

**ICL Pathway ICL Pathway Problem Management Process**

Ref: CS/PRD/021  
Version: 2.0  
Date: 26/08/99

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**Document Title:** ICL Pathway Problem Management Process

**Document Type:** Process Description

**Abstract:** This document defines the ICL Pathway Problem Management Process. The process has been developed so that it covers both problems that are only visible to ICL Pathway, and also problems that impact POCL as well as ICL Pathway.

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## 0 Document control

### 0.1 Document history

Version	Date	Reason
1.0	05/11/97	ICL Pathway Problem Management Process
1.1	16/04/98	Update
1.2	25/05/98	Update
1.3	19/07/98	Update
1.4	03/12/98	Update
1.5	04/02/99	Update
1.6	29/07/99	Updated following internal review and comments
2.0		For approval

### 0.2 Approval authorities

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### 0.3 Associated documents

	Reference	Vers	Date	Title	Source
1	CS/PRD/012	1.1	26/01/98	Release Authorisation and Distribution Process for Software Fixes	ICL Pathway
2	CS/PRD/063	0.3	27/08/99	Generic Service Management Processes	ICL Pathway
3	CS/PRO/063	0.2	04/02/99	Proposed Problem Management Procedures to support the Customer Service Operations Manual	ICL Pathway
4	HOR/SMF/PM G/002	1.5	01/07/99	Service Management Framework – Problem Management	POCL
5	PA/PRO/001	6.0		Change Control Process	ICL Pathway

## 0.4 Abbreviations

CP	Change Proposal
CS	ICL Pathway Customer Service Department
DM	Duty Manager
ETP	Emergency Temporary Procedure
DA	Database Administrator
HSB	Horizon Systems Helpdesk
ICL PW	ICL Pathway
ICL PW PM	ICL Pathway Problem Manager
ICL PW SM	ICL Pathway Service Management
PIR	Post Implementation Review
PM	Problem Manager
POCL	Post Office Counters Limited
SSC	Systems Support Centre

## 0.5 Changes in this version

- Withdrawal of Service Improvement Opportunities from the Problem Management Process.
- Amendment to Temporary Procedure description within Section 5.
- Amendment to the role of the Problem Manager, Section 6.

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## 1 Introduction

Not all incidents that arise at the helpdesks can easily be resolved using the incident management processes. Some incidents have a wide impact, some may be difficult and time consuming to resolve, whilst others may relate to a single underlying issue. Therefore, some incidents may require referral into ICL Pathway Service Management, as well as being passed through their regular support routes, to aid resolution

A key element for success in the resolution of incidents that are referred to the ICL Pathway Service Management team is an effective Problem Management process.

## 2 Scope

This document details the ICL Pathway Problem Management process. For detailed procedures please refer to [Ref.3].

The process starts by determining whether a problem has a cross-domain impact, i.e. the problem impacts POCL as well as ICL Pathway. The process then splits into two sections.

The first part defines the process for the management of problems that are internal to ICL Pathway, and only impact ICL Pathway.

The second section defines the process for resolving problems that impact POCL as well as ICL Pathway, and how the two organisations work together to resolve such problems.

Note:

The processes reflect, and are based upon, the high level cross-domain Problem Management process agreed between ICL Pathway and POCL. [Ref. 2/4]. See Section 4 for a further explanation of the high level cross-domain process.

### 3 Definition of a Problem

As agreed with POCL.

*A Problem is a record of an underlying cause that may result in Incidents.*

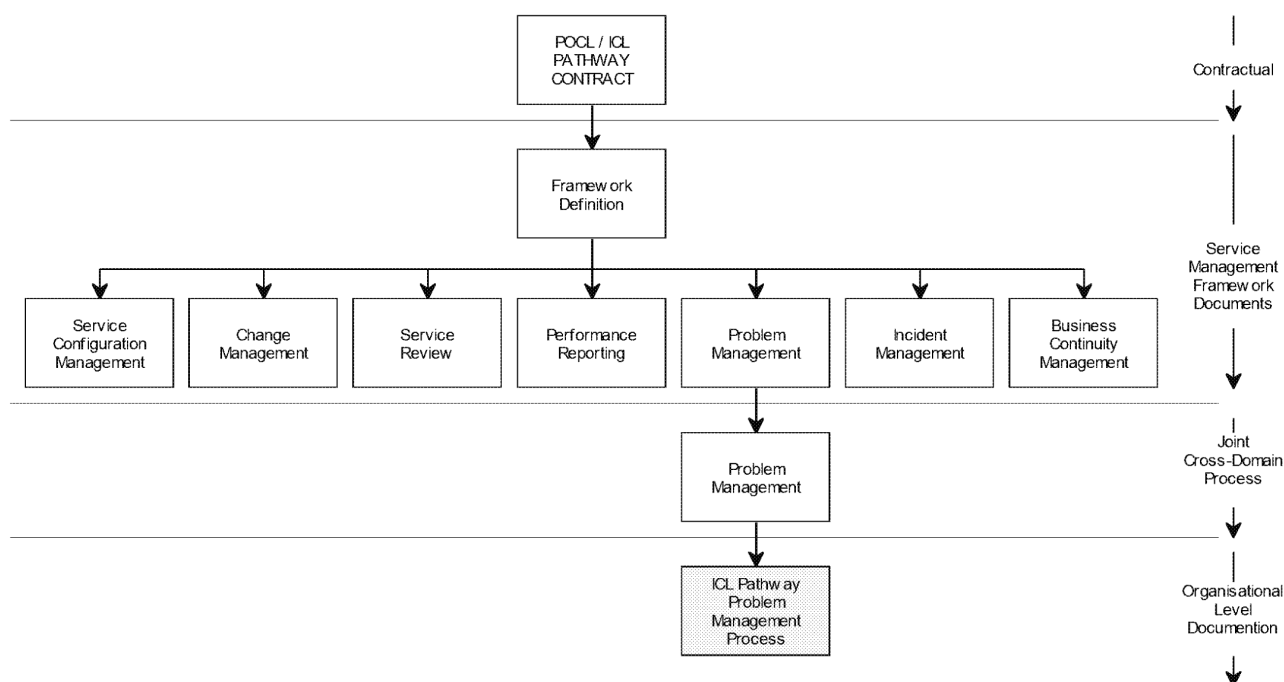
*A Problem potentially exists when a defect in the specification, design, production, implementation, or use of any of the service components results in any aspect of the service not meeting expectations.*

*A Problem will be raised when the impact of the defect (e.g. the level and severity of the related incidents) is substantial enough to warrant action to eradicate it.*

*A problem will be deemed to exist when it is logged on a POCL or ICL Pathway Problem Management system.*

*A problem will be closed when it has been agreed that the underlying issue has been fixed or removed.*

### 4 The Service Management Framework



The above diagram highlights the Service Management Framework documents. These are high level, non-contractual agreements between ICL Pathway, POCL. As can be seen, Problem Management is a part of the framework, and ICL Pathway's Problem Management process will relate to the higher level documentation as agreed with POCL.

