

KnowRisk® gives Whitehorse City Council the visibility and flexibility they need to better manage risk

The City of Whitehorse is one of the largest local council areas in Melbourne, covering an area of 64 square kilometres and is located just 15 kilometres east of the city centre. Characterised by quiet tree-lined residential streets, an abundance of parks, gardens and bushland, the area is home to approximately 151,000 residents, almost one-third of which were born overseas. The area also offers bustling shopping centres and a diverse range of arts and cultural offerings.

The Council employs over 1,100 full and part time staff, with close to half living locally. Their mission is to provide participative, representative and straightforward government, with efficient, appropriate, responsive services and adequate and reliable infrastructure that will lead to a prosperous and sustainable municipality.

Ready to take the next step in risk management

Whitehorse City Council was seeking a more effective method of managing risk across the organisation. Russ Turner, Risk Manager in Whitehorse's Compliance Department explains, "We had in place a very basic risk register process utilising an Excel spreadsheet, which we had developed in-house. It helped us manage risk across the organisation, including our insurance claims, our reputation, financial risk management and any IT based risks."

Russ explains the limitations of this methodology. "Excel doesn't have any built-in processes to allow you to score risk – it had to be done manually for each and every risk entry. In addition to this, each department had their own risk register so they all looked different and there was nothing professional in the approach or presentation."

Unparalleled flexibility

Recognising that the Council was ready to take the next step in addressing and managing risk, they embarked on the process of evaluating the various risk software options available. Russ comments, "We went to tender and five companies participated. Our evaluation panel, which included myself, considered the options and chose CorProfit's risk management solution, KnowRisk®."

Risk management software, KnowRisk®, uniquely integrates Risk, Compliance and Internal Audit programs, with a database that learns from your experience. It incorporates methods and steps for simplified navigation, a customisable Report Writer and enterprise-wide application, with the ability to replicate and synchronize selected information between multiple databases.

Russ explains their decision to go with KnowRisk®. "The reason we chose KnowRisk® was due to the flexibility it offers. It was flexible enough to meet our needs, plus we didn't have to adjust the way we worked to meet the needs of the software – we can change it to meet our needs. The other products we considered didn't offer that flexibility. It also has the scope to expand beyond our current requirements."

Russ continues, "Every aspect can be changed to suit. The layout on-screen including column width, font, text, background, row labels – you can effectively change everything to suit your needs. You can even present the page and reports in your corporate branding, which we have found achieves better ownership from the staff working with the software and those presented with the reports."

"KnowRisk® is a very versatile product – it can be used by Councils, water boards, mining companies and manufacturing. Very few other products offer the flexibility that KnowRisk® does."

Russ Turner, Risk Manager, Compliance Department, Whitehorse City Council

Visibility allowing you to tackle risk head on

KnowRisk® has been deployed Council-wide and has been in place for five years. Russ comments, "Initial implementation was challenging, because it required we manually transfer all our Excel data across into KnowRisk® – some 1,600 separate entries. Plus every department needed training on the software. It also took us a while to produce the sort of information we wanted."

Russ adds that the expertise of the CorProfit staff was invaluable during the transition. He notes,

“The team at CorProfit are very accommodating. We had their staff on-site for a number of visits early on, assisting with training and also helping us to develop the sorts of reports we needed. It was due to the work of CorProfit’s technical and service team we were able to overcome early implementation issues and go on to reap the benefits of KnowRisk®’s flexibility.”

Each department now inputs risk on an ongoing basis and KnowRisk® creates quarterly reporting. Russ explains, “Every risk has a review date and KnowRisk® produces reports when the review date is due. These reports enable each department to tackle risk, review how they’re tracking as far as control measures are concerned and what they propose to do to improve their risk rating for each individual risk.”

KnowRisk® instrumental in reducing and managing risk

KnowRisk® has been met with very positive feedback from Whitehorse City Council stakeholders. Russ states, “Both the staff and our executives have very positive things to say about KnowRisk®. They now feel we are being more pre-emptive as they are being notified accurately about our current position regarding risk. Our external auditors also have very positive feedback as one of the areas they focus on is our risk management process. They are very impressed with the product and how we have been able to use it. They feel comfortable that we are on top of risk within our Council area and if we are exposed to risk, we have systems in place to tackle it.”

“The purpose of KnowRisk® is to better enable you to assess your current position. You don’t just enter the risk and file it away, KnowRisk® keeps you on your toes and is a valuable tool indicating to our executives how we’re positioned with regard to risk.”

Russ Turner, Risk Manager, Compliance Department, Whitehorse City Council

As well as positive feedback from stakeholders, Council’s overall risk position has improved since implementing KnowRisk®. Russ comments, “When I first started at Council 10 years ago, we would receive about 200 public liability claims per year. Now it’s more than halved to approximately 75 per year. Notwithstanding other factors, KnowRisk® has certainly been

instrumental in this.”

“In addition to this, many other risks throughout the organisation are heading in the right direction in regards to their risk classification. We’ve been able to move High risks to Moderate status or Moderate risks to Low status and so on,” Russ explains.

“KnowRisk® produces what we need and we’re not left wanting. It creates professional reports and a system that supports timely follow up of outstanding matters better enabling Council to eliminate and manage risk.”

Russ Turner, Risk Manager, Compliance Department, Whitehorse City Council

A solution backed up by highly skilled expertise

Russ views a major strength of CorProfit’s as their highly skilled people. He explains, “All of the personnel are very talented people, whether it’s the risk management people or the technical staff. They’re quite impressive. They are also easy to work with. Friendly, very prompt and without hesitation will work with you to solve any issues. Five years on our relationship is just as good as ever and they regularly keep in contact to ensure things are going smoothly or to see if we require any further assistance.”

Impressive scope for the future

Looking to the future, Russ suspects they are only just scratching the surface when it comes to the capability of KnowRisk®. He states, “I suspect we’re only utilising 40 – 50% of the full scope of the product because it does so much. Fortunately CorProfit are proactive about keeping in touch and regularly enquire as to how we’re coping and whether we’re ready to go to the next level. We’re confident that when we are ready, CorProfit will assist us in opening up the software further to produce even more detailed reporting.”

“CorProfit’s staff are quite impressive. They are highly skilled, very talented people.”

Russ Turner, Risk Manager, Compliance Department, Whitehorse City Council

Company Background

CorProfit Systems offers a complete solution as they are both a supplier of Risk Management software and a Risk Management consultancy, specialising in planning, implementation and training. CorProfit Systems develops close relationships with clients, enabling them to keep in touch with the real world of operational Risk Management.

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