

CASE STUDY:

New Zealand Customs Service

New Zealand Traveller Declaration Programme PMO and Programme/Project Delivery Services



BACKGROUND

The New Zealand Traveller Declaration (NZTD) Programme was a \$200M investment made over 2.5 years designed to deliver a digital enabled transformation of NZ border processing. The main objective of the programme amongst many other activities, was the digitisation of the original passenger arrival card (which was paper based). However, to achieve 'straight forward' goal, the programme needed to deliver major organisational, operational, and technical outcomes mostly across the New Zealand Customs Service (the lead agency), and to Immigration NZ, Biosecurity NZ, and Health NZ.

THE CHALLENGE

The NZTD programme was initiated to support rapid and accurate assessments of travellers during the COVID-19 pandemic with the first deliverable implemented in March 2022 which was the critical factor enabling the NZ border to reopen.

During the ensuing year, the NZTD programme's main purpose was to deliver a quality health assessment solution as COVID-19 assessments at the border evolved rapidly in iterative cycles. The solution accommodated legal, privacy, policy, communications, change/operations, data and digital considerations. This was a considerable challenge to meet the border requirements which were continuously changing. Repeatedly, the programme needed to move entire operational systems to new norms in fortnightly cycles.

Once the New Zealand government officially and legally closed the COVID-19 pandemic response, the NZTD programme then evolved the digital solution to digitise the paper-based Arrival card. This required a change of focus in the programme. It needed to change from its status as a digital implementation programme to become a cross agency transformational programme. This required a new strategy for programme delivery including the development of a 'multi modal' (programme/project/agile delivery) approach, an update of operational and digital systems, new collaborative arrangements for the ongoing post-programme management, and eventual implementation of the NZTD for both air and maritime border operations.



THE SOLUTION

Nonsuch provided active and high-profile support to this programme through the establishment and delivery of a Programme Management Office (PgMO) services and programme/project delivery services. Led by Chris Fisher (Principal Consultant), Nonsuch, the PgMO delivered the key elements required for a programme of this magnitude. This included the establishment of the governance, reporting, assurance, prioritisation, roadmap and scheduling frameworks. The PgMO also led the development of the programme's strategies development, the establishment and successful union of the multi modal delivery framework (MSP and SAFe agile), and the management of key groups within the programme delivery on behalf of programme leadership.

Chris also led delivery services for the programme, which was a team of project managers and BAs, resulting in strong delivery oversight of all aspects of the programme. This enabled an iterative system of technical delivery whilst driving a range of complementary projects. This also included a considerable effort to map and iterate organisational and operational systems and processes with each new emerging understanding.

Towards the end of the Programme, Chris led the implementation of the NZTD into maritime border operations in a Senior PM role which saw the successful engagement of operational teams nationally with support from key maritime industry partners including the cruise industry. This resulted in the business acceptance of the NZTD maritime solution across all border agencies and industry partners.

THE OUTCOME

The NZTD programme successfully delivered the NZTD solution into both air and maritime border operations. This was due to the considerable efforts of the whole programme team, including critical contributions from Nonsuch services, led by Chris Fisher. NZ Border agencies and Nonsuch maintained a collaborative and deep professional relationship throughout the engagement. Chris & the rest of the Nonsuch team felt part of NZ border agency operations working side by side with border agency executives, middle management, and frontline staff to achieve the outcome.

Nonsuch delivered a comprehensive suite of services, throughout the 2.5 years of engagement, which were critical to programme success. The vision set for the NZ Border Agencies was the enabling of safe, secure and efficient clearance and enforcement services for passengers, crew and staff (by air and by sea) while protecting and promoting New Zealand. This vision was met by the NZTD programme.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Delivery team leadership of programme workstreams for the implementation of the NZTD COVID -19 solution into border operations during the border reopening in March 2022 and changes to COVID-19 legislation through to the end of 2022
- Delivery of the NZTD programme (cross agency) strategy during COVID-19 response and into a 'post COVID' operational border, establishing the conditions and strategic settings for the implementation of the NZTD digital passenger arrival card.
- Delivery of project management services to the NZTD programme, projects included Policy/Legislation/Privacy, Maritime Border Operations and Transition Projects.
- PMO leadership, monitoring and controlling the programme, advising SRO and NZTD Leadership, programme papers and governance artefacts, liaising with, and managing cross agency governance including CEO oversight committees, quality assurance and the Treasury gateway reviews.
- Initiating the NZTD target operating model involving the delivery of interagency border operating models and process development, benefits management, ongoing benefits realisation plans, and transitional plans.
- Establishment of an effective hybrid Programme Management/Safe Agile framework which facilitated delivery of all programme/project management planning and delivery services.
- Performing a crucial service that resulted in the successful delivery of a large multiagency capability that remains a critical NZ community digital service to date.