

Emergency Planning Improvements Project Management and Control

Problem:

The way in which the utilities plan and manage out of the ordinary events is becoming an ever-more visible issue in the media; the manipulation of public perception is a key area of stakeholder management which is highly complex and of critical importance to industry's future.

Any company operating potentially hazardous plant is looking to improve their emergency planning and control processes and systems.

Background:

The current radio systems used by our client to send and receive information from off site survey vehicles, was based on a system which was rapidly approaching the end of its life cycle and would have been unsupportable from a practical perspective within 1-2 years. The system components/parts were no longer manufactured and the existing maintainers were reluctant to accept the potential risks of continued maintenance; thus exposing our client to a higher risk and the associated costs.

Project Objectives:

The primary objective of this project was to maintain compliance with site licence conditions at our client's sites. To support this the project enabled the following:

- Replaced the existing NNARCS (National Nuclear Accident Response Communications System) system in use at our client sites with the Airwave system
- Implemented the Airwave system at three other sites that did not have a purpose built emergency radio system.
- Delivered documentation to our client that enabled it to conduct itself as the 'intelligent customer' in terms of being able to manage the service following completion of the project.
- Delivered to our client a unified method of operating its emergency arrangements.

Project Approach:

This was a complex project that ran for 18 months and as such there were a significant number of project controls put in place, in particular the use of stages to divide the project into periods that aligned with the clients Work Plan timescales. The principles of the Prince 2 project management methodology were used and the following key management documents were produced:

- Project Initiation Document – PID
- Functional Design
- Project Plan
- Quality Plan
- Stage Plan
- Communication Plan
- Product Breakdown Structure
- Acceptance Criteria
- End stage Reports
- End Project Report
- Risk Log

Project Summary:

A comprehensive and empathetic review of the processes, systems and procedures was carried out against modern requirements and technology. The project was a total success due to the selection of the appropriate systems, process refinement and implementation of changes with appropriate levels of consultation and buy-in of the Regulator, client, local emergency services and the public.

Client Benefit:

A successful and inclusive programme of change demonstrated the confidence and competence of the industry, and engaged the hearts and minds of all stakeholders. The project successfully delivered a new emergency radio system for our client. The ultimate success of the project was measured by the effectiveness of the new system in supporting the emergency exercise programme for our client without compromising site license compliance.