

Improving communications at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency

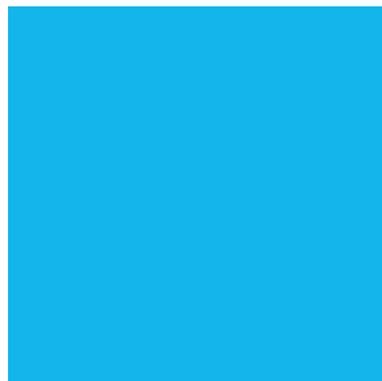
Capita Secure Information Solutions (Capita) has implemented a complete integrated communications solution (ICCS) for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) while maintaining the operational viability of the MCA's mission-critical services.

Capita visited and investigated a large number of MCA sites as part of the design and specification stage of the proposed solution. The design included 19 ICCS, 400 base stations nationwide and 120 control room desks. The Capita ICCS incorporates Windows NT and TCP/IP servers and analogue/digital (TETRA) radio interfaces.

The MCA responds to distress calls placed via radio or phone and mobilises rescue assets (lifeboats, helicopters etc.) as needed. This project included the national roll-out of a digital radio network along with multi-location command-rooms and integrated applications.

The overall solution included the integration of a number of software applications into a single screen display. The applications included in the solution include Direction Finding, EISEC, CLI (linked with picture retrieval), pre-recorded weather messages, paging and directory services.

This project illustrated the importance of designing and specifying complete solutions in partnership with the client and building upon the expertise and wide range of technical competence that Capita is able to offer. The project was completed 6 months early and on budget, demonstrating Capita's ability to manage complex and large projects involving numerous parties and working in parallel with existing application and service providers.





Business Change Programme

Capita undertook a Business Change Programme and provided the national emergency call taking and communications solution to the all of the 19 Maritime and Coastguard Agency control rooms across the UK.

During the tendering phase, Capita consultants visited the majority of the MCA control rooms undertaking studies of how the business operated and understanding the operational aspirations of the control room staff along with the shortcomings of the existing technology. There was little, if any integration between the existing business processes and this in turn was underpinned by technology platforms that were not and could not be integrated.

The environment had evolved over many years with new system interfaces being added and presented to the operator wherever they could be accommodated within the physical constraints of the control room.

This meant that the overall operational effectiveness of the control room was diminished and restricted in so far as only certain operators had access to specific information and from the public facing perspective it led to a less effective and efficient user experience both from an emergency call handling and a day to day maritime communications.

Capita took a holistic view of each element of the process and enabled the MCA to transform the control room environment both at a local and national level and facilitated an overall rationalisation programme of how existing resources were utilised both during the day and also during the year when there were high levels of inactivity at some of the most northerly stations. It also automated many of the manual operator functions that were prone to disruption and repetition that subsequently freed up operators for other operational activities

The derived benefits from the adoption of the business change programme were increased flexibility of resources which facilitated a freeing up of key staff along with a significantly increased customer experience through the ability to provide key information in a more accurate and timely manner.