

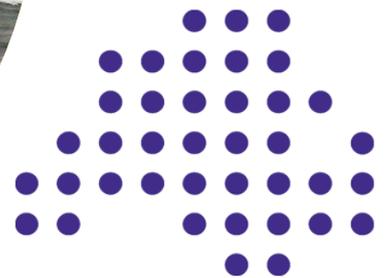


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CASE STUDY

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Changing shift patterns to align demand and capacity

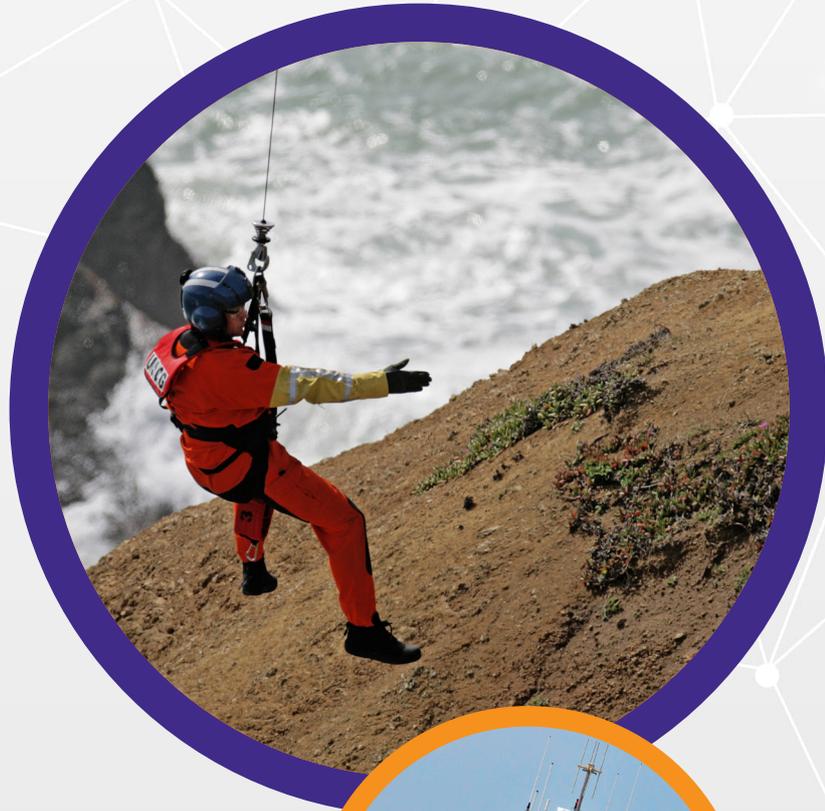


We designed shift patterns for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency which ensured it could efficiently meet variations in demand across time frames (days, weeks, years) and diverse geographical operating patches. Through efficient use of shift workers' contracted hours, this emergency service was able to remove periods of significant underutilisation and reduce long shifts.

By modelling demand and designing optimised shift patterns, rotas and rosters the organisation was able to reduce labour costs, whilst protecting vital skills and maintaining service levels.

Overview

- The only Emergency Service to operate as a single organisation with full UK-wide responsibility.
- Operates 24/7/365 and responds to c. 22,500 incidents a year.
- 90% of employees are members of a



Our Role

- Analysing and unifying demand and capacity data from 18 operational areas across the UK.
- Designing an Annualised Hours system with shift patterns, rotas and rosters that track peaks and troughs in demand.
- Introducing a 'reserve hours' bank to provide additional flexibility and implementing rostered holidays to guarantee cover during peak periods.
- Supporting engagement with employees and unions to generate valuable insight, promote understanding of the process and aid implementation.
- Embedding best practice around regular reviews and providing fair notice on draw down of reserve hours.

Outcomes

- Eliminated overtime and over-provision, reducing annual labour costs.
- Ensured the labour supply is responsive to varying demand profiles across time frames and geographical operating patches.
- Enhanced employee work-life balance by providing better visibility and control over shift patterns and down-time.

Our Customer

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency is one of the four 999 Emergency Services, working to prevent the loss of life on the coast and at sea. It is the only Emergency Service that operates as a single organisation with responsibility to cover the whole UK.

