



Australia's premier Indigenous art fair turns to SurePact for innovative project management solutions



Image credit: Models adorned with Pormpuraaw Art & Culture Centre wearable ghostnet designs, Photo by Cristina Bevilacqua, Courtesy Cairns Indigenous Art Fair.

The Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) – a major not-for-profit event – is continuing to forge new pathways for artists and performers, as well as innovative and streamlined project management processes with SurePact's software.

The client

CIAF is a not-for-profit organisation that showcases the very best artworks, fashion designs and performances by Indigenous artists of Queensland. With a focus on offering an ethical art marketplace, CIAF attracts national and international collectors and curators, commissions new work and provides pathways and professional development opportunities for emerging visual and performance artists.

CIAF was established by the Queensland Government as a strategic initiative of the Backing Indigenous Arts program in 2009. The CIAF has since transitioned to independent status, though, maintains valued support from both Commonwealth and State Government funding. In addition to this funding, CIAF actively seeks philanthropic and sponsorship partnerships to grow the myriad of program offerings, to provide new opportunities for Indigenous creatives going forward.

The problem

As the organisation grows (with the initiation of the CIAF Evolution Project traineeship program and the welcoming of new team members), the need for CIAF to implement a more streamlined process for tracing activity around project delivery phases became apparent.

CIAF General Manager, Darrell Harris, says the organisation was looking to a "new way of doing things" with a focus on ensuring such processes could be accessible to all, including external contractors, artists, performers, and other stakeholders.

"Everyone here is very capable and works very hard, but we didn't have any software that encompassed and intertwined each person's role, so we could track where each member of the team was at and provide support for them, if needed. That's where I saw a gap that needed to be filled."

The solution

After seeing the SurePact software in action in a previous role, Harris recognised that it could be what CIAF had been looking for.

In December 2020, CIAF Project Coordinator, Megsi O'Toole, became the first member of the team to be trained and mentored in the use of SurePact. Quickly becoming proficient in administering the solution, she has since trained her colleagues to use the software.

O'Toole says CIAF has begun using SurePact's grant management module to manage all lifecycle stages of grant delivery, centrally housing all contracts, documents and information related to a grant in one location, with a robust audit trail.



...having an overview of all the money coming into the organisation in one place, and a high-level understanding of which milestones need to be hit and when – has been very beneficial."



Image credit: CIAF 2019, Blueclick Photography

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“As an organisation, we rely on grants to facilitate everything we do,” O’Toole says. “So inputting those grants into SurePact – having an overview of all the money coming into the organisation in one place, and a high-level understanding of which milestones need to be hit and when – has been very beneficial.”

With intelligent and customisable workflows, built-in analytics and real-time reporting dashboards, SurePact is helping CIAF to streamline all project activities into one place ahead of this year’s events (which are to be held from 17-22 August, 2021).

“Internally, all of our staff have access to SurePact, and are currently using it to track their projects on a day-to-day basis,” O’Toole says. “So even in the month that we’ve been using SurePact, it’s really helped to clarify people’s roles.

“Closer to the event, we’ll have our PR and marketing teams, artists, performers, event management, security – hundreds of external contractors – using SurePact to collaborate, as well as key stakeholders like the Cairns Convention Centre and Cairns Regional Council.

“SurePact’s functionality is simple, but there’s a depth of features – we’re still discovering all the things it can do for us, like the Asset Management register and lots more, which SurePact are helping to tailor to our unique needs.”

O’Toole says she wouldn’t hesitate to recommend SurePact to other not-for-profit organisations looking for a grant and project management solution.

“I would highly recommend it, especially if they’re currently operating off of multiple spreadsheets,” she says. “To have everyone working on the one platform, to enable that collaboration across the organisation – it’s just been such a game changer for us.”

“SurePact’s functionality is simple, but there’s a depth of features – we’re still discovering all the things it can do for us, like the Asset Management register and lots more, which SurePact are helping to tailor to our unique needs.”



