DEEP SPACE · COMMERCIAL

Tracking scope departures before they become variations

When a drawing revision, a site instruction, an RFI response or a latent condition moves the job away from what was contracted, log it in the Departures Register the moment it surfaces. The register carries the open exposure into the PCG, and when a departure firms up it raises the head contract or subcontract variation from the record — with the trail from “scope changed” to “money agreed” kept intact.

AUDIENCE
Commercial Managers · QS · Contract Administrators

APPLIES TO
Commercial → Departures Register

VERSION
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1. What this replaces

Until now Deep Space held only the *outputs* of change: the head contract variations in Variations (Client-Side) and the subcontract variations in Variations (Subcontractor-Side). The upstream event — the scope change itself — had no home, so nearly every commercial team ran a departures or change register in Excel, with a SUM at the top, reconstructed at month end.

The Departures Register is that spreadsheet, inside Deep Space. A departure is **pre-variation**: it is not a VO and may never become one. Some are absorbed, some are rejected, some firm up into formal variations. The register is the single ledger of everything that has moved from what was contracted, and it gives the Commercial Manager one live number — open exposure — instead of a formula.

It is deliberately a register, not a module. There is no RFQ-for-change workflow, no portal claim and no e-signature notice here. When a departure does firm up, it hands off to the existing variation registers, which own the variation from then on.

2. Finding the register

Open the **Commercial** group in the sidebar. **Departures Register** sits between Forecasting & Final Account and Financial Summary, marked **NEW**. It is project-scoped, so the project selector at the top of the page decides which departures are listed.

If the item shows a lock, or clicking it says *"You don't have permission to access this app, please contact your administrator"*, the role has not been given View on this feature yet. A workspace administrator opens the Roles page, picks the role, and switches on **View** for Commercial → Departures Register. Every role in every workspace starts with it off, so expect to switch it on for the commercial roles once.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> The feature row already exists on every role in every workspace — only the View tick is missing. There is nothing to sync or request from Deep Space; the workspace administrator can do it straight away.

3. Logging a departure, step by step

The form is one step and one required field. If logging a departure takes longer than typing a row into the spreadsheet did, it will not get used — so everything except the title can be refined later from the drawer.

1. **Open the register and choose "Log departure".**

   The blue button at the top right of the page. The form opens over the register, which stays where it was.

2 **Give it a title.**

The only required field. Write it the way it will be read on a register row six months from now: *"Fire damper relocation — Level 2 corridor"* rather than *"dampers"*.

3 **Say where it came from.**

Source type is one of:

- Drawing revision
- Site instruction
- RFI response
- Latent condition
- Consultant advice
- Client request
- Other

Source ref(s) is free text, comma-separated — *"SI-014, A-201 Rev D"*. It is searchable, so type references the same way each time.

4 **Put a number on it, if there is one.**

Estimated cost can be left blank. Blank means *nil* — not yet priced — and is never treated as $0: a nil departure is counted in the open count but left out of the exposure sums and the breakdown bar. **Est. time impact** is whole days, zero or more. **Cost code** is optional, from the workspace list; it also decides the markup a head contract variation starts with if the departure is later converted.

5 **Record who raised it and why it matters.**

Raised by defaults to you. **Description** is what changed against the contracted scope and why it matters — this is the text that becomes the variation's reason if the departure is converted, so it is worth a sentence.

6 **Log departure.**

The row appears at the top of the register with status **Open** and an auto-numbered reference — `DEP-<project>-0001`, counting up per project and never reused. The exposure strip recomputes at once; there is no need to reload.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> Estimates are meant to move. Every change to the estimated cost is written to the departure's Activity tab with the user and time, so a departure that drifted from $10k to $46k reads as a history, not a correction.

4. Reading the exposure strip

The three cards above the table are the register's headline. They cover the **whole project**: the filter chips and the search box narrow the table underneath, never the cards.

CARD	WHAT IT COUNTS
Open exposure	The estimated cost of every departure in Open, Under Review or Firming Up, added up. Nil departures are left out and reported as "*n* at nil". The bar underneath splits the figure by status.
Converted to date	The estimated cost of every departure that has been converted to a variation, with the count. Money that has become a variation and left the open figure.
Open programme impact	The estimated time impact of every open departure, added up in days. It is a straight sum: six five-day departures read as 30 days even if they would run concurrently.

> FOR THE RECORD
>
> Converted, Absorbed and Rejected departures leave every open figure the moment their status changes. A converted departure's three days are not lost — they are on its variation as the schedule impact — but they are no longer open exposure, so the third card does not show them.

The table below the strip has a filter chip per status (Absorbed and Rejected share one), each with a count; a search across title, reference and source refs; a Column/Filter menu to hide columns; and a totals row that sums Est. cost over the rows currently shown. Converted departures carry a chip with the variation reference on the Departure column, and departures linked to Risk & Opportunity carry the R&O reference.

5. Working a departure: statuses and the drawer

Clicking a row opens the departure in a drawer from the right; the register stays visible behind it. The drawer has three tabs. **Details** edits every field in place — change a value and it saves when you leave the field. **Attachments** holds documents and photos from Explorer, the same way other Commercial records do. **Activity** is the timeline: created, edits (including every estimate change), status changes, the conversion and the Risk & Opportunity link, each with who and when.

STATUS	MEANING	COUNTS AS OPEN
Open	Logged, not yet assessed.	Yes
Under Review	Being assessed or priced.	Yes
Firming Up	Likely to become a variation.	Yes
Converted	A variation has been raised from it. Read-only apart from attachments; cannot be deleted.	No
Absorbed	Will be carried within the existing scope and price.	No
Rejected	Not a departure after all, or not being pursued.	No

Changing status is the dropdown in the drawer header. A departure moves freely between the three open states. Marking it Absorbed or Rejected asks for confirmation, because it leaves the exposure figures; either can be reopened to Open later. **Converted** is reached only by converting (section 6) and cannot be undone.

