

Phantom Capacity

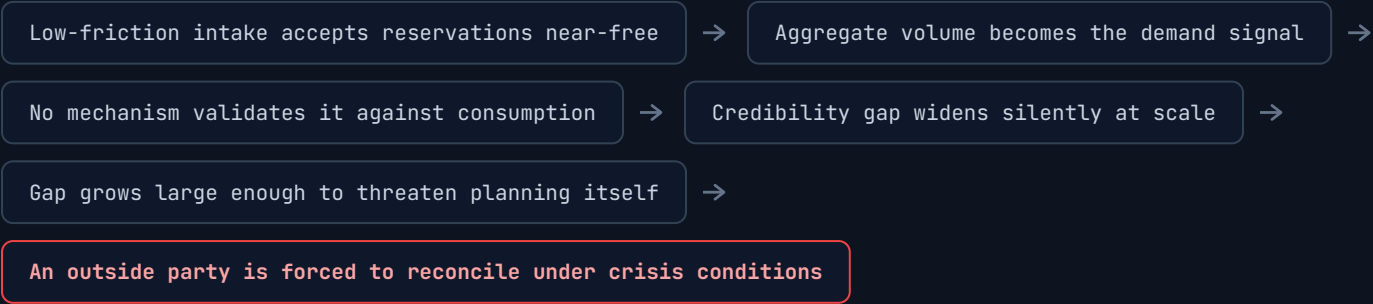
DEFINITION

Capacity that appears committed inside a planning system but hasn't earned the right to be trusted as a demand signal.

FRAMEWORK FLOW

01 Reservations Accepted Requests enter the planning system with no proof of intent beyond the request itself.	02 Reservations Influence Planning Aggregate reservation volume becomes the basis for capacity, budget, or infrastructure decisions.	03 Reservations Remain Unvalidated No recurring mechanism checks reservations against actual consumption or commitment evidence.	04 Phantom Capacity Distorts Allocation Decisions Planning decisions are made against a demand picture that was never verified, and the distortion surfaces only when the system is forced to reconcile — usually under external pressure, not on its own schedule.
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Failure State: Forced Arbiters



THE DIAGNOSTIC SIGNAL

RESERVATION OWNERSHIP Ask any single reservation holder whether their request is legitimate. The answer is always yes — filing cost almost nothing and the position has real strategic value to hold.	COMPOSITE OWNERSHIP Ask who owns the credibility of the aggregate queue. The honest answer is nobody — not neglect, absence of a design that assigned the question to anyone.
TRIGGER CONDITION The gap activates the moment aggregate reservation volume gets treated as a planning input. A queue nobody plans against never triggers it at all.	REMEDIATION SHAPE Recertification, expiration windows, utilization thresholds, milestone requirements, deposits — friction built into intake, not a cleanup pass after the fact.

THE FOUR SYSTEM QUESTIONS

WHAT SIGNAL IS ACCEPTED The reservation, allocation, quota, commitment, or forecast the system treats as input — with no proof of intent beyond the request itself.	WHAT VALIDATION IS MISSING The recurring reconciliation step that would check the signal against actual consumption — never built into the intake design.
WHO ABSORBS THE COST The budget owner, platform team, or planning function left holding the gap once the signal turns out to have been wrong.	WHAT HAPPENS AT SCALE The credibility gap compounds quietly until something forces a reconciliation nobody scheduled — usually under pressure, not on the system's own timeline.

A secondary validation ladder orders the available fixes by how much proof of intent each actually extracts, lowest to highest: periodic recertification, expiration windows, utilization thresholds, milestone requirements, and deposits or financial commitments.

ARCHITECTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

No architectural relationships are currently mapped for this framework in the registry.

ANCHOR /phantom-capacity/

FRAMEWORK HOME

The signal-validation gap is domain- and vendor-agnostic — the same failure shape holds across a grid interconnection queue, a cloud reserved-capacity program, a GPU allocation pool, a Kubernetes quota, or a storage forecast.

"Every reservation can correctly justify its own filing. Nobody can explain why the aggregate queue was trusted — not because anyone neglected the question, but because no one built the system to ask it."