Why establish an operating model for a service bid?

The way in which large bids are submitted to UK Government departments continues to evolve with some departments now using software tools such as Jaggaer to control how industry provides its bid response. This is in parallel with a 'user requirements directed' approach which demands a response to each customer requirement in isolation. The outcome is hundreds of standalone responses loaded into the software tool by bidders.

For these large bids this approach means a single proposal document is no longer required. Whilst this may be good for the customer, helping with bid scoring and compliance, it can introduce difficulties for industry. This is because the many elements of a bid are established by a Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and if they focus only on their requirements, there can be confusion about and limited visibility of the 'whole' solution. The creation of a service operating model, with a comprehensive operating view, has therefore become more important.

What is a service operating model and how is it created?

The aim is to establish a visualisation model which identifies a to-be steady state service operation that includes all; activities (or processes), inputs, outputs, enablers, and controls. This is across all service operation areas and underpinning functions.

There are several ways in which an operating model could be created. The overall model could be captured and articulated by a Service Solution Architect using a combination of Power Point and Visio images. Whilst this is feasible, and often the approach, the downside is the inability of easily sharing the 'model' with other bid team members and wider stakeholders.

For large bids, a better way is use of a professional software tool which enables easy sharing of the whole model. 2c8 is the perfect tool for this. It is an easy to use relatively low-cost specialist tool. An approach used many times is to combine a high-level Power Point **Rich Picture,** a simple Power Point **architecture model** and a 2c8 **operating model**.
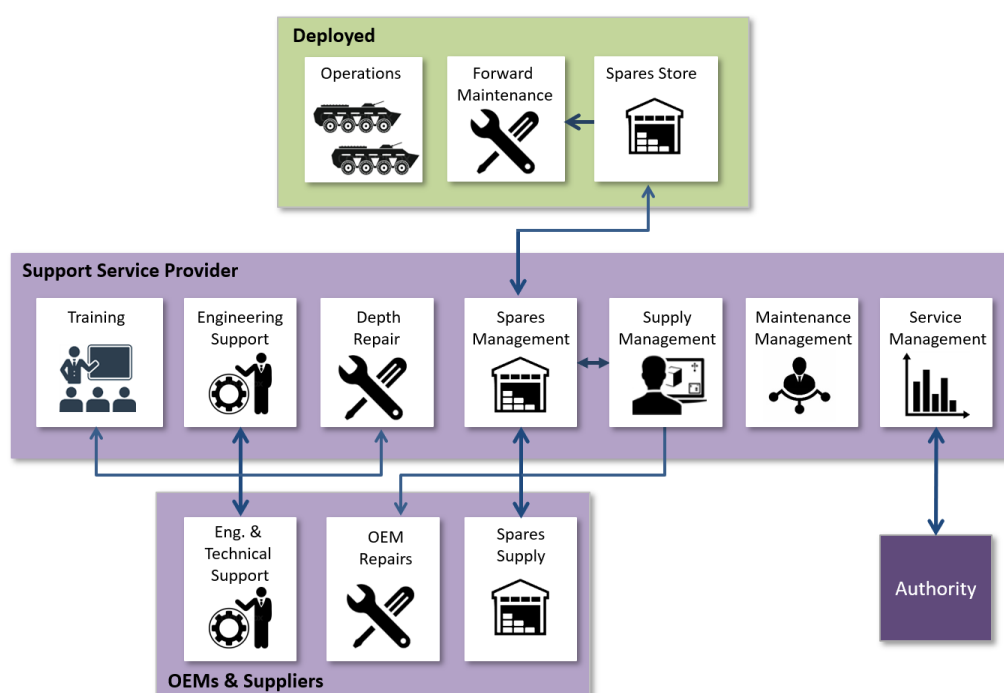
Example of a Simple Rich Picture

