

HCS-099

Terminology and Constitutional Lexicon

Harmonic Constitutional Specification Reference Vocabulary

Version: 1.0 (Federation Draft)

Status: Draft Constitutional Reference Specification

Status of This Specification

This document defines the normative constitutional terminology used throughout the Harmonic Constitutional Specification (HCS) series.

Unlike other HCS specifications, this document defines vocabulary rather than constitutional behavior.

Its purpose is to ensure that constitutional terminology maintains a stable and consistent meaning across all HCS specifications.

Unless explicitly overridden by a subsequent HCS specification, the definitions contained within this document SHALL apply throughout the HCS series.

This specification is normative with respect to terminology.

Abstract

Constitutional architectures depend upon precise language.

As the HCS series evolves, terms such as **authority**, **continuation**, **supportability**, and **constitutional state** must retain stable meaning.

Without semantic consistency, constitutional consistency cannot be preserved.

This specification establishes the shared constitutional vocabulary upon which all HCS specifications rely.

Purpose

The purpose of HCS-099 is to:

- establish a common constitutional vocabulary;
- reduce ambiguity across specifications;
- preserve semantic consistency over time;
- support federation through shared terminology; and
- separate terminology from constitutional behavior.

HCS-099 defines language.

It does not define constitutional authority.

Scope

This specification applies to every document within the Harmonic Constitutional Specification series.

It does not prescribe implementation.

It defines constitutional terminology only.

Normative Terminology

Unless explicitly stated otherwise by a subsequent HCS specification, the definitions contained within this document SHALL be considered normative throughout the HCS series.

Alternative wording MAY be used for readability provided that constitutional meaning is preserved.

No alternative wording SHALL alter the constitutional meaning of a defined term without explicit revision of this specification.

Undefined Terms

Terms not explicitly defined within this specification SHALL retain their ordinary technical meaning unless explicitly redefined by another HCS specification.

Undefined terminology SHALL NOT be interpreted as extending constitutional jurisdiction or constitutional responsibility.

Constitutional vs. Operational Concepts

Throughout the HCS series:

Constitutional refers to governance responsibilities, constitutional boundaries, constitutional determinations, and sovereign architectural authority.

Operational refers to the presently observable conditions under which constitutional determinations are made.

Operational conditions inform constitutional decisions.

They do not redefine constitutional responsibility.

Constitutional Terms

Admissibility

The constitutional determination that an attempted continuation presently satisfies the governance conditions required to proceed.

Admissibility is determined under current constitutional state rather than historical authorization.

Authority

The presently valid constitutional basis upon which continuation may be permitted.

Authority may be granted, delegated, constrained, suspended, or revoked.

Authority is evaluated.

It is never presumed.

Constitutional Boundary

The maximum constitutional jurisdiction claimed by a sovereign constitutional architecture.

No authority outside an architecture's constitutional boundary is implied.

Constitutional Interface

The explicit mechanism through which sovereign constitutional architectures exchange governed constitutional state while preserving independent ownership, jurisdiction, and constitutional authority.

Constitutional Jurisdiction

The complete set of constitutional responsibilities explicitly claimed by a sovereign constitutional architecture.

Responsibilities outside constitutional jurisdiction remain the responsibility of neighboring sovereign architectures.

Constitutional State

The complete set of currently observable governance conditions under which continuation is proposed.

Constitutional state may include, but is not limited to:

- authority;
- evidence;
- operational context;

- dependency integrity;
 - governing constraints; and
 - historical continuity.
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Constitutional Synthesis

The governed integration of multiple constitutional evaluation surfaces into a single determination regarding continuation admissibility.

Supportability emerges through constitutional synthesis.

Consequence

Any externally meaningful state transition affecting:

- systems;
- organizations;
- individuals;
- environments;
- governance; or
- downstream decisions.

Consequence may be direct or indirect.

Continuation

A proposed transition from one operational state toward another capable of introducing additional consequence.

