



## HOW AUSTRALIAN-BASED TENIX IS ADDRESSING TODAY'S FIELD SERVICE CHALLENGES

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The Service Council's latest research on field service challenges highlights how organizations are focused on workforce management initiatives to improve Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) tied to customer satisfaction, productivity, and profitability. Forty-one percent (41%) of the 226 respondents to our field service survey highlighted that workforce management activities from hiring, on boarding, and training to scheduling and planning were top of mind for the rest of 2013 and early 2014. To understand the issues, we sat down with Jim Kafanelis, contract manager – gas infrastructure, networks at Tenix (<http://www.tenix.com/>), a delivery partner to owners of gas, electricity, water, wastewater, heavy industrial, and mining assets in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific. Jim's team has approximately 200 field-based resources working in operations & maintenance, asset replacement and minor capital works.

**The Service Council:** What are some of the bigger challenges facing your field service business?

**Tenix:** With our large service area, covering both metropolitan and regional centers, remote management of the team is very important to ensure their safety. We also have a challenge to reduce our reliance on our current paper-based dispatch system and to develop a more efficient way to get information to and from our people in the field. This will assist in a multitude of ways including retaining of information, accessing documentation, processes and procedures, and real-time data capture with a reduction in administration tasks.

**The Service Council:** What else are you grappling with as you manage a diverse and spread out workforce?

**Tenix:** We need to ensure that we support all of our field workers to continually improve on our strong culture of service and safety. While we aim to address all of our service issues in the best way possible, safety is the most important. We also rely on a large network of third-party providers and we need to feel confident that they also have the tools to embrace and represent our safety and service standards to support our brand.

**The Service Council:** How can you continue to promote the culture of service and safety?

**Tenix:** Tenix has developed a safety program called Zero Harm. This program sets the clear direction for safety improvement across our business. We monitor, measure, and manage our safety performance to achieve zero harm. We also have an in-house registered training organization (RTO) that ensures our staff and sub-contractors are qualified and certified to the required industry and regulatory standards.

In line with our commitment to continuous improvement we have invested in GPS technology (supported by Trimble) with a view of moving to a full field mobility solution in the future to achieve increased safety and operational performance. With the assistance of the GPS technology, we are able to allocate our unplanned maintenance work based on real-time field crew locations. The GPS system provides visibility to our

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field resources and will also be accessed by our client to dispatch after-hours work to our availability (on call) resources. This visibility enables our crews to be monitored for safety during the late evenings.

Moving forward, our aim is to implement a full field mobility solution that will provide our field resources with access to job details, customer or network information and policies and procedures. This will increase performance and reduce down time associated with the administration activities that we currently rely on to support our large field workforce

**The Service Council:** What factors were most important in supporting your solution deployment?

**Tenix:** To develop the mobility solution we have created a cross-functional committee. The committee will review current technology solutions to determine the most appropriate system for our business. GPS technology is only the first stage of our mobility solution. We are now focused on the software, in-vehicle hardware and systems development to achieve our desired objectives. Staging the development of a full field mobility solution will enable our team to come on the journey with us, to become familiar with the concept of mobility and the solution that we develop.

To implement our GPS solution, we appointed a designated coordinator to interface all the requests between ourselves and our solution partner. In this way we are able to tailor and configure the GPS Solution to get the most out of the technology. This provides us with crew identification, time-on-job, travel summary and the ability to identify the types of plant and equipment in the field – all at a glance of a screen. Without the backend set-up of this system we would not realize the full benefits that are available to us. The system also allows us to generate reports to help better understand our business, such as our fuel consumption, plant utilization (time spent in depot versus in the field), stop summary for repair and breakdown, travel time and driver safety, just to mention some.

Finally, we were very fortunate to have a very receptive workforce, which made the transition and implementation of the GPS Technology possible. Our field staff are working with us in developing and testing the product and are keen to realise the benefits of this technology.

**The Service Council:** Where do you go from here?

**Tenix:** We have only recently fully implemented our GPS solution and are now working on developing our full field mobility solution. We forecast that it will take 12 to 18 months to develop and implement. We believe that mobility will be a differentiator for our business and key to further efficiency gains. The introduction and implementation of field-based technology into our operations is assisting us to gain a better understanding of our operational performance and to identify improvement opportunities. With it, we will be able to improve our planning and scheduling capability significantly.

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