

## Case Study

# National Oceanography Centre Facilities Management



**National Oceanography  
Centre Southampton**  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON AND  
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL

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Paul Dent  
Security Supervisor,  
National Oceanography Centre

### PROJECT SUMMARY

**Company**  
National Oceanography Centre,  
Facilities Management

**Market**  
Institutional

**Location**  
Southampton, United Kingdom



The National Oceanography Centre (NOC) is the UK's largest institution for integrated sea level science, coastal and deep ocean research and technology development.

Together with its partners, NOC confronts key scientific challenges such as sea level change, the oceans' role in climate change, predicting and simulating the behaviour of the oceans through computer modelling, development, the future of the Arctic Ocean and long-term monitoring technologies.

Keeping more than 2,500 scientists, engineers, technologists, support staff and students safe across the NOC's two operational sites, one of which is shared with a university, and securing the institution's assets in compliance with relevant legislation is one of the primary responsibilities of the NOC Security Supervisor Paul Dent.

## The Challenges

NOC manages several different incident categories, including but not limited to building management alarms and checks, fire alarm system checks, fire alarm activations, water leaks, electricity supply failure, lost and found property and criminal offences.

“What we needed was a digital alternative that would not only replicate our manual DOB processes and help us manage multiple incidents more effectively, but also give us more ways to quickly and accurately report and track them as they happen,” says Dent.

“In past years this complex function was primarily managed through a system of physical Daily Occurrence Books (DOB), which made it time consuming, labour intensive and difficult to manage in real-time,” he says. “Regardless of how many rules you put in place, using a manual DOB system means you can't really get an accurate sense of what's happening in and around the NOC at any given point, which is not ideal for a busy site with highly sensitive equipment and research facilities.”

NOC records about 3000 security-related incidents every month.





## The Solution

NOC needed a system that was simultaneously easy to use and flexible enough to configure independently.

“The software had to be easy to use, fully reportable and user configurable,” says Dent. “Of the three solutions we evaluated, one was overpriced and another overly complicated. Incident Desk was the only one that met all three selection criteria, was reasonably priced, and was backed by exceptional customer service and after-sales support from Solution House and Solution House UK.”

Importantly to NOC, Incident Desk also featured a mobile component – via a native smartphone app – that immediately elevated the functionality to a level none of the other packages could match.

## The Results

While it’s difficult to quantify cost savings because this was not the primary issue when NOC implemented the solution, Dent says the management benefits have been significant.

“We have Incident Desk set up to automatically email senior management for certain occurrences, or if the business continuity plan is invoked. This ensures that the correct people are initially informed of the incident, which is then backed up by a telephone call. If the person or persons don’t answer the call, they have the fallback of an email alert of the incident.

“We also have full visibility of all the actions our staff take during an incident,” he adds. “This is particularly important to protect the integrity of the staff and the institution because neither party can claim they weren’t made aware of the incident. In this way the system gives us full transparency for every incident, and every individual is accountable for his or her actions taken in response.” NOC is currently in discussions with Solution House about potential future add-ons to the system, including a real-time security guard tracking and reporting system.

Incident Desk takes inspiration from the Safe Cities model, which integrates data from multiple standalone systems to provide an informative “big picture” which in turn increases coverage, visibility, performance and planning.

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