The Power Point rich picture provides the top-level overview of topics, scope, and responsibilities.
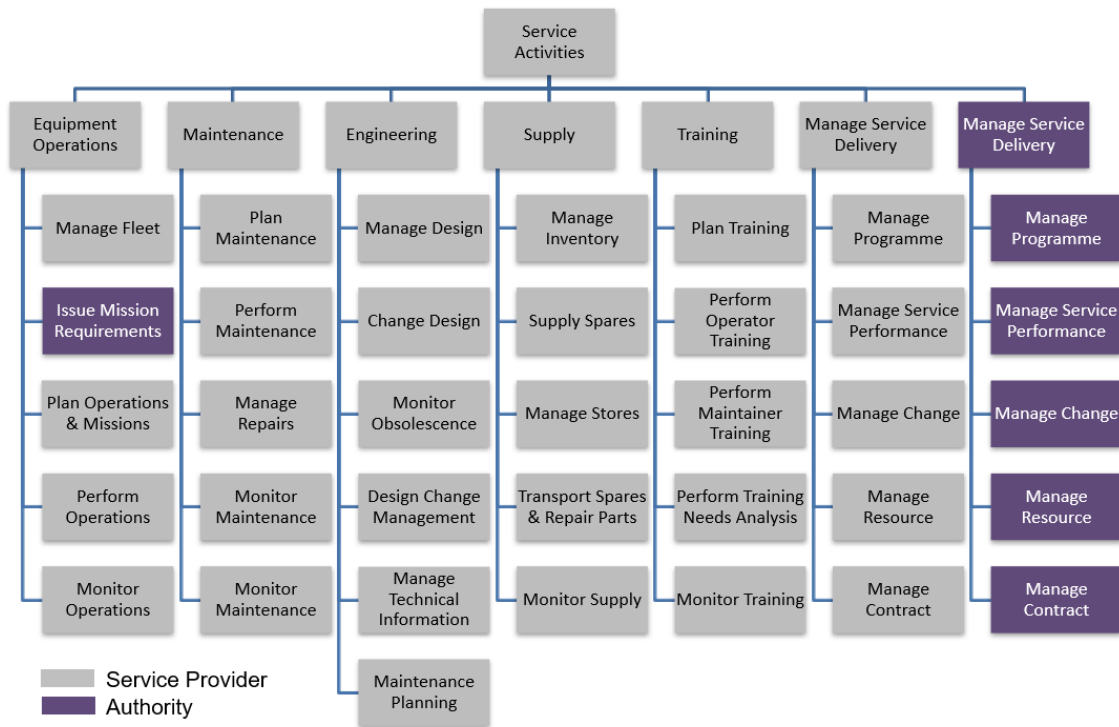

Example Activity Model

The Power Point activity model (which can have multiple levels) sits one level below the rich picture providing more details. The operating model uses the rich picture and activity model as inputs to establish significantly more detail and information.
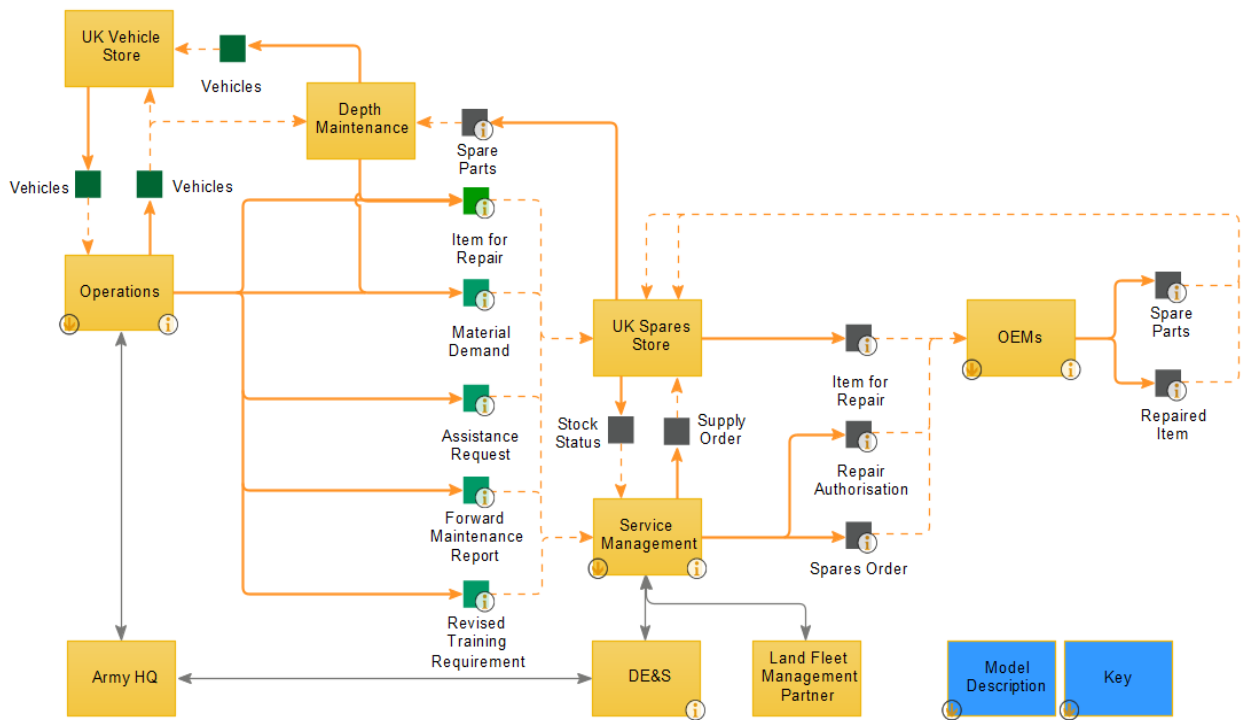

