



Moving Project Management into the Cloud

RPC were engaged as part of a wider project and tasked with migrating and upgrading the client's P6 EPPM arm from their current on-premise solution to the Microsoft Azure Cloud. However, we also supported the client with their Web Services integration and at the same time, the client's project management software was upgraded to Oracle Primavera P6 EPPM Version 18.8.

Business Sector

Nuclear, Defence and Security

Services Provided

- Migration
- Upgrade
- Integration
- On-going database and application support

Technologies Used

- Oracle Primavera P6 EPPM, inclusive of P6 Pro Cloud Connect
- Web Services
- P6 Services
- Oracle HTTP Server
- Microsoft Azure Cloud (provided and supported by client's application team)
- Fusion (provided by Oracle Cloud)

Approach

Migrating from on-premise to a secure, cloud-hosted provider – in this case, Microsoft Azure – offers greater working flexibility and, in particular, easier access for remote working, which has proved to be a real asset throughout the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. To make this possible, RPC needed to build a series of Development, Test (SIT), Pre-Production and Production environments all in Azure, and address and solve any associated issues with the install. Working with the client's Database Administrator, RPC tested the database migration from its current environment to Azure to ensure that all the data migrated successfully. Once built and tested, the system was upgraded to the latest version and then the new environment went through a rigorous testing procedure. RPC applied any necessary service packs or bug fixes to make the solution ready to deploy. The final stage of the project was to help with the roll out of the new applications to users.

Main Challenges

Given the nature of their work, the client operates in a high-security environment. This meant that all RPC staff required individual security clearance, but also imposed restrictions on access to phones and laptops when on site. Unable to take 'hands on' control of keyboard and mouse, our Technical Resources talked inhouse database and application teams step-by-step through work that we would normally undertake ourselves. As this was a wide-ranging project, RPC worked alongside multiple different client teams across the site, including database, application, solution architect, integration and project lead/managers all in different areas of the business. This meant establishing relationships and working practices with each disparate team and working with them in 'silos' rather than as one overall project. Once 'Go Live' was completed, we would transition to the Documentation and Handover phase with the application team, equipping and enabling them to continue to support the environment on the new platform. By this time, the COVID-19 pandemic had hit the UK, bringing with it restrictions on travel and necessitating remote working for the majority of the team at RPC and the client.

Benefits

- Access to P6 EPPM Version 18.12.X, eliminating java applets and providing quicker performance
- Roll out of P6 Pro Cloud Connect, which allows end users to continue working in poor or unstable network locations while utilising the P6 Professional Client
- Deployment of Web Services – integration of P6 with Fusion completed, but with scope for future software integration requirements
- Access to applications from outside the on-site network – a major benefit for users, especially in the current pandemic climate
- Utilising Microsoft Azure Cloud allows scalability, security, reliability and high availability Instances can be reduced or brought down outside working hours to reduce cloud service overheads

“ Installing Primavera P6 on Microsoft Azure datacentre allowed for integration and transfer of data between the enterprise-wide Planning and Financial application. RPC provided instrumental technical expertise on the upgrade and installation of the application across the database, application and web tiers, and also shared their wealth of knowledge enabling the incumbent team to support, document and repeat. RPC were a pleasure to work with and steered us towards a very successful and stable implementation. ”