



OVERVIEW

Farnborough International Limited (FIL) is responsible for organising one of the longest-running and most prestigious air shows in the world, Farnborough International Airshow. Taking place every two years the 2016 event saw more than 110 different types of aircraft participate in flying and static displays. Those in attendance included British astronaut Tim Peake and former Prime Minister David Cameron, alongside more than 1500 exhibitors from 52 countries around the world.

ISSUE

Farnborough International Ltd (FIL) was looking for a communications platform that could facilitate the multi-agency structure of its incident control room and help to effectively deploy resources during both emergency and facility management operations. FIL was also looking for a system that could be used year round for the various events that take place at the site.

For the 2016 airshow, FIL wanted to move away from its previous whiteboard culture to an automated system that could provide in-depth reporting and analytics as well as emergency notification capability.

SOLUTION

Having been deployed throughout the incident control room, the Everbridge platform's incident logging and GPS mapping capability enabled organisers to have clear visibility of incidents as they unfolded, so they could quickly deploy the correct resources to manage these situations. Everbridge had a dual use at the airshow with the platform responsible for both emergency and facility management issues. The unified platform was therefore used by a range of different bodies including emergency and security services and those responsible for traffic management, parking and crowd control.

The improved efficiencies and reduction in the time needed to respond to incidents has led to FIL looking to deploy the platform worldwide.

Q&A with Jonathan Smith,

Head of Operational Development and Health & Safety at Farnborough International Airshow

Q: WHAT WERE YOU LOOKING FOR IN AN EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM?

A: Duty of care is paramount and an increasing factor for large scale events. There have been a number of high profile incidents at events in recent years that serve as a reminder of the need for incident management and communications. We were looking for an innovative communications platform that had the ability to reduce the time it took to log and resolve incidents. We also needed a system interface that the various blue-light services in our incident control room could use easily and efficiently in a unified manner. We wanted to move away from an overreliance on paper and manual recording to a more efficient system that would improve the data included in our post-event logs – making evaluation much simpler. The driver behind installing the Everbridge platform was that it is an effective tool that staff could use to help oversee the wider operational delivery of the airshow, as well as aiding with day-to-day management of the on-site facilities.

Q: WHAT INCIDENTS HAVE YOU BEEN USING THE EVERBRIDGE PLATFORM FOR?

A: Throughout this year's event the Everbridge platform was used for a number of incidents. These included both emergency responses and any non-critical facility management issues that required attention. When extreme weather caused serious on-site flooding at this year's show we were forced to act quickly. To help protect visitors, exhibitors and employees the Everbridge platform was used in the incident control room to log the relevant data and enable emergency services to communicate and co-ordinate an effective response. Using the platform as part of the command and control tool set, we were able to perform a managed shut down of the exhibition halls which involved moving 57,000 people off-site in an orderly manner, in less than two hours. This is a significant example of why Everbridge is now a vital solution in our overall event strategy – the flooding at this year's show could have been an extremely dangerous situation if a co-ordinated evacuation had not taken place immediately. From an operational perspective, the platform also helped ensure that the on-site facilities were correctly maintained and fit for purpose and that any issues that required attention were swiftly resolved. Ensuring that all on-site facilities are functioning and providing the best service for visitors is just as much of a priority as effective communications in the event of a major incident. It is extremely important that health and safety standards are met no matter how high the footfall or number of emergencies that occur throughout the show.

Q: WHAT FEEDBACK HAVE YOU HAD FROM YOUR USERS?

A: The feedback from users has been extremely positive. We have all been impressed with the flexibility and scalability of the platform in helping to co-ordinate the effective deployment of our resources. The mass notification system meant that communications could be sent throughout the chain of command in a matter of minutes—with our CEO even able to receive relevant updates and alerts directly to his phone—enabling us to respond more effectively to incidents as they happened. The platform's incident logging capability helped to streamline our processes and improve co-ordination between the multiple agencies that

operate the control room. Also, the fact that Everbridge is a web-based solution meant that agencies like Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service were able to familiarise themselves with the platform prior to the event. Using Everbridge meant there was a huge reduction of 'noise' in the control room when dealing with facility services issues. This resulted in the emergency services being given a higher priority in the room. Unifying thirteen different agencies on one platform allowed teams to collaborate like never before. This alone has demonstrated the value of the Everbridge platform and improved the customer experience at Farnborough.

Q: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING THE EVERBRIDGE PLATFORM?

A: The most significant and tangible benefit of Everbridge was having a single platform to record all of the incidents that took place at the event – particularly when the logs were requested by the Police to investigate serious issues. Rather than having to rely on paper and a number of different logging systems where some data may have been missed, a concise report was produced in minutes. Time that may have been spent on administration was saved, the Police could focus on doing its job and investigating the incidents.

Several other benefits became immediately apparent. For instance, Everbridge's emergency notification system and GPS mapping functionality has helped improve the ability to locate people or items on a large site—during and after the event— which enabled the team to spot trends and analyse issues in real time.

During one emergency this year, the platform reduced the time it took to locate and resolve an incident by more than one hour and provided a wealth of incident data that could be handed straight to the relevant emergency services, meaning as little disruption as possible. One of the biggest benefits of implementing the platform was the in-depth training and support that the Everbridge team provided meant the transition from our previous practices to the new platform was more efficient. Having the core Everbridge team members on the ground, providing support, meant that we were able to quickly comply with third party changes to the platform to ensure a unified communications strategy. Having such a flexible and scalable tool at our disposal was a great help.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE EVERBRIDGE PLATFORM GOING FORWARD?

A: The reduction in time spent both responding to incidents and reporting on them afterwards has had a significantly positive effect on our efficiencies and saved both time and money. Having seen first-hand the return on investment of using the Everbridge platform, we will continue to use it for all future FIL events. We are also looking at using it as part of the year-round operational management of the site at Farnborough and considering having contractors, exhibitors and visitors using the platform or the smartphone application at the next event in 2018. Secondly, we want to include Everbridge as part of the wider infrastructure being used at the other international air shows that we operate around the world. We are also keen to explore how the latest features of the Everbridge platform can help to protect our mobile workforce and ensure we deliver a consistent approach to our communications processes and emergency responses at all of our events.