

An assignment for a major metro infrastructure client

Introduction and background to the assignment



Our client's Directors of Safety & Assurance and Projects requested a solution to a serious multi disciplinary safety and management problem in terms of potential Critical Asset Failures (CAFs).

These had been identified some time ago and were categorised according to their potential impact on the railway and its safe and reliable operation.

The main problems were associated with the quantity of CAFs that existed and how to progress their management. Touchstone Renard was commissioned to find the solution.

Our task

The key objective was to make the resolution of CAFs part of current business activities. As no substantial work had yet been done on CAFs, extensive consultation was required with project and maintenance managers to secure ways of absorbing as many CAFs as possible into existing programmes.

A further aspect was to ensure that the status of the CAF programme was formally recognised and acted upon to satisfy our client's metro operator client in addition to legal and regulatory requirements. In particular, our client wished to:

- Test each CAF for risk, relevance and validity.
- Eliminate invalid CAFs by removing duplication.
- Provide a sound, auditable trail for every CAF.

How we went about it

The basic approach that we adopted was to analyse obstacles and develop a workable solution. The data that we needed to examine was contained in over 100 different sources.

A database and management reporting routine was required to provide confidence to our client and its own metro operator client, that the CAF programme was being well managed and controlled.

We developed a database model that captured all the data into a single location and provided simplified reporting, categorisation and analysis.

It was essential for us to obtain the agreement of our client's people to take on the CAF activities, their priorities, timescales and ownership.

We therefore carried out a significant number of interviews, leading to considerable liaison and negotiation, to ensure an understanding between the parties involved and related departments across our client's organisation.

As part of the CAF allocation process, we also had to examine the financial impact on every relevant project.

Assessing the analysis and incidence of CAFs to improve asset management was conducted, including statistical analysis of asset maintenance performance and identifying root causes of failure.

Information was presented to assist building future asset management systems by anticipating key issues.

What we achieved and our thoughts on the assignment

Working across all management levels and numerous internal facilities, the CAF problem was conceptualised and a working solution synthesised. CAFs were prioritised, owners identified, and requisite funding secured.

A database was developed, from which information was imported into a new corporate Active Risk Management System. A robust programme was accepted by our client, before being adopted and embedded into the business for the ongoing mitigation and management of CAFs.

In addition, whilst resolving the safety issues, we identified and incorporated several cost saving benefits. The scope of the work was expanded by our client to include analysis of 'safety reporting' and data capture processes.

This resulted in meaningful 'safety risk' indicators being developed and supplied to our client's Management Board.

We were pleased to have been able to support our client to solve this difficult problem.