

SURVEY FINDINGS ON PROJECT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



IN EUROPEAN DEFENCE COMPANIES

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The Epicflow team conducted an anonymous survey from June to August 2024, involving 50 European defence companies.

The study aimed to identify the primary challenges in project and resource management aspects within these organisations, understand their strategies for addressing these issues, and explore ways to enhance their project outcomes.

Participants were asked to list their top three project management challenges, assess the effectiveness of resource management functions at their organisations, describe the tools and strategies that they employ, and share suggestions for overcoming these challenges.

This document summarises the most common responses, draws conclusions, and proposes strategies for effectively addressing these challenges.



KEY PROJECT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES IN EUROPEAN DEFENCE COMPANIES

After analysing the survey responses, we identified seven main categories of challenges faced by European defence companies:

17.1%

Resource Management

Human Resources: A significant concern involves the shortage of qualified workers, skill gaps, difficulties in resource planning and finding personnel with the necessary competencies.

Material Resources: Issues related to resource availability, material and stockpile management are also widespread.

Resource Allocation: Conflicts arising from resource sharing between projects, especially in matrix organisational structures, often hinder successful project management.



13.5%

Time Management

Time Constraints: Tight deadlines and challenges in managing time effectively are common struggles.

Scheduling: Maintaining schedules and predicting effort and time, particularly for research projects, are key concerns.



10.3%

Risk and Quality Management

Risk Management: Estimating risks and managing unexpected project deviations are seen as significant hurdles.

Quality Control: Ensuring on-time and within budget delivery whilst maintaining high quality standards is frequently mentioned as a major challenge.



9.2%

Stakeholder and Communication Management

Stakeholder Engagement: Managing stakeholders effectively, particularly in balancing quality and budget is a notable challenge.

Communication: Ensuring clear communication within teams, across departments, and with external stakeholders is critical but often problematic.



8.5%

Scope and Change Management

Scope Control: Managing scope creep and unexpected changes in project scope are recurring issues.

Change Management: Adapting to changes in programme scope, resources, and customer expectations is another significant challenge.



7.8%

Team Management and Leadership

Team Coordination and Motivation: Enhancing team coordination, managing personal conflicts, and maintaining team morale are critical challenges.

Leadership: Leadership difficulties, particularly with autocratic management styles and managing diverse teams are also significant concerns.