Deleting is available from the row actions and the drawer for anything not yet converted. It asks for confirmation, removes the departure from the register and the exposure figures, and cannot be undone.

6. Converting a departure to a variation

When a departure firms up, choose **Convert to variation** from the row actions or the drawer. It is offered for Open, Under Review and Firming Up departures that have not already been converted; on anything else the button is greyed out and says why.

1. **Pick the target.**

   Raise Head Contract Variation (HVO) creates a record in Variations (Client-Side) against an Active head contract on the project — chosen for you when there is only one. **Raise Subcontract Variation (SVO)** creates a record in Variations (Subcontractor-Side) against a subcontract you pick; Draft subcontracts are not offered.

2. **Check the preview.**

   The dialog shows what the variation will be pre-filled with: description, value, cost code and time impact. Nothing here is typed; if a value is wrong, close the dialog and fix it on the departure first.

3 **Raise it.**

One click, one action. The variation is created, the departure flips to **Converted** with a chip showing the new variation's reference, the variation shows a chip pointing back at the departure, and the conversion is written to the Activity tab. From here the variation register owns the record.

WHAT CARRIES ACROSS	HEAD CONTRACT VARIATION	SUBCONTRACT VARIATION
Title	Description	Description
Description	Reason	Reason, with the source notes appended
Source type	Variation type: Client request and Site instruction become *Client Request*; Drawing revision, RFI response and Consultant advice become *Design Change*; Latent condition becomes *Site Condition*; Other stays *Other*.	
Source refs, raised by, date raised	Additional notes	Appended to Reason
Estimated cost	One priced scope line at that cost. Sell is cost plus the cost code's default markup, or equal to cost when the code has none.	Base value, and one scope line at that value.
Est. time impact	Schedule impact, in days	Not carried — subcontract variations have no time field.
Cost code	On the scope line	On the scope line
Attachments and linked documents	Carried	Carried
Starting status	Draft	Submitted — its provisional SOV goes onto the subcontract straight away.

A departure with a nil estimate still converts; the variation is simply created without a priced scope line, and the QS prices it in the variation's Scope & Pricing tab.

GOOD TO KNOW

The value a head contract variation shows in Variations (Client-Side) is its **sell** figure — the estimate plus markup. The register's Converted to date card shows the departure's **cost** estimate. Whenever the cost code carries a default markup the two numbers differ, and both are right.

WHY ONE VARIATION PER DEPARTURE

A departure converts to exactly one variation. A change that will be priced across several subcontractors is several departures, one per package — each keeps its own link. If a variation is later deleted, the departure does not quietly go back to looking open: its chip shows the link is broken, and the departure stays Converted.

7. Linking a departure to Risk & Opportunity

An open departure is a forecast risk before it is anything else. **Link to Risk & Opportunity**, from the row actions or the drawer, pushes it into the project's Risk & Opportunity register in Cost Forecasting with one click, so the QS does not enter the same risk twice.

It is offered for Open, Under Review and Firming Up departures that are not already linked — one link per departure. It creates one **Risk** entry with the departure's title as the description and its estimated cost as the **Most Likely** value; Worst and Best are left for the QS to value in Forecasting. A nil estimate still links, with Most Likely at $0. Both records carry a chip pointing at the other, and the link is written to the departure's Activity tab.

The link is one-way. Nothing edited in Forecasting writes back to the departure, and later changes to the departure's estimate do not update the Most Likely value — adjust it in Forecasting.

When a linked departure is **converted**, its Risk entry is flagged **Pending closure**, with the variation reference as the reason, and the flag is shown on the Risk & Opportunity tab and in the entry's drawer. It is a flag, not an automatic close: the exposure is now carried by the variation, and the QS confirms the closure in Forecasting so nothing is counted twice.

KNOWN LIMIT

Today the Risk & Opportunity register's Most Likely value does not feed the forecast EAC. It appears in the WIP report's **Margin incl R&O** column and in the forecast snapshot bridge. Linking a departure puts its exposure in front of whoever reads those, but the per-cost-code EAC and variance in Cost Forecasting are unchanged until that integration is built.

8. Exporting the register

Export, at the top right, writes the rows currently shown — after the status chip and the search — to an Excel workbook or a CSV file. The columns match the table: reference, title, source type and refs, raised by and date, estimated cost, time impact and status. Nil estimates export as blank cells, not zeros, so a SUM over the column still means what it says.

9. Known limits

LIMIT	WHAT TO EXPECT
View is the only permission that gates	A role either sees the register or does not. The create, edit, delete and approve ticks on the role row are recorded but not yet enforced, so anyone who can open the register can log, edit, convert and delete. A read-only role for project managers is a follow-up.
Source references are text	Refs are free text, not links to the RFI, instruction or drawing record. They are searchable, so the register can still answer “everything logged against SI-014” — as long as the reference was typed the same way each time.
Estimates do not follow the link to R&O	Most Likely is set once, when the link is made. Re-estimating the departure afterwards does not move it.
Time impact is not carried to subcontract variations	Subcontract variations have no schedule field, so the departure’s days stay on the departure. Head contract variations receive them as schedule impact.
Converted is final	A converted departure cannot be reopened or deleted. If the variation was raised in error, deal with the variation in its own register and log a fresh departure; the original will show its link as broken rather than pretending to be open.
Money is shown in AUD	The register formats money the same way the two Variations registers do — in Australian dollars — regardless of the project’s location setting.