The Port of Melbourne Standardizes Operational Incident Management with Help from Noggin

The Port of Melbourne Corporation faces operational incident management challenges

The Port of Melbourne is one of Australia's foremost maritime hubs. The nation's first port to handle over two million TEU (twenty-foot equivalent unit), the Port of Melbourne receives upwards of 3,000 ships a year; on any given day, the Port handles more than 7,000 containers and a thousand motor vehicles.

With that volume of activity happening over the span of 140,000 m² of facilities, Melbourne port operators understandably have a lot on their mind, especially the team responsible for security, safety and emergency management. For those folks, it didn't help matters that the Port of Melbourne Corporation (PoMC) was dissipating valuable emergency planning resources on tackling incidents with multiple, overlapping systems, instead of in a comprehensive, all-hazards framework.

You see, the lack of operational incident management standardization at the Port only made changing processes and sending out notifications time-consuming ordeals: the Security, Safety and Emergency Management team often found itself spending way too much time on incident prioritization.

That wasn't the only challenge though. Because of overlapping structures, establishing a common operating picture for events going on across the business was difficult-not to mention achieving shared situational awareness in the event of an incident. Executives, in particular, often received a fragmented picture of events, as the rank-in-file didn't have an automated means by which to send regular situational reports to senior leaders.
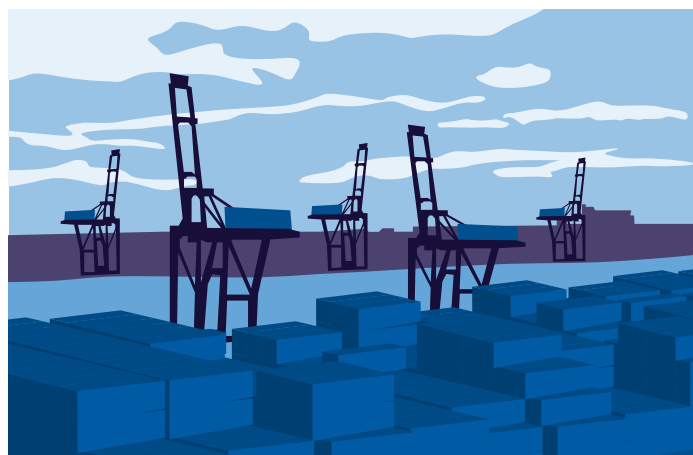
Something had to change. The team desperately needed a comprehensive, integrated solution to eliminate the kind of process redundancies that proliferated across the organization. And, to sure up the information flow in order to help all stakeholders achieve shared situational awareness, the team hoped to invest in a new solution that would collect, display, share, and disseminate incident and emergency information in real time, facilitating incident reporting and review, as well as enabling contingency planning.

Above all else though, PoMC was ready to take an all-hazards, incident management approach to managing all of its major risk areas (pollution, emergency management, security, risk and work health and safety). The team just needed to find the right platform-one that would ensure that PoMC continued to meet its stringent auditing, compliance, and vulnerability requirements.

PoMC discovers Noggin OCA

Lucky for PoMC, it wouldn't have to do too much looking; all-hazards, enterprise resilience software provider, Noggin found the Port, instead. And what exactly was Noggin offering? Just the benefits of the Noggin OCA platform, an efficient, mobile-friendly solution to manage any type of disruption and ensure efficient collaboration, both within PoMC as well as with external contractors and other agencies that contribute to incident and emergency response.

PoMC was intrigued. Doubly so, as Noggin also came with an impressive track record in emergency and incident management, a history of success and innovation confirmed by even key PoMC stakeholders. Noggin's Aussie roots didn't hurt either. To PoMC, it was a comfort that Noggin was a local service provider: extra support and resources would be close at hand. PoMC was sold.