Aurukun Shire Council uses SurePact to improve collaboration with external contractors



Aurukun Shire Council is using SurePact to collaborate with external contractors more effectively and deliver infrastructure to remote communities more efficiently.

The client

Aurukun Shire Council is a small Council in Far North Queensland which includes much of the traditional country of the Wik, Wik Way and Kugu peoples.

The Council manages the maintenance and installation of community infrastructure, including community housing, water and sewerage reticulation and treatment, waste collection and landfill operations, road maintenance and construction, development of appropriate subdivisions, marine access, airport maintenance and operations and cemetery maintenance. These deliveries are made possible by working with a variety of external contractors.

Aurukun Shire Council

As a non-rate payer-based community, 77 per cent of the Council's revenue is provided by Commonwealth and State Government funding bodies. Any overrun must be paid for by either reducing future activity or applying for further funding. On the other hand, any savings the Council makes to its bottom line can be redirected to additional projects for the local community.

The problem

The Council identified a need to streamline their project deliveries and track all their activity in one secure location that could be safely and securely accessed by external contractors. Previously, millions of dollars in grants, projects and contracts had been managed through multiple and very large spreadsheets, emails and files on a group drive, and were proving difficult to keep track of.

Aurukun Shire Council Technical Services Officer Anne Boundy says variations – when actual conditions are

entirely different from expected conditions – have also been a problem for the Council, leaving them open to potential cost and scope blowouts.

"The problem we had was if workers out on a job have a variation – if they pull down a wall and identify a problem behind it, for instance – the communication and approval would probably bypass us and we would not know about it.

"We could get to the end of the job and receive an invoice from the contractor for variations we knew nothing about, which was a huge issue due to our procurement policy."

Due to these concerns, the Council sought out project management software that would enable them to communicate and collaborate more effectively with external contractors.

The solution

In July 2019, Aurukun Shire Council implemented SurePact's project management and contract delivery software.

External contractors and Council collaborate within the SurePact system. The cloud-based SaaS (software as a service) allows information to be entered from virtually any internet-connected device in the field, with built-in analytics and real-time reporting dashboards available at all times to those with access to the system, ensuring full accessibility and visibility.

"There are a whole lot of processes involved in each one of these deliveries, and with SurePact we are able to keep all of these processes recorded in one place," Boundy says.

"We use SurePact across the entire project delivery, from the construction and maintenance work all the way through to accounts payable... Our external contractors can see every step of the process and have access to all of the documentation, including Form 1s and certificates and everything else that has to be produced. It is so helpful for everyone to be able to go in and retrieve what they need themselves."



The results

Aurukun Shire Council has seen significant benefits from using SurePact to collaborate with external contractors, including enhanced accessibility, transparency, communication and variation management.

"SurePact makes everything accessible and transparent, so you are not relying on one person to coordinate everything and pass information on," Boundy says. "We all have to communicate together and be on the same page, which we can do with SurePact because everything is there in the one place and everyone has access to it."

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"Previously, external contractors were directly contacting the building supervisor to tell them things that were not always relayed to me, so I couldn't update our records. But when everything is communicated through SurePact – for example, if a project's schedule is extended due to things like wet weather – it's entered into the SurePact system and everybody can see it."

Variations are now entered into SurePact as they occur, so the Council is aware of them immediately, not just when they get the bill.

"SurePact has cut down the confusion about where and when variations have occurred," Boundy says. "We have seen a reduction in delays in completing deliveries due to variations, down from weeks to one or two days."

Envisage Building work with Aurukun Shire Council on both minor and major renovations to residential housing and commercial buildings within the community. Heather Crawford from Envisage has seen the benefits of using SurePact in their work with the Council firsthand.

"SurePact has helped us to digitise our filing system for each individual project and helps us to sustain clear interactive communication with each other," Crawford says.

