

Repair and Procurement Decision Workbook

Keep the required service, the real costs, and the evidence for each claim on the same page.

Author: Omar Haddad, materials and procurement lead · 17 October 2026 · Edition 1



Generated illustration, not a product test, repair demonstration, or record of an institute workshop.

1. Define the need without choosing the purchase

“Order twelve new items” is a solution disguised as a requirement. Begin instead with the service: who needs what function, under which conditions, by when, and for how long? An inventory, maintenance task, shared item, borrowed item, repair, or revised routine may meet that need without a new purchase.

[IPCC AR6 Working Group III Chapter 5](#) frames demand around services and well-being, rather than materials and energy as ends in themselves. It also cautions that circular-economy approaches do not automatically establish climate benefits. This workbook therefore records choices and evidence without awarding an invented carbon saving.

Use it for a household, small workplace, or learning exercise. It is not a technical repair manual, a safety inspection, or legal advice. Involve the people who will use and maintain the item, not only the person approving the invoice.

Safety comes before thrift. Stop using an item when its condition may be unsafe. Electrical, gas, pressure, braking, structural, battery, and protective-equipment faults require appropriate competent assessment. Do not treat a successful cosmetic repair as proof of safe performance.

2. Understand the fault and the alternatives

Record the item's model or identifying details, age if known, condition, fault, care history, warranty position, and any recall information. Distinguish an observed symptom from a diagnosis. "A seam has opened" describes what you can see; "the whole fabric has failed" requires further evidence.

Need and condition record

Question	Write a usable answer
Required function	Users, quantity actually needed, conditions, access needs, and deadline.
Current condition	Visible symptoms, known history, unknowns, and any stop-use reason.
Assessment	Who is competent to diagnose the fault and what assessment will cost.
Alternative routes	Maintain, repair, share, borrow, buy used, replace selectively, or change the routine.

A repair quote should say what is included, what remains uncertain, when the work could be completed, and what happens if inspection reveals a different fault. Ask about parts, labour, return transport, assessment charges, and any relevant guarantee. Do not compare a complete replacement price with a repair estimate that omits half the work.

For a repairable garment, appropriate low-risk work may include a seam or replaceable fastening, following its care guidance. For protective clothing, the same visible fault can affect a safety function. Materials, use, and applicable standards change the decision. This workbook deliberately does not give stitching instructions or claim a universal patch works.

Consider the person carrying the inconvenience. A nominally cheaper option may require repeated travel, inaccessible collection, unpaid labour, or weeks without an essential service. Put those constraints beside the price rather than describing the user as unwilling to repair.

Decision boundary: We will not proceed with this option unless _____ confirms _____.

3. Work through the numbers honestly

Fictional worked example. A small office has twelve ordinary wool jumpers for indoor events. They are not protective equipment or expedition clothing. The exercise assumes all twelve are still needed and correctly sized. Every price below is invented for arithmetic practice, not a supplier quote or a Still North transaction.

The fictional repair service charges €30 to assess the batch, €9 per repaired jumper, and €24 for return transport. New jumpers cost €48 each, with €18 delivery per order. The table compares immediate expenditure only. It does not establish equal durability, comfort, labour conditions, or environmental impact.

Illustrative costs, conditional on the stated assessment outcomes

Option	Calculation	Immediate cost
All twelve repairable	$€30 + (12 \times €9) + €24$	€162
Replace all twelve	$(12 \times €48) + €18$	€594
Eight repairable; four replaced	$€30 + (8 \times €9) + €24 + (4 \times €48) + €18$	€336

The repair route costs less in these assumed cases, but the first row cannot be selected before assessment confirms it. Ask how the decision changes if the deadline cannot be met, fewer jumpers are needed, or repaired items have too little remaining useful life. A spare inventory may make waiting feasible; buying duplicates without a plan may simply add waste.

For a longer ownership comparison, choose a common service period and add expected maintenance, consumables, downtime, transport, storage, and disposal costs. Record uncertain inputs as scenarios rather than making them look measured. Do not divide by an optimistic lifetime supplied only by advertising.

Cost differences are not emissions differences. A lifecycle comparison would need appropriate data and consistent boundaries, including the service delivered and what replacement is genuinely avoided. Write “not assessed” when that evidence is absent. A modest, documented financial conclusion is more useful than a dramatic unsupported environmental one.

4. Ask suppliers for evidence that changes the choice

A material label is not a complete procurement case. Recycled content, repairability, working conditions, performance, packaging, and end-of-life options are different claims. One good attribute does not prove the others. Ask for evidence relevant to the function you need, and keep the date and scope of the answer.

Supplier question sheet

Claim or concern	Question worth asking
“Repairable”	Which parts can be replaced, by whom, with what tools, prices, and availability?
“Recycled material”	What component and proportion does this cover, and what evidence supports it?
“Durable”	Which relevant test, use conditions, exclusions, and repair support are documented?
“Responsible production”	Which stage, location, labour issue, and independently checkable evidence are meant?
“Recyclable”	Which real collection route accepts this exact construction where it will be used?

A refusal or incomplete answer is information, not proof of wrongdoing. Record the gap and decide whether it prevents a responsible purchase. Avoid collecting a folder of certificates that no one checks. If a certification matters, verify that it applies to the actual product and claim rather than a different factory, component, or time period.

Keep specifications proportionate. An ordinary indoor item does not need an expedition performance story. Conversely, safety-critical equipment needs the relevant verified requirements, not a reassuring description. Do not let a preference for a material, brand, or local supplier quietly replace the function and safety criteria.

For legal context, the [European Commission’s repair directive overview](#) explains repair obligations for goods within specified categories and conditions. It is not a universal right to every repair for every product. Check current national rules, product scope, and guarantee terms in the applicable jurisdiction; do not copy a consumer-law promise into a workplace contract without checking it.

5. Write a decision someone can maintain

A procurement decision is unfinished if no one knows how the item will stay useful. Name the person or team responsible for care, spare parts, service records, and review. Budget time as well as money. A product selected because it can be repaired still needs a realistic route to that repair.

One-page decision note

1. **Need:** state the service, quantity, users, deadline, and non-negotiable requirements.
2. **Options:** record the routes considered, including no purchase where feasible.
3. **Evidence:** attach condition assessment, comparable costs, supplier answers, and remaining gaps.
4. **Choice:** explain why this option fits, what would change the decision, and who approves it.
5. **Continuity:** name care, repair, review, and eventual transfer or recovery arrangements.

In the fictional jumper example, a defensible note might authorise assessment first, keep replacement quantities conditional, and require a return date that meets the event schedule. It would not announce twelve successful repairs before anyone has examined the garments.

Set a review tied to actual use. Did the item meet the need? Which faults returned? Were instructions understandable, parts available, and maintenance manageable? Feed those answers into the next specification. Avoid treating a short trial as a proven lifetime.

At end of use, consider safe continued use or transfer before material recovery. Protect personal data where relevant, follow local disposal requirements, and do not donate an unsafe item to move the problem elsewhere. Record a recovery route only when it exists for the actual item and location.

Demonstration disclosure. Still North and its staff are fictional. All example goods, prices, assessments, and transactions are illustrative. No repair service, supplier, certification, saving, purchase, payment, or shipment is promised.