## 5 Glossary of Terms

### **Authorised Temporary Procedure**

A Temporary Procedure that has been agreed by both ICL and POCL Problem Management teams to resolve incidents that are associated to a problem. The need to develop an ATP will be dependent upon the nature, impact and probable duration of a problem.

### **Change Proposal**

An official request to change/update part of the Horizon solution.

### **Database**

A manual or electronic storage facility for a problem record

### **Emergency Temporary Procedure**

The term used for a Temporary Procedure that is in use to resolve incidents that are associated to a cross-domain problem, until it has been authorised as an Authorised Temporary Procedure by both the ICL and POCL Problem Management Teams.

### **Incident**

An incident is an individual day to day event resulting from: faults or failures in equipment, software, services or procedures; user error; user requests for advice and guidance.

Such an event may be resolved locally or be raised as an Incident. An Incident will be deemed to exist when it is logged on a POCL or ICL Pathway Incident Management System. Once a solution or temporary procedure has been applied and accepted, the individual Incident will be closed.

### **Post Implementation Review**

A review of the Problem Process following resolution. Both ICL and POCL Problem Managers or Business Continuity Managers will attend the review. The objective of the review is to look for improvement opportunities in the process using the experience of the last Problem / Business Continuity event.

### **Problem**

See definition on Page 6

### **Temporary Procedure**

An Incident may be resolved by the application of a Temporary Procedure, which will be agreed between the Helpdesk managing the Incident and the organisation within which the Incident occurred. This will be at the discretion of the parties involved, who must take into account any actual, or potential, impacts on other business areas.

## 6 Problem Management Roles

### 6.1 Problem Originator:

The person who raises the problem, and notifies Service Management within the parent organisation of the problem.

### 6.2 Problem Manager:

The Problem Manager is the person within the Service Management organisation with responsibility for managing a problem and ensuring it is resolved. The duties of the Problem Manager include:

- Accepting a problem
- Logging the problem onto the organisational problem database, and keeping the database updated
- Brokering prioritisation
- Reviewing solutions
- Monitoring progress
- Closing problems

The Problem Manager is the only communication channel between the Service Management teams of the two organisations (ICL Pathway and POCL).

### 6.3 Problem Resolution Manager:

The person appointed to resolve a particular problem. Responsible for creating a team, developing a solution, developing an implementation plan, brokering with interested parties, submitting to the Problem Manager, and to Change Control.

## 7 Problem Management Principles

The following principles have been used in the development of the ICL Pathway Problem Management process. Changes to the principles may require the review and revision of the processes detailed within this document.

- Problems will be managed by Problem Managers
- All Problems will be logged on the Problem Database
- All problems on the database must be updated and maintained regularly
- Problems will be impacted locally before being raised as a cross-domain problem
- Responsibility for the management of a problem must be clearly allocated.
- Problems will be prioritised based upon business impact
- Closure criteria will be agreed at the start of a problem. Once the problem has been resolved the criteria will be used to decide when it can be closed.
- Where required, the Problem resolution process will be managed to ensure timely delivery of the solution to the required quality
- The escalation of a Problem can occur at any point during the management process in order to provide a higher degree of management focus
- (Authorised) Temporary Procedures may be developed to provide short to medium term work around solutions whilst a long term solution is prepared
- Problems will be closed after the solution has been proved to meet agreed closure criteria.
- A Post Implementation Review can be requested for any problem.
- The Problem Manager must inform those impacted by a Problem, or involved in the resolution process, of the Problem, and keep the parties updated at all times.

## 8 *Problem Management Process*

The process and procedures used by the Problem Manager to work towards the resolution of a problem will depend upon the type of problem that is being dealt with. These can be divided into two categories: Internal Problem Management and Cross-Domain Problem Management.



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Process Step	Actions
1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Problems can arise from different sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A problem can arise from within ICL Pathway. For example, via an internal audit or a Service Review Forum that highlights a problem. This will be reported to a CS Service Manager who can either assign him/herself as the Problem Manager, or assign another Service Manager as the Problem Manager.</li> <li>b) POCL can also report a problem into ICL Pathway. This is reported via the Duty Manager who will subsequently assign a Problem Manager to progress the problem on behalf of ICL Pathway.</li> <li>c) A problem can also be assigned to a Problem Manager from the Duty Manager who has made a decision that a potential problem referred via the HSH or one of ICL Pathway support units, such as the SCC, is a problem.</li> </ul>
5, 6	Having been assigned a problem, the Problem Manager contacts the originator of the problem to obtain all the details required to understand the situation and to make an assessment of what action is required. If the originator is not contactable, the Problem Manager will only continue with the process if enough information is available to do so, and contact the originator as soon as possible thereafter. If there is not enough information to continue, the Problem Manager must wait until contact has been made with the originator before continuing.
7	The Problem Manager assesses the problem. This might require contacting the relevant expert domains that are dealing with the problem, e.g. SSC or OSD, to learn as much as possible about the problem. This will help the Problem Manager to determine the appropriate course of action.
8	The Problem Manager checks to see if the problem has already been recorded on the Problem database. If the Problem is already being dealt with, the Problem Manager will inform the originator of the existing problem and provide the contact details of the Problem Manager who is responsible for the problem.
9, 10	<p>If the problem does not already exist, the Problem Manager will prioritise it and record the problem on the Problem database. (see Section 8.5 for prioritisation)</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The Problem Manager is responsible for keeping the database updated with the actions and events taken throughout the life of the problem through to its closure.</p>
11	Most problems will arise via the incident management process, so an incident(s) will already exist for a problem. If there is the potential for more incidents to be logged with the HSH as a result of a problem, the Problem Manager will inform the HSH to create a Master Incident. The Master Incident will be used to capture the volume of incidents arising as a result of the problem. There is the potential for