"Using SurePact has provided us with transparency, time savings, variation management and communication improvements. In particular, the filing system has saved me a lot of time. For example, the documentation of variations and being able to clearly see which variation has been approved and its associated costs throughout the lifespan of the project has created complete transparency between myself, the Council and my site foreman and reduced the time it takes to get variation approval.

"With SurePact, I can clearly see the tasks that I must complete for each project, step-by-step, which has helped me learn the process in which I need to submit documentation to streamline project completion and handover.

"The notifications keep me updated on what documentation I need to complete for us to meet our deadlines and to keep projects on track. It also helps me see if a document has been approved – and if not, I know not to start organising for work to proceed."

By streamlining and simplifying the process of collaboration, SurePact has transformed the way Aurukun Shire Council and its external contractors deliver projects.



VR pilot in WH&S reduces risks and saves Burke Shire Council thousands in training costs



SurePact partnered with Next World Enterprises to deliver an innovative virtual reality program that reduced risk, boosted morale and saved money on training costs for Burke Shire Council.

The client

The Shire of Burke is a local government area in North West Queensland, lying on the south coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria and sharing a border with the Northern Territory. The Shire covers an area of 39,684 square kilometres, but 80 per cent of its residents live in the two major townships of Burketown and Gregory Downs.

Burke Shire Council has an annual budget of \$18.9 million, and is reliant on Commonwealth and Queensland Government grant funding, which makes up 54 per cent of its budgeted revenue.

The problem

Burke Shire is considered a remote living environment, and is further isolated by a wet season that limits road access each summer. Because of this, work health and safety (WH&S) training for Council employees has traditionally been delivered by trainers flying into the area, or by staff travelling more than 450km away to centres such as Mount Isa, making training both inconvenient and costly.

Making the situation even more difficult, the Shire was declared a Pandemic Zone Permit area after the onset of COVID-19. This meant that no trainers or outsiders could enter the region without extenuating reasons.

The Council recognised that WH&S training is critical to maintaining both safety and compliance. The Council also understood that the difficulties with accessing this training had the potential to compromise the safety of employees and the community, and could lead to escalating costs – both financial and otherwise.

At the same time, the Council identified high staff turnover as a problem that could be addressed by

engaging staff with WH&S training that felt less like a chore and more like a desired solution.

There was a clear need, then, for an innovative WH&S training program that could be conveniently, consistently and cost-effectively delivered to Council employees in the Burke Shire.

The solution

SurePact – the award-winning software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution that identifies and mitigates risks at each decision point of a grant, project or contract, through to asset realisation – partnered with Next World Enterprises, a dedicated virtual reality training provider, to deliver virtual WH&S training to Burke Shire Council employees for a two-month trial period.

While wearing virtual reality headsets, staff were taken through animated scenarios and responded to questions using a handpiece. The training modules, available on-demand and in real-time, included WH&S courses on topics such as manual handling, working at heights, confined spaces and chainsaw management.

The virtual nature of the training was intended to reduce travel and accommodation expenses for staff and trainers, and make WH&S training more engaging and accessible for all staff, leading to improved learning retention and compliance, reduced risk for Council programs and projects, and more efficient work outcomes.

Clare Keenan, CEO of Burke Shire Council, said the innovative program was the ideal solution for the Council's situation.



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"As a very remote Council and being strapped for cash, being early adopters of technology has massive benefits," Ms Keenan said. "With the borders of our Shire closed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, flying trainers in was not a possibility. Burke Shire Council jumped at the opportunity offered by SurePact as part of their innovative expansion to pilot virtual reality WH&S training by Next World Enterprises."

The results

The virtual training program was an immediate success for Burke Shire Council, with rapid uptake and acceptance among staff. Over the two-month period, more than 50 staff completed up to four WH&S virtual reality modules each – all without having to take staff offsite or fly trainers in from outside the community.

