

The Finnish Maritime Administration (FMA) ensures safe shipping.

The FMA is the authority responsible for maritime safety, fairway maintenance, hydrographic charting and winter traffic assistance, as well as the provision of ferry services to the archipelago communities. The FMA is also in charge of vessel traffic service (VTS) and is the supervising authority for pilotage. The FMA employs nearly 800 people in different parts of Finland.

FMA to build a management system with QPR Software's help

CUSTOMER CASE:



Merenkululaitos



Mirja Jatkola, Project and Quality Manager (right) and Anne Ilola, FMA's Development Manager (left).

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The FMA ensures that the basic operational conditions for merchant shipping and sea transport are maintained and continually improved, taking into account safety, economic aspects and environmental consequences. The aim of these activities is to ensure safe and efficient merchant shipping, meeting both society's and customers' needs.

In summer 2006, the FMA purchased QPR ProcessGuide and QPR ScoreCard software. Before that, some of the FMA's processes already utilized quality systems, although they lacked FMA's perspective. The new software purchases will harmonize FMA's functions, enhance communications and improve transparency.

packages were best suited to FMA's needs. "QPR had a finished product, and provides commissioning and user support services. The good functioning of the technical environment was a major factor in deciding on the software provider," says Anne Ilola, FMA's Development Manager and Management Team member, commenting on the factors influencing procurement of the software.

Competitive bidding for software providers

The FMA arranged extensive competitive bidding for its software procurements. High priority was given to the features of the software, to the suitability of the technical environment and to user support. The software provider's own expertise was also emphasized. The QPR software

Strategic aim: a harmonized Finnish Maritime Administration

The FMA's strategic aim was to harmonize the FMA. All the FMA processes were reviewed and uniformly described. Mirja Jatkola, Project and Quality manager, was selected to head the enterprise

management system. Mirja is also the main QPR user.

Project implementation in an expert organization

Anne Ilola recalls the beginning of the project: "We started building a management system for a future FMA. Making services even more customer-oriented and project development were also regarded as important aspects. We needed a modern tool and an effective steering and management system to start describing processes. This was the background for the Management Team's discussion when the project was launched."



Seen here, ships being assisted.

Anne continues: "We wanted an easy-to-use electronic system because we wanted to streamline the distribution and maintenance of process instructions. The QPR software is so user-friendly that the FMA was able to work independently. Personnel commitment is essential – which is why we wanted to do as much as possible ourselves. We plan to develop our operations through "Learning by Doing" to maximize gains in expertise."

Launched in 2006, the project was defined as a strategic project for the FMA.

In 2007 a quality team was formed to coordinate operations, and systematic description of the various processes started. Since then, progress has been good, the processes have been described, the plans have been finalized, and performance meters will be incorporated in autumn 2007.

FMA personnel found that writing process descriptions was a simple phase. The FMA will take a QPR consultant on board to incorporate the performance meters so that they are as effective as possible.

Enterprise management system a cornerstone for development

The FMA's harmonized operational system is an extensive quality system that includes descriptions of the organization's processes and instructions. The system is used not only to generate instructions but also to analyze operations and thus further develop them. The aim is to make the operational system a central part of the control and management system.

In synchronization with the annual cycle, operations are evaluated in relation to processes, and improvement measures are recorded in the operational plan for the next year.

Process descriptions improve operational quality

"Once processes are described and instructions for doing the work exist, the quality of operations improves. Personally describing processes enables them to be developed as early as in the description phase. We found that certain things could be done better, and were thus able to improve profitability!" Anne says.

"The FMA is such a large organization that it's important for us to know how each of our job descriptions is linked to the FMA's primary aims. On-the-job wellbeing is enhanced when each person can see how their work is connected to the whole.

Our aim is organizational unity: understanding what is being done in the office next door, what kinds of projects are in progress there, and what types of special expertise we have in-house. It's vital to document information and to expand one's own expertise."

Many people will retire over the next ten years, so transferring expertise is essential, and descriptions must be completed with care. To develop our operations we must gain an understanding of where we are right now – unless you know where you are, it's difficult to know where you're headed," says Anne Ilola.

"The project has gone smoothly and I have a very positive overall impression of it. QPR has helped us whenever we've needed it and we've stayed on schedule. We're really happy to report that all is well and that QPR has kept its promises," Anne Ilola comments.

Product training and support from QPR

Mirja Jatkola is pleased with the QPR ScoreCard and QPR ProcessGuide training arranged by QPR. "QPR's trainers are competent and the training was useful. Our cooperation with QPR's consultants is very smooth," says Mirja, while both Anne and Mirja say: "The support from QPR Customer Care also works extremely well."

Future measures: entrenching the operating model

The aim for the remainder of the year is to have the operational management system in use by all FMA personnel (some 800 people) through QPR Portal at the start of 2008. QPR Portal is a browser-based end-user environment, into which a database model will be introduced, making it available for the entire staff.

The FMA is also interested in the new QPR WorkFlow. QPR WorkFlow not only ensures practical application of process descriptions but also enhances quality by automating processes.