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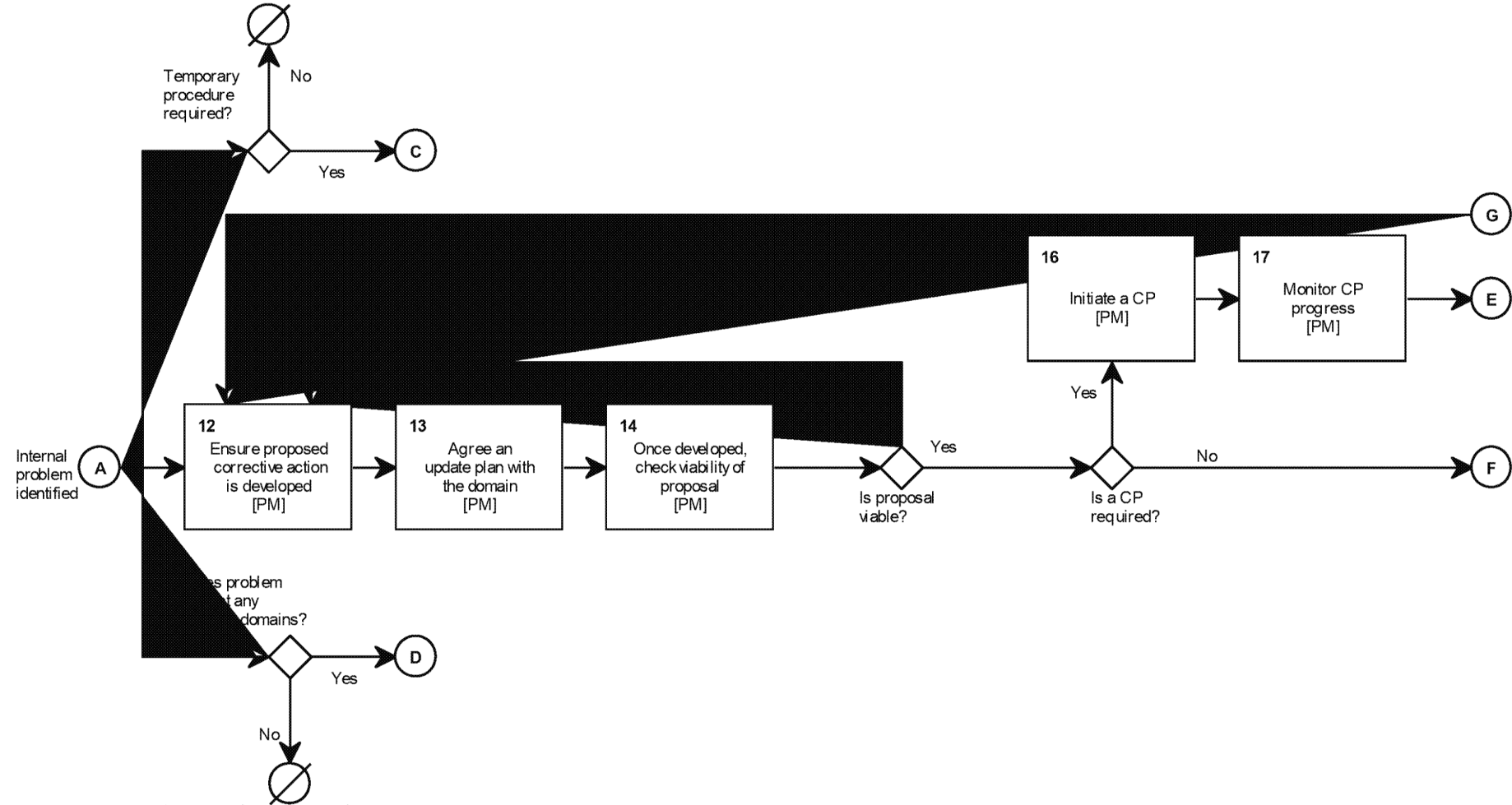
	<p>the priority of the problem to be raised if it is found that a high volume of incidents is arising and a solution is required more urgently.</p> <p>The Problem Manager will then make a decision as to whether or not the problem should be dealt with as an 'Internal' problem (Section 8.2) or as a 'Cross-Domain' problem, i.e. the problem impacts POCL (Section 8.3).</p>
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**Note:**

Escalation – Go to Section 8.4

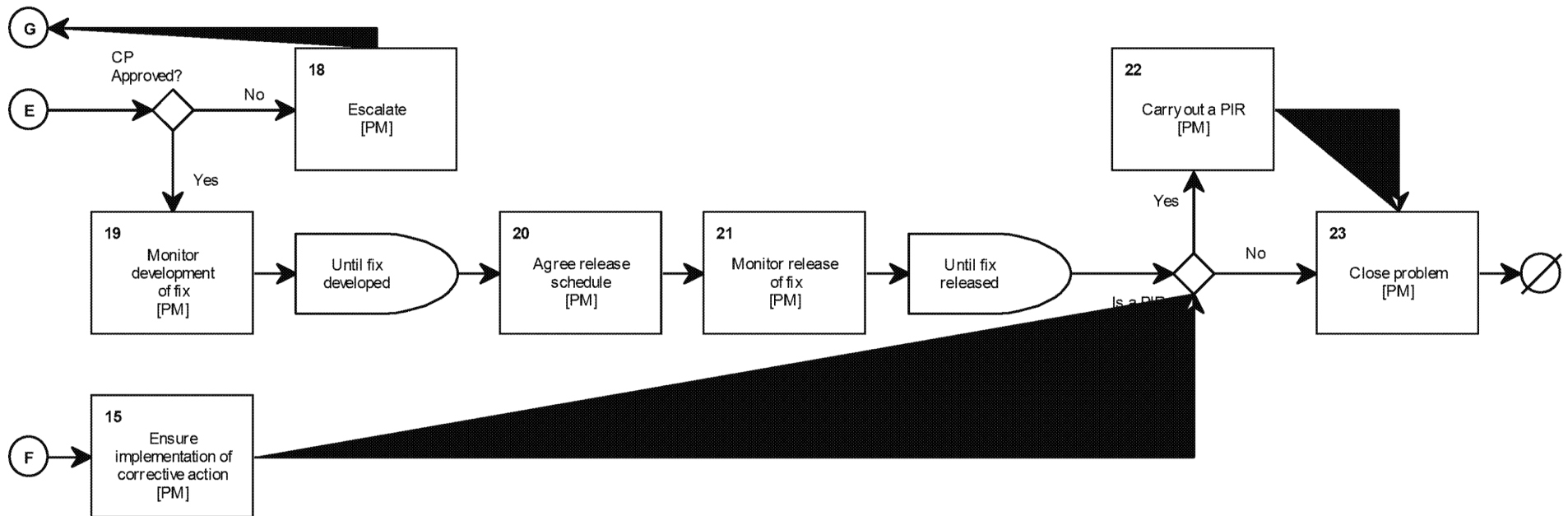
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**8.2.1 Internal Problem Management Description**

Process Steps	Action
12	Having prioritised (section 8.5) and logged the problem on the database, and determined that it is an internal problem, i.e. does not impact POCL, the Problem Manager ensures that the appropriate expert domain is developing proposed corrective action.
13	To keep up to date with the development of the proposal, the Problem Manager will agree an update schedule with the expert domain. The Problem Manager is then in a position to monitor the progress of the proposal and take action should the proposal be delayed.
14	Once a proposal has been developed, the Problem Manager will check the viability of it resolving the problem. If it is not viable, the proposal must be redeveloped.
15	Once a viable solution has been proposed, the Problem Manager decides if a Change Proposal (CP) [Ref.4] is required in order for the change to be developed and released. If a CP is required continue to Step 16.  If a CP is not required, the Problem Manager will ensure that the corrective action is implemented. Go to Step 22.

**Requirement for a CP**

16, 17, 18	The Problem Manager ensures that a CP is initiated [Ref.5] and monitors its progress through the Change Management process. If the CP is not approved, the problem will be escalated to aid the resolution process.
19	Once the CP has been approved, the Problem Manager monitors the development of the fix, ensuring that planned implementation targets are adhered to.
20, 21	Once the fix has been developed, the Problem Manager ensures that the release schedule [Ref.1] developed for the fix meets the requirements of the problem solution. Satisfied with the release schedule the Problem Manager will monitor its release into the live environment, to ensure that the expected targets are met.