The benefits to Burke Shire Council of on-demand WH&S training for all staff included:

- Reduced WH&S risks
- Improved WH&S compliance
- Improved employee welfare
- Reduced training costs

VR learning resulted in a 73 per cent improvement in engagement levels, with participants reporting that they retained, on average, 67 per cent more knowledge through VR.

As expected, the virtual training technology eliminated the costs of flights, accommodation and food incurred by sending staff away for training or flying trainers to remote areas, saving the Council and ratepayers money. The 'working at heights' modules alone, for instance, result in a cost saving of up to \$2500 per person.

The virtual training, available at multiple locations within the Shire, also reduced the amount of time that staff had to be absent from work, and was conducive with social distancing requirements, as it didn't require large staff gatherings in training rooms.

As a result of this innovative program, Burke Shire Council went on to win the Bush Council Innovation Award 2020.

David Gornalle, WH&S contractor for Burke Shire Council, said the staff "retained more using the VR experience than sitting in a classroom", and the training had a positive effect on team morale.

"WH&S is for the entire business, and it does not have to be 'just another task'," Mr Gornalle said. "Next World and SurePact are doing a great job teaming up so that it can be fun and informative, and this experience is bringing the 'Wow' back to the safety training arena."

Read the [Microsoft Case Study here >](#)



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Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council is driving its digital transformation with SurePact



With SurePact's project management software, Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council is embracing technology and getting the most value from their funding for the community.

The client

The Aboriginal Shire of Cherbourg is a local government area in Central Queensland, completely surrounded by the South Burnett Region.

In the 2016 census, the rural town and locality of Cherbourg had a population of 1,269 people, 98.7% of whom identified as Indigenous Australians. The town is located in Wakka Wakka tribal boundaries, but many different clan groups are represented within the population.

Cherbourg ASC

Although the town was originally founded in the early 1900s under a policy of segregation, today's Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council (Cherbourg ASC) prides itself on being a forward-thinking Council that is sensitive to the needs of its growing community.

The Council owns all the houses in Cherbourg, and there are minimal external enterprises. The Council is therefore largely reliant on grants from both Commonwealth and State Government bodies for its funding.

The problem

Cherbourg ASC is subject to annual government audits, and must be able to demonstrate how funding is being allocated with full transparency and accountability.

Sean Nicholson, Cherbourg ASC's Economic and Community Development Manager, has also identified internal communication and approvals for project variations as areas that could be streamlined and improved.

"A current issue when there are variations to projects is the three or four levels of approval," Nicholson says. "[Approvals] would have to go through our own internal department, all the information needs to be gathered, put together and signed off so that it can be varied internally and then it has to go to be approved externally."

More broadly, the Council has made digital transformation a deep strategic priority, and is seeking out technology that supports this transition.

"We are embracing technology and are trying to bring our businesses into that space as well," Nicholson says.



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"There are several reasons for this. Firstly, it is of interest to management to run a business as efficiently as possible, so there is obviously the efficiency analysis.

"People are also interested in technology – they use it all the time socially now and we want to bring it into the workplace. For instance, instead of banning mobile phones and bringing that antagonism into the work environment, we have got employees with phones, we tell them how to use it for work and as long as they are productive we are happy."

The solution

Cherbourg ASC has begun to use SurePact's project management technology, which streamlines all the activity related to a project in one place with built-in analytics and real-time reporting dashboards, to oversee a variety of projects, particularly with regards to the construction and maintenance of social housing.



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Cherbourg ASC is currently undertaking a number of projects as part of the Works for Queensland program, a State Government initiative that supports regional Councils to undertake job-creating maintenance and minor infrastructure projects.

"We have various projects under that umbrella, including adding a range of pathways around town and fixing up a radio station that was not in good condition, and these projects are all on SurePact," Nicholson says.

"SurePact enables us to see when a project was initiated, when it was supposed to stop, if the funding is approved, if it is environmentally safe, and if workplace health and safety is all in place... we can access photographs of before-and-afters, all the grant documentation, sign-offs and Form 16s."

