

SERVICE-ORIENTED INFRASTRUCTURE COMPLEMENTING THE QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROCESS

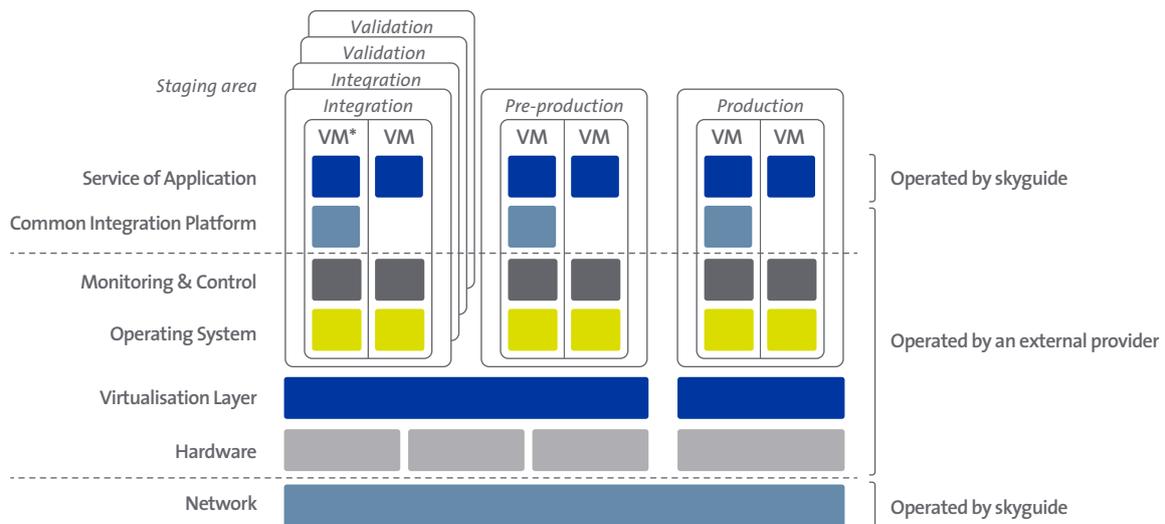
PATRICIA BOMME
Head of Safety and Compliance

Patricia Bomme has been Head of Safety and Compliance within the Technical Department of skyguide. She is a civil engineer, and computer science is her domain. Currently, she is preoccupied with new regulation from the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) concerning, among other topics, the quality of infrastructure.

SKYGUIDE There has been a lot of talk about Service-Oriented Infrastructure (SOI), which provides for a layered architecture instead of a monolithic one. In your expertise area, can you please elaborate on this?

PATRICIA BOMME SOI combines SOA and ITIL standards into a functioning whole. SOA or Service-Oriented Architecture means a style of software design where services are provided to the other components through a communication protocol over a network. The Infrastructure Library ITIL is a collection of predefined processes, functions and roles as they occur typically in the IT infrastructure of medium sized and large companies. In order to provide the necessary quality assurance as well as to anticipate the implementation of new European regulation, we are striving for a clear infrastructure qualification plan in VCT2.

LAYERED ARCHITECTURE



* Virtual Machine



“ As we are changing the business model in the frame of VCT2, we have to create trust in the new set-up ”

What are the main challenges?

PB Safety is highly related to people. They are ready to change as long as the change does not affect them! People worked in well-defined organizations. Now with VCT2 everything is changing. There is a huge amount of difficulties; you might be lost as soon as you look closely at them. We are complementing the quality management process of skyguide, for example, writing system engineering life cycle methods. Is the organization capable of digesting this in a short time? Changing the mindset of people takes time. We have to overcome the fears and resistance that come with standardizing and consolidating processes, tools and systems. When we are formalizing the components, we have to make sure people understand their new role, particularly when, at the same time, new companies come in.

What is the purpose of collaborating with an outside IT company like DXC? Surely you would have the competences in-house.

PB Technology is getting more and more complex; simultaneously we had to decide how to use our resources and how to stick to our core business. The question we asked ourselves was to determine where our core competences are? And the answer: they are in designing and providing services. So for the purpose of efficiency, our central integration platform, hosted on an on-premise private cloud, is provided and monitored by our external partner DXC in Sofia (Bulgaria): DXC already had the technology, which is widely used elsewhere. We were very impressed by the way the company is organized and how it can integrate the specificity of a customer into its organization. In its customer training centre in Sofia, it knows exactly which training is appropriate for which customer.

Skyguide is a safety critical company. Is it not dangerous to outsource some of its IT business to a private partner in a foreign country?

PB DXC have indeed many business critical customers but most probably no safety critical ones like skyguide. Therefore we provided them with insight through a dedicated training at skyguide. This training emphasized their role in the technical service delivery. Early 2018, we will also do a supplier assessment in Sofia in order to test the organization and cooperation.

One of your tasks is the relationship between skyguide and the Federal Office of Civil Aviation FOCA. How do you handle that?

PB As the Safety and Compliance Manager of the department, I am regularly in touch with the FOCA. As we are changing the business model in the frame of VCT2, we have to create trust in the new set-up. The aim being to make the situation and the technical details intelligible for FOCA.

And your conclusion of all of this?

PB I knew the process would be difficult, but I never assumed it would be as difficult, slow and energy consuming as it now appears to be. We have a tendency to look only at failure and what is missing instead of what has been achieved. But I am confident that we will make it, confident because of the quality of the people working with us. ■