It employs 350 staff across 18 coastal-based Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres and a National Maritime Operational Centre in Fareham and responds to around 22,500 incidents a year.

The Situation

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency is experiencing increased demand for its services driven by growing volumes of energy development and shipping, the popularity of leisure activities and more frequent severe weather events and floods.

Like all Emergency Services, the organisation has a strategic imperative to meet rising requirements whilst delivering cost efficiencies and increasing operational resilience. By the nature of the service it delivers, The Maritime & Coastguard Agency faces significant variation in demand - by hour of day, day of week, and week of year. Geographical complexities are also a factor. For example, oil industry traffic off the coast of Scotland provides a very different demand profile to leisure industry issues off the south coast.



“One Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre may be over five times busier than another in a typical year and peak periods may generate workloads that are 20-times higher than during a quieter time.

“We’ve traditionally operated 12-hour shift patterns, meaning the profile of labour provision was flat across a year. Whilst this ensured labour supply matched peak demand in all areas, significant inefficiencies would be created when there was less demand.”

Matthew Briggs, HR Strategic Partner at The Maritime and Coastguard Agency

The organisation looked for external expertise and tools to help it:

- Build an accurate forecast of demand and capacity.
- Create flexible shift patterns, rotas and rosters that meet varying demand.
- Reduce skills fade in shift workers.
- Exercise better control over its labour resource.
- Reduce overtime spend.
- Create a better work-life balance for employees.

Our Role

We were engaged by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency due to our long track record of using shift planning, rostering and workforce management consultancy and software to successfully implement Annualised Hours and Demand Led Rostering systems in Emergency Services. We used historic data to create accurate demand profiles across each of the 18 Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres. In line with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's intention to consolidate and streamline operations, this was converted into demand profiles for nine new stations.

From this we designed an Annualised Hours system which would allow the organisation to remove the rigid 12-hour shift patterns, effectively pair up coastguard stations and ensure it was making full use of shift workers' contracted hours.

A variety of shift pattern lengths were created that efficiently track peaks and troughs in demand and reduce the need for long-hours working. The system also introduced a 'reserve hours' bank to provide additional flexibility and rostered holidays to guarantee cover during peak periods. Central to the adoption of this new approach to shift planning, rostering and workforce management was employee engagement. We facilitated close communications with unions and shift workers to articulate the strategic requirement, the working time change methodology and the benefits that would be delivered.

“We created a working party which enabled employees to engage with the process, to meet necessary challenges and to question and supplement our insights.

“This group was instrumental to helping co-create efficient team sizes and optimised shifts and made useful recommendations on how best to consult staff and implement the necessary changes.”

Martin Gee, Director at Working Time Solutions

Outcomes

By implementing Annualised Hours and Demand-Led Rostering, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has been able to reduce annual labour costs without affecting the quality of the service across the UK. Shift workers are benefitting from better visibility of their scheduled shift patterns, rotas and rosters...providing more certainty throughout the year. The new system is also delivering improvements in their work-life balance, with shorter shifts in general and shorter working weeks during quieter periods.

The change process has helped embed a commitment to continuous improvement in shift planning, rostering and workforce management within the Maritime & Coastguard Agency. It regularly carries out reviews to ensure shift patterns, rotas and rosters remain aligned to the needs of the organisation and its employees.

“It was clear we needed to find a new resourcing model if we were to deliver cost efficiencies whilst simultaneously meeting rising demand and protecting service standards.

“Working Time Solutions helped us design and implement a Demand Led-Rostering and Annualised Hours system that has generated significant and sustainable savings.

“By modelling our demand accurately and designing shift patterns that match it, we’ve been able to deliver against organisational objectives and provide our employees with an enhanced work-life balance.”

Matthew Briggs, HR Strategic Partner at the Maritime & Coastguard Agency



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Totalmobile is market leader in field service and mobile workforce management technology, helping organisations deliver more service, of the highest quality and at reduced cost.

Our SaaS based software provides a range of innovative products that deliver a step change in field service performance, mobile worker empowerment and management control.

This unlocks transformative cost savings, capacity gains, productivity improvements and empowers allows mobile workers to focus on consistently delivering the best service.

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