Managing these projects through SurePact makes it easy for Nicholson to provide timely and accurate reports on their progress, both internally and when reporting to funding bodies.

"I attend the Council meeting once a month, and within that meeting I can easily demonstrate on SurePact where each project is up to time-wise," he says.

"The transparency of SurePact allows us to show the high standard of ethics and the quality risk analysis, WH&S accountability and procurement documentation of what we do."

Nicholson says that SurePact has enabled Cherbourg ASC to avoid time and scope blowouts and improve their communication.

"Communication and time-saving are the biggest benefits we have seen from using SurePact."

"In the corporate and business world, managers always say, 'But I wasn't told, I had no communication, I didn't know.' With SurePact, there is no manager that has any excuse for a lack of communication.

"People can see exactly where they are and their part to play, from the accounts department to project, economic and asset management teams and each individual subcontractor and work crew."

Nicholson says the SurePact software has helped to significantly speed up Cherbourg ASC's approvals process.

"The accessibility of the platform means decisions can be made very quickly," he says. "The external stakeholders can just access the project and see what's going on... with a phone call, a decision is made and the project moves forward.

"Digital technology gives us that extra visibility. Lots of what we are doing uses digital technology, which is done on iPads and mobile phones, and so what we really like about SurePact is that it's easily accessible on these devices."

As they continue to use the software, Cherbourg ASC has also found that the SurePact team have been responsive to their suggestions.

"They actively seek improvements and are willing to discuss them and look at them," Nicholson says. "It all happens in six weeks, and you won't find any other software that does that.

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Cloncurry Shire Council improves contractor transparency and trust with SurePact



SurePact provides provision for full transparency and visibility for the work of over 1200 external contractors, giving Cloncurry Shire Council a complete picture of their project and contract delivery.

The client

The Shire of Cloncurry is a local government area in North West Queensland covering an area of 47,971 square kilometres. Most of the Shire's 3,100 inhabitants live in Cloncurry, the Shire's major town and administrative centre. The Cloncurry Shire Council is a major employer in the area, which has twice been crowned 'Queensland's Friendliest Town'.

The Council relies on grants from both Commonwealth and State Government funding bodies for 33 per cent of its budgeted revenue. Due to the size of the Shire, much of the work performed on Council projects is carried out by external contractors.

The problem

The Council has experienced delays on reporting from external contractors. Receiving out-of-date data has, in turn, led to a reduced understanding of the projects being delivered to Council, and made it difficult to impart information to the community in a clear and timely manner.

As well as impacting contractor performance management, a lack of visibility and transparency has the potential to result in overspends in project and contract delivery; ineffectiveness in future program-of-works planning; and breakdowns in stakeholder relationships because of poor communication. Crucially, for a Council that derives a third of its budgeted revenue from grants, it can also lead to a lack of knowledge of funding requirements, making it difficult to apply for grant funding to support delivery in a timely manner.

The Council recognised the need for full transparency and visibility of its 1200 external contractors, in order to identify and mitigate risks, increase trust and improve reporting to stakeholders.

The solution

SurePact's software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution includes a suite of modules to identify risk early in project and contract deliveries and reduce cost, time and scope blowouts.

Guided and automated workflow approvals are supported by robust audit and governance transparency, with real-time analytics – accessible anywhere, anytime – providing strong business intelligence and highlighting enterprise-wide performance metrics.

The system can be deployed independent of integration with other platforms initially, and without the need to load historical data.

Contractors and Council have the ability to collaborate within the SurePact system, ensuring full visibility of all stages and outputs, from concept to closeout and asset realisation.

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Cloncurry Shire Council began implementing the SurePact system in October 2019, with an initial set-up and training period of one week to deploy the Project Management and Contract Delivery modules.



The main team involved in the roll-out included 2 project staff, supporting a release to almost 40 internal and external users. All were trained and mentored in the use of the modules, giving a level of proficiency allowing users to be able to administer the solution with the support of an onsite super user.

