

MANUFACTURING

Less chasing, clearer production handovers

Alongside People / Advice and hands-on implementation

A practical AI paper for Melbourne manufacturers.

If AI experiments are happening around the business but you are unsure which ones deserve investment, we can help establish what good looks like for your operation. We work with your people to find a useful next move; the handover below illustrates one possibility.

The useful starting point. Recover capacity by making production documentation easier to assemble and verify. Start with a handover or review pack that carries the right facts, sources and unresolved questions to the next person. Keep safety, quality release and production authority with the people who hold it.

The work between the systems

A production planner may have the order in one system, an approved drawing in another and the latest supplier clarification in an email. Preparing a handover requires finding the documents, checking their revisions and asking whether an unresolved issue has actually been resolved. A neatly written summary can still be wrong if it joins information from different versions.

Investigate these possible bottlenecks through one job's planning and handover. Ask the receiving supervisor which facts need chasing. Observe how engineering changes, partial information and urgency affect preparation.

AI might prepare a source-linked pack and identify gaps. A document register or required fields may help more. Choose the approach that makes information dependable with less preparation.

This paper proposes administrative documentation support. It does not propose autonomous machine control, altered safety settings, generated operating instructions, maintenance authorisation or product release. An assistant must not convert a suggestion into an approved technical decision.

Safety duties remain part of the setting

WorkSafe Victoria describes employer duties to provide safe plant, safe systems of work, and necessary information, instruction, training and supervision. Delegating document preparation does not transfer those duties to a tool. [WorkSafe general duties](#).

WorkSafe's consultation guidance explains consultation with affected employees and health and safety representatives. Changes to a handover may change how people receive information or organise work, so involve those users and the organisation's safety owners rather than designing solely for the planner. The applicable duty and process should be checked for the actual change. [Consultation: safety basics](#).

The Plant compliance code offers practical guidance for relevant Victorian duties and is not itself mandatory. Check the controlled source and its applicability to the actual work. This paper does not use the code to design or certify machinery. [Plant compliance code](#).

These are official Victorian resources. Their presence in a document does not establish legal compliance, engineering verification or safety approval.

A fictional workflow: prepare the job review pack

A fictional Melbourne component manufacturer holds a planning review before starting an order. Its planner gathers the approved drawing reference, purchase-order details, material-document references and open supplier questions. Engineering and quality staff verify the pack before the supervisor accepts the handover.

The proposed assistant reads a restricted set of approved records and prepares a draft index and factual summary. Each item names its source and revision. It flags mismatched order references, missing attachments and contradictory dates. It does not infer that a material is suitable or that a deviation has been accepted.

A document controller checks source status. Engineering resolves technical questions; quality retains acceptance authority; the planner completes the administrative handover. The initial trial uses synthetic orders and documents, including deliberately stale versions.

The pilot never changes the production schedule, bill of materials, equipment parameters or inspection result. It cannot create a compliance certificate. A missing approval remains missing. This fictional example describes a design to test, not our delivery history.

What would make this worth continuing?

The following is a decision aid for the fictional trial, not an observed result. Agree the limits with the people responsible before testing.

- **Accepted result:** An accepted job review pack with correct identifiers, source revisions and missing approvals visible.
- **Who judges it:** Planning, document control and the engineering or quality staff receiving the pack.
- **Hold and return to the manual route when:** An approval is invented, a superseded drawing is presented as current or the draft issues a technical or safety instruction.
- **Evidence for another step:** Compare total preparation and verification effort for similar jobs, including corrections and supervisor questions.

In a fictional revision check, the index contains drawing revision B while the controlled register identifies revision C as current. Hold the affected item and ask document control to resolve it. The assistant cannot merge the drawings or infer that the difference is harmless.

Use the [one-workflow worksheet](#) to record the agreed question, evidence and next decision.

Five states with manufacturing evidence gates

Understand. Observe one pack being assembled and used. Separate search and formatting effort from engineering and quality judgement. Record authoritative sources, document ownership and the manual checks. The benefit hypothesis is less searching and fewer incomplete handovers. The gate is a named owner, agreed scope, baseline and permission to use the chosen records. If revision status is unclear, fix that before adding AI.