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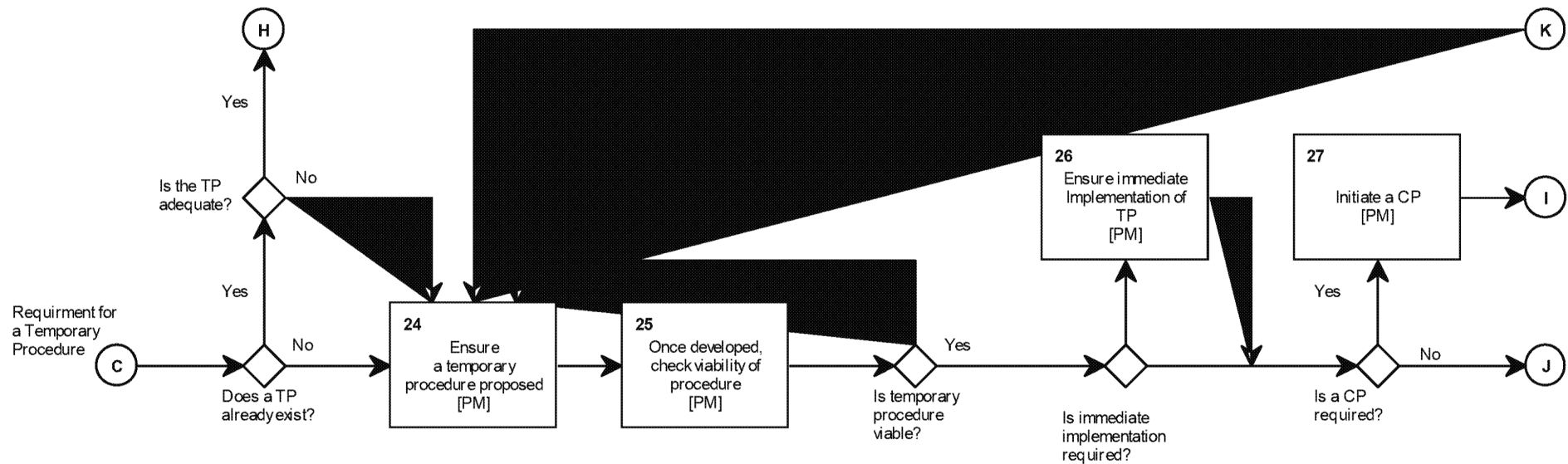
**Post Implementation Review and Closure**

22	If a review of the resolution of the problem is required, the Problem Manager will lead a Post Implementation Review (PIR). The review looks at the way the problem was resolved, from initial problem analysis through to the release of the problem. Any improvement opportunities arising from the review will be implemented for future problem resolution.
23	The PIR, if initiated, will be used as the closure authority for the problem. If a PIR is not used, the problem will be closed when the Problem Manager, in agreement with any other parties involved in the resolution process, agree that the closure criteria have been satisfied.

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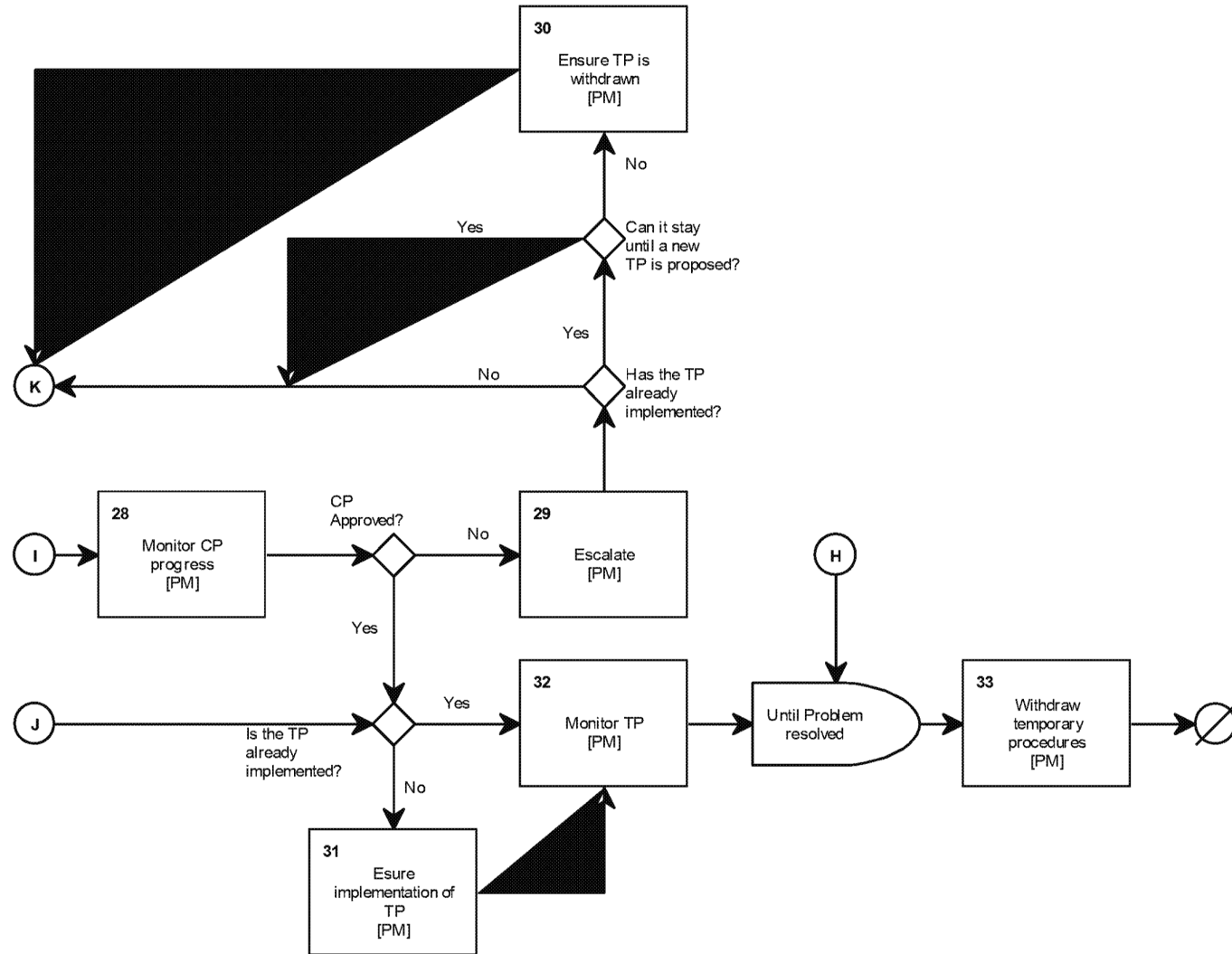
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8.2.2 Temporary Procedures



