

# IFS enables higher performance for Portsmouth Aviation



Portsmouth Aviation (PA) is a leading UK-based mechanical and aeronautical engineering company with over 80 years of experience, providing technical and manufacturing services to the major UK civil and military aircraft constructors, in addition to offering environmental and packaging solutions.

## Portsmouth Aviation using IFS

PA has been using IFS since 2006. “IFS brings everything into one system, product management to capacity planning and scheduling,” says Simon Vaughan, IFS Manager, Portsmouth Aviation. “And with IFS solutions there have been some changes in project management functionality resource analysis that mean we should be able to achieve even greater visibility and control. Better visibility means better resource management and ultimately increased profit and margins.”

A key benefit of IFS for PA is the resource management feature which plugs into work orders, manufacturing, and projects. Every employee is part of a labor class, and each labor class is part of a resource, while every work center is also a resource, this segmentation enables PA to group and visualize capacity for employees’ working hours and machine usage.

Resource Navigator allows PA to draw a capacity line using a day, week or month view which can be displayed against actual work. In the case of labor classes or work centers, PA can determine whether planned or actual shop orders can be completed in a timely fashion or whether we need to reschedule. This also gives us visibility when quoting and planning work to ensure our lead times are consistent and accurate.

“This is viewed as a strong tool for the business moving forward. It not only helps with planning, but also if a customer wants to change things mid-flow it enables us to react accordingly, plan and set new timeline expectations,” says Vaughan.

“Prior to implementing this tool this type of management was carried out using Excel with data from various sources and was both time consuming and not especially accurate.”

## About Portsmouth Aviation

Based in the UK with sites in Portsmouth and Dereham, Portsmouth Aviation was founded in 1929 as a flying service, the business has evolved several times—from aircraft and engine overhaul and servicing; to issuing of Certificates of Air Worthiness; and then extending to repairing, refurbishing and flight testing of damaged service aircraft during World War II. In recent years the business diversified further into providing technical and manufacturing services to the major UK civil and military aircraft constructors. In addition to offering environmental and packaging solutions. Portsmouth Aviation currently has approximately 200 employees of which 165 are IFS users.

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In addition to the new resource management functionality, IFS Lobby provides PA's users with at-a-glance real-time visibility into the business. Prior to its introduction, PA's 165 IFS users would access a wide variety of data for projects from numerous screens. Now users can log in to a single screen and view a list of items that need to be addressed with the ability to drill-down to specific functional screens and data from the IFS Lobby.

From an operational standpoint PA's IFS team has spent time with individual employees assessing what tools would help them do their job more effectively. Those tools are then presented in IFS Lobby on an easy to use front end. The use of IFS Lobby has helped revolutionize certain workflows for some workers.

From a strategic standpoint PA is applying IFS Lobby to an aerospace supply chain approval process known as SC21 that will ensure its supply chains are running to a certain standard. A dashboard has been created that anyone in the business can access to see easily whether PA is achieving required delivery performance against SC21 for key customers.

IFS Lobby is also enabling PA to migrate away from KPI dashboards run on third party app QlikView. This has the dual impact of ensuring PA's data is centralized with a standardized view and accessible to all, while helping to reduce operating costs.

## Agility Enabled by IFS

The aerospace and defense industry presents organizations with a number of unique challenges. With government spending under intense scrutiny, demanding regulatory requirements, complex equipment and high-profile procurement programmes all helping to create spikes in the demands made of suppliers and the requirement for rapid manufacturing turnaround and agile business models. To succeed in this environment, PA diversified by adding new product lines to the business and by serving new markets.

This diversification was supported by the in-built flexibility and modular structure of IFS and the projects functionality which enabled PA to manage costs and time. Using IFS means PA can raise requisitions, manage external and internal staffing requirements, conduct a full audit log of everything it does, generate work orders and manage production for a project.

## The early adopter program

Implementing IFS took five months in 2018, with PA and IFS working in close harmony to ensure success. Early exposure to new functionality in the beta release was a distinct benefit for PA, but ultimately the company chose to join the IFS early adopter program to influence the development of fresh functionality.

### Benefits

- Improved project management functionality
- Resource management for greater visibility
- EAP involvement helps shape the end product
- Direct access to developers
- A closer relationship with IFS



“We like to use everything vanilla, we don’t like to have to customize things, in fact we have no IFS customizations. IFS has helped us maintain that and push that model,” notes Vaughan.

In addition to benefitting from enhancements to project and resource management functionality, and an introduction to IFS Lobby, a redesign of existing features has also proven beneficial for PA. For instance, the previous version of the IFS solution featured a Gantt chart for project manager, but it didn’t deliver exactly what PA wanted. Whereas the updated version includes a designed Gantt chart that works well for PA. “We can plan projects, drag activities around and make things dependent on other things. Project managers expect this kind of interface, and so that’s a pretty big win,” says Vaughan.

## What's next?

“We need to make sure we’re using the tool properly and see greater adoption,” says Vaughan. “There’s a new function called Demand Driven MRP, which I think is a perfect fit for our business, and it will really help with the rapid turnaround manufacturing that we want to do.” In addition to this, PA is also looking to roll out HR functionality and IFS Aurena, an AI-driven intuitive, browser-based, interface that allows users to ask questions and perform transactions by voice or text.

A large part of the success of whatever PA chooses to do in the future will come down to how the firm handles change management rather than the technology itself thinks Vaughan. “People grow comfortable with the way they work and worry the new way will be less efficient or more challenging. People need to be involved as early as possible. We need to explain what is happening, and why. Getting people to commit to the change and view it positively is the key to success,” he says.



## Find out more

Further information, e-mail [info@ifs.com](mailto:info@ifs.com), contact your local IFS office or visit our web site, [ifs.com](http://ifs.com)

