

From the Sky to the Cloud

Enquire Contract Management at NQ Dry Tropics

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This month we meet Doug Willis, the IT Manager at Natural Resource Management body, NQ Dry Tropics. NQ Dry Tropics have implemented Enquire as a key contract management system to manage all components of the project contract lifecycle.

From Photogrammetry (aerial photographic mapping) to Natural Resource Management (NRM) GIS, Doug Willis has used his 20 years of army experience to ensure NQ Dry Tropics have their data lined up and processes integrated with Enquire. His time in the army has made Doug an expert in process management which has assisted with his current role. "Everything has a start point and an end point and there are logical steps between those things," said Doug.

Doug began work with NQ Dry Tropics as their GIS Manager close to 9 years ago. "I have been employed primarily as the GIS Manager but changed role around 2 years ago to IT Service Manager, said Doug. The key purpose of the role is to review and refine the organisation's business processes for expedience, then implement systems to fit. Enquire was one of these systems. "Before adopting Enquire for contract management we were working across three Microsoft Access Databases. This was a significant risk to the organisation as the connectivity between the databases was not organic," said Doug.

Doug's primary use of Enquire is in the capacity of system administration. The most important component for Doug is the ability to manage users in Enquire, including transferring projects between users as they move on from the organisation. "If a person leaves the organisation and we have a new project manager come in we can quickly say this is where everything is this is where the project is up to," he said.

The other important component for Doug is being able to generate specific reports to analyse delivery progress. Using the custom report features Doug can query data to assess application progression. "If it's taking us 30 days to get from an application to the day it's sent to the assessment panel, we can analyse that and ask why it is taking so long to get through those particular steps," said Doug.

Enquire is used extensively in NQ Dry Tropics for managing contracts with the Graziers, Cane Farmers, Horticulture Growers and those working in Grains. "We also use Enquire to roll out projects with community groups," said Doug. Once NQ Dry Tropics investor loads the contracts into Enquire and NQ Dry Tropics work through a planning process to assess how they are going to deliver the work over 3 years. Doug explained that "to do that we have to make child projects that sit under a Primary Project and we deliver the outputs under the child projects. Project Managers are assigned to deliver these projects. We are still embedding that as part of our culture and process."

Enquire is also used for reporting to State Government. NQ Dry Tropics are adopting Enquire contract management to manage their internal projects. This is proving to be a change management challenge as it very different to the way they have managed these projects in the past. Doug believes "it all comes down to training and reinforcing the message of the single point of truth and business continuity for projects".

One of the key challenges of Doug's role is change management. The key part of NQ Dry Tropic's change management is conveying to staff why proposed change is important for the organisation. "What we are trying to do is change that paradigm so that staff understand the importance of having all information in a single place for a single point of truth and continuity," he said.

Doug finds that the biggest reward in his role is finding solutions to specific work problems. Being able to stand back and see the difference that the changes make to team collaboration, workflow and business efficiencies.

Overall, Enquire as a web-based contract management system has given us far greater ability for our staff and partners to access a single point of truth for our projects anywhere that has Internet connectivity.

Having achieved his initial infrastructure and system goals with NQ Dry Tropics, from February 2015 Doug will be consulting to NQ Dry Tropics and other organisations to help them implement Enquire and other cloud based systems.

If you have any questions about how your organisation can use Enquire to better manage project contracts please contact Tactiv or call us on +61 7 3846 1555.

