



MONITORING A LARGE WORKFORCE WITHOUT TYING UP STAFF WITH MANUAL MONITORING

The Challenge

HQPlantations wanted to monitor a large workforce across broad areas of forests throughout Queensland and meet OH&S obligations without tying up staff with manual monitoring.

The Solution

Pivotel provided an integrated system of mobile satellite devices, the Tracertrak portal, check-in protocols and staff training, in a simple, cost-effective solution that offers an instant overview of staff locations and movements.

“ It means we can have more people out there working alone safely, rather than having someone sitting and waiting for a call that may or may not come. ”

- Tom Hanson
Health and Safety Manager
HQPlantations

Business Problem

As health and safety manager for HQPlantations, Tom Hanson is responsible for the well-being of 160 staff. Including the contractor workforce, in peak season, there can be up to 900 workers working for HQPlantations, spread across 340,000 hectares of forest spanning the length of Queensland.

Ensuring worker safety and meeting Occupational Health and Safety obligations meant the manning of phones and radios to monitor worker check-ins and distress calls. HQPlantations staff and contractors are responsible for all aspects of forestry management and harvesting, back-burning to manage fire risk and fire-fighting when required.

“One of the big issues we have is knowing where workers are,” says Tom. “We’d have someone sitting in offices in multiple locations monitoring check calls, making sure people are safe, making sure the telephones and radios are always manned. We were looking for a better solution under one account, and to spend less time monitoring manually.”

The Hardware



SPOT Gen3

on the Globalstar Network -

- One-way messaging
- Check-in/leave site
- Scheduled check-in management
- SOS emergency alerts
- Request help
- Location monitoring

SPOT Trace

on the Globalstar Network -

- Monitor your asset in near real-time
- SMS or email alerts when movement is detected
- Location monitoring/geofencing

inReach

on the Iridium Network -

- Two-way messaging to co-workers and manager to inReach/mobile/email
- Check-in/leave site
- Scheduled check-in management
- SOS/emergency alerts/request help
- Location monitoring

Tracertrak

Management Portal -

The Tracertrak portal allows HQPlantations to monitor all remote and isolated workers in one platform, maximising operational efficiency and fulfilling its WHS compliance obligations.

Business Solution

Tom’s search for a more efficient solution led him to Pivotel’s Tracertrak system and the allocation of 130 devices among 160 workers, mainly the SPOT Gen3 one-way messenger and several inReach two-way satellite devices.

All workers have a check-in schedule and if someone misses a check-in it immediately shows up on the Tracertrak portal and other local workers and managers are alerted by emails and text messages. At a glance, head office can see where all workers and assets are located and if anyone has missed a check-in.

They are also incorporating SPOT Trace satellite devices on fire tankers to monitor their location, and geo-fencing, which allows them to monitor when staff and assets enter and leave designated areas.

Staff training has been quick, simple and hassle-free, with one-hour training sessions and rapid uptake of the system by workers. “We haven’t had one person turn around and whinge about it. People have been screaming out for it,” says Tom.

The Outcome

Tracertrak allows HQPlantations to monitor all workers and assets with one portal and frees up staff for more productive tasks.

“We can go straight into Tracertrak and we can see that all these workers are using this system,” says Tom. “It removes the need to actually monitor lone workers. We only check on people when we believe they may be in danger if they miss a check in. It means we can have more people out there working alone, rather than having multiple people in multiple locations sitting and waiting for a call that may or may not come.”

The system proved its worth in Central Queensland during an unprecedented fire season in the Summer of 2018/19. “It was a very challenging fire season, with catastrophic fire conditions being declared for the first time in Queensland,” says Tom.

Going forward Tracertrak will allow HQPlantations to overlay mapping of predicted fire paths and the location of their workers to see if anyone was in harm’s way and respond accordingly. “Because we work with fire, our workers could be put in some extreme situations,” says Tom. “We just look online and we know exactly where they are.”

Costings are transparent and manageable, with no nasty surprises. “The hardware costs are nothing extravagant. They’re rugged, they’re hardy, they’re weather proof,” says Tom. “The cost for us annually is less than half of what it would cost to employ people to do it. It’s quite a bit of peace of mind, knowing that we can actually find the workers and they have a way to get help, knowing that we have the system set up and people are using it.”

About HQPlantations

Queensland based HQPlantations is one of the largest private timber plantation companies in Australia. HQPlantations sustainably manages 340,000 hectares of forest throughout the state of Queensland including softwood and hardwood plantations. These plantations produce up to of 2.5 million cubic metres of logs annually that support both domestic and export industries.

As well as supplying plantation logs, HQPlantations protects native forests. The native forests provide a range of conservation, community and other values. HQPlantations protects these plantations for future benefits. HQPlantations is committed to managing all forests under their care with a long-term, sustainable approach that benefits the environment as well as investors.