Example Top-Level Operating Model

The example 2c8 top-level operating model screenshot above is organisationally structured with a subsequent process view within each organisation object. As an example of 'level 1' of the model the content of the Service Management object is provided below with a 'level 2' example (Manage Spares & Repairs) following.
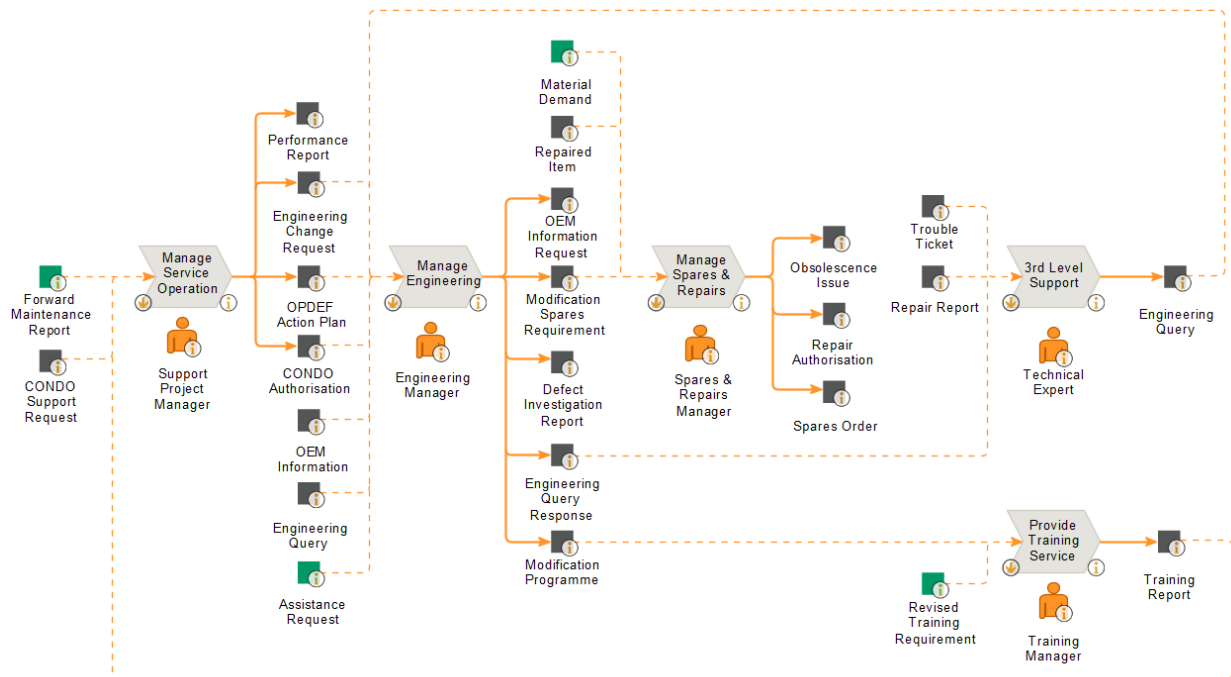
Example Level 1 Breakdown – Service Management
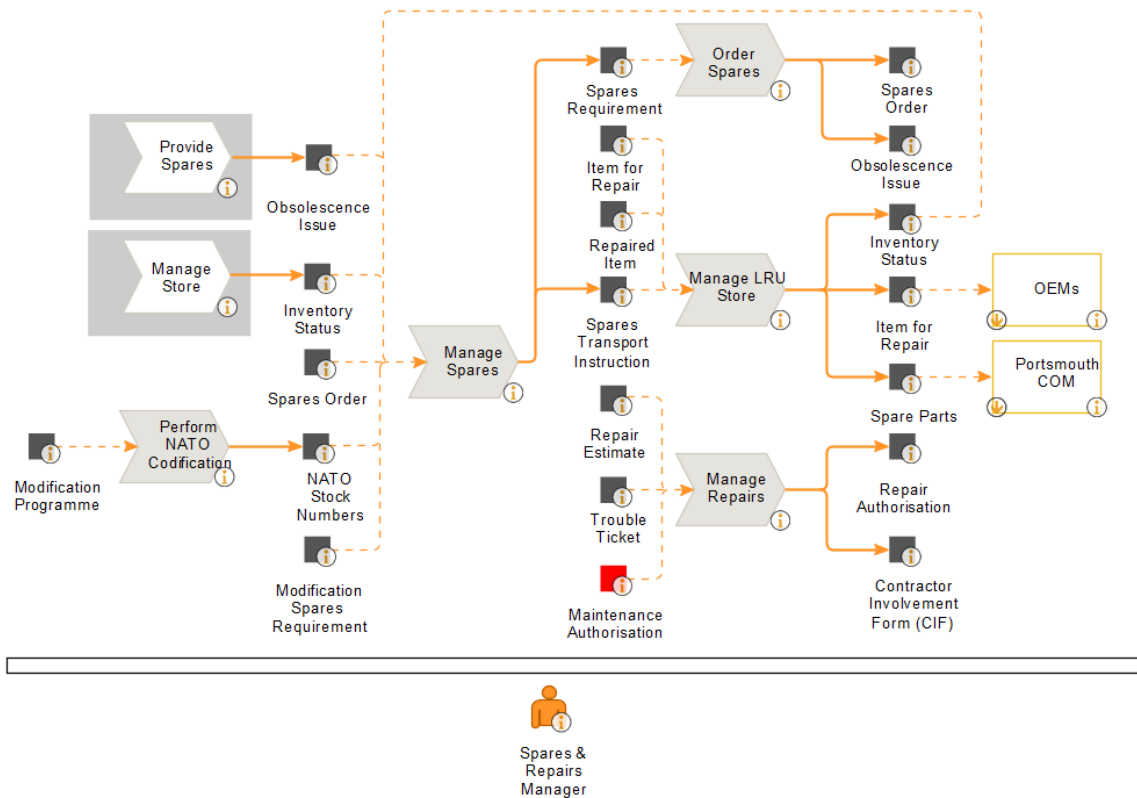
Example Level 2 Breakdown – Manage Spare & Repairs

