Unified Decision Construct (UDC)

A Lightweight Decision-Captioning Aid for Preserving Institutional Decision Rationale Under Uncertainty

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What UDC Does (One Line)

UDC captures *why a decision was reasonable at the time it was made*—before hindsight rewrites the story.

The Logic (UDC in Plain Language)

Organizations often learn from events by reviewing outcomes after the fact.
But the highest-risk decisions are made **before** full information exists.

UDC is built on a simple logic chain:

1. **DUU exists** (Decision Under Uncertainty)

2. **A decision must still be made** under time compression

3. **UDC captures the Institutional Decision Rationale (IDR)** at the moment it is exercised

4. **That preserved rationale becomes Continuity of Reasoning (COR)**—a stable record of logic used under pressure

UDC does not decide.
UDC documents decision logic so future review reflects the *real* decision environment.

Key Terms (Public Definitions)

DUU (Decision Under Uncertainty)
Conditions where information is incomplete or ambiguous and time pressure forces action.

IDR (Institutional Decision Rationale)

The contemporaneous, good-faith reasoning explaining why a decision was taken under DUU—what was known, unknown, assumed, constrained, and prioritized.

COR (Continuity of Reasoning)

The preserved chain of rationale that carries institutional decision logic across shifts, leadership transitions, and post-event scrutiny—without outcome bias.

Trigger and Validator: HILP

HILP (High-Impact, Low-Probability) signals are used in UDC as both a trigger and a validator:

- **Ignitor:** "This may become high-impact if we wait."

- **Validator:** "This meets the threshold for DUU documentation even if probability is uncertain."

HILP does not force action; it justifies why UDC capture is appropriate.

Particle Functionality (Operational Behavior)

UDC is intentionally small and modular—a *decision caption* that can be recorded quickly.

Each UDC entry functions as a **decision particle**:

- **Atomic:** one decision, one rationale, one authority context

- **Timestamped:** anchored to the moment the call is made

- **Chainable:** multiple particles form a coherent decision trail during evolving incidents

- **Portable:** usable within logs, situation reports, or continuity documentation

This particle approach prevents over-documentation while preserving the decision trail.

What UDC Captures (Minimum Viable Fields)

A UDC capture is brief and structured:

1. Incident Name (anchor)

2. Decision Statement

3. DUU / HILP Basis

4. Knowns / Unknowns

5. Constraints (time, resources, jurisdiction, dependencies)

6. Options Considered (at least two when feasible)

7. Rationale (IDR)

8. Authority Context

9. Intended Review Window

This is sufficient to preserve IDR without becoming an AAR or policy memo.

Synergy of Disciplines (EM + BC + RM)

UDC works across disciplines **without blending them**:

- **Emergency Management (EM):** operational context, incident tempo, response constraints, public safety thresholds

- **Business Continuity (BC):** continuity objectives, minimum service levels, recovery dependencies

- **Risk Management (RM):** uncertainty framing, consequence reasoning, option trade-offs

UDC serves as the shared capture surface where these perspectives align into preserved institutional rationale.

What UDC Is — and Is Not

UDC is:
A non-directive, lightweight method to preserve decision rationale under DUU.

UDC is not:
Command authority, operational doctrine, compliance enforcement, performance scoring, or an after-action review.

UDC protects **context**, not outcomes.

Closing Statement

Decisions made under uncertainty should be understood in the uncertainty that existed when they were made.
UDC preserves that understanding through IDR and COR.

Document Authority & Control

This document constitutes the official public reference version of the **Unified Decision Construct (UDC)**, authored by **Dmitri Dits**.

UDC is a non-directive, decision-captioning aid intended to preserve institutional decision rationale under conditions of uncertainty.

This document may be referenced, cited, or adapted for internal organizational use, provided its non-operational and non-prescriptive intent is preserved.

Record Custodianship
UDC records, when implemented, are maintained under applicable Emergency Management (EM), Business Continuity (BC), and Risk Management (RM) governance structures.

Executive Acknowledgment
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Version Control

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