



Case Study: TGA

Mainpac helps ensure good health for Therapeutic Goods Administration

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The asset and maintenance management system Mainpac has helped a key Federal Government organisation to pass stringent occupational health and safety audits with flying colours, by demonstrating total integration between building system maintenance procedures and OH&S requirements.



Above: Maintenance is vital to ensuring the reliability required for the laboratory functions of the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Not only are the highest OH&S standards required to support the day to day operations of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in Canberra but they assumed particular importance when the Government proposed selling the facility in suburban Symonston.

TGA building manager Alan Freemantle said the immediate and easy access to the maintenance data compiled using Mainpac allowed public and private sector auditors to conduct major audits in a timely manner.

There was minimal disruption to the operations of the building services unit which oversees what is a sophisticated laboratory complex. The outcomes of the audits were extremely satisfactory for the TGA," Mr Freemantle said.

"The Mainpac system proved of great assistance in the process and provided a high degree of accountability and record keeping."

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is a business unit of the Australian Department of Health and Ageing. The primary role of the staff at Symonston is to administer the provisions of the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 to ensure the quality, safety, and efficacy of therapeutic goods imported into, manufactured and supplied in, or exported from Australia.

The building is a 23,000m² complex, built in 1992, which includes about 9000m² of laboratory. A further 5,000m² in extensions have been added to the building since construction.

TGA outsources its maintenance functions to the contractor, Multiplex Asset Management (MAM), including all programmed maintenance, performance-based maintenance and all extended works or maintenance beyond the scope of a contract. MAM also undertakes most of the project management for refurbishment works within the facility.

Mr Freemantle explains that maintenance at the TGA is vital to ensuring the high degree of reliability required for the laboratory functions.

Many of the testing procedures are carried out on therapeutic goods and devices over periods of between 20 and 30 days. Failure of critical equipment late in the testing process could therefore have severe repercussions.

In addition, the TGA is accredited with the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) and as such is required to maintain strict service delivery standards.





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Above: Mainpac is used by all maintenance staff and the laboratory manager of the TGA to control all aspects of maintenance within the 23,000 square metre facility. It is also used to maintain an asset list.

Strict heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) controls operate on a 24 x 7 basis and provide an excellent example of the complexity of the maintenance requirements. Eighty four air handling units serve the facility, compared with just five which would typically be needed to serve a shopping complex of a similar size said Alan Freemantle.

The first audit, by the Federal Government's Workcover agency, involved an investigation of the TGA OHS management systems. The investigation included an extensive survey of specific building procedures and routines which all have safety implications.

Another audit was conducted concurrently by consulting engineers Sinclair Knight Mertz in relation to the sale of the building. Again, the ability to produce professional and timely evidence and data on building and OHS related issues on demand proved very valuable.

"Both parties said our Mainpac based system had been extremely helpful in completing the audit, endorsing the ease with which the information was gathered and its high standard of accuracy," Mr Freemantle said.

"Conducting an audit without the data captured by Mainpac would have been extremely difficult in terms of the information being sought by the auditors."

For example, they required information on the tests that had been carried out on the building cooling towers for legionnaire's disease. Since commissioning Mainpac in 1997, the system had prompted Mr Freemantle's staff to conduct and report on such tests on a weekly basis. The speed with which the TGA was able to refer to any one of those tests impressed the auditors.

Multiplex is similarly enthusiastic because it has a high degree of ownership and pride in the facility.

TGA began using Mainpac when MAM took over the maintenance contract. Mainpac is used by all maintenance staff and the laboratory manager to control all aspects of maintenance within the facility, as well as the billing of extended works. It is also used to maintain an asset list for the facility.

The system has been customised for use within the facility management discipline, including such things as modifying type codes and other specific fields to identify contract and non-contract jobs.

With a programmed maintenance requirement of 380 jobs a month, Alan Freemantle is keen to further streamline maintenance management. He is now exploring the use of personal data assistants (PDAs) and scanning technology to record readings and determine maintenance status of equipment.