

Karachaganak Petroleum Operating (KPO)



Karachaganak Petroleum Operating (KPO) uses Infra technology to support IT operations in expanding development area



The IT support desk at KPO provides 'Infratastic' service

Karachaganak, in the northwest region of Kazakhstan, is one of the world's largest oil and gas condensate fields. The expansion of the field is currently the biggest internationally funded project in Kazakhstan, and is operated by Karachaganak Petroleum Operating B.V (KPO), an organization formed with international partners BG Group, Eni of Italy, the US company ChevronTexaco and LUKOIL of Russia.

Under the agreement signed by the Republic of Kazakhstan and the KPO partners, KPO will operate the facilities in the field through until 2038. The organization's operations are strictly regulated and so it is vital to run a tight ship throughout its supporting facilities. A key area for KPO is the IT equipment that it uses to run daily operations. To support its end users the IT department, a team of 100 staff, has implemented infraEnterprise software from Infra Corporation to manage help desk calls, as well as manage its asset base and facilities management.

Improving service levels

According to John Beaton of KPO's IT department: "We have had a huge increase in the number of computer users that we support out in the field. Recently we have seen the number of calls escalate to over 3000 per month. However, since implementing Infra we have been able to significantly improve our response times. Previously we were only answering around 60% of the calls received within the timeframes agreed. Now we are able to capture and respond to 90% of the calls logged, which has meant that we are consistently able to meet our Service Level Agreements."

The KPO IT & Telecom Department was using a different system prior to implementing the Infra software and the new system brought many advantages and benefits. There is now much stronger call management with the facility to escalate calls, record them more efficiently and to report in more detail on the outcome. In the early years the lack of these features was not such a problem since the IT&T department handled around 200 calls per month, but rapid expansion of the field during 2000 and 2001 resulted in the number of calls increasing rapidly to 2500 in less than a year. Realizing that the system in place could not handle the volume and type of calls that they were getting, the team looked for a solution.

System Highlights

- Used by staff at 17 separate, remote locations
- Producing detailed service level metrics, supporting move to ITIL culture
- Integration to Active Directory to autopopulate user information and give single sign-on
- Supports shift workers sharing equipment
- Monitors software licensing



Beaton explains, "We drew up a list of five products initially and selected Infra because it could handle all of our requirements - recording what products we have, incident management, service level management and change management. One of the key reasons for selecting the Infra solution was the fact that it was web based. We have 17 sites at different locations within the field and so it is much easier for users to be able to log on remotely from any location."

In addition, KPO uses the infraEnterprise Active Directory to automatically populate their users and end-users from Microsoft's Active Directory. Single sign-on enables them to log onto their computer just once to gain access, with no additional log-on to the Infra system.

Successful configuration management

One of the key benefits that the Infra system has brought is the ability to track configuration items.

All of the information for PCs, software, telecoms and contract information is now stored more efficiently in the Infra database. The structure of the previous system often made it difficult to track down items. Now it is easy to see exactly who has what equipment. Similarly, all of the software that KPO has is logged into the system and licences are scanned in and attached to the software.

This is particularly useful as the organization operates a 'back to back' rota, whereby many staff work twelve hour shifts, seven days a week, on a four week pattern. Using Infra, each item can be assigned to two people, allowing operators to record the correct piece of equipment regardless of which user is currently on duty.

"Software licences need constant monitoring. Now we can run a report highlighting which licences are due to expire several months beforehand. This gives us plenty of time to renew them in a controlled manner, rather than rushing around at the last minute," said Beaton.

KPO plans to use the Infra system to automate and manage part of the assignment process for new equipment. When an employee starts at the company, a template is available to issue equipment, check the software and provide access to the data that they require to do their jobs. The assignment request is raised and may be signed off electronically, and the process recorded and tracked. Equipment will be assigned from stock or purchased if necessary. This also enables the configuration items to be recorded and logged. It will also ensure that equipment is issued to the correct users according to their priority.

Prioritized, managed support

To date, the Infra system has been successful in helping the IT team improve their service levels, and the team are working on implementing additional procedures to ensure that support calls are dealt with in accordance with the appropriate SLA.

"There may be certain communications failures that impact drilling in the field," explained Beaton. "Losing a day's drilling can be very costly and so we have built in processes to give those types of calls top priority."

Having already been successful in reaching their SLA targets, KPO has recently purchased the Infra Customer Portal, so that internal customers can log calls. This will mean that standard requests such as ordering toner or paper can be handled without going through the service desk. This will reduce the number of calls and improve response times even more.

Ensuring ITIL guidelines are met

Once KPO decided on infraEnterprise, an Infra consultant was on site for just seven days to assist with the implementation. After this, the base system was successfully up and running with key information and help desk staff were provided with training. According to Beaton, the whole process was very

smooth and any assistance since required has been promptly and effectively managed by email.

While the IT team already relies on the Infra system for many aspects of the help desk activities, it also plans to customize the reporting facility to schedule daily and monthly statistics for circulation to the management team. In addition, there are plans to work towards greater compliance with ITIL, including new installations and upgrades of equipment and software and configuration changes, using the change management facility. Using this functionality, changes can be implemented smoothly with no disruption to daily operations and requests can be integrated with overall plans.

"We wanted a product that could be customized if we needed it. We also wanted one that had rich functionality so that we could achieve most of our requirements with 'off the shelf' features so that the implementation didn't get too complicated. For this reason Infra is perfect for us. It covers all of the key disciplines such as daily incident and problem management but has the flexibility to enable us to plan for future changes," said Beaton. "We have been so impressed with the quality of the software and the support we have received from Infra that we have coined a new phrase for when something works out well - Infratastic! Our ability to provide an efficient support service to our clients is certainly Infratastic."

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