



Optimising utilisation of storage capacity across the MoD estate

Background

The MoD is the UK's second largest landowner, in possession of 1.1m acres across the UK (2% of the country's landmass). Land Usage and Management is crucial to the MoD's operation and CELLA is paramount in carrying out these critical activities. In 2020, the Warehousing and Distribution Optimisation (WDO) began a programme to better understand and manage the estate.

The WDO needed a central repository that would supply a consolidated view of the wider MoD landscape to bolster planning and decision-making. The solution needed to offer evidence and operational data for the MoD's ability to function, with a high standard of consistency, accuracy and analytical reporting. This was crucial to the WDO's objective of increasing efficiency and using reliable evidence to manage efforts, storage capabilities and limitations.

Challenge

The MoD struggled to easily understand the space it maintains and the attributes of its various storage locations. This restricted their planning and decision-making ability for military operations or civil requirements, particularly storing PPE reserves during the Covid-19 pandemic. Warehousing and other storage facilities were managed on an individual basis without a centralised database or management system, and data storage was often highly siloed.

The WDO decided upon a bespoke solution delivery approach, as there was no readily available COTS tool that met their complex requirements.

The system needed to prompt users (via email) to provide updates, and the frequency of updates needed to be configurable according to need (e.g. data for short-term storage facilities should be updated more often than longer-term facilities).

The data held on the solution needed to be comprehensive, including everything from basic facility type to state of repair and security factors.

Solution

We worked with the WDO to optimise and classify their raw data and understand usage and users' needs. Using Mood's no-code software we rapidly deployed an integrated solution that put relevant information at the fingertips of decision makers.

A one click/two click navigation supplied an optimal user experience and encouraged the MoD's goal of promoting self-sufficiency. Standardised terms and references enabled users to search the entire system, additional permissions-based access could be granted for those users who require it, and automated e-mail reminders encouraged efficient action.

The Mood platform we delivered allows the input data to be filtered and combined in multiple ways to supply answers to operational and planning challenges, such as readiness for military or civilian emergency operations. Functional aspects such as frequency of automated prompts is configurable to meet local conditions. Data can be exported for secondary reporting, e.g. using Power BI tools.

The frequency of email reminders can be configured on a site-by-site basis to ensure data is updated for sites where storage requirements change regularly while keeping effort low for sites used for long-term storage.

"Since transferring to Joint Support in April of this year, the CELLA team have secured multiple storage successes, which will already see savings to the MoD of several million pounds over the next few years. As CELLA continues to mature and understanding of its potential grows, these figures will undoubtedly continue to rise."

Wg Cdr Duncan Serjeant
Ministry of Defence (MoD) Joint Support

Results

Over 300 buildings are now listed within this tool, and the WDO users are working towards achieving comprehensive estate coverage. The WDO's understanding of their operational assets and storage buildings has improved, helping them decide whether particular locations or sites are right for particular actions. This ultimately allows them to optimise their estate. Since delivering the first phase of this programme, we have extended the CELLA capability by adding:

- **Self-sufficiency:** As the solution was being handed over to a central support desk, we ensured that wherever possible, users could maintain the solution themselves and not rely on CACI.
- **User-specific information:** Users' home screens were updated to showcase information immediately, allowing them to focus on what needed to be done.
- **Streamlined administration:** Users can now access all the information they need about storage sites in one place without having to telephone individual sites and speak to multiple people. Stored items can be located and, just as importantly, storage opportunities can be identified quickly.



Future

The CELLA Data Management Tool (CDMT) team are now working their way around the country to load further sites and hardstandings into the tool. This will give the MoD greater insight into their estate of buildings that is expanding in the face of global instability.