6.5%

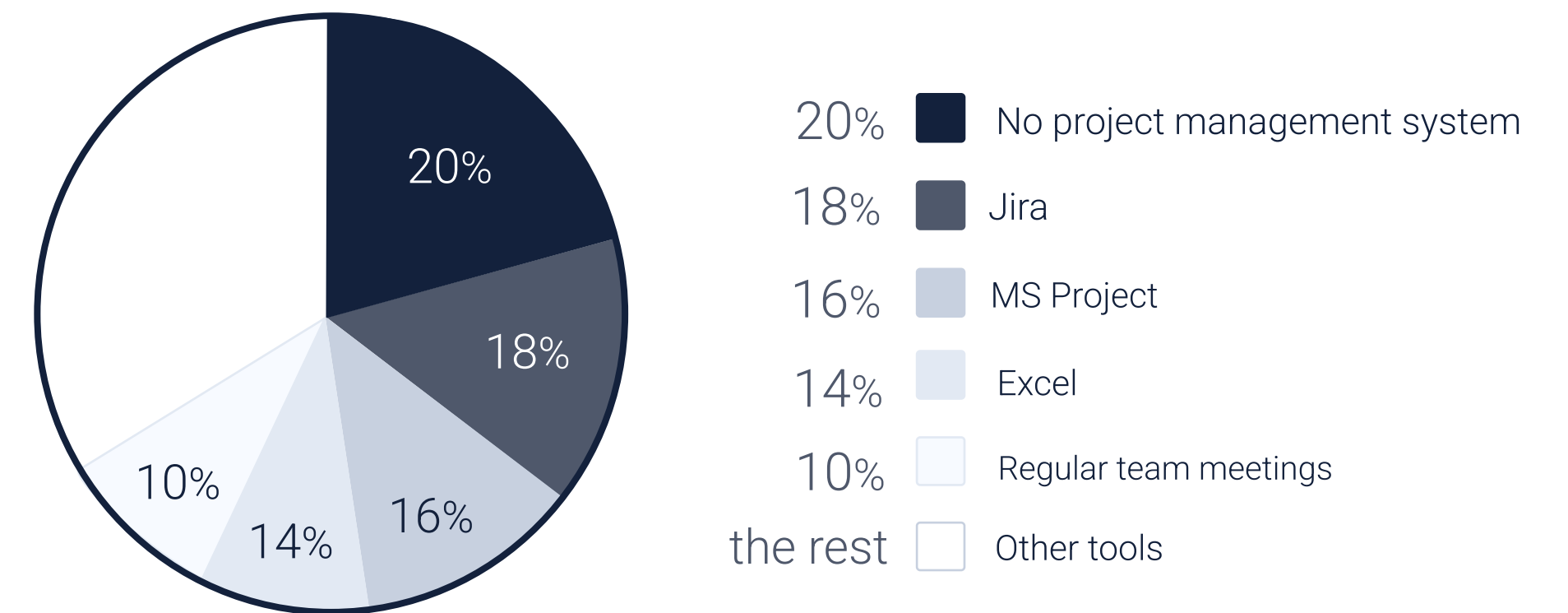
Project Planning and Strategy

Strategic Alignment: Aligning project goals with company objectives and optimising return on investment (ROI) are essential but challenging tasks.

Budgeting: Staying within budget and managing project finances effectively is a frequent challenge.

STRATEGIES AND TOOLS RESPONDENTS USE FOR PROJECT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The survey revealed that 20% of respondents do not use any project management systems. Of those who do, 18% use Atlassian (Jira), 16% use MS Project, and 14% rely on Excel. Regular meetings with management and team members are a common strategy for project management mentioned by 10% of respondents.



Other tools and strategies highlighted include:

