

DYMARIS

Mission & Operational Support

M E T H O D O L O G Y G U I D E

Enterprise Communications & Collaboration Framework

A structured operating model for internal coordination, digital governance, and operational continuity across programs and departments.

Reston, Virginia · Nationwide & Global · Federal Programs & Enterprise Delivery

About This Guide

This guide presents the DYMARIS Enterprise Communications & Collaboration Framework, a proven operating model for managing internal communication, digital governance, file structure, and cross-team coordination. It is published by DYMARIS as a demonstration of our operational methodology for enterprise program management and technology integration.

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REVIEW CYCLE

Quarterly — Internal Framework

O V E R V I E W

How to Use This Framework

This framework is a practical operating guide — not a policy document. It is structured for operational leaders, program managers, and technology teams who need a predictable, enforceable model for internal communication and digital governance.

DYMARIS has developed and applied this framework across federal programs and enterprise environments. The principles are tool-agnostic, though the implementation examples reference Microsoft 365 — Teams, SharePoint, Forms, Lists, and Power Automate — as the primary collaboration platform.

Recommended starting points

- ▶ Apply the Quick Start and Non-Negotiables first to gain early traction with minimal disruption.
- ▶ Use the Teams and SharePoint operating model, ownership rules, and cross-team structure for areas where communication friction is highest.
- ▶ Use the lifecycle, KPI, and troubleshooting sections to refine the model over time.
- ▶ Review the framework quarterly and update it as the organization or program changes.

E X E C U T I V E S U M M A R Y

The Problem This Framework Solves

Most internal communication failures inside growing organizations are structural, not motivational.

Teams lose time and institutional knowledge when decisions live in chat; files sit in personal storage, requests are handled through fragmented email threads, and cross-team work runs in multiple parallel spaces simultaneously. These are not problems of effort — they are problems of structure. This framework addresses them with a small set of simple, enforceable rules.

Principle	What it means in practice
One record workspace per initiative	The same work is not run in multiple Teams or channels simultaneously.

Principle	What it means in practice
Channels as the shared record	Decisions, outcomes, and context are visible to the team — not buried in private chat or email.
SharePoint as the durable file home	Operational files are discoverable during staff transitions and program handoffs.
Structured intake for every workflow	Forms, Lists, and shared mailboxes replace ad-hoc email and verbal requests.
Hub-and-spoke for cross-team work	One designated hub channel for each cross-team initiative prevents duplication.
Two owners and quarterly review	Every Team has accountable owners and a regular governance cadence.

Q U I C K S T A R T

Five Things to Implement First

If only five changes are made at the outset, these are the ones that deliver the most immediate value:

- 1. Designate one record workspace** — for each team, program, or cross-team effort. This single decision eliminates the most common source of coordination of confusion.
- 2. Store operational files in SharePoint** — in the Team library — not in personal OneDrive. Files must be discoverable when staff change.
- 3. Use channels for decisions and outcomes** — not private chat or email. If it matters to the team, it belongs to the channel where the team can see it.
- 4. Use one shared intake method** — per workflow. Prefer Forms or Lists for structured requests and shared mailboxes for routine service queues.
- 5. Assign two owners to every Team** — and review membership and activity quarterly. Ownerless teams are the leading cause of information sprawl.

N O N - N E G O T I A B L E S

Rules That Are Not Optional

These are the minimum standards that make the rest of the framework work. Exceptions should require explicit approval from the program's lead or operations owner.

- ▶ **One source of truth per initiative.** The same work is never run in multiple Teams or channels.
- ▶ **Record of work stays with the team.** Files, trackers, and decision context must remain discoverable during staff turnover.
- ▶ **One-to-one chat is temporary.** If it matters to the team, it moves into the channel.
- ▶ **One workflow, one tracker.** No parallel spreadsheets or duplicate Lists for the same process.
- ▶ **Attention is a limited resource.** Use @mentions only when action is required from a specific person.