The results

With real-time dashboards providing immediate data that was previously either inaccessible or outdated, Council leadership reports that their working relationship with external contractors has greatly improved.

Charles Taylor, Assets and Project Planning Manager for Cloncurry Shire Council, says the transparent real-time reporting on contractors and projects provided by the SurePact system has led to clarity of risks and accountability, and improved business intelligence based on measurable facts.

"The dashboard is a unique point for SurePact," he says, "giving immediate business intelligence linking all funding and outputs while highlighting the risks."

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SurePact's document management and decision governance has provided Cloncurry Shire Council with a fully transparent audit trail. This accessibility and visibility has allowed for accurate information to be delivered to the community, and enabled more informed decision-making, front-end planning and future program planning.

With a 360-degree line of sight of revenue received, delivery costs and management of risks, Cloncurry Shire Council is better placed to deliver projects and initiatives that benefit the community.

Read the [Microsoft Case Study here >](#)



CurryPM delivers the largest federally funded flood warning program in Australia with SurePact



CurryPM Project Manager Frank Plozza with Boulia Director of Works and Operations Harin Karra

CurryPM is utilising SurePact to deliver part of the largest infrastructure network in Australia, the Queensland Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Program, across 12 Councils.

The client

CurryPM is a project management firm delivering part of a network for the Bureau of Meteorology to develop a greater understanding of where rain is falling, how much rain is falling and the peaks and troughs in the flood window.

With the real-time data supplied by the Queensland Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Program, the Bureau can monitor weather conditions more closely. This enables the Bureau to provide communities with earlier and more accurate flood warnings, evacuate people in at-risk areas and alert graziers to get their livestock to higher ground. The data also helps the Bureau to study and further understand climate change.

The Queensland Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Program is divided into three locations of operation – AO1, AO2 and AO3. CurryPM is responsible for delivering AO1, which stretches across 12 Councils and covers 35 per cent of Queensland, from the South Australian border to the Gulf to the Northern Territory border and across the Great Dividing Range.

The problem

The sheer size and scale of this project brings with it a level of complexity that would challenge any organisation, with many moving parts and parties involved.

The potential risks and the amount of administrative work involved in delivering the network led CurryPM to seek out project management and compliance software to help them identify and mitigate internal, external and environmental risks, increase transparency and visibility, collaborate effectively and minimise the potential for cost, time and scope blowouts.

The solution

CurryPM has implemented the SurePact system – the award-winning software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution that identifies and mitigates risks at each decision point of a project, all the way through to asset realisation – to assist with managing this important project. At the same time SurePact's grant management module concurrently tracks and reports on the delivery of the tax payers dollars and allowing for the federal funding group to have complete visibility and transparency.

CurryPM Weather Station

SurePact's guided and automated workflows make project management simple, with robust audit and governance transparency. The real-time analytics dashboard – accessible anywhere, anytime, on any internet-connected device – provides up-to-the-minute business intelligence and highlights key performance metrics.

SurePact enables collaboration in a secure environment, with full visibility of all stages and outputs for those granted access to the system, while all data is backed up and secured with multi-factor authentication.

The results

CurryPM Project Manager Frank Plozza says the SurePact tool has been "highly effective".

"Using SurePact means we get visibility and transparency of all our funding, and all those things that managers love to see, so they can monitor how the jobs are proceeding and how it is tracking against budget," he says.

"SurePact is a repository, where whatever you put in there is locked in there and cannot be messed with. This transparency for us is so important and that is why it is so good for the Federal Government and state governments, because it just captures all aspects of the projects true and correct. This means everything is immediately available in real time for an auditor so that when you finish with it you can just hand it to them and they can see the full program."



When you put all the contracts in, every time you go through a delivery stage, you can track it and you can access real-time data and graphs."

Plozza says SurePact has made it easy to track the progress of this complex project.