System modeling tools

Internal tools for monitoring KPIs

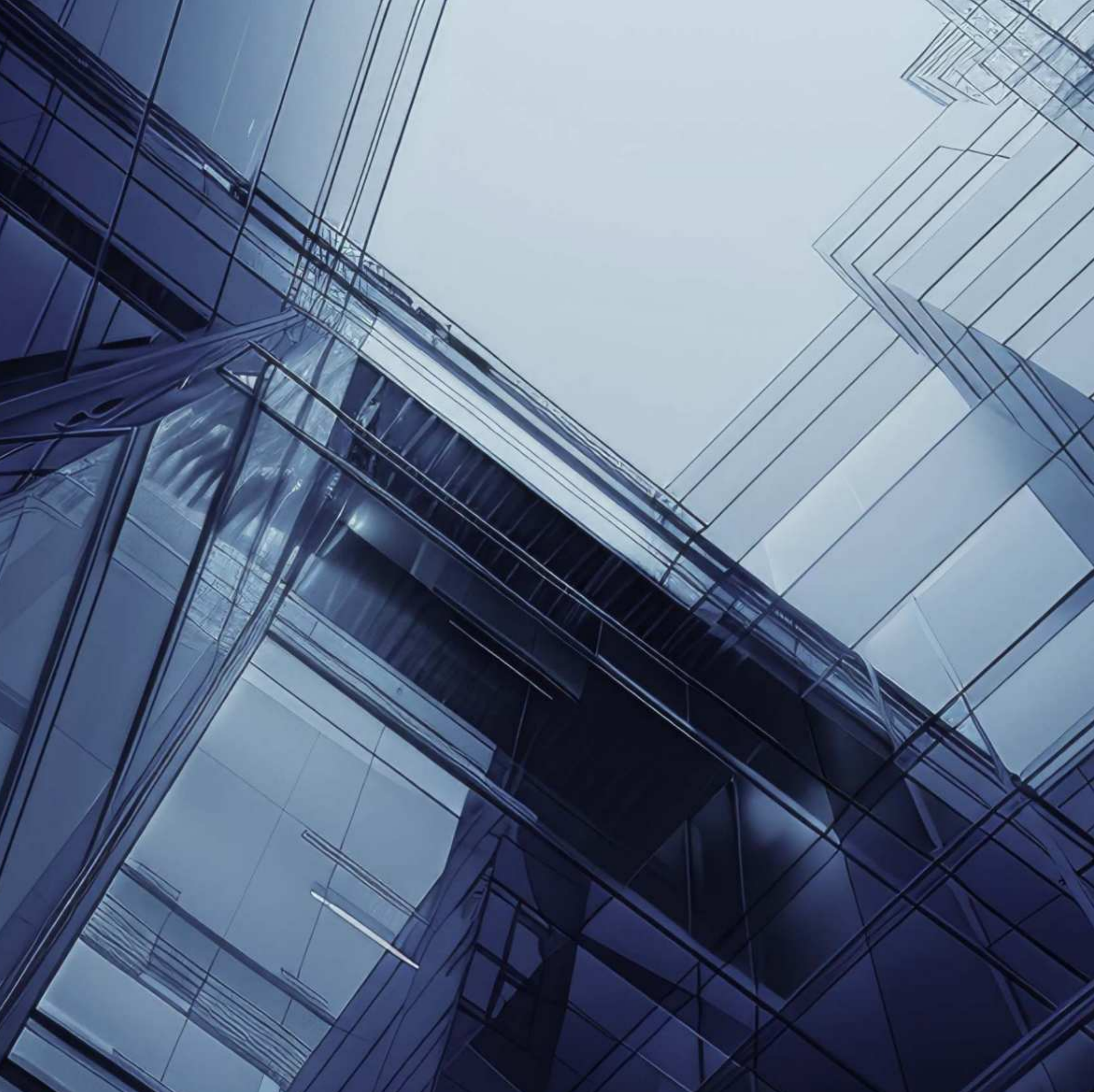
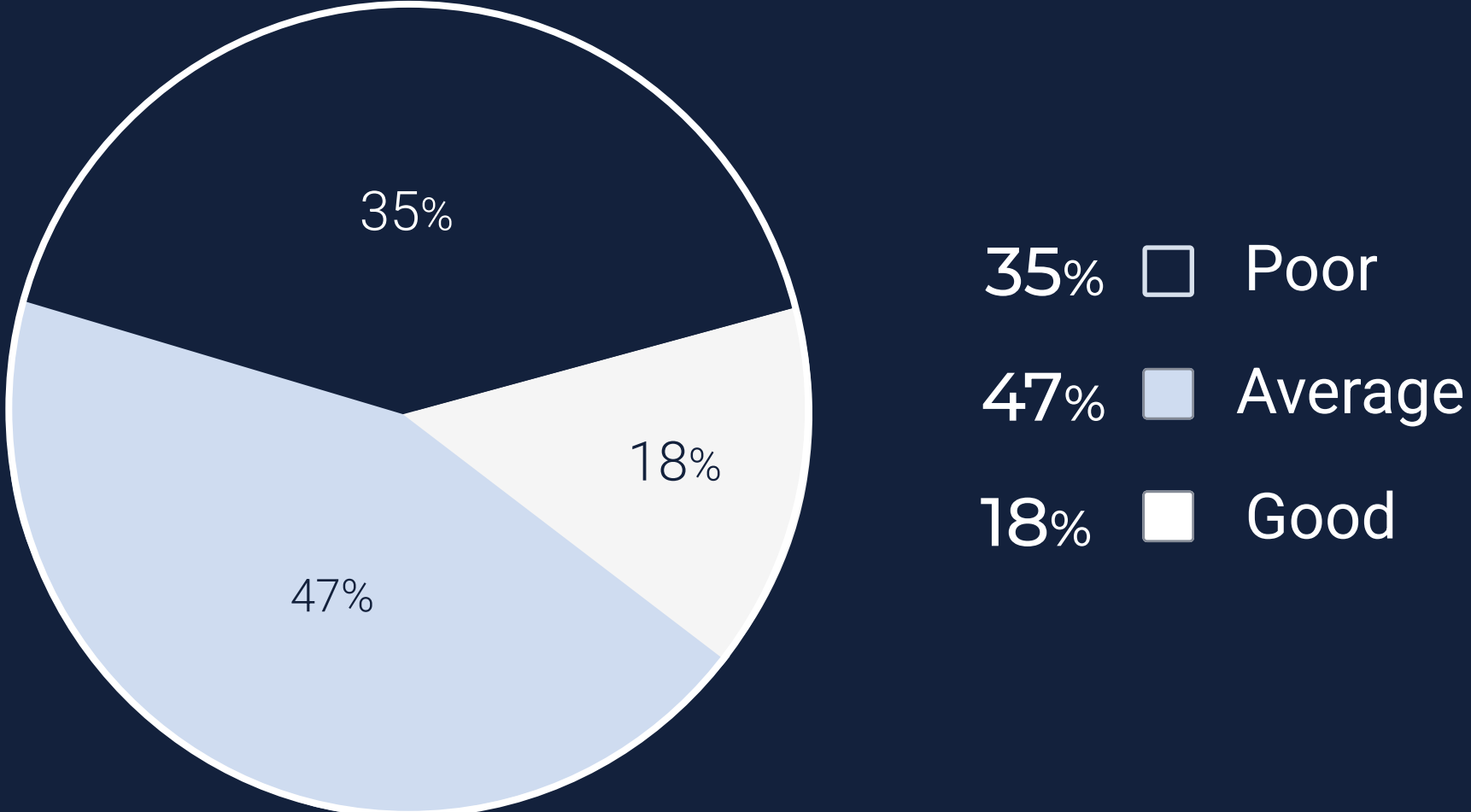
Agile methods and software