As screenshots in a MS Word document (such as this), the above images can only provide limited information of model content. Each object in the 2c8 tool is 'intelligent' and can include descriptive text and other attributes such as attached documents.

The 2c8 operating model is published in several formats including web-browser, MS Word, Excel, and Power Point. The web-browser format is perhaps the most powerful allowing anyone to review and understand the model content (without the ability to edit the model).

A model of this type is established in parallel with development of the service solution by the bid team and its SME members. The Service Solution Architect works closely with the bid team via one-to-one sessions and workshops to collate the emerging solution and reflect this in the operating model. The operating model therefore matures over the period of the bid and provides material to support the bid response to the customer. It can also provide material for the various internal plans required for the company governance process.

The model, once mature, therefore provides the central comprehensive visualisation of the service solution. As a qualitative visualisation model, it answers many questions and addresses many facets of the service operation including scope, activities, requirements, roles, responsibilities, tools (physical and IT), reports, plans, regulations, standards, performance metrics, deliverables, etc.

To return to the question at the start, **why establish an operating model for a service bid**, the immediate benefit of such a model is the ability for any bid team member or wider stakeholder to easily see the whole service solution in one place. The primary longer-term benefit is to use the model to support establishment of the service post contract award.

It is often the case that those who work on the bid are not the same people as those who implement and deliver the service. A comprehensive operating model is therefore a key asset for the service delivery team. It is also a valuable training aid for service implementation.

However, as a qualitative model, it is not able to address every part of a bid and answer quantitative questions such as how many, how often and how much. These types of questions are addressed by quantitative models which are another part of the Service Solution Architects remit and not addressed by this discussion piece.

For further information about a service operating model, the use of 2c8 and other topics addressed above, please contact julian.dayment@whitetree.co.uk.

About the author: Julian Dayment is a Whitetree Group Limited principal consultant, service solution architect and 2c8 user. Over the last 20 years Julian has developed many support and service operating models for Government departments and companies such as BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce Defence, Leonardo, Raytheon, Thales and Draken Europe. Julian was the lead contributor and primary author for the recently issued Team Defence Information (TDI) Equipment Support Modelling Guide - Book 1 Support Modelling Introduction which is available from the Whitetree web site (www.whitetree.co.uk/news).