

Q-Pulse Case Study

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Industry Sector: Aviation
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Summary

As one of the world's leading service companies, Serco had been contracted to provide a range of flight training and support services to RAF Cranwell. To satisfy the new European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Part-145 requirements, as well as contract and ISO9001:2000 requirements, management purchased Q-Pulse as an effective automated solution that would help in the Quality Management of their approvals.

At Serco Cranwell, management have reduced Document management related paperwork by 99% and Audit paperwork by approximately 50%. With all module information available to all Q-Pulse users at their location at the click of a mouse, the greatest benefit has been in time saved per person. The time taken to achieve certification to both EASA and ISO standards has been reduced considerably as a result of using Q-Pulse.

Background

As one of the world's leading service companies, Serco help national and local governments around the world to improve services across all aspects of their activities. Serco has a wide multinational presence, employing around 35,000 people in the UK, continental Europe, the Middle East, Asia Pacific and North America. With over 600 contracts worldwide, Serco enjoy a success rate of over 90% on renewals. Despite competitive re-tendering, Serco has retained the contract to operate and maintain the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdales for 40 years.

Serco had been awarded the prestigious Multi-Activity Contract (MAC) and Multi-Engine Pilot Training Interim Solution (MIS), to provide a range of flight training and support services to RAF Cranwell. Serco had leased 7 King Air B200 aircraft from Raytheon Aircraft Company, and within 6 months of the contract being awarded, the aircraft had been specially built, delivered and put into operation.

The Challenge

With more than 350 employees transferring to Serco from the previous contractor, management had to very quickly ramp up a new maintenance organisation to satisfy the new European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Part-145 requirements, as well as create an Integrated Management System (IMS) capable of satisfying contract and ISO9001:2000 requirements.

Q-Pulse is already in use in several of Serco's contracts worldwide, as well as at their UK head office in Hook, Hampshire. As the IMS Manager and nominated post holder for Quality in the EASA Part-145 organisation, Colin joined the company in January 2006, whilst the contract at RAF Cranwell have used Q-Pulse from the outset."

"I'd used Q-Pulse for about 3 years in my previous post at BMI, where it helped considerably in controlling documentation and audits in particular. Based upon my previous experience, Q-Pulse is an effective automated solution that helps in the Quality Management of our approvals, such as EASA Part-145 and ISO9001:2000 which has certainly allowed the company to become leaner and more efficient"

The Solution

Since the contract began in April 2004, staff have been managing a very large workload in order to obtain both EASA Part-145 approval and compliance with ISO9001:2000, and to create an Integrated Management System that incorporates Quality, Health & Safety, Environmental and Risk Management systems. In demonstrating compliance with both standards, a robust solution such as Q-Pulse has proven indispensable.

Management chose Q-Pulse in order to achieve a reduction in administration costs, and to have accountability and visibility of documentation, customer complaints and audit non-conformance control.

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Q-Pulse is used to issue and control the amendment status of all documentation, which includes a complete history of documents produced throughout their lifecycle. Audits are scheduled and carried out and any non-conformances controlled within time scales. Customer complaints are controlled in a similar manner. Management reviews using reports from the Workload and Analysis & Improvement modules assist in this process. Staff use the Initiatives module to assist in the time management of tasks.

“We’re able to show various reports from Q-Pulse to the Ministry of Defence and RAF, Contract Monitoring Team (CMT). Sometimes this is just over-the-shoulder views on where we are or sometimes printed reports,” says Colin. “Since control over documents and non-conformances can easily be verified by a couple of mouse-clicks, it’s a very efficient method for us and for the CMT.”

Conclusion

Q-Pulse is used by senior management, planners and supervisors and has allowed Serco to better control documentation, audit programmes and the tracking of non-conformances.

“With the Document module, we’ve reduced paperwork by 99%,” says Colin. “At Serco Cranwell, our 22 different sections would need, on average, 350 documents, but now we need only one hard copy manual with around 500 individual documents in it, as a back-up in case of computer failure.

“With the Q-Pulse audit module, we have also reduced paperwork by approximately 50% because we print off the schedule and post it on our walls. With audit reports, we print off the checklist and properties, as well as any associated non-conformances and keep them in a filing cabinet. This also provides a backup if the computer goes down, and we’ve found that our ISO auditors prefer to leaf through actual pages at their leisure rather than click a mouse!”

As well as a radical reduction in paperwork, the greatest benefit has been in time saved per person, as all module information is available to all Q-Pulse users at their location at the click of a mouse. At Serco Cranwell, the time taken to achieve and manage certification to both EASA and ISO standards has been reduced considerably as a result of using Q-Pulse.

“We would be at a complete loss without Q-Pulse. I couldn’t envisage attempting to control our huge amount of documentation and audit plan without an automated process such as we have now; alternatively, we’d certainly require a larger workforce.”

Colin Ambrose, IMS Manager, Serco Cranwell