S E C T I O N 1

Purpose and Scope

Purpose: establish a predictable, searchable, and useful communication model that supports delivery, decision-making, and continuity across departments, programs, and projects.

Scope: Applies to staff, managers, project leads, operations teams, and long-term contractors participating in internal coordination or operational delivery within programs using this framework.

Out of scope

Public affairs, media relations, external marketing, and public-facing customer messaging. Those areas should be governed by separate policies appropriate to each function.

S E C T I O N 2

Guiding Principles

These principles define how communication decisions are made within the framework. When in doubt about where something belongs or how to handle an edge case, return to these.

Principle	What it means
Value first	Every message should reduce uncertainty, enable action, or support a decision. Informational noise is a cost.
Clarity over volume	Short, structured updates are more effective than long threads. Format matters.
Explicit ownership	If no owner is named, the work is not owned. Ownership must be stated, not assumed.
Loop closure	Requests should end in a clear state: approved, rejected, deferred, or needs information.
Searchability	If others may need it later, put it in the channel and link to the source item.
Continuity by design	The organization should not have to reconstruct history when staff change. Design for that from the start.
Controlled confidentiality	Sensitive content belongs in restricted spaces with defined owners and controlled membership.

SECTION 3

Governance and Roles

Clear role definition is prerequisite to any governance framework. The table below maps each role to its primary responsibility within this model.

Role	Primary responsibility
Executive Sponsor	Sets direction, resolves major trade-offs, approves significant structural changes.
Operations / PMO	Owens the communication model, cadence, templates, and quarterly review process.
Functional Directors	Enforce adoption within departments and resolve ownership gaps as they arise.
Program / Project Leads	Own daily execution, status visibility, dependency tracking, and record workspace discipline.
Team Owners	Manage membership, channel hygiene, file organization, and continuity through transitions.
All Staff	Use the correct workspace, follow file rules, and move important outcomes into shared channels.

For decisions that affect scope, staffing, budget, delivery timing, risk posture, or external commitments — identify at minimum a decision owner, approver, consulted parties, and informed parties before proceeding.

S E C T I O N 4

Record of Work

A simple rule sits at the center of this framework: the record of work lives in the record channel and its SharePoint library.

- ▶ **Decisions and outcomes** are posted in the record channel, not summarized in private chat or email after the fact.
- ▶ **Files and trackers** are stored in the connected SharePoint library or approved List, not in personal OneDrive folders.
- ▶ **Intake data** is captured through Forms, Lists, or shared mailbox, with the outcome visible to the team in the channel.

This standard removes the recurring argument about whether something belongs in email, chat, a spreadsheet, or a personal folder. The answer is always the same: the channel and its library.

S E C T I O N 5

Where Work Lives in Microsoft 365

The following table defines the default home for each type of work item, and the working rule that governs it. When these rules are followed consistently, the team can locate any official item in under one minute.

Item	Default home	Working rule
Channel conversations	Team channel	Use for decisions, outcomes, context, and team-visible updates.
Channel files	Team SharePoint library	Default home for all operational files and shared documents.
Chat files	Sender OneDrive	Not for operational file storage. Move to channel Files immediately.

Item	Default home	Working rule
Private channel files	Separate SharePoint site	Use only when confidentiality requires it. Review quarterly.
Structured trackers	SharePoint List	One tracker per workflow, owned by the business team.

Quick test: If the team cannot locate the official version of an item in under one minute, it is in the wrong place. Use this test regularly during team reviews.

SECTION 6

Operational Files Policy

Operational files must be stored in the Team SharePoint library and organized under the correct channel folder structure. Personal OneDrive should never function as the team filing cabinet.

- ▶ If a file is shared in chat by mistake, move or copy it to the correct channel Files location immediately.
- ▶ Share the SharePoint link in the channel and treat that link as the official version.
- ▶ Ignore or remove older chat copies to avoid version confusion and dual maintenance overhead.