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Process Steps	Action
24, 25	<p>If a temporary procedure (TP) is in place, the Problem Manager will decide if the TP is adequate, i.e. does it resolve an incident associated to the problem, and if so, ensure there are no external impacts associated with the TP. If the TP is adequate, then go to Step 31.</p> <p>If the current TP is not adequate, the Problem Manager ensures that an alternative temporary procedure is developed.</p> <p>If there is no TP currently in place, the Problem Manager ensures that the appropriate parties propose a TP.</p> <p>Once the TP has been proposed, the Problem Manager checks that it allows associated incidents to be resolved. If not, the proposed TP must be redeveloped.</p>
26	<p>Once the TP is approved, the Problem Manager must decide if the problem requires that the TP be immediately implemented. If so, the PM ensures that measures are taken to release the TP into the live environment as soon as possible.</p> <p>If a Change Proposal is required continue to Step 27, else go to Step 31.</p>

**Requirement for a CP**

27, 28, 29, 30	<p>If the TP requires a Change Proposal (CP), the Problem Manager ensures a CP is initiated. The Problem Manager will subsequently monitor the CP through the Change Management process [Ref.5]. If there are any delays, or if the CP is rejected, the Problem Manager will escalate the problem.</p> <p>If the CP is rejected, and the TP has already been released due to the nature of the problem, the Problem Manager must decide if the TP can remain in place until a new TP is developed and approved, or whether it must be withdrawn.</p>
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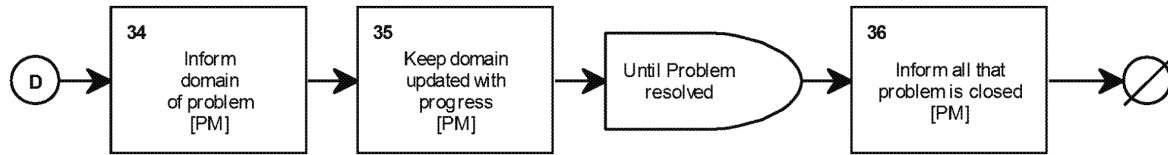
**Implement, Monitor and Close**

31, 32	The Problem Manager monitors the development and implementation of the temporary procedure, ensuring that planned targets are applied to.
33	The temporary procedure is withdrawn in parallel with the release of the problem solution.

Note: Escalation – See section 8.4

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**8.2.3 Internal Communication****8.2.3.1 Internal Communication Description**

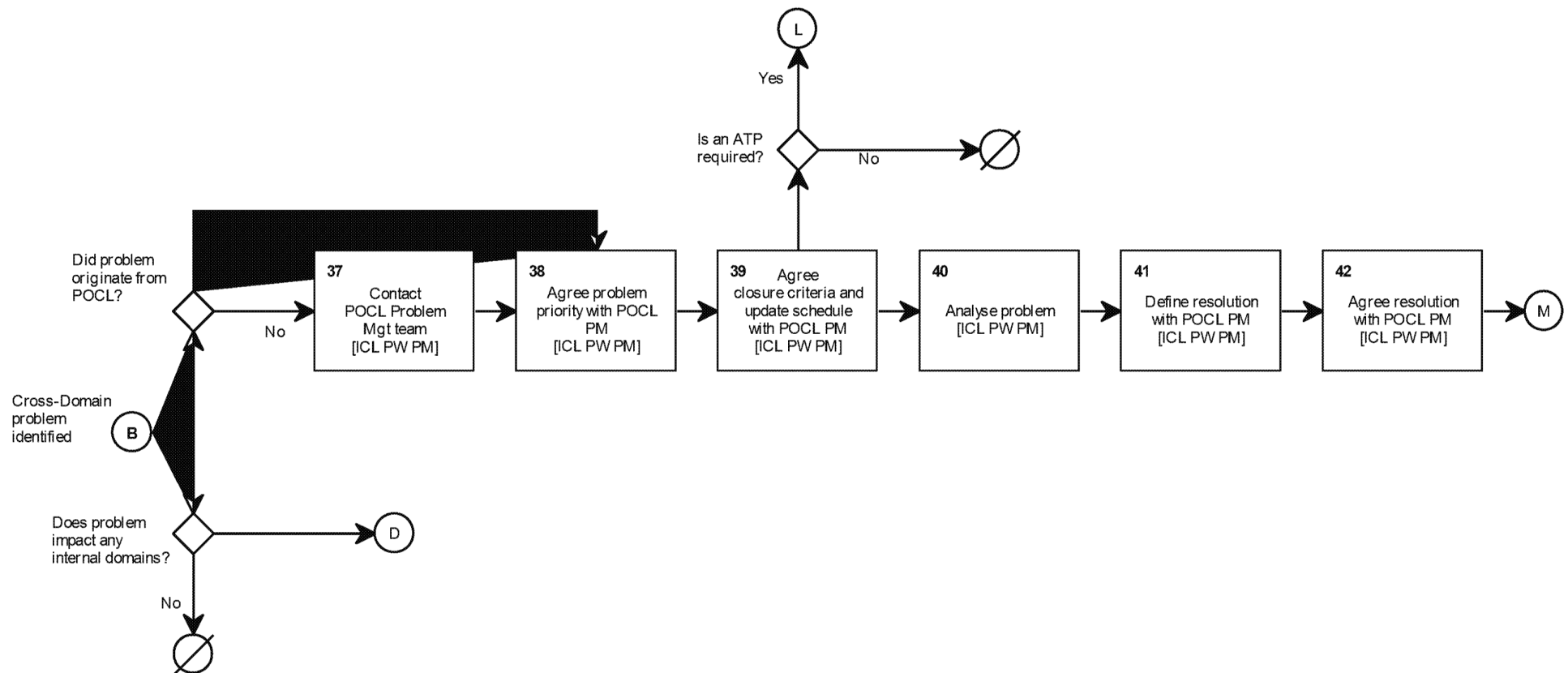
Process Steps	Action
34, 35, 36	The Problem Manager communicates with any internal domain that may be impacted by the problem, and keeps them updated with events of the problem resolution until the problem has been closed. This includes informing the HSH to close a Master Incident if one had been created once a problem has been closed.

