



Business challenge

Funding cuts required Cambridgeshire to improve the efficiency and reduce the costs of its processes.

Transformation

To build an open-standard, collaborative model for business process discovery and development Cambridgeshire integrated IBM® Blueworks Live™ with IBM Business Process Manager on Cloud.

Business benefits

60-90%

Reduction

in process deployment and development times

Builds

collaborative

business process modelling and management platform

Facilitates

systems integration

and data sharing among fire and rescue services

Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service

Comprehensive process redesign with cloud-based business process modeling and automation

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) is the fire and rescue service for the non-metropolitan county of Cambridgeshire and the unitary authority of Peterborough in the UK. The service operates 28 fire stations.

“We’re providing a foundation on which to build processes relating to community prevention, emergency response, public education and firefighter recruitment.”

— James Thompson, business process manager, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

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Improving business process efficiency

The burden to do more with less is universal, drawing no distinction between public and private sector. 'Efficiency' has become the mantra, and IT leaders hoping to improve efficiency often focus first on their organization's business process management.

Martin Franklin is project manager for Cambridgeshire's Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (STEP) and is assisting with CFRS' response to government mandated cuts to operating budgets in the public safety sector. "The program is really about improving back-office efficiency so we can save money to prevent cuts having to be made to our frontline- our firefighters and fire engines," he says. "We had to find ways of becoming more cost effective and cheaper without sacrificing operational integrity."

Mr. Franklin's colleague, James Thompson, BPM developer at CFRS, heads up the organization's business process management transformation, a linchpin to the success of STEP. "We recognized that many processes lacked visibility into performance and data," he says. "Manual, unmanaged processes had to become more efficient. A concept that excited us was Smarter Process—not just replacing spreadsheets, but automating processes."

Facilitating collaboration

STEP is crucial to not only increasing process efficiency and collaboration internally, but to improving collaboration with other fire and emergency services as well. Building an open-standard, collaborative model for business process discovery and development within STEP thus became a point of focus, driving the

decision to integrate IBM Blueworks Live with IBM Business Process Manager on Cloud (IBM BPM on Cloud), based on the IBM SoftLayer® cloud platform. By leveraging IBM Db2® on Cloud as the repository database for the solution, CFRS has a fully managed, robust and secure database that requires less labor to maintain.

To-date, CFRS has implemented 16 business processes in IBM BPM on Cloud, encompassing over 600 staff members across 29 sites. Stakeholders throughout CFRS utilize cloud-based IBM Blueworks Live for process discovery and modelling, identifying the 'as-is and to-be' conditions of each process.

"Our business analysts go out and, with the process owners and other stakeholders, they map the as-is processes and model them in

IBM Blueworks Live. Blueworks Live has been with us from the start and it's critical to our process analysts during discovery. After that stage the development team and I develop a smarter process in IBM BPM on Cloud," says Mr. Thompson.

IBM Integration Bus plays a crucial role as well, given that CFRS operates with six legacy databases on disparate platforms containing large volumes of business data relevant to the business processes being automated by Mr. Thompson and his team. Integration Bus software provides a common, robust and flexible integration foundation, making the data from all databases available to the BPM on Cloud environment.

Moving to public-facing processes

According to Mr. Thompson, CFRS has realized a time savings of 60 percent and 90 percent in process development and deployment. “A process that took a week to perform now only takes a day or perhaps a matter of hours,” he says. “So, BPM on Cloud has been revolutionary for us. Developers find the process of developing smarter processes on IBM BPM on Cloud much more flexible. It allows us to focus on the business process rather than worrying about the infrastructure.”

Developers’ initial focus is on administrative processes. “STEP helps us understand how our administrative processes work, improve them and demonstrate that improvement before looking at operations,” Mr. Franklin says. “We’re providing a foundation

on which to build processes relating to community prevention, emergency response, public education and firefighter recruitment.”

This foundation has allowed CFRS to become a pioneer among UK fire services, as it uses IBM cloud technology to share administrative systems, data and processes with its fellow services. Plans are for CFRS to partner with the UK Government to drive collaboration and adoption on a nationwide scale.

That goal has already been achieved to a limited extent. CFRS’ first foray into a cloud-based public-facing process, the recruitment of new on-call firefighters, was developed with 14 other fire services for vetting recruits. The process was designed collaboratively with the intention of establishing a common procedure for all fire services. Efficiencies are improving there as well.

“We’ve measured as much as an 80 percent time savings by eliminating duplicate or even triplicate data entry,” says Mr. Thompson. “Not only that, we’ve been able to capture much better quality data, and better quality data helps us gain a better understanding of who is applying to be an on-call firefighter—where they’re from, what their background is and what business they work in as their day job. We now capture that data in a much more qualitative way.”

He plans to move all of CFRS’ in-house smarter processes onto the Cloud. “We just feel that’s the future. It’s more flexible and certainly a lot faster to develop on. But more importantly, we can collaborate on back office processes and with systems that send firefighters out to the incidents.”

The IBM Cloud platform has also expanded collaboration with other emergency services. “We reach out to other fire and rescue services and show them what we’ve done and the efficiencies we’ve achieved,” Mr. Thompson says. “There’s almost zero start-up cost for executing smarter process on Cloud, so those other services are more apt to join us. We could achieve huge efficiencies across the country. IBM BPM on Cloud and BlueWorks is a very promising framework for coming together as fire services and finding common ways of working not only at the human end, but to developing common technical paradigms for the systems integration and data sharing. That’s powerful. And perhaps the thing that excites me most about process improvement on BPM on Cloud is that we can take an incremental approach and see how addressing small improvements can suddenly yield huge rewards.”

Solution components

- IBM® Blueworks Live™
- IBM Business Process Manager
- IBM Db2® on Cloud

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Take the next step

To learn more about Business Process Manager on Cloud and BlueWorks Live, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following websites: ibm.com/software/products/en/business-process-manager-family, ibm.com/software/products/en/ibmbluelive

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GMC14075-USEN-02

