

PUBLIC OPERATIONAL WORKSHEET

Decision Rationale Timeline Worksheet

Separate what existed at the decision point from what was recorded after commitment.

When did the reasoning become part of the decision?

PURPOSE

A public worksheet for reconstructing one decision route across evidence state, AI influence, human commitment, operational effect and rationale creation. It does not score exposure or determine compliance.

How to use this worksheet

Select one consequential decision route and complete the timeline from surviving evidence. Record what can be established, identify what requires inference and leave unresolved points visible. Do not reconstruct several workflows at once.

1	BOUND THE ROUTE	Name one decision, consequence, reviewer and commitment point.
2	PLACE THE EVENTS	Locate evidence state, AI influence, commitment, effect and rationale.
3	CITE THE SOURCE	Use logs, records, version history, screenshots or attributable notes.
4	KEEP UNCERTAINTY	Mark what is unknown rather than silently filling gaps with memory.

Selected route

PROCESS / FUNCTION

DECISION AND CONSEQUENCE

AI OR TECHNICAL INFLUENCE

HUMAN REVIEWER / ROLE

COMMITMENT POINT

OPERATIONAL EFFECT

REVIEW PERIOD / SAMPLE

- PUBLIC BOUNDARY**
- This worksheet organises surviving evidence; it does not determine whether a decision was lawful, fair, accurate or compliant.
 - A late rationale is not automatically false or defective.
 - Missing timestamps indicate uncertainty, not proof of failure.
 - Do not add confidential information unless the document will remain inside an authorised environment.

Timeline: evidence and AI influence

Complete from documentary evidence where possible. Use “unclear” when the record does not support a conclusion.

T0

Evidence state

What information, uncertainty and alternatives were available?

TIMESTAMP / PERIOD

When was the relevant evidence state available to the reviewer?

WHAT WAS AVAILABLE

Record the material evidence, uncertainty, alternatives and constraints visible at this point.

SOURCE

Identify the surviving record: system log, case file, interface capture, policy, email or other attributable source.

COULD THE ROUTE STILL CHANGE?

Could an authorised actor still pause, challenge, modify, reject or escalate the route?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unclear

☐ Not applicable

T1

AI influence

What output, ranking, framing or route condition reached the reviewer?

TIMESTAMP / PERIOD

When did AI, automation, analytics or technical framing enter the route?

INFLUENCE PRESENTED

Record the output, ranking, score, recommendation, summary, threshold, routing or framing that reached the reviewer.

SOURCE

Identify the system record, interface state, notification, model output or technical explanation.

WAS THE INFLUENCE VISIBLE?

Could the reviewer identify that this information or route condition came from an AI-enabled process?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unclear

☐ Not applicable

Timeline: commitment and operational effect

Separate the moment of human or organisational commitment from the moment the outcome became operational.

T2

Human commitment

When did judgement become commitment?

TIMESTAMP / PERIOD

When did the reviewer or organisation become committed to the selected route?

COMMITMENT EVENT

Record the approval, sign-off, submission, closure, release or other event that fixed the route.

ACTOR AND AUTHORITY

Who committed the organisation, and what authority did that actor possess?

COULD THE ROUTE STILL CHANGE?

After this event, could the ordinary reviewer still change the result without exceptional intervention?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unclear

☐ Not applicable

T3

Operational effect

When did the decision begin to affect the case, person or route?

TIMESTAMP / PERIOD

When was the action executed, communicated or made difficult to reverse?

OPERATIONAL EFFECT

Record what happened: notification, exclusion, payment, restriction, closure, assignment, escalation or other effect.

SOURCE

Identify the execution log, outbound communication, status change or operational record.

WAS REVERSAL STILL PRACTICAL?

Could an authorised actor restore the previous state within the ordinary decision window?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unclear

☐ Not applicable

Timeline: rationale event and completion review

T4

Rationale event

When did the explanation first become part of the surviving record?

TIMESTAMP / PERIOD

When was the rationale first created, materially completed or later amended?

RATIONALE CONTENT

What evidence, uncertainty, alternatives and reasons were recorded?

AUTHORSHIP AND VERSION

Who created or edited the rationale, and does version history preserve the original state?

TEMPORAL STATUS

☐ **Contemporaneous**

Created before or at commitment.

☐ **Post-commitment**

Created after T2 but before operational effect.

☐ **Retrospective**

Created after T3 or after challenge.

☐ **Unclear**

Timing cannot be established.

A

Three records to keep separate

Do not collapse technical explanation, human judgement and later commentary.

1

SYSTEM OUTPUT OR TECHNICAL EXPLANATION

What the AI system produced, displayed or logged. This may help reconstruct system behaviour. It is not the reviewer's rationale.

2

CONTEMPORANEOUS HUMAN RATIONALE

What the reviewer recorded before or at commitment while intervention remained possible.

3

RETROSPECTIVE COMMENTARY

A later account created after approval, operational effect, complaint, incident or audit. It may be useful, but should remain labelled as later evidence.

COMPLETION REVIEW

- Can the organisation establish the order of T0-T4 from surviving records?
- Is the human rationale distinguishable from the system output and later commentary?
- Did the rationale exist while intervention remained possible?
- Which points remain uncertain and require further evidence?

Related resource: AI Rationale Timing Readiness Check | www.iddac.eu/resource-library/