SUMMARY FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Before you give an agent a job near a critical control

An agent can carry evidence faster than a person. It cannot be present at the workface, be competent in law or answer for a release. So the useful question is which rung of authority it holds, for which function, and who can take that rung away at two in the morning.

The decision

RECOMMENDATION Adopt a ladder of five rungs: observe, assemble, flag, recommend, release. Grant each rung for one function at a time, in a signed charter. Never grant the fifth. Before any rung above the second, require a trial against your current practice and against plain fixed rules on the same cases.

Why this test

FACT A BCG paper of October 2026 reports 37 agents in six layers with no human employees, trading on prediction markets. Its central triage agent processed escalations every 8 hours. Its authors call their lessons emerging hypotheses.[1]

INFERENCE A wrong bet in that experiment costs money and can be corrected at the next cycle. A wrong release at a conveyor cannot. A decision that must be made in 10 minutes would wait up to 48 times its deadline in an 8-hour queue.

Five findings

1. The law already names a person. FACT Under the EU AI Act, a deployer of a high-risk system must assign oversight to people with the competence, training and authority to exercise it.[2] British law requires a risk assessment wherever AI affects health and safety at work.[5]

2. Oversight decays. FACT A 2010 review of the research found complacency and automation bias in novices and experts alike, and found that training or instructions do not prevent the bias.[11]

3. Agreement is cheap. INFERENCE Three summaries that cite one work order are one piece of evidence. Agents multiply summaries.

4. A rule often does the job. INFERENCE Many handover checks need an exact match on identity, date and a required field. A fixed rule does that, and it fails in ways people can predict.

5. Small trials prove little. FACT Eight clean cases still allow a true miss rate of up to 31%.[13]

The short version

Let an agent read, compare and warn, once a trial on your own records shows it beats plain rules. Keep verification, restart and every staffing decision with named people. Write the grant down, test the night without it, and be ready to take it back.

© 2026 Riskopilot · riskopilot.com · contact@riskopilot.com · CC BY-ND 4.0

SUMMARY FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Five rungs, and who grants each one

EXHIBIT A

The ladder of agent authority around a critical control

RUNG	WHAT THE AGENT MAY DO	GRANTED BY	PROOF REQUIRED FIRST
1. Observe	Read approved copies of shift notes, work orders, rosters and verification records.	The owner of each information source, for a fixed period.	A list of sources, with what is excluded and why.
2. Assemble	Set records side by side with origin and age. Show contradictions. Decide nothing.	The operating owner of the function.	An offline replay on past handovers, scored against reference answers.
3. Flag	Send a bounded notice to a named duty holder and deputy on an approved channel.	The site director, with the technical authority.	Shadow operation, a response deadline and a manual fallback the night shift has used.
4. Recommend	Propose an action, with the evidence and what is unknown.	The executive committee, function by function.	A measured gain over fixed rules, and a check that people still challenge the output.
5. Release	Change a permit, clear an alarm, sign a verification, restart work.	Nobody.	None is sufficient. A named, competent person decides.

RECOMMENDATION Riskopilot proposal. The ladder is a management method. It has not been tested against injury outcomes.

What to sign

RECOMMENDATION One charter per agent and per function, naming the rung, the sources, the operating owner, the person who can switch it off on each shift and the fallback.

A 90–day trial on one handover workflow, with three arms: current practice, fixed rules, and rules plus the agent.

A rule that no post is removed on the strength of an agent until a duty-coverage review has been run on the busiest shift.

What to refuse

RECOMMENDATION An agent whose supplier can change the model without notice and a replay of your acceptance cases.

A business case that counts minutes saved and names no protective duty.

A dashboard, an adviser and a board paper that agree and all cite the same record.

Any design in which an urgent warning waits for a central queue.

A trial with no arm for plain rules.

By Bruno Hounkpati, CEO and former VP HSE. Gold numbers and page numbers refer to the full report, “What an agent may decide”, Riskopilot Research, November 2026.

© 2026 Riskopilot · riskopilot.com · contact@riskopilot.com · CC BY-ND 4.0

SUMMARY FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Dates, duties and the next 90 days

Dates that changed in 2026

FACT An EU regulation published on 24 July 2026 moved the application of the AI Act's high-risk requirements. They apply from 2 December 2027 for the uses listed in Annex III, and from 2 August 2028 for AI that is a safety component of a product covered by EU product law.[3] The earlier dates were 2 August 2026 and 2 August 2027.

FACT The new EU Machinery Regulation applies from 20 January 2027. It places safety components that use machine learning with self-evolving behaviour among the categories that need third-party conformity assessment.[4]

INFERENCE The delay moves a compliance date. It does not move the duty an employer already has to assess and control the risk of what it deploys.[5] An agent that monitors or evaluates workers, or allocates tasks from their behaviour, falls in an Annex III category.[2] Ask counsel to classify each use. This report is not legal advice.

Five questions for the next meeting

RECOMMENDATION Which agents already read safety records in our operations, and who approved the access?

For each, which rung does it hold today, in writing?

Who on the night shift can switch it off, and have they done so once?

When the model last changed, who replayed the acceptance cases?

Which post has been reduced, or is planned to be, on the strength of an agent?

The 90-day plan

DAYS	WHAT HAPPENS
1 to 15	Choose one asset family and both shift types. Consult workers and contractors on purpose, access, corrections and retention. Write the charter at rung 1.
16 to 30	Offline replay. The same frozen handovers go through three arms. Two independent experts set the reference answers first.
31 to 60	Shadow operation. The agent sees live inputs and has no effect on work. The existing process continues unchanged.
61 to 90	Decision by the executive committee: adopt at a stated rung, extend, restrict or withdraw.

What you will know after 90 days

Whether the agent catches contradictions that fixed rules miss on your own records, what it costs in reviewer time and nuisance notices, and whether your night shift can work without it. You will not know an injury rate. No trial of this length can show one.

Cost

We give no figure. The main costs are the time of two experts to set reference answers, paid time for the workers consulted, and the supplier's support for a replay environment.

© 2026 Riskopilot · riskopilot.com · contact@riskopilot.com · CC BY-ND 4.0