

## Case Study: Port of London Authority

**When the Port of London needed an independent Agresso expert to undertake a technical IT audit of their key financial systems and procedures they engaged Integra.**

The Port of London Authority is a self-financing public trust established in 1908 to administer, preserve and improve the Port of London. Its responsibilities include ensuring navigational safety along the Tidal Thames, promoting use of the River and safeguarding the environment. The Authority is an established user of Agresso having implemented core financials over eight years ago.

The Authority's Audit Committee wanted an independent third party expert to perform an audit of their key financial systems and all the related procedures. The audit itself was primarily concerned with ensuring that adequate controls existed to maintain the integrity of the PLA's financial systems and to ensure that these controls were 'secure' and not open to fraud. The results of the Technical Audit would be used to address the PLA's Corporate Governance needs and compliance.

The Committee was resolute that such an assignment required an independent third party expert bringing the advantages of independence and

objectivity, but also with sufficiently detailed experience and knowledge to be able to conduct a thorough review and offer valuable recommendations. Integra's profile met their exacting requirements as consultants with a wide range of expertise to call on including:

- Independence from any software vendors
- Over 10 years in-depth experience of the PLA's principle finance system
- Agresso application, technical and interface knowledge
- Financial business & process experience
- System and User security

### Audit Terms of Reference

The scope of the audit was defined as the Authority's Agresso finance system, including all its interfaces and underlying business processes. The terms of reference specified that the audit scrutinise the security of the overall system in terms of the integrity, availability and the confidentiality of data.

*'It was good to work with a relatively small company who clearly knew Agresso inside out, had the right skill-sets to do an audit (both technical and financial), were quick to understand our business, stayed focused on the Board's terms of reference, had good synergy with my team and, most importantly, make recommendations that were appropriate for our line of business!'*

**Information Services Manager –  
The Port of London Authority**

**Integra Associates is an independent consultancy specialising in implementing financial business solutions and is made up of qualified accountants and IT professionals.**

## Approach

Integra examined the system from an application and technical viewpoint, ensuring that roles and responsibilities were clearly defined. Key sections of the review included core Agresso and operating system security, network access controls, password/directory control, system controls, and end-user access.

The PLA's finance system has several interfaces with other client systems, e.g. POLARIS, PACE, Excel spreadsheets, BACS, etc. and Integra reviewed these interfaces to ensure that appropriate controls were in place.

System change control methods were also examined to ensure that the management of system enhancements and system maintenance would ensure minimum risk to the system.

Integra's experience of the Agresso system, its input and output interfaces (GUI and Batch), and of the database and audit tables allowed the audit to rapidly focus on the key risk areas and deliver an efficient audit programme.

## Audit Report

Integra produced a report detailing the financial systems and related controls. This report categorised Integra's findings into high, medium and low risk issues across a range of application and technical areas. For each issue highlighted Integra set out recommended action points for the PLA to consider.

Included within Integra's report was an update on the PLA's progress on issues highlighted in previous Technical Audits. This enabled the Audit Committee to identify the progress made towards their goals of secure and well controlled systems.

Integra provided a cost effective audit by drawing on a powerful range of business, application and technical Agresso expertise together with good financial practice to produce an audit for use by management that clearly consolidated past, current and future issues and recommended actions.

## CLIENT PROFILE

The Port of London Authority is a public trust that was established in 1908 to administer, preserve and improve the Port of London. It has statutory responsibility for the conservancy and regulation of navigation of 96 miles of the tidal River Thames and owns much of the river bed and foreshore to the high water mark. It provides navigational services for ships using the Port including the maintenance of shipping channels, moorings, lights and buoys.

*'The consultants covered all bases in regard to their knowledge of the financial system and technical environment'*  
*"Their report also provided some pointers for future improvements to the financial system and its associated technical environment"*

**Information Services Manager – The Port of London Authority**

Other responsibilities include the inspection and licensing of commercial vessels, and the licensing of watermen, lightermen, and of river works extending into, over, or under the Thames below mean high water level. The PLA is also the pilotage authority for the tidal Thames.

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