

P2W- a strategic solution for Control of Work at Manchester Airport



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The Manchester Airport Asset Management Team implemented P2W, the Electronic Work Authorisation and Contractor Management solution from GEMsoft7 in 2015, after seeing the benefits that P2W has delivered at London Stansted Airport.



Background

Manchester Airports Group comprises four UK airports; Manchester, Stansted, East Midlands and Bournemouth and is the UK's largest airport operator, serving 52 million air passengers each year and handling 600,000 tonnes of freight.

Prior to installing P2W, Manchester Airport operated a paper based permit to work system for internal staff and contractors needing to undertake planned, emergency or routine maintenance work. Given the size and complexity of the site this meant that there was limited visibility and overall control of day to day work. At the time it was estimated that there were around 100 different contractor companies registered to work at the airport, many of whom operated under a generic "job registration," which gave them the right to send any individual anywhere on site, doing any job, regardless of what was going on around them. Safety checks and the supporting documents, such as Risk

Assessments and Isolation Certificates were sometimes not available or were incorrectly completed.

One of the most serious consequences of this was the number of contractor generated false activations of fire alarms in the terminal building. This was caused by contractors performing grinding or hot work related activities without the appropriate isolation of smoke/fire detection in the areas covered by the work. When any alarm is activated the entire building

has to be evacuated by all staff and passengers and the site then has to be inspected by the fire service. The false alarms were causing enormous unnecessary disruption, inconvenience to passengers and cost to the airport.

The contractors themselves were also often frustrated by the issues regarding paper permits, as they were required to travel considerable distances around the airport in order to acquire the appropriate work authorisations and permit approvals.



The Solution

Having seen P2W working successfully at London Stansted Airport, as well as Gatwick, London City and London Luton airports, the Manchester Asset Management Team chose P2W to help them address these issues and to help improve all of their Health and Safety and Contractor Management processes.

The Manchester team also took the strategic decision to closely follow GEMsoft7's P2W Work Authorisation Framework as part of their implementation. This provides organisations with the confidence that their processes follow the Health and Safety Executive's HSG250 guidelines relating to the use of Permit to Work systems. The P2W Work Authorisation Framework is based on the HSG250 guidelines and has evolved in line with customer requirements and feedback from the Airport Management sector and GEMsoft7's customers in other high risk/ high security industries.

"While P2W can and does allow customers to adapt the system to mirror their existing Health and Safety processes, Manchester were happy to adopt our Work Authorisation Framework with only minor configuration changes which the GEMsoft7 technical team carried out," said Phil McKell, GEMsoft7 MD.



This led to a smooth and speedy implementation - the purchase of P2W took place in December 2015 and went live on 1st April 2016.

P2W is already providing much greater control and efficiency, leading to safer working practices across the airport. There are now 334 different contractor companies registered on the system and 1750 individual contractors. Each month the airport now raises 100 project authorisations, 100 work authorisations and 200 permits.

Paul Dean, Control of Works and Compliance Manager for Manchester Airport, has already seen a big improvement in efficiency from contractors. "They prefer working with P2W as they now spend less time running around the airport trying to get paperwork signed off and more time getting on with the job they are being paid to do."

"In fact one of the surprising aspects of installing P2W has been how smoothly the implementation has gone from an operational perspective. We did expect some resistance from contractors, but in fact, as many of them were already

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used to working in very controlled environments at other sites, most have responded very well to the new, more formal but safer way of working." The team at the airport continues to enjoy a productive relationship with their counterparts at GEMsoft7. "What we like about working with GEMsoft7 is that we feel that they listen to us and understand our requirements, nothing that we've ever asked about has been dismissed; they will always go away and try to find a solution." This could range from the creation of a permit type new to GEMsoft7, such as the "Ionising Radiation," permit and report and audit, which records details of the location and work required on X-ray machines as required by Public Health England, to the ability to view information from the Projects folder in P2W in a gantt chart format.



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The Benefits

The whole of the Manchester Airport site, both landside and airside, is now covered by P2W. This has already provided significant operational benefits for Manchester Airport stakeholders and contractors. Activities such as the use of cranes and excavators are now managed through P2W, requiring the auditable approval of the appropriate stakeholders within Manchester Airport before any work can proceed. This has reduced the number of outages at the airport caused by excavators accidentally digging through power cables and pipes.

A further benefit to the Control of Works and Compliance team is that Project and Work Authorisations are now assessed, using P2W, by individuals with both the technical and health and safety competency to understand, and if necessary correct, working practices. This helps to ensure safer and more efficient processes. This not only prevents projects being initiated at the airport without the necessary technical and safety approvals, but also ensures that safe working practices are followed at all times.



Since the system has been implemented the increased control over work has led to fewer incidents and better general awareness of health and safety among contractors. The deployment of P2W and the processes provided by the Work Authorisations Framework gives everyone at the airport more confidence to challenge contractors to prove they have the appropriate authorisations to be working there. For example, using P2W has helped Manchester Airport mandate the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which must be worn by everyone doing maintenance or construction at the airport. This has ensured that every contractor at the airport now wears a company branded high-vis vest, as well as their P2W generated access pass, which Paul Dean says, "has led to contractors being much more visible to our passengers, and accountable to us, which in turn has instilled a greater sense of security and professionalism around the airport."

About GEMsoft7

GEMsoft7 created P2W in 2003 to provide software to manage permits and work authorisations to organisations working in high risk environments. It now has customers across a wide range of sectors including oil and gas, airports, the banking sector, food and drug manufacturing. P2W handles more than 100,000 permits to work every year, ensuring a safer working environment for 96,000 staff and contractors and thus the general public in countries around the world.



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