'SAPPHIRE has become embedded in the management culture of the RAF, where it is finding an increasingly important role in both the conduct of day-to-day business at the producer level through to the conduct of senior management boards all the way up to the Defence Management Board.'

Mark Williams - Group Captain

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SUMMARY OF KEY FACTS

Organisation
RAF Air Command

Contract signing date
February 2002

Service/s delivered
SAPPHIRE Application Design, Application Integration, Application Development, Support, Managed Service and training on Application Management.

Benefits For MOD
- One database providing a consolidated view of performance & risks
- Subjective assessment of performance displayed alongside the calculated value
- Enter data once, use many times in different ways
- See the big picture or focus in on detail
- Capture all expertise, make better decisions
- Shared aims, more effective working
- Reduced reporting burden upon users
- Emphasises forecasting
- Compatible with legacy and future IT systems
- Promotes corporate awareness

The challenge

The RAF is a complex and diverse organisation. It's people and equipment carry out complicated, high-risk tasks both in the UK and on operations overseas which need to be completed against demanding time constraints, in a way that minimises the risk of failure and maximises efficient use of resources. The achievement of these tasks relies upon timely and well-informed decisions based upon a shared understanding of trends, the current position and the future outlook.

However, prior to the selection of SAPPHIRE, the RAF did not have a consolidated view of its performance and risk position. For a commander to see one version of the truth, hundreds of emails and documents would have to be collated which could take weeks and there was no way for staff at all levels to have universal access to performance and risk data.

There was a long-standing requirement for the measurement of capability, the associated risks and issues such as threats, equipment problems, resource shortfalls and possible future adverse events.

The solution

After conducting a requirements capture and analysis exercise at the RAF Headquarters at the former Strike Command, Fujitsu developed and delivered a new, bespoke Performance and Risk Management System, named 'SAPPHIRE', with balanced scorecard capabilities. The acronym 'SAPPHIRE' stands for Strike Applications Project Promoting High level Information Reporting and Evaluation. Whilst Strike Command has since transformed to become AIR Command, SAPPHIRE is in use across the whole of the RAF, providing a single performance and risk management tool.

SAPPHIRE is based on Oracle database technology, sitting on the MoD's existing communications infrastructure with (Trusted) access available to users not yet on DII. SAPPHIRE can take information from any other ODBC-compliant database and provide outputs in a variety of formats as defined (and thus easily understood) by the user as appropriate to their own organisation or unit's needs.

Fujitsu implements changes and additions to SAPPHIRE functionality as user needs evolve, and provides on-line support to users and system administrators as well as managed support services and training for instructors and those performing application management roles.

Although it was the RAF's requirements that drove SAPPHIRE's development, it has been successfully adopted by other MoD departments as the performance and risk management tool of choice. The system design is generic and because the user defines the business rules, it can be applied to any organisation.

SAPPHIRE operates at SECRET and RESTRICTED data classifications, with user definable rules that allow access to pre-determined individuals whilst still promoting information sharing on a 'need-to-know' or 'duty-to-share' basis.

Benefits for our Customer

One version of the truth One database providing a consolidated view of operational performance, risks and issues giving a single version of the truth available in one place, transforming decision-making and operational management.

Subjective assessment of performance displayed alongside the calculated value Subjective military assessment of performance can be added without overriding calculated, objective assessments so that the extent of the judgement applied is always apparent.

Enter once, use many times in different ways Data is entered only once but can be used again and again, categorised in a variety of ways (for example, Defence Lines of Development, user-defined structures and keywords) and viewed or manipulated to suit user output needs through the generation of reports.

See the big picture or focus on detail Huge amounts of information are consolidated into simple summaries by users, who can drill down to the supporting data if required.

Capture all expertise, make better decisions Accurate information entered by experts in their area gives senior management a clearer understanding of the factors and impacts which lead to better, faster decisions.

Shared aims, more effective working Senior officers are equally aware of a consistent big picture, which helps them work together more effectively.

Reduced reporting burden upon users Previous reporting systems were labour intensive. With SAPPHIRE, comprehensive reports are viewed easily on-screen and information can be selected then presented in various formats.

Emphasises forecasting SAPPHIRE provides immediate access to history and trend information but focus is now on forecasting and managing the future. The application allows managers to enter performance and risk forecasts to any future time period based upon proposed management and mitigation strategies detailed in report narratives.

Compatible with legacy and future systems, adding value to existing data Data from other sources can be imported without the need for manual transcription, saving time and improving consistency which adds value to that data.

Promotes corporate awareness Training for users of the application and its subsequent use in everyday management has helped to remove silo thinking.

Future Developments

The system will continue to be developed to reflect the unique business needs of new users and to enhance core functionality to existing users, including investigation of alternate user interfaces and automated data feeds from extant applications.

An increasing user community as DII(F) rolls out across Defence, enabling business areas the opportunity to adopt SAPPHIRE as their preferred performance, risk and business management tool.

Our Approach

SAPPHIRE was delivered in phases by Fujitsu, allowing early benefits as well as quick response to requirements for changes and enhancements. The SAPPHIRE training has contributed to the cultural and mind-set changes which were critical to achieving optimum ROI.

The Expertise

Fujitsu were chosen because of their proven expertise in project management, application development, implementation, support and managed services.

Wing Commander Nicky Mellings, the SAPPHIRE User Champion, stated: '*SAPPHIRE continues to provide key benefits to (not just) AIR Command (but the RAF as a whole), enabling senior management at all levels to view, understand and manage their outputs effectively and efficiently. The ability to view the present position, married against risks, allows senior managers to make (better) informed decisions to mitigate future risks and improve future performance.*'

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