"There are so many devices being delivered across so many projects including cameras, river monitors, rain gauges and interactive signs for flood ways," he says. "I am currently setting up all the contract delivery across 12 Councils and doing everything within SurePact so that we can get all the benefits of handling the process in the software and so that it can all be tracked there. The cloning function has made setting this up so much quicker – I can create a contract and then clone it for setting up other contracts in minutes.

"We are dealing with 12 Shires in AO1 and each of those Shires have packages of contracts. For instance, in Cloncurry there will be nine contract deliveries under Cloncurry Shire and they are all different sites. Each contract needs to be documented, everything has to be captured and every site is different. It could be a camera or it could be a multiple set up with cameras, river monitors and rain gauges. There are various things to track and capture, and SurePact can do that for us.

"When you put all the contracts in, every time you go through a delivery stage, you can track it and you can access real-time data and graphs."

Plozza says the collaboration enabled by the SurePact system has been crucial.

"That is the beauty of SurePact," he says. "The project manager can actually control the ins and outs, but we can have multiple users in there working in the background, uploading documents into the right areas, so we know exactly what is what.

"The permissions function is also incredibly beneficial – being able to give the right people access to the right parts of the contracts so everyone can see what is going on and who can do what.

"With SurePact, the business is not impacted by someone leaving and going off with a USB with everything on it. Once you put that information in there, someone else can be inducted to SurePact and they can pick it up and go again, wasting minimal time, effort and costs. You are not losing information, which is gold."



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Ultimately, Plozza sees utility for SurePact across a variety of applications.

"The SurePact solution is extremely useful, and they go really well with project management. It is not a pigeon-holed product – it is a software that can be used across many industries."



Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council achieves a 15% bottom line improvement with SurePact



By using the SurePact solution to identify, mitigate and manage risks, Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council reduced cost, time and scope blowouts, and realised a 15 per cent bottom line improvement in their first year.

The client

Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council (ASC) is a Regional Council in Far North Queensland. Yarrabah ASC has five elected Councillors, and is the major employer in the region.

The Council has an annual budget of \$23.5 million, with an asset value of \$135 million. The 2018-19 financial year saw \$7.1 million in asset additions, all requiring high ongoing maintenance costs.

As a non-rate payer-based community, the majority of funds for Yarrabah ASC's development and operations are provided by Commonwealth and State Government funding bodies. It is important for the Council to be successful in grant applications and to work towards achieving bottom-line improvements which can be redirected to additional projects for the local community.

The problem

CapEx and OpEx overruns present a significant challenge for the community, cutting into grant funds and reducing the potential future development.

With limited visibility of tracking funding from receipt to the delivery of contracts and projects, the Council was aware of the potential for less-than-optimal audit trails to affect grant applications.

The Council recognised a need for risk management in grant, contract and project deliveries; consistent data and reporting capabilities; and workflows to support compliance, in order to increase accessibility, visibility and transparency and minimise the potential of cost, time and scope blowouts.

The solution

Yarrabah ASC made the decision to implement SurePact's software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution to identify, mitigate and manage the risks of deliveries from concept, or before the tender stage, to closeout.

The Council began implementing the SurePact system in February 2019, with an initial set-up and training period of one week to deploy SurePact's Project Management and Contract Delivery modules. The system can be deployed independent of integration with other platforms initially, and without the need to import historical data.

The main team involved in the roll-out included 3 key super users, supporting a release to 20 staff and external contractors. All were trained and mentored in the use of the modules, and are now proficient in administering the solution with the support of the executive leadership team and improved business improvement processes.

The solution tracks the Council's entire program delivery, with risk identification and automated workflow approval processes at each gateway.

The document management and governance of the SurePact system provides a fully transparent audit trail, allowing full accessibility and visibility for Council leadership and stronger probity outcomes for Councillors.

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The results

The SurePact solution provides Yarrabah ASC with a 360-degree line of sight of all revenue received, delivery costs and management of risks in the delivery of all grants, projects and contracts across the organisation.