Try. Draft a pack from synthetic or explicitly approved examples. Include a superseded drawing, mismatched part number and absent approval. The benefit hypothesis is quicker factual assembly. The gate is complete source traceability, correct identifiers and revision handling, visible gaps and acceptable review effort. One plausible invented approval is grounds to stop and correct the design.

Repeat. Have a different planner use the instructions across more representative order types. Include incomplete supplier material. The benefit hypothesis is consistent handovers between people and shifts. The gate is repeatable performance without silently dropping hard cases, plus a manual process that the receiving team understands. Record exclusions openly rather than reporting only easy jobs.

Operate. After authorisation, connect the limited documentation workflow with access controls, logging, a backup owner and change review. The benefit hypothesis is less coordination effort in routine preparation. The gate is demonstrated recovery and explicit acceptance of the ongoing control workload. A drafting process remains outside machine control and quality-release authority.

Improve. Review errors, delays, user experience and actual capacity recovered. A better required field or clearer document ownership may outperform a more capable model. The gate is a recorded decision to retain, revise, expand or retire, with engineering and safety review where the next change requires it. Expansion needs fresh permission and evidence.

Our Understand / Try / Repeat / Operate / Improve framework is an original discussion aid. It is not a manufacturing certification, validated scoring system or substitute for established quality and safety practices.

A proposed 30-day pilot

Days 1-7: map one documentation handover, identify document owners and record a baseline. Confirm information permission and technical boundaries. Days 8-14: prepare paired manual and assisted packs offline, then review every identifier and source. Days 15-23: repeat with another planner and exercise stale-source, missing-attachment and tool-outage cases. Days 24-30: review results with planning, engineering, quality and affected users.

The decision may be to improve document control before continuing. The month is a suggested learning period, not a delivery promise or justification to skip approval. It cannot establish performance for all products, shifts or abnormal production conditions.

Measure the accepted handover

Use total preparation and verification effort per accepted pack as the primary measure. Separate active effort from waiting for a supplier or engineer. Record first-pass completeness, follow-up questions and reasons for rejection. Compare similar jobs and retain the original manual examples.

Guardrails include wrong identifiers, wrong revisions, omitted approvals, unsupported technical statements and inspection burden. Confirm that the pack's layout makes uncertainty easy to see. A reduction in planner effort must not create greater checking effort for engineering or the supervisor.

Include licences, configuration, integration, training and document maintenance in cost. Agree thresholds before the pilot. Any invented safety instruction, approval or release statement triggers a hold and review; the affected job continues under established manual controls. Do not infer reduced scrap, improved output or shorter lead times without evidence from those outcomes.

Recovered capacity may help an unresolved order. It does not justify faster production or assumed labour savings.

Permissions, fallback and our role

Begin with read access to the selected document set and write access only to a draft workspace. Keep original records immutable to the assistant. It cannot approve deviations, place orders, edit controlled documents or send instructions to machines or workers.

If a source becomes unavailable or revisions conflict, hold the pack and identify the item needing human resolution. Return to the existing manual checklist. Before routine use, ask a backup planner to reconstruct a pack from the originals and reconcile a failed run without duplicating records.

Our team can help follow the work, assess alternatives and implement the agreed documentation improvement. We can connect authorised information, make evidence and uncertainty visible, define checks and prepare a handover. Your organisation retains engineering, quality, safety and operational authority. Production-system changes and ongoing support need separately agreed scope.

Bring us a handover that repeatedly causes chasing or rework. We can help establish whether better information and a bounded assistant would make the work easier to rely on.

Sources inspected 3 October 2026. Recheck source versions and applicable requirements before use.

If you are already trying AI and are unsure what deserves further investment, [tell us what you have tried and what you want to improve](#). We can help find the starting point together.

Read the structured HTML edition: alongsidepeople.com/resources/ai-for-manufacturing