Continuation represents proposed progression rather than execution.

Dependency

Any prerequisite constitutional condition required to support continuation.

Dependencies may include upstream governance determinations, external systems, environmental assumptions, prerequisite evaluations, or required constitutional state.

Escalation

The governed transfer of constitutional responsibility to another authority when current constitutional conditions no longer support autonomous continuation.

Escalation is a governed outcome.

It is not failure.

Evaluation Surface

A constitutional category independently evaluated during continuation admissibility.

Evaluation surfaces contribute collectively to constitutional synthesis.

No individual evaluation surface independently determines admissibility.

Evidence

Information presently available that contributes to determining continuation admissibility.

Evidence may strengthen, weaken, contradict, or leave supportability unresolved.

Federation

The composition of multiple sovereign constitutional architectures through explicit constitutional interfaces while preserving independent jurisdiction and constitutional authority.

Federation does not imply centralized governance or ownership.

Governance

The constitutional discipline of determining whether continuation remains supportable before additional consequence is introduced.

Governance precedes execution.

Governed Outcome

The constitutional determination produced following constitutional synthesis.

Governed outcomes authorize, constrain, redirect, or prevent continuation.

They do not constitute execution.

Operational Context

The current environmental, organizational, and runtime conditions under which continuation is proposed.

Operational context is continuously evaluated.

Operational State

The presently observable operational condition from which continuation is proposed.

Operational state contributes to constitutional state.

Reconstructability

The ability to reproduce the constitutional basis upon which a governed outcome was determined.

Reconstructability supports transparency, accountability, review, and governance assurance.

Runtime

The operational period during which continuation proposals are evaluated and governed.

Runtime is distinct from design time, deployment time, testing time, and audit time.

Runtime Governance

The application of constitutional governance during runtime to determine whether attempted continuation remains admissible under current constitutional state.

Runtime governance operationalizes constitutional rules.

It does not create them.

Sovereign Architecture

An independently governed constitutional architecture possessing explicitly defined constitutional jurisdiction and constitutional responsibility.

Sovereign architectures cooperate through federation without relinquishing constitutional independence.

Sovereignty

The condition under which constitutional authority remains explicitly bounded and independently exercised.

Sovereignty is preserved through explicit jurisdiction.

Supportability

The governed constitutional determination that continuation remains justified under current authority, evidence, operational context, dependency integrity, continuity, and governing constraints.

Supportability is not independently measured.

It emerges through constitutional synthesis.

Design Principles

The terminology defined within this specification SHALL remain:

- implementation-independent;
- constitutionally consistent;
- semantically stable;
- interoperable across the HCS series; and
- compatible with federated constitutional composition.

Future specifications SHOULD introduce new terminology only when necessary.

Existing definitions SHOULD remain stable over time.

Relationship to Other Specifications

This specification provides the common constitutional vocabulary used throughout the HCS series.

It does not:

- establish constitutional jurisdiction;
- define constitutional evaluation models;
- prescribe implementation;
- define constitutional interfaces; or
- govern runtime behavior.

Those responsibilities remain with the appropriate HCS specifications.

Evolution of Terminology

The constitutional vocabulary defined within this specification is intended to evolve conservatively.

New constitutional terms MAY be introduced when required by future HCS specifications.

Existing definitions SHOULD remain stable.

Where refinement becomes necessary, revisions SHOULD preserve semantic compatibility whenever reasonably possible.

Constitutional terminology SHOULD evolve more slowly than implementation terminology.

Closing Statement

The Harmonic Constitutional Specification series depends upon precise constitutional language.

Architectural consistency begins with semantic consistency.

HCS-099 establishes the shared constitutional vocabulary through which the remaining HCS specifications define constitutional responsibility, constitutional evaluation, constitutional interfaces, constitutional federation, and constitutional composition.

By maintaining stable terminology independent of implementation, the HCS series preserves clarity, interoperability, architectural discipline, and long-term constitutional coherence across sovereign governance architectures.