

## Northern Ireland Water

Recording incidents and near misses through Datix web-based system



Northern Ireland Water (NI Water) is the sole supplier of water for the 1.7 million people of Northern Ireland. It supplies over 625 million litres of clean fresh water every day, whilst also collecting, treating and disposing of Northern Ireland's wastewater. NI Water is a Government Owned Company (GoCo). Since its incorporation in April 2007, the business has been charged with delivering challenging efficiencies whilst also investing £778 million in the clean water and wastewater infrastructure, including the £120 million Belfast Sewer Project. This project has already won a Considerate Constructor's Award which was initiated to improve water quality and reduce the risk of flooding within Belfast's inner city.

### Managing risk

NI Water is particularly proud of its Health and Safety record and has achieved its challenging KPI targets in this area for 2008/09. The Datix system is making an increasingly important contribution to Health and Safety and enables the recording of both incidents and 'near misses' through the online web-based system. Corporate Risks and Directorate Risks are also recorded and managed through Datix.

NI Water's Head of Corporate Governance, George Ong, came across the Datix system in a previous Health Trust role and saw the opportunities for NI Water. When Datix was first brought to NI Water the Corporate Governance Team worked closely with Datix to configure the application to meet NI Water's requirements. Datix was first introduced to NI Water in 2007 and has really gained momentum over the last year, with Datix now being the central incident, near miss and risk reporting tool across the business. NI Water is now managing a large number of incidents recorded on the system and each directorate is efficiently managing its own Directorate Risk Register in Datix.

On an average day Datix receives 2-3 incidents and near miss reports, these encompass; slips, trips falls, environmental near misses, vehicle related incidents; contractors' reports and even security breaches. Simultaneously NI Water sees risks updated on a live basis.

### NI Water's current position

To date, over 400 NI Water employees have been trained to use the Datix web-based system. Awareness of Datix was promoted through posters, the organisation's intranet 'Source' and through the excellent in-house magazine.

The Health & Safety team have also played a major role in configuring Datix to meet the organisation's requirements, helping NI Water to achieve a RoSPA Silver award in 2009 for Health and Safety Management.

Incidents are now being collected and managed more efficiently and effectively, thus preventing further risk exposure. In addition, incidents and near misses can be accessed and addressed

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**George Ong**

Head of Corporate Governance  
Northern Ireland Water





## About Datix

Datix is a global supplier of software for patient safety, risk management, incident and adverse event reporting.

We aim to help healthcare organisations build a culture that drives excellence in patient safety, based on market-leading software, skills and healthcare knowledge.

Set up specifically to meet the governance and risk management requirements of the healthcare industry, Datix is working as a partner to leading healthcare organisations across the world.

Today, Datix customers include more than 70% of the National Health Service in the UK, the United States Department of Defense, a number of provinces in Canada and some of the world's leading private healthcare providers.

by employees across the business. The information gathered and stored in Datix includes photographs and investigation reports.

With the introduction of Datix, a further benefit is that employees who need to respond to incidents and near misses are alerted immediately, whether in the office or outside via their mobile phones. Information is fed back to staff in real time as action is taken and lessons learned are shared. The Datix search facility has reduced the time required to find information, which is now just a few clicks away.

## Training and development

NI Water takes the view that knowledge is the key to success. The Corporate Governance Team has been involved and continues to work with NI Water's in-house training team to ensure employees know the Datix system well enough to improve risk management, reduce claims and share learning. Currently employees are being trained through half day training sessions held in a computer suite at NI Water's Learning and Development Centre. Additional training sessions will also be held across various locations throughout NI Water, and will be customised to meet specific business needs. NI Water has also developed an interactive learning package on its intranet which allows employees to 1) 'see it' 2) 'do it' 3) 'test it'. This is a self help system which teaches employees how to use Datix without affecting live data. Customised user manuals can also be downloaded by employees and a 'Key Learning Points' section on the Intranet means lessons can be learned from recent incidents and near misses are highlighted for employees' attention.

## Future plans

NI Water plans to continually train new employees and provide refresher courses. It is hoped that this will maintain awareness, stress the importance of reporting incidents and near misses and allow the business to improve its management of risks through Datix. As the usage of Datix increases, NI Water will increase the types of reports available to various levels of the organisation to further improve risk management throughout the business.

## Fast Facts

- NI Water is the sole supplier of water to 1.7 million people
- Risks updated on a live basis
- Datix helped achieve a RoSPA Silver award in 2009 for Health and Safety Management
- Incidents and near misses alerted immediately via mobile phones
- Over 400 NI Water employees trained to use Datix web-based system

