PRINCE2® HELPS WITH DELIVERY WITHIN IT AT TRANSPOWER

Transpower is a state owned enterprise which owns and operates New Zealand's high-voltage electricity transmission grid.

Providing a seamless delivery of bulk electricity to towns, cities and major industries across the country. To do all of this, Transpower has to maintain what it has today and plan for what might be needed in the future to meet New Zealand's energy needs.

Transpower plans ahead, to ensure the National Grid is able to meet the needs of future generations. This is achieved using computer programs which simulate how New Zealand's power system behaves as electricity demand and generation grow.

When a future issue is identified, Transpower goes through a process of:

- Identifying options to resolve the issue (for larger projects this will include an extensive public consultation process)
- Short-listing the options
- Determining a preferred option
- Seeking approval to recover the cost of the preferred option (if transmission) from the Electricity Commission (who regulate Transpower's investments)
- Designing the solution and consulting with any people affected
- Obtaining Resource Management Act approval to build.

As the transmission network is a natural monopoly Transpower's investments are regulated by the Electricity Commission, and it's pricing is regulated by the Commerce Commission. As a result of this, the Commerce Commission audits delivery performance and processes to ensure that Transpower delivers value for money assets and IT solutions.

Within IT, a hybrid project management method was previously used that was identified as having inefficiencies to those employed in the project management space. The lessons that were learned in 2008 were that the delivery framework and associated processes were cumbersome and not grounded in industry good practice. In order to achieve this and deliver against the corporate vision that stated 'We will be respected for our operations and our honesty', the decision was made to implement PRINCE2 as the project management method for IT projects.

Rather than take the text book approach, almost 3 months of preparatory work and business analysis was undertaken to understand how best to tailor PRINCE2 to suit Transpower's IT business. Fortunately, the planned implementation schedule coincided with the release of the new Directing Successful Projects with PRINCE2 guide. Consistent project governance had previously been an issue, so this was dealt with first, replacing Steering Committees with more structured Project Advisory Teams (utilizing the PRINCE2 project board model).

There was also heavy investment (time predominantly) in developing a standard competency model for project managers, therefore it was important to introduce a common language within the delivery framework. Implementing PRINCE2 has succeeded in achieving this. All project staff are PRINCE2 certified (foundation course), such that the method and terminology is fully understood. The processes, components and techniques of PRINCE2 have all been moulded to fit the way that thedepartment operates, such that the Transpower IT project management framework – by luck or good judgment! – is now closely aligned with PRINCE2 2009.

The implementation of the method was kept relatively low-key, merely announcing (following completion of the process improvement project) that processes and templates were now aligned to PRINCE2. There is a school of thought that thinks the PRINCE2 approach introduces bureaucracy and the IT Programme Support Office was anxious to avoid any such scare-mongering! The framework is continually improved via lessons learned feedback and the introduction of an IT programme management approach aligned to MSP, will follow later this year.

'**We will be respected for our operations and our honesty'**

Corporate vision statement that underpinned the decision to implement PRINCE2

About APMG

APMG-Australasia accredits Training Organizations, Trainers and Consultants across Australia and Asia and administers exams for professional certification. We are a wholly owned subsidiary of The APMG Group, Ltd, the official accreditor for PRINCE2®, an internationally recognized standard for Project Management. PRINCE2 (Projects IN Controlled Environments), is a scalable and flexible project management method that navigates you through all the essentials for successfully running any type of project.

PRINCE2 underwent a full refresh in June, 2009 to more fully address today's project environment. More than 170 organizations contributed their experiences and ideas to the refresh process. PRINCE2 reflects the Best Practices of leading project management practitioners worldwide and can enhance the credentials and careers of project management professionals.

For more information on PRINCE2, or how to become an accredited PRINCE2 training organization, please contact APMG at Tel +61 (0)2 6249 6008, Fax +61 (0)2 6249 7002 Email admin@apmg-australasia.com