Careful planning and prioritisation of tasks

Skill matrix and training to balance workload

EFFECTIVENESS OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

When asked to assess the effectiveness of resource management within their organisations, responses were as follows:



RESPONDENTS' IDEAS FOR OVERCOMING PROJECT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Respondents shared various ideas for improving project management within their organisations. The most popular suggestions were:

Adopting a software solution  16%

Establishing clear priorities  8%

Better long-term planning  4%

Other tools and strategies highlighted include:

Defining scope as a goal and monitoring performance by CPI and SPI


Setting priorities and discussing talent gaps with senior stakeholders

Improving resource allocation mechanisms

Increasing financing for hiring qualified experts

Emphasising continuous improvement and standardisation

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF THE CHALLENGES

The image on the left side of the page is an abstract, high-contrast graphic. It features a complex, layered structure of sharp, angular shapes in various shades of blue, from deep navy to light sky blue, set against a white background. The overall effect is one of depth and complexity, with many overlapping planes and sharp edges that create a sense of three-dimensional space and movement.

The survey results indicate that resource and time management challenges are predominant, reflecting the significant difficulties project managers face in these areas. Issues such as tight deadlines, limited resources, and the complexities of resource allocation are recurrent themes.

Risk and quality management are also major concerns, driven by the volatile nature of the defence industry and the complexity of long-term projects. Effective risk management and quality control are critical for ensuring successful project outcomes.

Change management and scope control challenges highlight the dynamic nature of defence projects, where managing changes and uncertainties are a constant struggle. Communication and stakeholder management are equally critical, with clear communication being essential to project success.

Leadership and team management issues, including coordinating globally distributed teams, are also prominent challenges, underscoring the need for strong leadership and effective team management strategies.



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