

Case study - Naval asset maintenance performance

Driving executive alignment

- Navy warships come in to the dry docks once a year for significant maintenance. This is called External Maintenance Period (EMP)
- During the 2012 Brisbane floods, the Government realised that it was unable to mobilise its ships for relief work as most of them were under maintenance or not serviceable
- It was found that during EMPs, ships would remain unavailable for 40% longer than predicted and cost 100% more to maintain than expected
- In order to increase the availability and reduce the maintenance turnaround time of Australian warships, Helmsman was engaged to support the reform transformation
- Helmsman provided end to end solution for the entire business system, not just maintenance management

What were the challenges?

- **Inability to Define, Agree and Deliver:** The client lacked the capability to accurately define the end outcome and the scope of work needed to be done; to agree on cost and schedules; and to effectively plan and report performance targets
- **Lack of clear accountabilities:** In the absence of a stage gating process, overlapping maintenance activities were being handled inefficiently due to improper resource utilisation and lack of accountability
- **Insufficient condition assessment:** Due to lack of coordination between operators and maintainers, an accurate materiel state of the vessels couldn't be determined. This led to 125% additional defects identified after the EMP commenced, as opposed to 25% expected.

What changes were proposed?

- **Soft-factors over technical capabilities:** The operators and maintainers are highly knowledgeable, and 'know their stuff'. Issues revolved more around the 'soft' factors relating to governance & control, culture & behaviours, and roles & responsibilities
- **Integrated planning implemented:** Greater collaboration between operators and maintainers for accurate work & scope determination and consistent planning
- **Outcome driven approach:** With clear end goals in mind and right to left planning, the appropriate drivers and KPIs for various stage gates were identified to maximise benefits
- **Good information basis:** quality and reliability of critical data regarding asset configuration and condition underpins accurate scope definition, and consequent planning & scheduling

What was achieved?

- Increased schedule predictability, with schedule compliance now close to 100%
- Better understanding of the EMP process, its success factors and the competencies required to achieve the desired outcome
- Improved outcomes in terms of ship availability (Seaworthy Maintenance On Time Every Time, or SMOET)