

# Case Study

## Ballina Shire Case Study

### OPEN WINDOWS REDUCES RISK, STREAMLINES PROCESSES FOR MAJOR NSW REGIONAL COUNCIL

#### The Challenge

Located in the far north coast of New South Wales, Ballina Shire Council has approximately **100 contracts and supplier agreements** in place at any one time. After successfully using CONTRACTS for 6 years, Ballina Shire Council identified an opportunity to streamline the communication process between council and suppliers. Council lacked an efficient, uniform approach to managing contractual information of suppliers and contractors, and as a result, inefficiencies and errors were placing the organisation at considerable risk.

Ballina Shire Council required a **streamlined process** that would help them **improve efficiency, strengthen supplier relationships** and **reduce risk**.

#### The Solution

Before implementing the CONTRACTS PORTAL, Ballina Shire Council managed all contracts paperwork internally, using multiple systems. This ad hoc approach frequently resulted in high-risk oversights, such as failing to renew insurances.

Ballina Shire Council implemented the Open Windows CONTRACTS PORTAL, a portal integration to their existing Open Windows CONTRACTS solution to streamline the way suppliers submit contract documentation and the internal processes once received. The Open Windows CONTRACTS PORTAL also enabled the Council to replace tired, manual process with an automated approach that offered easy access to real time information.

#### The Results

By implementing the Open Windows CONTRACTS PORTAL, Ballina Shire Council moved from a clumsy, paper-based system to a secure, digital environment that enables all parties to quickly and efficiently communicate and access relevant data.

The CONTRACTS PORTAL has provided Ballina Shire Council with a range of key benefits including:

**Greater efficiency.** The CONTRACTS PORTAL has reduced the time it takes Council staff to process and manage contracts and supplier agreements.

**Greater visibility.** CONTRACTS PORTAL is a centralised repository, and both Council staff and contractors can log into the system to submit/update information and view notifications and reports.

**Reduced risk.** Automatic email notifications are now sent to both staff and contractors when insurances are about to expire, enabling Council to renew policies and avoid the risk of uninsured contractors.

*“Processing documentation that would have taken a staff member two to three days can now be completed in less than a day with the CONTRACTS PORTAL”*

*Chris Allison, Projects and Contracts Coordinator, Ballina Shire Council*



**Better communication.** “It’s a two way street. Both parties benefit from being able to easily view, in real time, what information is outstanding and what needs updating,” explains Chris Allison, Projects and Contracts Coordinator, Ballina Shire Council

**Improved supplier relationships.** CONTRACTS PORTAL is an easy-to-use system that has improved supplier satisfaction and delivered ‘more effective and efficient’ business outcomes through increased compliance.

**Improved processes.** The CONTRACTS PORTAL is integrated with Open Windows CONTRACTS, allowing contract information to be automatically updated and tracked. This creates an audit trail, reduces reliance on emails and ensures staff and contractors are always fully informed. Additionally CONTRACTS PORTAL is integrated with Council Document Management system to provide even greater efficiency and accuracy.

**Improved use of human capital.** The Council says the CONTRACTS PORTAL has improved the ability of staff to perform their jobs. “Staff roles have changed from data entry to verification, enabling them to spend their time and energy on more valuable tasks, and turning administrators back in managers,” says Chris Allison.