Real-time analytics and custom reporting metrics are now available organisation-wide as required in real-time. As a result, Council leadership has reported stronger team engagement and ownership of deliveries and significantly improved opportunities.

Michael Geoghegan, Director of Northern Civil Solutions, says the SurePact system has helped Council achieve stronger transparency for both internal and external delivery teams.

"The SurePact system facilitates communication," he says, "and ensures that everyone is working for the same issues and solutions, in real-time, both back in the office and in the field, saving time and shortening turnaround of issue resolution."



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In the first eight months after implementing the SurePact solution, Council was able to achieve a 15 per cent bottom line improvement, with cost and time blowouts significantly reduced.

Leah Yeatman, CEO of Yarrabah ASC, says the SurePact solution has helped the Council to mitigate and manage risks and deliver projects with complete transparency, accessibility and visibility.

"SurePact has identified operational and planning gaps applicable to our sector from their executive level experience working in Council," Ms Yeatman says.

"I am impressed with the ease of application, level of engagement with my team and the 15 per cent savings realised within 8 months."

Read the [Microsoft Case Study here >](#)



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Aurukun Shire Council see a return on investment in under 3 months with SurePact



By using SurePact's project and contract risk management software, Aurukun Shire Council has been able to identify and manage risks and reduce cost and time blowouts, delivering immediate savings to the community.

The client

Aurukun Shire Council is a small Council in Far North Queensland which includes much of the traditional country of the Wik, Wik Way and Kugu peoples.

As a non-rate payer-based community, 77 per cent of the Council's revenue is provided by Commonwealth and State Government funding bodies. Any overrun must be paid for by either reducing future activity or applying for further funding. On the other hand, any savings the Council makes to its bottom line can be redirected to additional projects for the local community.

The problem

There are two main business sites within the Shire, located 800km apart. Between these two remote sites, millions of dollars in grants, projects and contracts had been managed through spreadsheets and hard copy documents, which can invariably lead to inconsistencies and out-of-date information in documentation, timelines, approvals and reporting.

Similarly, the Council was aware of the potential for less-than-optimal audit trails to limit transparency in risk mitigation and other decision making. This could affect Council's ability to systematically identify and quantify risks and to deliver projects on time and under budget.

There was a clear need for the Council to develop a systematic method for tracking grants, contracts, projects and asset realisation, in order to increase transparency, mitigate risk and reduce bottom-line project costs.

The solution

In July 2019, Aurukun Shire Council agreed to implement SurePact's project and contract risk management

software, in order to identify, mitigate and manage risks of project deliveries from concept to closeout.

Deployment was immediate, with the initial set-up and training period taking just one week. Council's Technical Services team were trained and mentored as part of the roll-out, and are now strongly proficient in administering the solution.

External contractors and Council collaborate within the SurePact system. The cloud-based SaaS (software as a service) allows information to be loaded into the system in the field, ensuring full accessibility and visibility at all stages and gateways in real-time and significantly reducing approval times.

The results

By putting simple steps in place to manage documents and make reporting metrics transparent and accessible, Council now has a much clearer picture of the spend and allocation of revenue received, delivery costs and management of risks.

In one program area alone, Council's improved efficiency and accountability has already led to savings of \$1.26 million on the delivery of 16 building and maintenance programs.

The benefits of the SurePact system to Aurukun Shire Council have included:

- ROI realised in under 3 months
- >34% quantified procurement savings
- 15% variation reductions
- >80% contingency improvement
- Retention of intellectual property across the organisation

As a result, Council has been able to re-invest the identified savings into the community.

"Having a software like SurePact that documents each process required helps to save Councils from massive cost blowouts," says Gus Yates, Technical Director at Aurukun Shire Council.

"The SurePact software will help us to justify the decisions we make in the future."

Read the [Microsoft Case Study here >](#)