REVYCORE

WHITE PAPER

Certification Metrics.

What to report to the board.

REVYCORE RESEARCH

DECEMBER 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A completed campaign says it ran. It does not say it worked.

Access certification is usually reported with one number: the completion rate. One hundred percent of lines reviewed on time looks reassuring, and says almost nothing about whether risk was reduced.

Boards and executive committees increasingly ask better questions: what did the reviews change, how long do known risks stay open, how much of the estate is actually covered, and what cannot be shown?

This paper proposes a small set of indicators that answer those questions, explains how each can be gamed, and suggests how to present them.

01 **Beyond completion**
Did reviews change anything, and how quickly?

02 **Coverage, honestly**
What is observed, and what is not.

03 **Time to verified removal**
How long a known risk stays open.

04 **What cannot be shown**
Reported by cause, never hidden.

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01

The trouble with completion rates

Completion measures activity. A campaign in which every line was approved in bulk scores one hundred percent, exactly like a campaign in which every line was examined. Optimising for completion rewards rubber-stamping.

Completion still matters, as a hygiene measure. But on its own, it cannot tell a board whether certification is reducing risk.

Outcome indicator. a measure of what the review changed or revealed, as opposed to an activity indicator measuring that the review took place.

> **A completed campaign says it ran, not that it worked.**

02

Five indicators that matter

A small set of indicators, read together, gives a far more honest picture.

INDICATOR	WHAT IT SHOWS
Coverage	The share of the estate actually observed and in scope of a certification, by platform.
Decision mix	The proportion of refusals, restrictions and exceptions, not only approvals.
Time to verified removal	How long refused access remains until a later observation confirms it is gone.
Owner coverage	The share of resources and systems with a named, accepted owner.
Not demonstrable	What cannot be shown, by cause: not observed, not comparable, expired.

> **Measure what changed, how fast, and what is missing.**

03

Reading the decision mix

An approval rate close to one hundred percent, sustained over time, is a warning sign rather than a success. It may mean the estate is perfectly governed; more often it means reviewers are not really deciding.

The decision mix should be read alongside time spent per decision and lines per reviewer. Together, they reveal fatigue long before an auditor does.

01

Refusals

Present, and tracked to removal.

02

Restrictions

Access reduced rather than removed.

03

Exceptions

Temporary, with reasons and end dates.

04

Escalations

Deadlines missed, routed upward.

> **A review that never refuses is a review nobody reads.**

04

Time to verified removal

When a reviewer refuses an access, the organisation knows of a risk. The time until that access actually disappears, confirmed by a later observation rather than a closed ticket, measures how long it tolerates a known risk.

This indicator is hard to game, because it depends on observation, not on declarations. It is also the one most directly linked to the purpose of the review.

> **A known risk left open is the costliest kind.**

05

Presenting to a board

A board does not need every indicator. It needs a short, stable view: coverage, time to verified removal and owner coverage, with their trend, and a plain statement of what cannot currently be demonstrated and why.

Presenting the gaps openly builds more confidence than a dashboard that is green everywhere. It also turns each gap into a decision the board can support: a platform to connect, an owner to appoint, a backlog to clear.

- **Coverage.** How much of the estate the programme really sees.
- **Time to verified removal.** How long known risks stay open.
- **Owner coverage.** How much of the estate someone answers for.
- **The gaps, by cause.** What cannot be shown, and what it takes to fix.

> **Three numbers, one trend, and the honest gaps.**

06

Where to start

Indicators earn trust by being consistent over time. Start small.

1 **Keep completion** as hygiene, not as the headline.

2 **Add coverage and owner coverage** by platform.

3 **Measure time to verified removal** from refusal to confirmed absence.

4 **Report what is not demonstrable,** by cause.

5 **Show the trend each quarter** with the same definitions.

> **Pick fewer indicators, and keep them stable.**

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Measure what changed, not only what ran.

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