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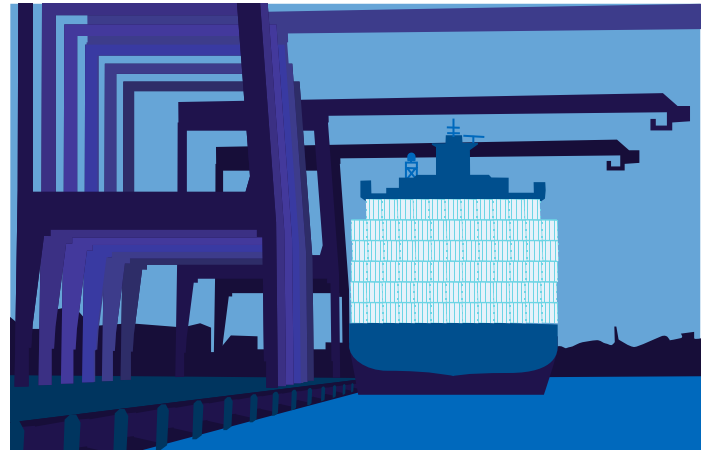
After comprehensive solution design, prototyping, and user awareness training, PoMC was ready to go live with Noggin OCA. And it didn't take too long for the results to roll in:

- **Automation.** Procuring Noggin OCA allowed PoMC to automate its thorniest procedures and (notification) processes, right off the bat. Radically simplifying data capture, for instance, consigned time-consuming, manual data collection to the past. Now, historical data is a lot easier to find, which facilitates incident planning.
- **Situational awareness.** Noggin OCA automates situation reports and notification alerts as well, which lets PoMC stakeholders monitor the progress of active events to completion. Information also gets automatically shared from a single source of truth, minimizing the potential for human error and lowering communication costs.
- **Accessibility.** A simple-to-use digital tool, Noggin OCA also manages to improve accessibility for core PoMC users, not just desk-based office employees but workers in the field. The solution even lets contractors and other external parties apply for permits online, cutting down on the manual transcription busy port administrators need to do.
- **Business process excellence.** Finally, the Noggin OCA workflow management tool lets PoMC change processes easily and make other business improvements seamlessly-all without additional IT resources. Some of Noggin OCA's benefits have been unforeseen as well, like a positive spill-over to other PoMC systems, which have seen their ability to efficiently and accurately manage hazards, incidents, and emergencies optimized by proximity to Noggin OCA.

A new wrinkle: Privatizing the Port of Melbourne calls for duplicating Noggin OCA

The story didn't quite end after the initial roll out of Noggin OCA. Far from it. About a year later, the government of the state of Victoria decided to privatize the Port of Melbourne. And in 2016, the Lonsdale consortium purchased the 50-year lease, paying a record 9.7 billion AUD to buy the Port.

The transaction, as you'd imagine, fundamentally transformed operations at the Port. Instead of one company, now two entities were in charge: the Victorian Ports Corporation (Melbourne), also known as Victoria Ports (VPCM), and Port of Melbourne (PoM).

The Port of Melbourne is the private manager of the Port's commercial operations. Meanwhile, Victoria Ports (VPCM), formed by the state, is the government agency responsible for Harbour Master duties, channel access and maintenance, as well as operations at the busy Station Pier, the city's primary passenger terminal.

Unforeseen at the time, the separation created a structural and logistical barrier between the two entities, both of which would be managing incidents and, therefore, needed to maintain close coordination in all matters related to incident planning, tracking, and response. You might say, it was almost as if VPCM and PoM required constant access to the same instance of Noggin OCA. That way incidents could get shared automatically between the two entities and each would be able to assign actions when necessary. The question though: how to configure it?

What PoM and VPCM get with Noggin OCA

- Incident and hazard reporting
- Incident and hazard dashboards
- Public forms for mass incident and hazard reporting
- Injury reporting and dashboards and other health and safety reporting
- RSS media monitoring
- Incident and scheduled digest communication
- Asset management
- Security reporting
- Environment reporting

Turns out, when you're working with the problem-solvers at Noggin, you can simply duplicate the original instance. And to ensure a real-time push-pull of information between the two agencies, Noggin linked the duplicated instances via Noggin OCA Connect.

Post-privatization, operations are going splendidly at the Port, which remains one of the Australasian region's most important. The entities responsible for the Port's management can settle into their new responsibilities, secure in the fact that their operational incident management needs are being met, thanks to Noggin OCA.

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