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What Are We Leaving Behind When We Speed Up?

For years, our defence against a bad number was simple: we were slow. Someone had time to look at it and say "that's not right." We're about to lose that.

Think about the lifecycle of a wrong number. Someone entered it. It sat in a report for a few days. It reached a meeting. And somewhere along the way, a person looked at it, frowned, and said, "Hang on, that can't be right. Send it back."

We called that a delay, but it was a safeguard. All that slowness gave us the chance to catch what the system couldn't — **to bring a judgment that the data didn't contain**. The pace we complained about was protecting us.

For years, **the gap between what our systems said and what was actually true has been filled by people — their experience, their instinct, their sense that something is off**. We rarely named it, but it's been holding a great deal together. Speed doesn't just remove the delay. It removes the room for that judgment to operate.

Now look at what we're bringing in. The whole promise of AI is that it doesn't wait. It takes the number and acts — fast, confident, at a scale no team could match. It won't pause to ask whether the number is right, because it can't. It doesn't know the work. It only knows the data.

This isn't an argument against moving faster. **It's a reminder of what the slowness was doing for us — so we replace it on purpose, rather than discover its absence the hard way**.

The question isn't whether we're ready to go faster. It's whether we know what we're leaving behind when we do.