

POWERED-UP TO CONFORM TO H&S REGULATIONS



Introduction

As part of a significant 'Year 2000 make-ready' project ScottishPower recently reviewed the performance of clocking systems, primarily used for monitoring the safety and attendance of personnel on-site, at three of its major power stations.

Background

ScottishPower became operational in 1991 when its predecessor the South of Scotland Electricity Board was privatised. The company has 15 power stations utilising a variety of generating sources including coal, gas and renewables. It serves three-quarters of Scotland's population, nearly four million people, plus a small part of north-east England. With a turnover of three billion pounds its activities include electricity and gas sales, telecommunications, generation, transmission, water and wastewater services. ScottishPower owns the Chester based electricity company Manweb and Southern Water which serves South East of England.

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Michael Miller, Finance Manager

Opportunity

"We had been dissatisfied with the efficiency of our existing safety monitoring and data manipulation systems for some time," recalls Michael Miller, Finance Manager based at Longannet power station. "Comprising a collection of bought-in, and in-house generated software packages, they were definitely not 'Year 2000' compliant. As we had little confidence in the accuracy of data they provided we backed them up with manual systems. These factors, combined with the need to comply with the new Working Time Directive regulations, acted as a catalyst for us to look for a more reliable replacement.

"Apart from full-time staff, ScottishPower employs a large number of contractors on a cyclical basis. During a major 'outage' overhaul project numbers can vary from a few regular maintenance teams, up to an additional 1000 contractors, on any one site. For Health and Safety purposes it is essential that we keep track of all these extra people."

Solution

"Primarily, therefore we required a software package to register the whereabouts of employees and contractors for safety reasons, but we also wanted to validate hours worked for manpower planning and invoice checking purposes."

"Learning from our past mistakes, of adding different elements to an off-the-shelf base package, we decided to opt for a supplier who could provide a complete system which included not only expertise in time and attendance monitoring but also a comprehensive support and future growth package."

Crown Computing Limited was selected through recommendation and for its ability to supply, not only a Windows based T&A software package, but also an efficient shift management system, which ScottishPower had already considered tagging onto its old system.

"Crown's new Open Options T&A module, operating on Windows NT and Oracle, goes further than a mere monitoring tool," continues Michael Miller. "It provides us with a number of solid advantages, the ability to write our own manpower planning reports, and statistical information on, sickness, holidays, training courses etc.



Case Study **SCOTTISH POWER**

Safety Tool

Crown offered ScottishPower, two mechanisms to register personnel attendance in case of an evacuation. Either a printed list of all clocked IN which can be cross-referenced manually as people muster point. Alternatively, people go directly to a muster point out, a shorter list is then produced at the gatehouse or control highlighting people who have not registered as OUT.

Because of the large numbers of unfamiliar contractor's faces second option was ScottishPower's preferred choice. "If you thousand people to deal with trying to find six guys, that you could cause a bit of a problem," smiles Michael Miller. "As evacuations are controlled from the Central Control Room, this option reduces time spent congregating at the muster point for names to be if someone rushes out without their card, fire marshals take cross reference them when the shorter list is produced."

Installation

Open Options has been installed, on a roll-out basis, at three major ScottishPower Stations. Methil, the smallest with around 80 employees and 20 contractors, was selected as the pilot site and went live in November 1998. Cockenzie with 250 employees, and several hundred contractors at peak maintenance times, went on stream end of February. The largest site at Longannet with 400 full time staff and up to 1000 contractors, is being installed by the end of March.

Administration

"Unlike our previous personnel monitoring system, which was very cumbersome, Open Options is an intuitive Windows '95 based system which is as easy to pick up as any I have seen," adds Robert Glen, Human Resource Advisor at Conkenzie.

"As a fully networked system, team leaders and managers can now input and access information on personnel, at any site, via their own PC to enable them to enter holidays, reasons off-site etc. They can also produce absence data in any format and manipulate information to produce better statistical reports," adds Michael Miller.

Key Benefits

Working Time Directive

"In our industry it is important to be seen to implement all health and safety regulations, including the new working time directive legislation" stresses Robert Glen. "At Crown's initial demonstration we were assured that the Open Options software would allow us to comply with the new rules."

Dealing with contractors

Contractors are employed on either a fixed term price, when ScottishPower are mainly interested in their presence on site from a safety point of view. Alternatively, they operate on a time and material contract, where their hours need to be validated against an invoice. Previously this was a laborious job of trying to decipher and double-check endless timesheets. Now finance simply run off a neat printed report showing hours worked by each contractor which is double checked against time billed.

Future

Planning module

"When fully operational we intend to use the Crown system even more as a management planning tool, for example to re-distribute skills in short supply among sites," says Michael Miller. "Open Options can produce a screen planner report which highlights potential callouts, for either a week or month ahead, enabling us to quickly identify personnel on-site, by their specific skill base."

Summary

"The installation of Open Options enables us to be confident that all our systems and agreements now conform to health & safety regulations. As it is primarily used as a safety tool, it is essential that the support infrastructure is reliable, we believe Open Options removes scope for inconsistencies, cuts down on manual effort, increases accuracy and allows us quicker access to statistics," concludes Michael Miller. "We also see big potential for greater use of the database interrogation and analysis capabilities of Open Options software."



Workforce Management Systems

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