This rule is especially important during staff transitions. Files stored in personal OneDrive create avoidable recovery work during offboarding and create compliance risk if the departing staff member's account is deprovisioned before files are transferred.

SECTION 7

The Final File Rule

Each work product must have one official version. That version lives in the record workspace SharePoint library. All other Teams, channels, emails, and presentations must link back to that item — not upload separate copies.

This single rule — when followed — eliminates the most common source of version confusion, duplicate effort, and stale content across enterprise programs.

S E C T I O N 8

Teams and SharePoint Operating Model

Use one approved collaboration environment as the primary internal operating system. Keep the structure predictable so team members know where to go without asking.

Workspace type	Intended use
ORG	Leadership or organization-wide announcements and strategic communications.
DEPT	Department-level work and team coordination within a functional area.
PROG	Program operations with dedicated staff and recurring delivery activities.
PROJ	Project-based work with a defined outcome and a planned end state.
COMM	Optional communities of practice for knowledge sharing across the organization.

Recommended Standard Channel Set

Every Team should include the following standard channels as a minimum baseline. Additional channels may be added to reflect program-specific workstreams.

Channel name	Purpose
00-Start-Here	Team overview, owner contacts, links to key resources, and escalation path.
01-Operations	Day-to-day coordination, status updates, and operational decisions.
02-Decisions	Formal decision log — outcomes, owners, and dates.
03-Risks-and-Dependencies	Active risks, blockers, and cross-team dependencies.
04-Deliverables	Links to final deliverables and official file versions.
99-Archive	Closed items retained for historical reference.

Minimum Standard for 00-Start-Here

Every Team's start-here channel must contain the following six items as pinned posts or tabs before the Team is considered fully provisioned:

- ▶ Purpose and scope of the Team
- ▶ Primary owner and backup owner with contact details

- ▶ Link to the final file location in SharePoint
- ▶ Link to the request intake method (Form, List, or shared mailbox)
- ▶ Current priorities or key reference links
- ▶ Escalation path for time-sensitive or cross-boundary issues

Illustrative Structure Example

The following is a generic example of how a multi-program team might be structured. Names and program titles are illustrative only.

Organization Team (all-staff announcements)

- ▶ Department Teams — one per functional area, with department-specific channels.
- ▶ Program Teams — created when membership differs from the parent department team.
- ▶ Program channels (within a Program Team) — one per major workstream or service line.

Each level links back to the level above via a pinned post in 00-Start-Here. No Team operates as a silo.

SECTION 9

Team Ownership and Membership Management

Business teams should manage their own Teams and channels for day-to-day operations. This reduces delays during onboarding, staff transitions, and routine channel updates.

- ▶ Every Team must have at least two owners at all times — a primary (typically the manager or supervisor) and a designated backup.
- ▶ Owners manage membership changes, channel descriptions, tab configuration, and file organization within their Team.
- ▶ IT provides governance infrastructure, access controls, and escalation support — not day-to-day ownership of business Teams.

Changes That Require IT or Governance Approval

- ▶ Creation of new Teams where duplication risk exists
- ▶ External guest access of any kind
- ▶ Changes to retention settings, sensitivity labels, or restricted access controls
- ▶ Restoration requests or investigation-related access

S E C T I O N 1 0

Shared Mailboxes, Forms, Lists, and Scheduling Tools

Use the simplest tool that matches the workflow. The goal is structured intake and visible follow-through — not tool complexity.

Shared Mailbox Standards

- ▶ Use shared mailboxes for routine service queues where multiple staff triage and respond.
- ▶ Run the mailbox as a queue with visible status categories — New, In-Progress, Waiting, Done.
- ▶ Assign an owner to each incoming request within one business day.
- ▶ Do not delete operational mail. Close items according to retention policy and archive rules.