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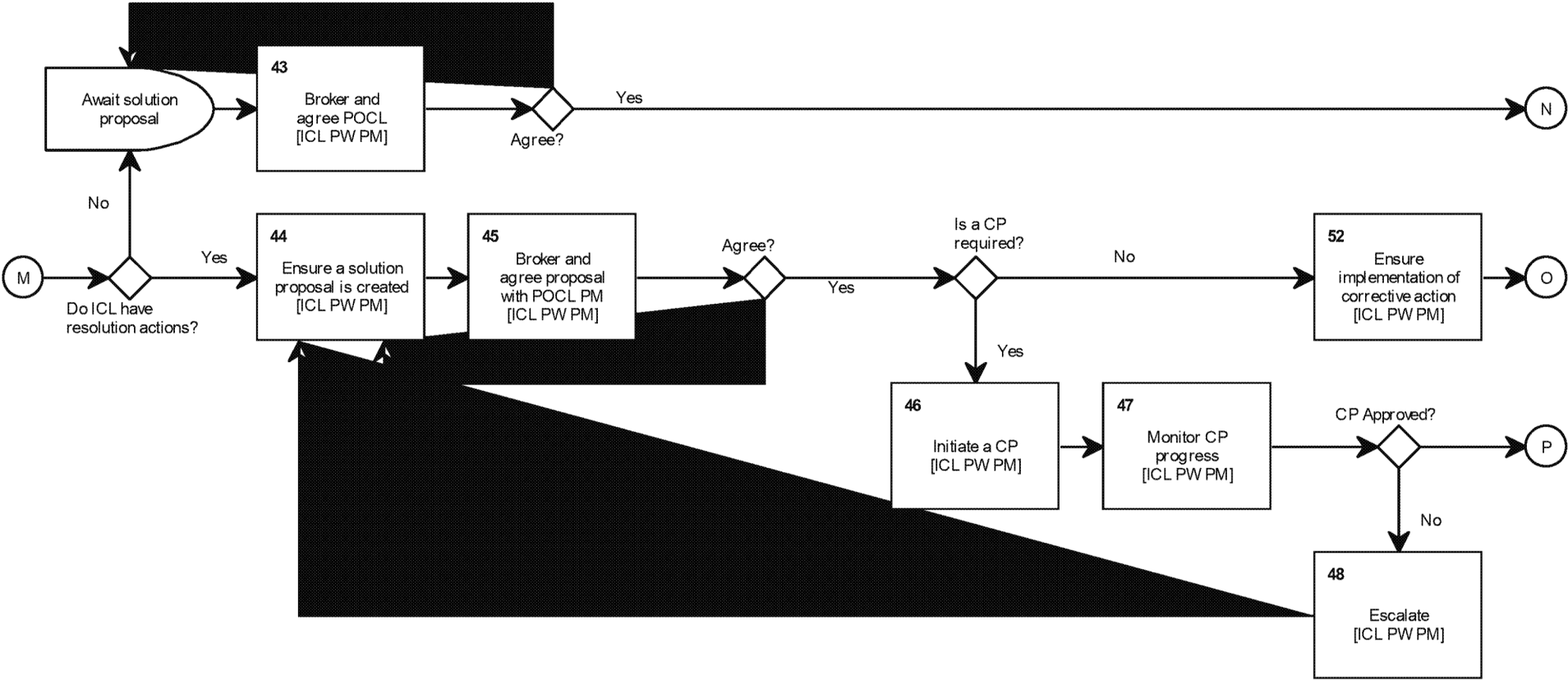
### 8.3 Cross-Domain Problem Management

Many problems raised within ICL Pathway will have an impact upon POCL. This section looks at the management of such Cross-Domain problems.



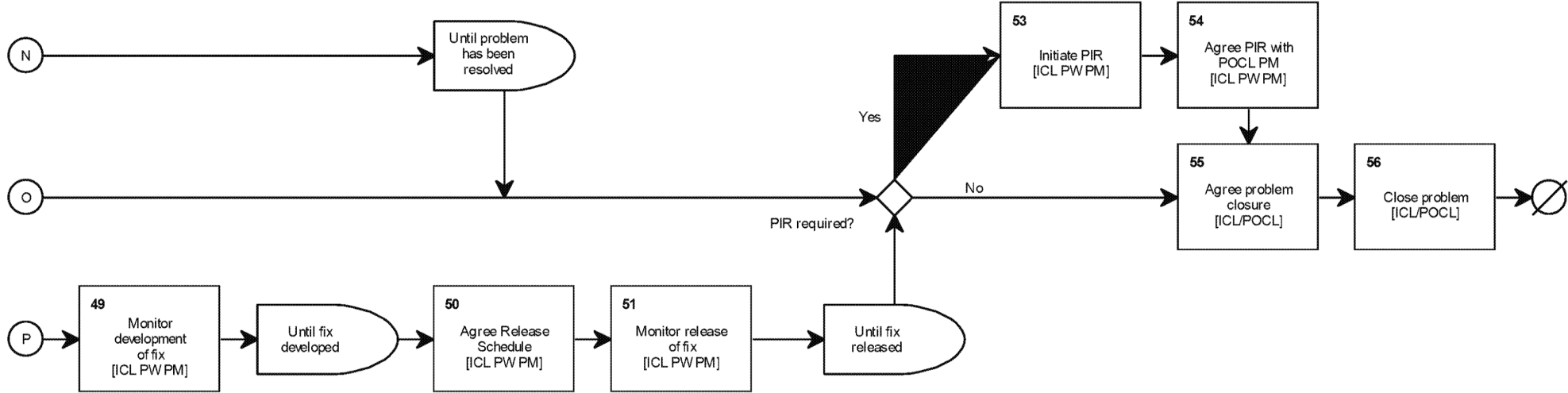
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### 8.3.1 Cross-Domain Problem Management Description

Process Step	Actions
37, 38	<p>If the ICL Pathway PM (ICL PW PM) has identified a problem that is felt to have cross-domain implications, the POCL Problem Management team will be contacted and notified of the problem.</p> <p>The nominated ICL Pathway and POCL Problem Managers then agree the priority (section 8.5) of the problem.</p> <p><b>(Note:</b> If the ICL PW PM has any doubts whether a problem has cross-domain implications, it should be progressed in accordance with cross-domain procedures until the situation is clarified.)</p> <p>If the problem was notified to ICL Pathway by the POCL Problem Manager (POCL PM), the ICL PW PM will contact the POCL PM to agree the priority of the problem.</p>
39	<p>The ICL Pathway and POCL Problem Managers decide upon the criteria for closure. This will be used to assess the proposed solution, and also to agree closure of the problem.</p> <p>It is also important that an update schedule is agreed between the Problem Managers to keep each other informed of progress on a regular basis.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If the Problem Managers decide that an ATP is required, see step 57.</p>
40	<p>The ICL PW PM analyses the problem to understand the resolution requirement that is needed and to determine which organisation is responsible for developing and implementing the solution. This may require discussions with the appropriate expert domains to understand what is required to resolve the problem.</p>
41, 42	<p>The ICL PW PM defines and agrees with the POCL PM the problem resolution requirements.</p> <p>If ICL Pathway has no problem resolution actions continue to step 43, else go to step 44.</p>

#### POCL responsible for resolving the problem

43	<p>Once a solution proposal has been developed by POCL, agree with the POCL PM the proposal's viability. The proposal must provide a technical solution and an implementation plan. Once agreement has been reached, progress updates should be communicated via the agreed update schedule until the problem has been resolved. Go to step 53.</p>
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**ICL Pathway responsible for resolving the problem**

44, 45	<p>The ICL PW PM ensures that the correct expert domain is developing a solution proposal. The proposal must provide a technical solution and an implementation plan. Once developed the proposal is brokered with the POCL PM until an agreement is reached.</p> <p>If a CP is required [Ref.5] to implement the solution continue to step 46, else go to step 52.</p>
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**ICL Pathway with actions to provide resolution to the problem****a) Requirement for a CP**

46, 47, 48	The ICL PW PM ensures that a CP is raised to approve the problem solution and monitor its progress through the Change Management process. If the CP is not approved, the problem will be escalated to aid the resolution process.
49, 50, 51	The ICL PW PM monitors development of the fix, following CP approval. Once the fix has been developed, the ICL PW PM ensures that the release schedule [Ref.1] developed for the fix meets the requirements of the problem solution, as agreed with the POCL PM. Once satisfied with the release schedule the ICL PW PM will monitor its release into the live environment, to ensure that the expected targets are met.

