MoD Compass Audit Solution for the Submarine Delivery Agency

Background

The Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA) is part of Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S). Its purpose is to procure and project-manage the construction of future Royal Navy submarines and support those in-service working with Navy Command and the Defence Nuclear Organisation (DNO). The In-Service Management Team (ISM) sits within the SDA.

As part of the In-Service Management (ISM) team's quality assurance function, periodic engineering audits are performed to ensure that processes are correctly followed when delivering equipment parts. During these audits, non-conformances may be identified which require attention, resulting in actions which must be tracked to completion.

ISM required a new capability to automate the management of this work and improve governance.

Challenge

- Equipment failure could occur with associated potential safety issues, because of a failure to track non-conformance actions.
- Experience was being lost as staff are normally moved to new posts every two years.
- Lessons from previous audits were not always applied due to limited information accessibility.
- Efficiency needed improvement. Previous tools used to manage audit work (e.g. Excel and SharePoint) required significant overheads to track and manage the audit calendar.

ISM wanted a tool that would secure the audit process and better support operations by decreasing the probability of actions being missed or delayed. Easy access to previous audit outcomes would help preserve team knowledge.

The solution needed to be self-sufficient in that all details of the item being audited could be input to the tool, and the audit team assigned. In addition, ISM looked for a significant reduction in elapsed time to complete each audit.

Solution

The SDA chose CACI's Mood Software to underpin their solution because of how well it lends itself to extending capabilities through the addition of new modules. COMPASS Submarines was initially developed to provide management of documented business processes, and CACI were able to weave in a new audit module that would avoid users needing to log in to separate software tools.

The new tool digitises the recording of audit details such as non-conformance findings and related actions. This is underpinned by a workflow with alert emails triggered by activities like adding or updating audits, or a non-conformance needed to be acted upon. Scheduled emails act as reminders, for example when an audit is due.

This is a successful instance of Mood software's ability to be customised using JavaScript to deliver extra functionality to the end solution.

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Results

Efficiency is improved through system-driven working rather than relying on personnel knowledge and human driven processes:

Strengthened governance, as there's auditable evidence that findings are being captured and tracked.

Reduced likelihood of recurring issues.

Management overhead surrounding audits have been significantly lowered, allowing a reduction in FTE dedicated to the tasks.

Retention of knowledge is improved, as outcomes of latest and previous audits are readily available.

> "We're proud to share that the audit module was recognised with an award at the SDA Improvement Awards in November 2022."

Future

The audit module is available to other parts of Defence, however, its value as an engineering audit compliance tool isn't limited to a Defence context. We'll be exploring new uses and are actively looking at extending the solution design to be relevant to other types of audits such as the complete range of ISO standards.

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