Forms and Lists Governance

- ▶ Use Forms or Lists when the same request requires the same structured fields each time.
- ▶ One workflow, one list. Do not build parallel trackers for the same process.
- ▶ Critical Lists must have a named business owner and a backup owner.
- ▶ Store the List in the record workspace SharePoint site, so the data stays with the work.
- ▶ If automation is used, document the owner, purpose, trigger, and handoff plan.

Scheduling and Booking Tools

- ▶ Use scheduling tools to reduce back-and-forth for leadership or high-demand roles.
- ▶ Publish only approved meeting types with clear duration, purpose, and preparation requirements.
- ▶ Use buffer times, lead-time rules, and cancellation policies to protect working calendars.

S E C T I O N 1 1

Cross-Team and Fusion Operating Model

Cross-team work fails when multiple spaces each look official. The fix is always the same: one hub, and everything else links back to it.

- ▶ Designate one record workspace as the hub for each cross-team effort before the work begins.
- ▶ Use department Teams as spokes for team-specific execution within the broader initiative.

- ▶ Capture cross-team decisions and outcomes in the hub channel — not in spoke channels or email threads.
- ▶ When another team posts the same work, link back to the hub thread or folder instead of re-running the discussion.
- ▶ Archive for fusion spaces when the work ends, or the team becomes inactive.

Cross-Team Handoff Template

Every cross-team request or handoff should contain the following five fields as a minimum. This eliminates the most common handoff failures.

Field	Description
Request	What is needed — stated precisely, without assumed context.
Owner	Who will deliver it — a named individual, not a team or role title.
Due date	When it is needed — specific date and time if relevant.
Acceptance criteria	What "done" mean — so both parties agree before delivery begins.
Link	The channel post or SharePoint item that is the record of this handoff.

SECTION 12

Confidentiality and Restricted Work

Confidential work belongs to restricted areas with clear purpose, controlled membership, and named owners. Private channels should not be the default — they are a tool for defined confidentiality needs.

- ▶ Private channels are reserved for clear, documented confidentiality requirements.
- ▶ Private channels must have at least two owners and a written purpose statement in 00-Start Here.
- ▶ Sensitive detail may remain in the restricted space, but approved outcomes that affect other teams should be posted back to the main record channel.
- ▶ Review private channels quarterly and archive them when no longer operationally needed.

SECTION 13

Operating Rhythm

A consistent cadence keeps work visible and prevents the accumulation of decisions made outside the channel. The following minimum rhythm applies to all Teams using this framework.

Cadence	Purpose	Minimum output
Weekly	Coordinate work and surface blockers before they become escalated.	Short status update posted in the Operations channel by agreed deadline.
Monthly	Review priorities, exceptions, resource constraints, and capacity.	Summary posted for leadership or management visibility.
Quarterly	Review structure, ownership, channel health, and framework adherence.	Membership and archive review, plus logged improvements.

Weekly Update Format

Each weekly update posted in the Operations channel should contain these four items — kept short and action-oriented:

- ▶ Top priorities for the week
- ▶ Progress since the last update
- ▶ Blockers and cross-team dependencies
- ▶ Decisions needed — with a named owner for each

SECTION 14

Escalation and Attention Rules

Good internal communication depends on both disciplined escalation — knowing when to raise issues — and disciplined restraint — knowing when not to.

- ▶ Use @mentions only when action is required from a specific person, not to inform.
- ▶ If a message requires follow-through, include a named owner and a due date in the message itself.
- ▶ Post in the right channel rather than starting new threads in multiple locations.
- ▶ Use meetings for decision-making and alignment — not for reassembling information that should already be visible in the channel.

Trigger	Where it appears	Expected response
Cross-team blocker	Hub Operations or Dependencies channel	Named owner responds within the agreed working window — same day for urgent items.

Trigger	Where it appears	Expected response
Decision needed	Decisions channel	Approver identified and decision timing made explicit in the thread.
Deadline at risk	Operations channel and escalation path	Escalate the same day if a recovery path is not clear.
Sensitive issue	Restricted area or approved escalation path	Handle according to access rules and confidentiality policy.

