, guidance and direction which I accepted –

as a result I changed my research methodology which has proven successful.

Recommendation: remember that when advice is given, consider its value, discuss it with knowledgeable professionals and then undertake the required actions so that you reach your goal.

Reflection 4: Writing a Doctoral Thesis

I have studied throughout my professional career and I have written dissertations as well as many publications for my employer and yet when I started writing my DBA thesis I was presented with a significant challenge – I did not know how to write an academic thesis. I searched for various publications to assist me and I read Doctoral theses but still I struggled to develop the required format and language. I reflected on why this was my problem. My writing was stilted and not free-flowing, and I concluded that I was very accustomed to writing factual points to support clarity which may be used for defence work in court but also for writing guidance documents so that the messages to be conveyed were clear and unambiguous. I discussed this problem with one lecturer who suggested that I dictate the required text and then amend it as necessary. I found this a very useful technique which I continued to practice, and I have told others who are experiencing the same problem. My Supervisors were very supportive in helping me to write appropriately for a DBA thesis and my writing has improved although gradually and I still have much to learn to enhance my academic writing style.

Recommendation: accept all criticism as constructive as well as advice as it is given to assist us to improve. Ezra Pound (1885-1972) said: 'I consider criticism merely a preliminary excitement, a statement of things a writer has to clear up in his own head sometime or other, probably antecedent to writing; of no value unless it come to fruit in the created work later'.

Reflection 5: Exploiting Technology

I am familiar with the office package provided on all computers, but I was not at all familiar with OneNote, Nvivo and SPSS at the commencement of my DBA journey. At the conclusion of the journey I now understand the value of exploiting these packages to support research, retain useful reference articles and to support thematic analysis of data obtained for my research study.

In using SPSS I gained valuable insight into the relevance of data analysis results and the interpretation of the data as applied to decision making. In applying Nvivo for thematic analysis I saw a world of relevant data grow very rapidly and started to understand the relevance of themes and how to support these themes with relevant quotations so that my qualitative research study could be strengthened and improved.

Recommendation: Be aware of the software packages available to support a literature review and research study. Identify opportunities to exploit the capability of the software so that meaningful and relevant results can be

presented. Finally, be aware that it is necessary to read and write and listen attentively to all interactions while observing body language as software cannot do this for you.

Summary

Use of a reflective diary for my DBA research was not something new for me as I had previously used one in my nursing profession to capture new ideas and to progress them to implementation where appropriate. I also used it to record insights from others which I thought could be useful to me at some point in my future professional development. In my current role I use a reflective diary on an ad hoc basis to capture progress with project development and implementation. However, the use of the reflective diary for the DBA took on a new meaning as it applied to a different environment of my work and professional development.

The reflective diary proved useful to check details recorded following a specific interaction or development, to record new learning, frustration and anger as well as questions when I did not have the answers, but most importantly it has demonstrated how far I have travelled on my DBA journey, how I got there with the support of so many as: ‘no man is an island’ (John Donne's Devotions, 1624) when on many occasions I questioned the purpose of the research and felt like giving up, but most importantly I had people around me who supported and believed that I could deliver this tremendous academic achievement.

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