FMI | NATA

Case Study

NATA

Mature application security

Standardised national processes

Single source of asset data

About the Client

NATA is Australia's leading national accreditation body, recognized by government to assess organisations against a number of international standards for laboratories, inspection bodies, proficiency testing scheme providers and reference material producers.

Part of an international network, NATA provides accreditation services to conformity assessment bodies that is recognised around the world.

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— **Cameron Lamb, National Facilities and WHS Manager, NATA**

Snapshot

Challenges

- Sites in each state operating with their own, predominantly paper and spreadsheet-based, processes.

- Varying FM skillsets across the organisation nationally.

- Lack of visibility over asset data meant decisions relied on individual knowledge and experience.

- Strict data privacy obligations necessitated IT consultation in choosing a solution.

Solutions

- Centralised FM function with improved visibility allowing for consistent national processes.

- Centralised function leveraging individual strengths to improve team performance.

- Better data stored centrally enables data driven decisions and consistent decision-making processes.

- Technical and security information provided by FMI instilled a high level of IT confidence in the software.

The Opportunity

Operating out of five sites across Australia, NATA had previously relied on office managers for facilities management. In 2021, they embarked on an initiative to centralise their facilities and asset management function.

The move to FMI Works was one NATA carefully considered, as it was a critical step to improve and mature their facilities and asset management processes. For National Facilities and WHS Manager Cameron Lamb, implementing a secure and reliable facilities management software solution was an important step towards a vision of streamlined processes and data driven decision making.

The Journey

Fundamentally NATA was suffering from a lack of visibility over their facilities management operations. Data stored in spreadsheets, and each site following their own processes meant there was no central source of truth for asset data. Asset maintenance plans, including end of life relied on the knowledge of individuals, which made it difficult to synchronize activities across the sites.

A key outcome was to centralise both data and knowledge, improve visibility and leverage the strengths found in each state. National Facilities and WHS Manager, Cameron Lamb explains:

"Without access to the right data, we were reliant on the knowledge and experience of individuals. We wanted to be able to look at an asset, know exactly what work has been done on it, when, and predict when it would need to be repaired or replaced.

We needed to bring in a system to improve visibility over things like maintenance costs, end of life, and costing of assets across the business. Improving visibility enables us to make data-driven decisions, which can be implemented through standardised processes across all our sites."

NATA's decision to implement a solution wasn't one they rushed in to. A solution that needed to deliver valuable insights necessitated a meticulous approach, from choosing a solution, through to implementation.

For NATA, one of the key factors considered when evaluating different options was the security of the solution. NATA's IT team were key stakeholders, consulted from the start of the buying process. The responsibility of protecting employee data and other sensitive information was one that NATA took extremely seriously. Speaking to the IT team's role in the decision-making process, Lamb says:

"Our IT team had a lot of factors they were considering how and where data is stored, password strength requirements, and policies and procedures around breaches. Once our IT and security team reviewed all the documentation, they were very comfortable with FMI in terms of security.

FMI Works seemed to have a higher level of maturity and robustness compared to some of the other solutions we looked at, in terms of application security."

Once a solution was chosen, NATA continued their conscientious approach when it came time to implement FMI Works across the business.

Lamb and his team decided on a progressive rollout, to allow the team to fine tune their processes, and gain a comprehensive understanding of the solution before it was rolled out more broadly. With little data to start with, and staff spread out across each state office, taking the time to learn on a pilot site would allow for a more seamless implementation across the other sites.

Throughout this initial period, NATA were able to access support and training packages, included in their purchase of FMI Works. Describing this onboarding experience Lamb said:

"Implementing a new system is always going to involve a learning curve, but the training packages we got as a part of our implementation have been great. The support team and our account manager are fantastic, nothing is ever too much trouble, and we've got 24/7 access to guides in the help centre."

As the NATA continues with deepening their use of the solution, the NATA team have been concurrently working on re-educating staff, to encourage compliance with new work request processes. A gentle, empathetic approach to change management is driving a high level of compliance with new processes, and the team are receiving positive feedback so far.

"If people slip back into old ways of doing things, we take the time to show them, so they're empowered to follow our processes. We've noticed that the culture is changing, and people are increasingly using FMI Works to log their jobs and any issues around sites, which is really good for us."

Looking to the future

For NATA, the next step in their facilities management journey is bringing contractor management into FMI Works. Setting up the contractor portal will allow their team to manage all contractors more efficiently nationally and will bring another level of visibility to their operations.

Lamb tells us "We're just taking a slower approach, we want to make sure we get it right before we take the next step. Our staff need to be comfortable using it, and our processes fine-tuned."

The careful, considered nature that NATA have taken to moving to FMI Works is key to their success with the solution. This approach allowing the team to take on what they can handle, reducing the level of stress for the team and any friction for the broader business.

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