SECTION 15

Measurement and Continuous Improvement

Measure outcomes, not message volume. The KPIs below are illustrative benchmarks drawn from enterprise communication frameworks. Organizations should calibrate targets to their own baseline before setting improvement goals.

KPI	Why it matters	Illustrative target
Decision cycle time	Shows whether the organization can move work forward without unnecessary delay.	Reduce average from 5 business days to 3 within one quarter.
Actions closed on time	Measures follow-through and accountability against stated commitments.	Improve from 70% to 85% within two quarters.
Repeated-question rate	Signals with weak findability or unclear guidance in the channel structure.	Reduce recurring questions from ~10 per week to ~5.
Meeting load	Shows whether written coordination is working or whether meetings are substituting for channel discipline.	Reduce recurring status meeting time by 20% within six months.
Onboarding time to productivity	Measures the quality of continuity of documentation and record-of-work discipline.	Shorten time for independent task completion for new team members.

SECTION 16

Common Failure Modes and Practical Fixes

The table below maps the most frequent communication failures to their practical remedies. Use this as a diagnostic tool for quarterly reviews.

Failure mode	Practical fix
Multiple sources of truth for the same initiative	Assign one record workspace immediately and require linkback from all other locations.
Important files shared in chat and then lost	Move to the channel Files location within the same business day and use the SharePoint link as the official version.
Spreadsheet proliferation for the same workflow	Retire all but one approved List or form-backed tracker. Document the decision in the Decisions channel.
Shared mailbox becoming a black hole	Add visible status categories, per-request assignment, and a closeout rule within 48 hours.
Key decisions trapped in private chat	Summaries the outcome and rationale in the appropriate channel the same day the decision is made.
Notification overload leading to ignored channels	Restrict @mentions strictly and introduce a short weekly digest format in the Operations channel.
Ownerless Teams accumulating stale content	Require two owners per Team enforced at provisioning, and flag ownerless Teams in every quarterly review.

SECTION 17

Implementation Roadmap

The following phased plan provides a realistic timeline for organizations adopting this framework for the first time. The sequence is designed to build on each prior step without requiring a full organization to change simultaneously.

Phase	Focus	Actions
Weeks 1–2 Foundation	Governance structure	and Confirm the governance of ownership. Select two or three pilot teams. Set up the standard channel structure. Assign owners and document them in 00-Start Here.

Phase	Focus	Actions
Weeks 3–4 Record of work	File discipline and intake	Move operational files into SharePoint channel libraries. Stand up List or mailbox queues for structured intake. Launch weekly update cadence.
Weeks 5–8 Cross-team discipline	Hub-and-spoke model	Apply the hub-and-spoke model to one active cross-team initiative. Retire duplicate trackers. Resolve any file location conflicts identified in weeks 1–4.
Ongoing Quarterly refine	Framework governance	Review membership, archive inactive spaces, update KPI measures, and improve templates based on what the pilot revealed.

A B O U T D Y M A R I S

About DYMARIS

DYMARIS is a federal government contractor headquartered in Reston, Virginia, providing integrated mission and operational support across six core capability domains: Enterprise Technology, Workforce Solutions, Program Coordination, Logistics and Supply Chain, Facilities Management, and Program Support Services.

We work alongside federal agencies, program leads, and operations teams to deliver technology modernization, workforce scalability, interagency coordination, supply chain visibility, facilities lifecycle management, and end-to-end program support — at any scale, from steady-state delivery to surge response.

The Enterprise Communications & Collaboration Framework presented in this guide reflects DYMARIS's internal operational methodology — the same model we apply when standing up program teams, coordinating cross-agency work, and managing continuity through staff transitions.

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G E T I N T O U C H

Tailored Implementation Support

This framework can be adapted to your organization's specific program structure, technology environment, and compliance requirements.

To discuss a tailored implementation of this framework for your federal program or enterprise environment, contact DYMARIS through dymaris.com or reach us directly at info@dymaris.com.

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