

Compliance assessment at the click of a button – what could be easier?

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Keeping your people safe and your reputation intact is a top priority for offshore organisations and it needn't be complicated. Lee Clarke offers a three-point solution to building a compliance-ready crew

Five years after the Deepwater Horizon disaster, BP was ordered to pay more than \$20billion in criminal and civil penalties and clean-up costs, making the settlement the largest in corporate America.(i) The tragedy was a critical driver in transforming the industry's approach to safety and massively impacted how subsequent audits of offshore oil and gas operations are conducted.

In the aftermath of Deepwater Horizon, new regulation such as the Safety and Environmental Management System (SEMS) standard was also introduced. Aimed primarily at operators in the Outer Continental Shelf, SEMS comprises 17 elements that companies must address during the design, construction, start-up, operation, inspection and maintenance of all new and existing facilities. Furthermore, it stipulates that companies must have audits carried out every three years by independent audit service providers certified by the Center for Offshore Safety, rather than conduct these audits themselves.

Other industries have been quick to follow suit and take on board SEMS. The Civil Aviation Authority and Department of Transport have jointly published guidelines for the aviation sector on how to develop a robust security management system that protects staff and the public at large.(ii)

So why is this relevant to workforce management? Quite simply, the size and complexity of engineering projects in the offshore industry necessitate multiple contractors and teams of people located in all corners of the world. How do you bring them all together and ensure they have the right skills and licenses for following and meeting important safety requirements for SEMS as well as other Health and Safety legislation?

Here is a three-point plan to get you started:

1. Embrace automation - while spreadsheets might be a great tool at an individual level, they are static and limited in terms of scalability. Spreadsheets give everyone their own version of the truth, with complete autonomy to update and amend them as often as they like, without interference from anyone else. That's why they are popular but dangerous! Too many organizations waste significant amounts of time, effort and money by trying to reconcile various documents and systems that hold inaccurate information and merely serve to perpetuate a siloed approach to resource optimization. It's time to ditch those spreadsheets and embrace automation to develop, build and maintain an effective and safe workforce.

Modern integrated workforce management (WFM) systems bring together every single piece of information you'll ever need – in minutes. A centralized repository of real-time data gives a complete picture of crew members and activities affecting compliance – their skills and training competencies as well as important travel documentation such as certificates, medicals, passports and visas. Gaps in skills and certification are quickly identified and remedied to minimize the risk of non-compliance.

2. Maintain an integrated skills matrix - it's fair to say only by having a skills matrix as part of an integrated, automated resource and workforce optimization solution can organizations hope to remain safe and fully compliant. With a clear picture of crew competencies, skills, qualifications and training history, managers are able to ensure staff maintain a sufficient level of expertise and are equipped with the relevant new training to deal with a rapidly changing industry, technology and regulatory environment. Finally, a centralized skills matrix stores all the relevant associated documentation providing the hard evidence necessary to simplify and accelerate the auditing process.

3. Introduce a culture that thrives on change and plans for the future - with essential skills information at your fingertips, it becomes easier for staff to stay up-to-date with changes in your own business and an evolving regulatory landscape. Make change an enjoyable challenge rather than something to be feared. Make the most of data held in your system to take a current and historic look at existing personnel skills, identify skills gaps and develop tailored training packages in a timely manner. Well-trained staff are crucial to executing large-scale, complex engineering projects with aggressive deadlines on budget whilst complying with stringent safety regulations.

When it comes to managing big data, the latest WFM solutions are innovative, highly scalable and future-proof. They are sophisticated enough to analyze current resource competencies and model for future requirements quickly and efficiently. This is critical in the offshore industry that has struggled in recent years to recruit an adequate number of new entrants of sufficient quality. Companies that plan now will be better able to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

It really does pay to reassess your approach to safety and compliance management. Follow these three steps to create a well-thought out strategy that combines people, process and technology. Automation and planning enables a seamless, stress-free auditing experience and you'll have the right people and hard evidence to pass with flying colours.

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About Dynama

Dynama, an Allocate Software company, builds on 25 years' heritage and is a leading provider of maritime and defence workforce deployment software. Headquartered in London, Dynama has a fully fledged new office in Canberra (Australia) with sales and support in the USA.

Its flagship product, Dynama OneView, is designed to underpin complex workforce management in safety critical and high skill level environments, delivering both safe staffing and productivity savings.

For more information, visit DYNAMA (<http://www.dynama.global>)

(i) USA Today (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2016/07/14/bp-deepwater-horizon-costs/87087056/>)

(ii) CAA.co.uk

(<https://www.caa.co.uk/Commercial-industry/Security/Security-management-systems/Security-Management-Systems/>)

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