Scottish Water Launches
IHF ePtW Cloud Software

Scottish Water rolls out a new ePtW to improve workplace safety, improve efficiency and compliance
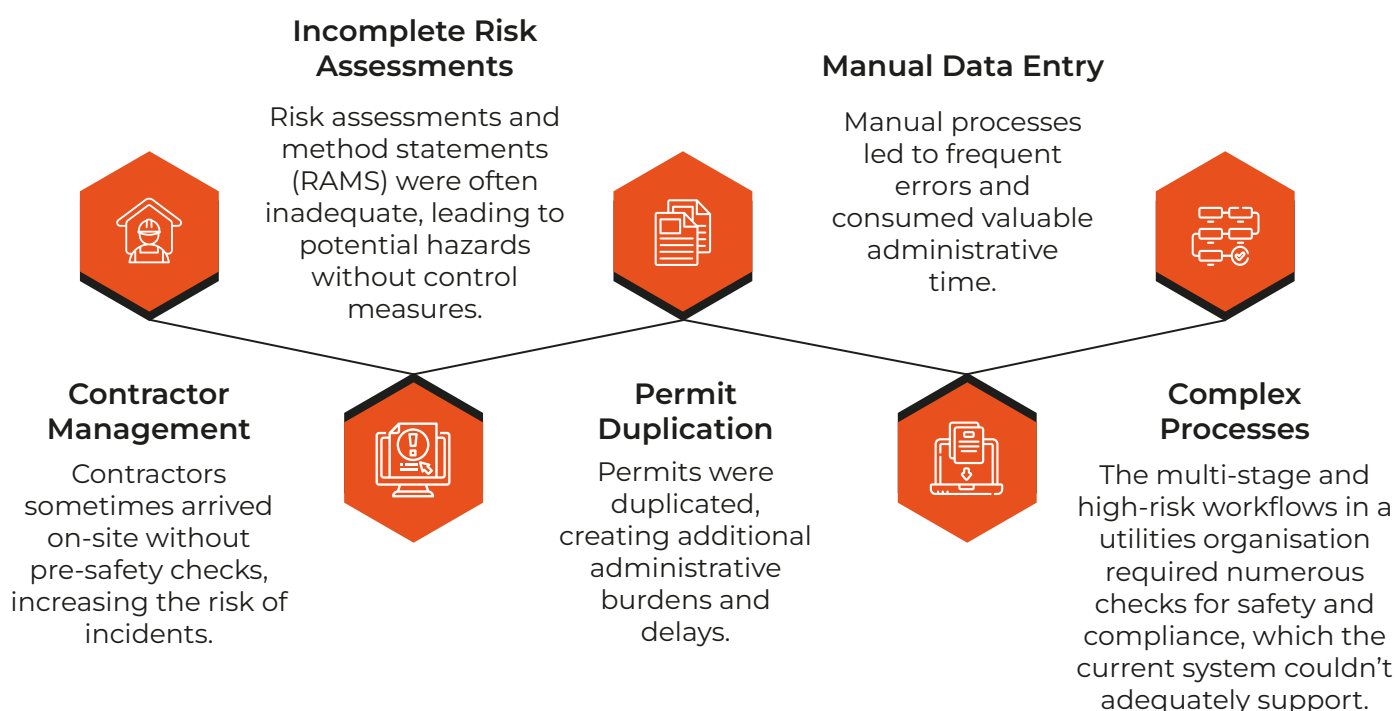
Introduction

Scottish Water has recently rolled out IHF's **electronic Permit to Work (ePtW) system**, a cloud-based solution designed to enhance workplace safety, improve operational efficiency, and ensure compliance across their extensive operations. Scottish Water faced significant challenges with its traditional, paper-based Access Transfer Certificate (ATC) system. The transition to a digital, SaaS-based solution on the AWS cloud aimed to streamline the permitting process, identify risks proactively, and reduce administrative burdens with a fully automated permit process.

Challenge

Scottish Water required a modernised, customisable and easy-to-use system to manage workplace safety effectively and optimise the efficiency of their operations. The paper-based ATC system had several critical shortcomings:

Incomplete Risk Assessments

Risk assessments and method statements (RAMS) were often inadequate, leading to potential hazards without control measures.