**b) CP not required**

52	The ICL PW PM ensures that the correct action is taken to implement the solution.
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**Post Implementation Review (PIR)**

53, 54	<p>Once the fix/corrective action has been implemented and released into the live environment, a PIR may be requested by either the POCL or ICL Pathway Problem Managers. Either party can request a PIR in order to review the way the problem was resolved, and to investigate ways in which the resolution process can be improved.</p> <p>If a PIR is not requested, go to step 55.</p> <p>The organisational Problem Manager that requests a PIR is responsible for initiating and chairing the review. Therefore, if the POCL PM requested a PIR, then the POCL PM is responsible for initiating and chairing it.</p> <p>The review will look at the way the problem was resolved, from initial problem analysis through to the release of the problem. Any improvement opportunities arising from the review will be implemented for future problem resolution.</p>
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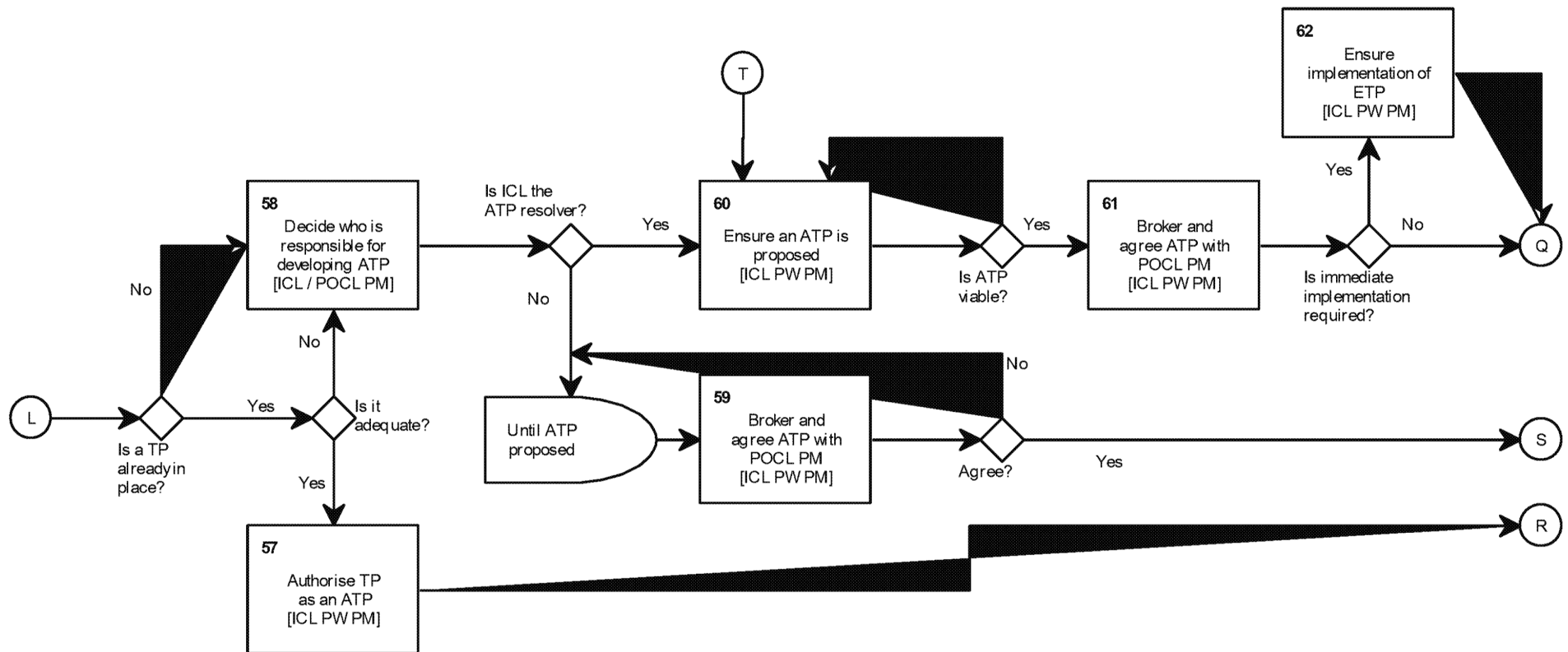
**Problem Closure**

