

One agent action. Reviewable evidence of every step.

Bind what an agent proposes to independently supplied authority, constrain the effect, and reconstruct what happened from the retained record.

BOUNDED SYNTHETIC REFERENCE

One refund workflow · synthetic SQLite destination · one host · no production credentials. Not a production deployment, OS security boundary or compliance certification. Public release is pending approval.

A WORKED EXAMPLE: ONE REFUND AGENT, FOUR REQUESTS. EACH LEAVES A RECONSTRUCTABLE RECORD.

\$250 refund requested ALLOWED Within the grant. Rechecked just before the effect; executed once.	\$750 refund requested DENIED Outside the grant. No attempt is made; the denial is recorded.	Same message delivered twice ONE REFUND Same proposal, same effect ID. Redelivery returns the original record.	Same refund, new proposal TWO REFUNDS POSSIBLE A different valid proposal gets a new effect ID. Effect-ID dedup is not business-intent dedup.
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As agents move from drafting text to issuing refunds and changing records, a log line is no longer enough. **A chatbot is reviewed by what it said; an agent must be reviewed by what it was allowed to do, what it attempted and what the destination was observed to do.** The Open Control Stack keeps those facts separate and connected.

FOLLOW ONE ACTION ALL THE WAY THROUGH

DECLARE	CONTROL	REPLAY	EVIDENCE
What may the agent propose? Action · target · scope · effect limits Action Manifest	Is this effect allowed now? Authority supplied outside the request · rechecked just before the effect Control Plane	What does the record show? Attempted · acknowledged · observed · reconstructed Replay Bundle	What can reviewers trace? Linked to source · gaps left visible Governance Evidence Pack

PROPOSED → PERMITTED → ATTEMPTED → OBSERVED *Independent verification is outside the reference.*

How it works

- **Authority comes from outside the request.** Authority Context is supplied by a trusted resolver; the incoming message cannot grant it.
- **Critical inputs are rechecked before each effect.** Per effect only: not whole-workflow or check-to-commit atomic.
- **Execution is bounded.** A changed payload, target or adapter produces no effect.
- **The record survives ambiguity.** A timeout is recorded as unknown, never as “nothing happened.”
- **Review is reconstructable.** Trace every step without rerunning anything.

Evidence is not permission.
A receipt, signature, log or model response can be valid evidence and still authorize nothing.
A denial is evidence too: it shows the control made a decision.
That separation is the point.

WHERE ENFORCEMENT STOPS

Per effect, not per workflow. Decide, execute and reconcile are not one atomic transaction; authority can change between the recheck and the destination commit. Application-level, not OS confinement. A privileged host process can bypass it. Live OpenShell confinement is unqualified.	Effect ID, not business intent. Redelivery is caught; a second, different proposal for the same refund is not prevented on the default path. An optional refund-intent profile, run separately, blocks it. Synthetic, not production. No production resolver authentication, real accounts, distributed budgets, remote finality or exactly-once delivery.
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Current release evidence: all 35 acceptance scenarios resolved, required suites run twice · fresh Oct 13 reproduction: 1,009 Python tests × 2 runs, 20 Node tests. Public contracts, code, tests and retained failures, so you can rerun it yourself.

Bring one workflow your agents should run.
We will map where its authority, destination and enforcement differ from the reference, and what evidence each difference needs.

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Learn more

Thirteen components. Six groups. One rule.

Each component owns one responsibility and states what it does not establish. Governed Exchange connects the groups. The rule: evidence is not permission.

01 · KNOWLEDGE & PROVENANCE	01	Cognous Evidence Registry	Local-chain claims, evidence commitments and history.
	02	Cognous Evidence Attestation	BitRep: verify issuer signatures under explicit trust.
02 · INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE	03	Cognous Institutional Governance	Alvorada: authority, challenge and correction for institutions.
03 · DECLARATION & POLICY CONTROL	04	Cognous Action Manifest	Declare the action before evaluating permission.
	05	Cognous Control Plane	Evaluate proposals against authority; keep the decision record.
04 · CONSTRAINED EXECUTION	06	Cognous Execution Runtime	Constrained execution beneath current authorization.
05 · REPLAY & EVIDENCE	07	Cognous Replay Bundle	Reconstruct what the retained records support.
	08	Cognous Governance Evidence Pack	Turn runtime records into reviewable governance evidence.
	09	Open Decision Evidence Standard	Portable decision evidence across boundaries.
06 · REASONING & HUMAN OVERSIGHT	10	Portable Reasoning Protocol v1.0	Instructions for evidence-bounded reasoning.
	11	Research Intelligence Protocol v1.0	Disciplined discovery and abstraction, kept separate.
	12	TFA Protocol (S43)	Truth · Freedom · Agency.
CROSS-CUTTING · CONNECTS THE GROUPS	13	Cognous Governed Exchange	Governed exchange and continuity for a bounded workflow.

HOW THE COMPONENTS WORK TOGETHER

One synthetic refund, from request to reviewable evidence. Amber arrows carry the action; teal arrows carry authority in and records out. Dashed panels never sit on the authorization path.

