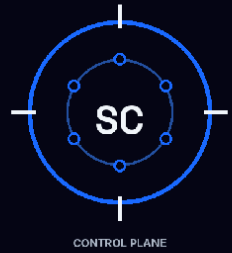


SESSION CUSTODY

EXPLAINER SERIES



PRINCIPLE EXPLAINER

Govern: The Objective Layer Autonomous Work Is Missing

The operating objective layer for accountable autonomous sessions.

GOVERN • CONTROL • ENFORCE



GOVERN THE SESSION, NOT THE REQUEST.

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Govern: The Objective Layer Autonomous Work Is Missing

The operating objective layer for accountable autonomous sessions.

The Problem of Objective Drift

Autonomous work becomes difficult to supervise when capability operates without a durable institutional objective. A person can receive an instruction, interpret its business meaning, notice when conditions change, and recognize when the work has moved outside its purpose. An agent can move faster, but speed does not preserve that meaning by itself.

Govern is therefore the first principle. Before covered consequential work begins, the enterprise needs a machine-maintained answer to what the work is for, who owns it, what authority it may draw upon, which systems and action classes are in scope, what economic limits apply, and what conditions end or suspend the work.

The objective is not descriptive metadata. It is authority-bearing session state that determines which policy, approvals, tools, delegation, economics, and evidence requirements can apply.

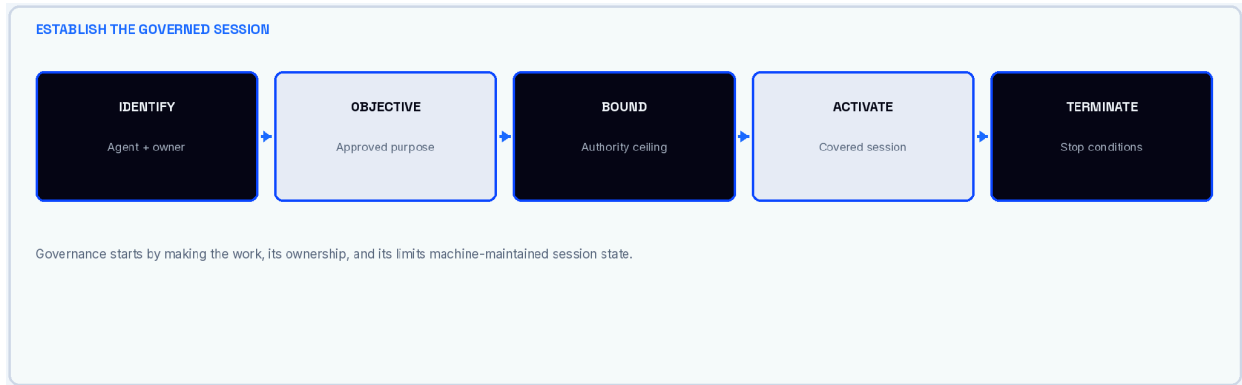


Figure 1. A governed session begins with accountable identity, objective, authority boundaries, and explicit lifecycle conditions.

From Instruction to Objective Contract

A prompt or task description can express intent, but consequential enterprise work requires a more durable form. The objective contract binds the requested outcome to accountable identity, approved purpose, scope, authority ceiling, economic envelope, and stop conditions. It remains associated with the session as the work crosses tools, runtimes, approvals, and delegated tasks.

Session element	What it establishes
Agent and owner	The acting system, accountable organization, sanctioned purpose, environment, and operating state.
Objective contract	The work to be accomplished, success conditions, prohibited scope, and termination conditions.

Session element	What it establishes
Authority ceiling	The maximum institutional reach available to the session before narrower policy and context are applied.
Tool and target scope	The covered capabilities, systems, action classes, and execution paths relevant to the objective.
Economic envelope	Budget, quota, retry, fan-out, and escalation conditions that can affect continuation.
Lineage root	The parentage and evidence reference from which delegated work must remain traceable.

Why Existing Systems Contribute but Do Not Own the Whole Objective

Identity systems can establish the actor. Workflow systems can establish a ticket, task, or approval. GRC systems can establish policy and obligation. FinOps can establish budget facts. Runtime platforms can establish local capabilities. The governed objective connects those facts for the current work without replacing their native owners.

This relationship prevents a common failure: treating access as purpose. An agent may have technical reach to a system that the current objective does not require. It may possess a tool that is outside the approved action class. A workflow may contain a prior approval that does not cover the current target, amount, or delegated path. Govern establishes the session frame against which those distinctions can be evaluated.

Objective Continuity Through Delegation

When a parent session delegates work, the child objective must be a bounded continuation, not a fresh source of institutional authority. The downstream constraint bundle carries the child objective, parent authority ceiling, applicable policy binding, budget boundary, exception scope, lineage, and revocation reference. The child can use different tools or a different runtime, but it cannot gain broader authority solely because the work moved.

Governance Without Micromanagement

The objective layer does not prescribe every reasoning step or fixed route. Agents can plan, retrieve, revise, and coordinate within their roles. Governance becomes operative at the transitions where the objective and current authority determine whether a covered consequence is admissible.

Govern answers four continuing questions: what work may exist, who is accountable, what limits define its authority, and what conditions require the session to narrow, pause, escalate, or end.

OPERATING BOUNDARY

These explainers describe the Session Custody product and category at a conceptual and operational level. Coverage depends on supported sources, configured mappings, authenticated integrations, and declared enforcement paths. The architecture does not assume a universal policy language, permanent authorization, human approval for every action, or replacement of the systems that own native enterprise facts and outcomes.