55, 56	<p>If a PIR had taken place, it will be used as the authority to agree closure of the problem. This will be signed off both the ICL Pathway and POCL Problem Managers. Both the ICL Pathway and POCL Problem Managers will attach a copy of the minutes of the PIR to the problem record held on their respective Problem databases.</p> <p>If a PIR was not used, the ICL Pathway and POCL Problem Managers agree closure when the closure criteria have been satisfied. An email from each Problem Manager will be used as the authority to close the problem.</p> <p>Once closure has been agreed, the Problem Managers close the problem on their individual problem databases, and inform all other relevant parties that the problem has been closed.</p> <p>When closing the problem record on the problem database, the reasons for closure must be stated.</p>
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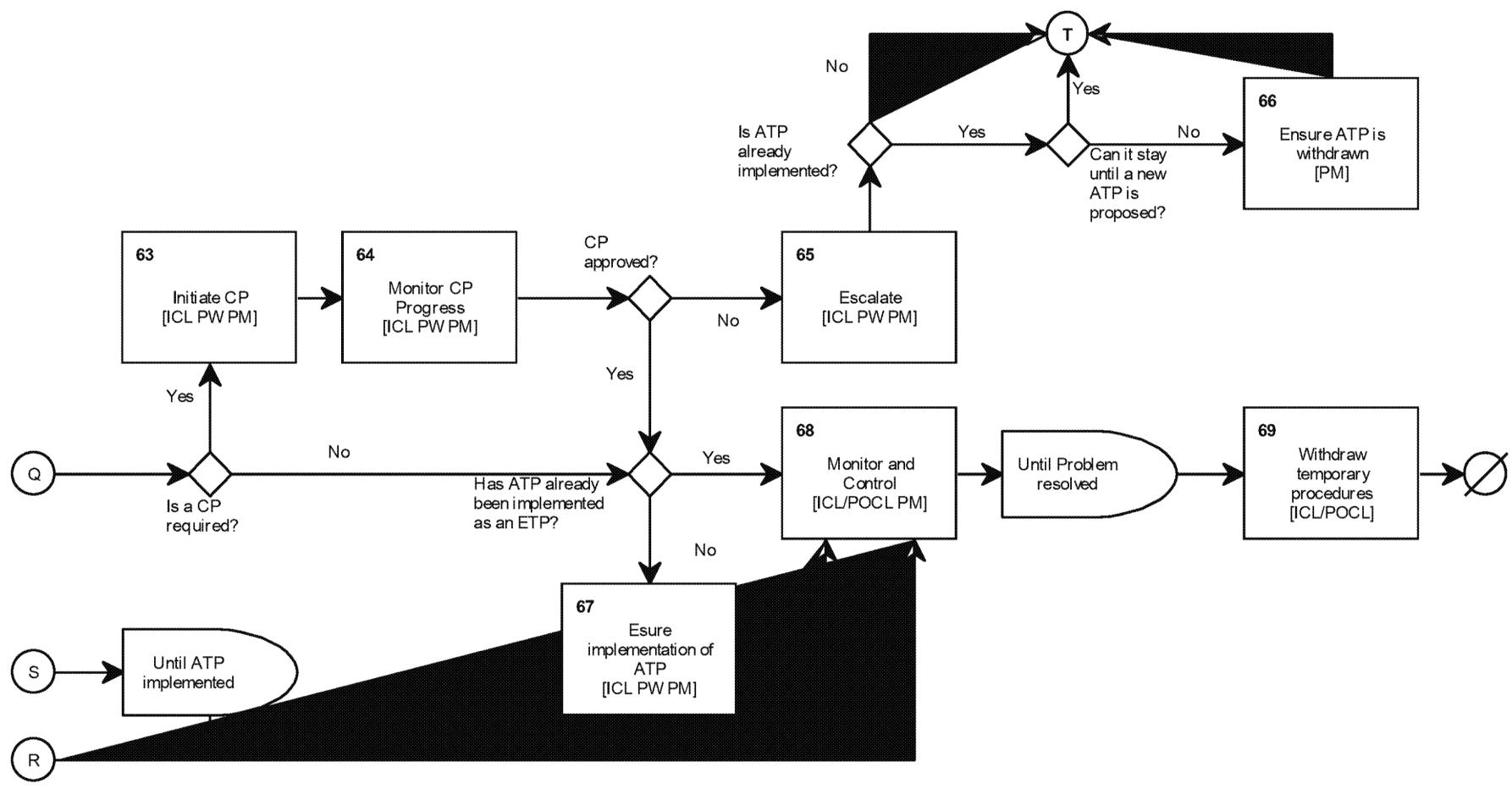
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8.3.2 Authorised Temporary Procedures



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**8.3.2.1 Authorised Temporary Procedures Description**

57, 58	<p>If a Temporary Procedure (TP) is not already in place then the ICL PW PM decides with the POCL PM which organisation is responsible for developing an Authorised Temporary Procedure (ATP).</p> <p>If a TP is already in place, it must be decided if the TP can be used as an ATP. If not a new ATP must be developed with POCL and ICL Pathway agreeing who is responsible for developing the ATP.</p> <p>If the TP can be used as the ATP then it will be authorised as an ATP. Go to Step 68.</p> <p>If a new ATP needs to be developed and ICL Pathway is the nominated ATP developer go to Step 60, else continue to Step 59.</p>
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**POCL responsible for developing the ATP**

59	<p>If ICL Pathway is not the nominated ATP developer then the ICL PW PM awaits the ATP proposal from POCL. Once agreement for the proposal is reached, POCL will take action to implement and release the ATP into the live environment. Go to Step 68.</p>
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**ICL Pathway responsible for developing the ATP**

60, 61, 62	<p>The ICL PW PM ensures an ATP is proposed. This may require enlisting the help of an expert domain to help decide the action that needs to be taken.</p> <p>Once a viable proposal has been developed, the ICL PW PM brokers and agrees it with the POCL PM.</p> <p>It must then be decided whether or not the ATP needs to be implemented immediately. If immediate implementation is required, the ICL PW PM must ensure that the ATP is implemented as an Emergency Temporary Procedure (ETP).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The Emergency procedure will be classified as an ATP once it has been brokered with POCL and, where required approved via a Change Proposal.</p>
63, 64, 65, 66	<p>If the ATP requires a Change Proposal (CP), the ICL PW PM ensures a CP is initiated. The ICL PW PM will subsequently monitor the CP through the Change Management process [Ref.5]. If there are any delays, or if the CP is rejected, the ICL PW PM will escalate the problem.</p> <p>If the CP is rejected, and the ATP has already been released (as an ETP) due to the nature of the problem, the Problem Manager must decide if the ETP can remain in place until a new ATP is developed and approved, or whether it must be withdrawn.</p>

**Implement, Monitor and Close**

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67, 68	The ICL PW PM monitors the development and implementation of the ATP, ensuring that planned targets are applied to.
69	Once the problem has been resolved, the ICL PW PM ensures that the ATP is removed in a co-ordinated manner with the release of the problem fix.

Note: Escalation – See section 8.4

## 8.4 Escalation

Process Steps	Action
70	<p>At any time during the Problem Management process, whether the problem is being resolved as a cross-domain problem or as an internal problem, the Problem Manager can escalate the problem to the next level of management.</p> <p>The process of escalation is intended to bring increasing levels of management attention and/or expertise to bear upon the resolution of a Problem. Escalation should be considered to be an exceptional resort.</p> <p>Escalation to a higher level will normally occur either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• when an issue is causing increased concern through time delay and consequent impact, or</li><li>• when it has not been possible to reach agreement on some aspect of the definition or management of the issue</li></ul>
71	<p>Escalate the problem to the next level of management.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If a cross-domain problem is being escalated, the ICL PW PM must ensure that the POCL PM is informed of the escalation so that escalation can take place within POCL to the same level.</p>
72	<p>The ICL Pathway Problem Manager will continue to manage the escalated problem through to its resolution, acting as the interface between the higher levels of management now involved via escalation and those who were already involved in the problem resolution.</p>

## 8.5 Problem Prioritisation

The prioritisation categories are as follows:

- ‘A’ Priority** Problems that directly impact, or have the potential to directly impact, POCL’s customers and clients.
- ‘B’ Priority** Problems that impact, or have the potential to impact, PO outlets
- ‘C’ Priority** POCL systems / ICL Pathway

The above priorities will be used to provide an **initial** priority to a problem upon its identification. It is this priority that will be logged upon the problem database when the problem is first entered into the system.

Once the problem is investigated and analysed more fully, if required, the priority of the problem can be raised or lowered.

### **Note:**

If the priority needed changing for a cross-domain problem, i.e. a problem that impacts both ICL Pathway and POCL, the change must first be agreed with POCL.

### General Priority Principles

Below is a guide to help understand the general priority principles.

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
A	Major impact, fix required for urgent implementation
B	Significant impact, fix required
C	Varied impact, consider fix or monitor