

# Environment Agency Becomes More Efficient by Integrating Financial and HR Systems

Environment Agency  
London, England  
www.environment-agency.co.uk

**Industry:**

Public Sector

**Annual Revenue:**

US\$1.9 billion

**Employees:**

12,000

**Oracle Products & Services:**

Oracle Financials  
Oracle Procurement  
Oracle iProcurement  
Oracle Human Resources  
Oracle Self-Service HR  
Oracle iExpenses  
Oracle iRecruitment  
Oracle Learning Management  
Oracle Time and Labor  
Oracle Payroll  
Oracle Discoverer  
Oracle E-Business Suite  
On Demand

**Implementor:**

Oracle Consulting

*“Oracle E-Business Suite has helped us to modernize and streamline our processes to meet the government’s efficiency targets.” – Gerry Kaspers, Head of 1B1S Service Center, Environment Agency*

The Environment Agency’s role is to protect the environment in England and Wales and ensure that air, land, and water resources are used in a sustainable manner for the benefit of future generations. Like many government organizations, the Environment Agency was looking for ways to improve management information, reduce overheads, and boost staff productivity.

The Environment Agency decided to use the Oracle E-Business Suite applications as the way forward. It has created an integrated system for financial and human resources (HR) management and business intelligence. The new system called “One Business One System”(1B1S) underpins the Environment Agency’s “Making It Happen” agenda and supports much of the day to day business in the Agency

Finance teams have easy access to timely information and can close books to government timetables. A single system has enabled The Environment Agency to move towards a single HR service centre for routine HR administration, which allows our HR professionals to focus on supporting managers in their business decisions with timely, accurate people information.” – Oracle’s Self-Service HR applications enable employees to access and “own” some of their data, which helps ensure that it is kept up-to-date.

Designed and implemented by Oracle Consulting, 1B1S incorporates a number of software modifications and third-party tools required to support the Environment Agency’s unique needs. Oracle Consulting developed the customizations using its extensive offshore facilities and specialist testing environment to deliver and deploy new capabilities quickly and cost-effectively and interface them with standard Oracle E-Business Suite

**Key Benefits:**

- Integrated, standardized, and streamlined back-office processes for all seven regions and Environment Agency Wales on a single, robust technology platform
- Gained real-time financial transparency and accurate, up-to-date cost tracking and expense allocation against projects
- Benefited from business transparency and Oracle's management information tools to accelerate reporting and enhance budgeting and forecasting
- Enabled move to a single HR service centre
- Benefited from 24/7 support, near-100% availability, high performance support, and flexibility to meet new business demands

processes. 1B1S is hosted by Oracle On Demand, which guarantees near 100 per cent uptime and high performance for the Environment Agency's users who now number 11,500.

Outsourcing system management to Oracle On Demand provides flexibility to manage the Environment Agency's data volume, which is growing at a pace of 10 per cent annually.

**Better Performance Through Business Transparency**

Before 1B1S, the Environment Agency relied on disconnected inherited systems and multiple regional data centers to manage its back office. Many processes were manual, time-consuming and error-prone due to data re-keying. Creating cross-regional reports was a complex and time-consuming process due to a lack of data transparency.

The Agency wanted a single supplier to design and implement the system and provide ongoing maintenance. "Our strategy was to source infrastructure, applications, management, and support from a single company to benefit from guaranteed services levels and on-demand expertise, while we focused on delivering our business objectives," said Gerry Kaspers

**Tighter Financial Control**

Consolidating the Environment Agency's financial management processes on Oracle Financials has allowed the organization to replace multiple systems with a single general ledger and reduce monthly close times. In addition, Oracle's automated applications have reduced cycle times for nearly all-routine processes

More than 10,000 staff members use Oracle iProcurement for self-service purchasing, which has removed paper from the buying process and transferred responsibility for purchasing to individual staff members. Invoices for organizations such as oil refineries and water companies--whose activities are regulated by the Environment Agency to ensure compliance with pollution control regulations--are now produced and sent to printers automatically. Using Oracle Time and Labor, the organization can allocate staff time to a specific project, which enables it to allocate costs appropriately.

“Oracle Financials gives us robust, efficient billing processes,” said Alun Thomas, financial services manager. “We can now do print runs totaling £20 million (US\$39 million) in hours --a task that used to take several days. Transparent financial management makes it easier to track the movement of money around the agency and to recover debt faster.”

### **Real-Time Project Monitoring**

The Environment Agency uses Oracle’s management information to improve reporting and forecasting and track the cost of all projects, which can range from major environmental initiatives to the purchase of a new building or software application. Accountants and budget holders run reports from the general ledger using Oracle Financial Statement Generator to view real-time statistics for the wide range of capital works programs that the agency manages. Oracle Discoverer provides managers with a suite of pre-formatted reports, as well as ad-hoc analysis and reporting capabilities.

“Using Oracle, we can monitor our spend against grants issued, produce quarterly reports on each project’s progress against milestones, and give managers access to timely information for decision making,” Thomas said. “Oracle Procurement allows us to control spend more closely and get better value from our suppliers.”

### **Centralized HR Optimizes Use of Skills**

With Oracle Human Resources Management, the Environment Agency has, for the first time, a single centrally managed database containing information about all staff, their salary details, qualifications, and training. Oracle’s self-service applications allow employees to manage their own personal details and claim expenses online.

“Oracle Human Resources has eliminated a lot of the day-to-day work associated with people and payroll management,” Claire Pulley, head of HR process and efficiency said. “Centralizing HR has enabled us to move to a single HR service centre to support all routine administration activities. HR professionals are able to focus on being true business partners to managers and have the relevant information to make informed decisions.”

### **Value Beyond the Core Solutions**

Oracle Consulting designed, developed, and implemented 1B1S. Its consultants worked with key process owners at the Environment Agency to determine objectives and priorities. Oracle Consulting's onshore and offshore facilities developed the system's many customizations, providing around-the-clock access to specialist expertise. The Environment Agency tested the customizations in Oracle's development environment before integrating them with the core E-Business Suite applications to create end-to-end automated workflow-routed processes, engineered to meet its specific requirements.

"Oracle Consulting's excellent knowledge of Oracle products, its in-depth technical expertise, and access to Oracle's extensive development resources has allowed us to make 1B1S a robust, functionality-rich platform that will serve our needs for many years," Kaspers said.

### **24/7 Availability of Data and Systems**

Oracle On Demand manages 1B1S, which simplifies support, reduces risk, improves service to users, and lowers costs for the agency. Oracle On Demand eliminates the need to employ large teams of Oracle technical specialists in house. On Demand provides a way of responding quickly and flexibly to new business requirements, allowing the Environment Agency to scale services as required.

### **Why Oracle?**

The Environment Agency selected Oracle after a competitive tender involving other leading IT vendors. It chose Oracle for its world-class applications and ability to provide infrastructure, applications, and management from a single source, which supported the Environment Agency's strategy to outsource non-core activities.

### **Implementation Process**

The Oracle applications went live during a four-year phased implementation. "Oracle Consulting provided us with flexible, skilled development resources whenever we needed them," McCarthy said.

*The Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales. Its job is to make sure that air, land, and water are looked after by everyone in today's society, so that tomorrow's generations inherit a cleaner, healthier world.*