

BEST-PRACTICE GUIDE · TRANSFORM

Phase 08 — Operate

From stable operations to the learning, self-driving organization

The Operate phase establishes the permanent, largely autonomous operation of the agentic target landscape: SRE-based reliability steering, agentic incident handling, continuous AI governance and an improvement loop feeding operational insights back into strategy and backlog — making the organization self-driving in the literal sense.

Goal of the phase

The phase delivers measurably reliable, compliant and economical operations: met SLOs, autonomous resolution of standard incidents, continuous model and cost management, and an established improvement cycle back into the TRANSFORM phases.

Process model

- 01

Service & SLO design
Define service level indicators and objectives per service and agent; agree error budgets as the steering instrument between business, operations and delivery.
- 02

Observability & AIOps
End-to-end telemetry (metrics, logs, traces, agent decisions); agentic anomaly detection and root cause analysis across the whole landscape.
- 03

Autonomous operations & incident management
Self-healing for standard incidents through operations agents; structured incident management with human escalation and blameless post-mortems per SRE practice.
- 04

AI governance & model operations
Continuous monitoring of model behaviour, drift and guardrail compliance; compliance evidence per EU AI Act and NIST AI RMF; controlled model and prompt releases via the eval suites.
- 05

Continuous improvement & value evidence
FinOps-based cost steering, measurement of realized value contribution against the OKRs; feeding improvement needs back into the Strategy and Plan phases.

Methodology mix

METHOD	PURPOSE	REFERENCE
Site reliability engineering (SRE)	SLIs, SLOs and error budgets as quantitative reliability steering; automation before staffing.	Beyer et al. (Google, 2016)
ITIL 4 — service value system	Framework for service management practices (incident, problem, change) in interplay with agile delivery.	PeopleCert/Axelos
AIOps	AI-supported anomaly detection, event correlation and root cause analysis in IT operations; scientifically grounded failure management methods.	Notaro et al. (2021)

METHOD	PURPOSE	REFERENCE
EU AI Act & NIST AI RMF	Regulatory and risk-based frame for operating AI systems; basis of the compliance evidence.	EU 2024/1689; NIST
FinOps	Operating model for the economic steering of cloud and AI resources (incl. the agents' token economy).	FinOps Foundation
Continuous improvement (PDCA/Kaizen)	Systematic learning loop from operational data back into strategy, backlog and architecture; closes the TRANSFORM cycle.	Deming; ITIL CSI

Platform support

ReqPOOL Suite: **REAM** (Enterprise architecture) · **SLIP** (Reverse engineering — whitebox)

REAM — lifecycle & architecture management	Lifecycle and architecture management in one inventory: every productive application with responsibilities, technology stack and lifecycle status.
REAM — end-of-support & technical debt	Automatic end-of-support detection and technical debt monitoring; the results feed the continuous transformation roadmap.
REAM — loop back to strategy	New demands from operations feed the next ideation cycle — the lifecycle closes into a continuous loop.
SLIP — living system documentation	Source-proven documentation, knowledge graph and AI assistant remain as working tools in operations — system knowledge no longer depends on individual heads.
SLIP — impact analyses in operations	Before every change, the assistant answers “What breaks if I change this?” — based on the actual code instead of outdated documents.

Best-practice checklist

	Prepare every change to the productive system with a SLIP impact analysis; unresolved dependencies block the change.
	Update the system documentation after every release — outdated documentation is an operational risk, not a formality.
	Assess end-of-support and debt signals from REAM quarterly and feed them as demands into the next ideation cycle.
	Enforce error budgets consistently — when exhausted, the release pipeline stops automatically; exceptions are decided by the steering committee.
	Run post-mortems blameless and feed actions as backlog items back into the Plan phase; insights without implementation are waste.
	Report value evidence quarterly against the Strategy phase's business case — operations prove the transformation.

Artifacts & outcomes

- SLO catalogue with error budget policy
- Established autonomous operations with runbook library

- AI governance evidence (EU AI Act, NIST AI RMF)
- Quarterly value and cost report (FinOps)
- Continuous improvement backlog into subsequent cycles

Quality gate criteria

☐	SLOs met over a full reporting period
☐	Agent autonomy levels documented and approved
☐	Compliance evidence complete and current
☐	Improvement cycle anchored in Strategy/Plan

Scientific deep dives

Beyer et al.: Site Reliability Engineering (Google) — Foundational work of the SRE approach; freely available.
<https://sre.google/sre-book/table-of-contents/>

Google: The Site Reliability Workbook — Practice volume on SLO design and canary operations.
<https://sre.google/workbook/table-of-contents/>

Notaro et al.: A Survey of AIOps Methods for Failure Management (ACM 2021) — Scientific survey of AIOps research.
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3483424>

EU AI Act (Regulation (EU) 2024/1689) — Binding legal framework for AI systems in the EU.
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>

NIST AI Risk Management Framework — Risk-based framework for trustworthy AI.
<https://www.nist.gov/itl/ai-risk-management-framework>

FinOps Foundation: framework — Standard for the economic steering of cloud resources.
<https://www.finops.org/framework/>