Manual Data Entry

Manual processes led to frequent errors and consumed valuable administrative time.

Contractor Management

Contractors sometimes arrived on-site without pre-safety checks, increasing the risk of incidents.

Permit Duplication

Permits were duplicated, creating additional administrative burdens and delays.

Complex Processes

The multi-stage and high-risk workflows in a utilities organisation required numerous checks for safety and compliance, which the current system couldn't adequately support.

These challenges highlighted the need for a streamlined and automated solution capable of integrating the various safety and compliance processes required for Scottish Water's extensive operations.

Solution

Scottish Water partnered with IHF to implement a fully customised, cloud-based ePtW solution hosted on AWS. This digital solution allowed Scottish Water to transition from manual to real-time, automated permit management, supporting their operational safety, compliance, and efficiency goals.

Key Features of the IHF ePtW System

- **Customisable User Interface:** Tailored to Scottish Water's specific permitting requirements, allowing for easy adoption and user familiarity.

- **Cloud-Based SaaS:** Leveraging cloud computing technology, the system enabled remote management, robust data security, and accessibility across different devices.

- **Enhanced Security:** A secure, AWS-hosted platform with strong data protection, privacy, and access controls.

- **End-to-End Management:** Provides comprehensive permit lifecycle management, from creation to approval and completion.

Benefits

The IHF ePtW solution delivered multiple benefits that addressed Scottish Water's key challenges:

Permit Lifecycle Tracking: A 360-degree view of each permit, enabling tracking from issuance to completion.

Digital Signatures: Electronic signatures reduced paperwork and sped up the approval and completion process.

Improved Reporting and Data Insights: Real-time data insights facilitated better decision-making and risk management.

Multi-Device Access: Enabled permit management on various devices, increasing flexibility for field and remote staff.

Centralized Data ("Single Source of Truth"): Eliminates data loss from paper-based processes, enhancing data integrity.

Color-Coded Dashboards: Visual dashboards improved permit status visibility and streamlined communication.

Efficient Shift Management: Supports shift scheduling and tracking, optimising workforce management.

24/7 Support and Training: Ongoing support and interactive tutorials ensured that employees could efficiently use the new system.

Key Outcomes and Results

Scottish Water achieved significant improvements in operational efficiency, safety, and risk management following the ePtW implementation:

Improved Efficiency: The ePtW system has streamlined workflows, enabling prompt notifications and status updates for relevant users.

Process Governance: Automated routing for approvals and tracking reducing the time required to manage permit processes.

Increased Accuracy: Automation is minimising errors associated with manual data entry, ensuring complete and accurate information for every permit.

Managed Complexity: The solution prevents duplication of permits and provides clarity in complex work processes, helping Scottish Water avoid redundant tasks.

Enhanced Visibility: Real-time permit status allows Scottish Water to identify and address potential risks early in the planning stages.

Technical Advantages

The cloud-based nature of IHF's ePtW system enabled seamless scalability and robust functionality for Scottish Water's widespread operations:

Cloud Computing Infrastructure: Hosted on AWS, offers flexible, scalability, on-demand resources.

Data Backup and Redundancy: Provides data protection and ensured business continuity in the event of an outage.

Accessibility and Scalability: Supports users across various geographic locations without on-premises software.

Monitoring and Logging: Real-time monitoring and logging enhances operational transparency.

Security: Comprehensive security features ensured data protection and privacy.

User Management: Controlled access allows specific permissions for different user roles.

> *We worked seamlessly with IHF from the proof-of-concept stage through to the full launch of their ePTW system. They understood our unique challenges from the outset and brought valuable Human Factors experience to the table. This new system offers us full control and visibility over our permit processes, significantly reducing administrative burdens and improving safety across our thousands of sites. The rollout was smooth, with minimal disruption to our operations with high adoption rate due to it being fully customised to Scottish Waters organisation."*
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> *— Sandy Duff, Health & Safety Consulting and Contracts Manager at Scottish Water*

Conclusion

By implementing IHF's ePtW system, Scottish Water successfully transitioned from a cumbersome, paper-based permit process to a secure, efficient, and comprehensive digital solution. This transformation has allowed Scottish Water to better manage risks, streamline operations, and enhance safety across their vast network.