CASE STUDY

M&A INFRASTRUCTURE INTEGRATION

Navigating Regulatory Barriers in a Major Asia-Pacific Market

50+ locations. One regulation nobody had mapped. Zero programme delay.

100+	50+	ZERO	60+
LOCATIONS IN SCOPE	SITES REQUIRING RECABLING	PROGRAMME DELAY	COUNTRY GLOBAL PROGRAMME

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Geneva, Switzerland

Global infrastructure programmes are designed around the dependencies teams know to look for.

Technical complexity. Provider coordination. Equipment availability. Commercial timelines.

What they rarely account for are the dependencies nobody thought to look for — the local regulatory requirements that exist in plain sight but never make it onto a standard risk register until installation teams discover them on site.

In a major Asia-Pacific market, during the Transformation phase of a global infrastructure programme spanning 60+ countries and 600+ locations, one such requirement surfaced.

A building regulation required formal government inspection before any drilling activity could begin. It applied to more than 50 sites. Government inspection slots were fixed and limited.

If the requirement had been discovered on site rather than in advance, the delay would have been built in before anyone had the chance to prevent it.

It wasn't discovered on site.

The risk was not that the regulation was unknown. The risk was that nobody had looked for it yet.

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The Situation

During the Transformation phase of a global network infrastructure programme spanning 60+ countries and 600+ locations, physical deployment work began in a major Asia-Pacific market.

The scope included over 100 locations across the country, with more than 50 requiring new cabling routes between building areas. Achieving the required network architecture meant drilling through certain structural elements where no existing conduits or cable paths were available.

What the programme plan had not yet accounted for was the regulatory environment.

Under local safety regulations, any drilling activity in buildings required a formal asbestos inspection and certification by a government agency before work could begin. This was not a discretionary requirement — it was a legal obligation that applied to every affected site, without exception.

Inspection availability was limited. The government agency responsible operated on fixed schedules, and slots could not be created on demand.

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Formal asbestos inspection and government certification required before any drilling activity could begin — no exceptions.

PROGRAMME SCOPE

100+ locations in market. 50+ sites requiring new cabling routes and structural drilling.

THE RISK

If discovered on site rather than in advance — delays across 50+ locations would have been inevitable.

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The Challenge

Three factors made this a significant programme risk.

The regulatory requirement was invisible in the programme plan. Global infrastructure programmes are designed around technical and commercial dependencies. Local building regulations — particularly those requiring government agency involvement before physical work begins — are rarely captured in standard risk registers at the planning stage.

The scale amplified the exposure. With 50+ sites requiring drilling across a single country, a single overlooked compliance requirement had the potential to halt an entire national deployment simultaneously rather than creating an isolated issue at one location.

The downstream impact would have extended beyond the local programme. The global transformation was closely aligned with broader business integration milestones. A significant delay in this market would not have remained contained — it would have created pressure on the overall programme timeline.

CRITICAL FACTOR 1

Invisible in the programme plan — local building regulations rarely appear on standard risk registers until discovered on site.

CRITICAL FACTOR 2

Scale amplified the exposure — 50+ sites meant one overlooked requirement could halt an entire national deployment simultaneously.

KEY CONTEXT

The risk was not that the regulation was unknown. The risk was that nobody had looked for it yet.

EXTERNAL PRESSURE

Downstream programme dependencies — a significant local delay would have created pressure on the overall global transformation timeline.

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The Approach

I requested detailed network and cabling design plans in advance for all locations across the market — before deployment scheduling was finalised.

This early review allowed the team to identify precisely which sites required drilling to create new cable routes between building areas, and therefore which sites triggered the asbestos inspection requirement under local regulations.

Working closely with local teams and installation partners, we consolidated the inspection requirements across all affected sites and submitted requests to the relevant government authority well ahead of the planned installation schedules.

The key decision was sequencing: by treating regulatory compliance as a planning dependency rather than an on-site discovery, the inspection process could run in parallel with the programme's preparation activities rather than interrupting the deployment itself.

When the requirement first surfaced, initial deployment at seven to eight locations was temporarily paused pending inspection completion. The team moved quickly to consolidate and accelerate the remaining inspection requests, recovering the schedule across the broader market deployment.

KEY CONTEXT

Treating regulatory compliance as a planning dependency — not an on-site discovery — is what made the difference.

SEQUENCING DECISION

Design review completed before scheduling — allowing inspection requests to run in parallel with programme preparation.

RECOVERY

Initial pause at 7-8 locations. Quick consolidation of remaining requests. Schedule recovered without impacting overall timeline.

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The Outcome

Government inspections were completed ahead of construction activities across all affected sites.

Network deployment proceeded according to the planned schedule. The transformation programme in this market was delivered on time, protecting the broader programme timeline and its downstream business integration dependencies.

No escalation was required. No milestones were missed at programme level.

RESULT 1

Government inspections completed ahead of construction across all affected sites — deployment proceeded without further interruption.

RESULT 2

Overall programme timeline protected — downstream business integration dependencies unaffected.

RESULT 3

No escalation required at programme or leadership level.

KEY CONTEXT

No escalation required. No milestones missed. The regulatory barrier never became a programme delay.

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The Insight

Global infrastructure programmes are designed around the dependencies teams know to look for: technical complexity, provider coordination, equipment availability, commercial timelines.

Local regulatory requirements — particularly those involving government agencies with fixed availability — rarely appear on standard risk registers until they are discovered on site. By that point, the delay is already built in.

In large multinationals operating across dozens of countries, every market has its own regulatory reality. The question is not whether local compliance requirements exist. The question is whether they are identified early enough to be managed as planned dependencies rather than unplanned obstacles.

Proactive planning — reviewing physical deployment requirements before schedules are locked — is what separates a regulatory barrier from a programme delay.

KEY CONTEXT

Proactive planning — reviewing physical deployment requirements before schedules are locked — is what separates a regulatory barrier from a programme delay.

LESSON 1
Local regulatory requirements are invisible until someone looks for them. Looking early is the only way to manage them as dependencies rather than disruptions.

LESSON 2
Scale changes the risk profile. One overlooked requirement across 50+ sites is not a localised problem — it is a national deployment halt.

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Programme at a glance

100+ Locations in Scope	**50+** Sites Requiring Recabling	**1** Regulatory Barrier Identified
Zero Programme Delay	**Early** Transformation Phase	**60+** Country Global Programme

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