



## New Zealand Ministry of Justice Transforms Collections and Increases Efficiencies

With a growing backlog of uncollected fines, the New Zealand Ministry of Justice Collections Unit decided to completely change the way it operated.

Along with some business process standardisation and a restructure, a key enabler for this transformation was implementing Genesys Enterprise Workload Management to increase efficiencies, dramatically improve visibility and control of all operations, and collect more outstanding fines without adding extra resources.

### AT A GLANCE

New Zealand Ministry of  
Justice Collections Unit

<http://www.justice.govt.nz/services/how-to-pay-your-fines/collections-unit>

Industry:  
**Public Sector**

Number of Employees:  
**580**

## CHALLENGES

- Resolve growing backlog of uncollected fines
- Address inefficient work practices:
  - > Employees choosing what they worked on and setting pace of work
  - > No ability to distribute work based on profile, priority, or loading
  - > Inconsistent processes resulted in duplication, confusion, and wasted time
  - > Operating in geographic silos
  - > Departments, spread across the whole country, worked independently
- Too many separate, uncoordinated systems and sources of work
- Monitoring and reporting were highly inefficient manual processes that impeded decision-making
- No clear sense of priority

In these times of economic constraint, governments everywhere are keeping a watchful eye on their fiscal responsibilities. Revenue shortfalls can have the cascading effect of restricting services and operations, and reducing aid to citizens.

Therefore, as part of their accountability toward good governance, agencies must strive to implement the most effective way possible to collect on revenues owed. Clearly, debt collections activities are of vital importance to this end, as the New Zealand Ministry of Justice was only too keenly aware.

## The need for change

The New Zealand Ministry of Justice Collections Unit is responsible for the country-wide collection and enforcement of an ever growing number of fines, including court-imposed fines, lodged infringements, and reparations. They also provide enforcement services for unpaid civil judgments and orders at a creditor's request.

The Unit's 580 staff — located in four primary business units across the country: the contact centres, the central processing unit, the distributed district collection units, and the Bailiffs — were being stretched to the limit, as the number of new fines being lodged at Court swelled to 1.2 million each year. What's more, the amount of outstanding debt had ballooned to over NZD \$800 million (USD\$647 million) by June 2009.

Management understood that there were internal challenges to overcome, such as inconsistent work practices across the offices that were creating inefficiencies, but lacked the means to resolve them.

For example, each of the 26 district collections units was responsible for managing its own geographic workload, and workers were being rewarded for actions that benefited their own office, even if these had a negative impact on the Ministry's overall performance. In some offices employees were under-utilised, even though the backlog of uncollected fines was

increasing. Employees could pick and choose what they worked on, which often meant that large or more problematic fines went uncollected because staff preferred to work on less demanding cases.

Because the Ministry's large number of disparate systems made it impossible for managers to quickly get a consolidated view of any part of the operation, there was no way to prioritise or execute work on a national basis, let alone measure the associated costs. From the duplications and distractions to the lack of visibility and standardisation — the need for streamlined workflow management was very apparent. The time had come to eliminate tasks of low value and stem the sub-optimal use of time, resources, and budgets.

Bryre Patchell, General Manager of the Collections Unit, recalls, "We wanted to restructure to flatten the organisation, provide clearer accountability, and standardise and simplify how collection activities were undertaken. The decision was made to transform the way the Collections Unit worked. Our initial approach was to determine the business capabilities we wanted to see in a future state, including those we could not compromise on, and to identify Key Performance Indicators. Then we scanned the market and, after careful consideration of the options available, were very excited to discover Genesys intelligent Workload Distribution (iWD) — a key product of Genesys Enterprise Workload Management.

"We selected iWD because it had a reputation for being straightforward to configure right out-of-the box, as well as relatively simple to integrate into existing environments. These features were very attractive to us, as we did not want to be mired down in customisation activities. Genesys iWD suited our needs to the highest degree because it supported the agile way that we wanted to operate, and we didn't have to compromise our highest priority business capabilities to 'fit around' what the technology does."

“We now have the visibility and control we need to effectively run our operations — it is so empowering! We have been able to meet our goals of efficiently increasing the collections rate, resolving fines faster, and minimising operating costs. People in this country want, and deserve, value for money and good governance. I believe that Genesys iWD has been key in helping to enable this.”

BRYRE PATCHELL  
GENERAL MANAGER,  
NEW ZEALAND MINISTRY OF JUSTICE COLLECTIONS UNIT

### Visibility is key

One of the unique strengths of Genesys iWD is the ability to blend tasks and activities from multiple sources into a single global task list. Using a set of rules defined by the Ministry of Justice’s Collections leadership team and running them through the iWD prioritisation engine, all debt is prioritised nationally and the most important tasks are forwarded to the employees best suited to handle them, irrespective of their location. Priorities can be assigned that place emphasis on elements such as the significance of a debt, rather than to a single traditional aspect like debt age or value.

This ability to ‘push’ work to employees based on knowledge of the task, individual skills, and their current workload ensures that every member of staff is being optimally utilised, and that the highest priority tasks are being given the appropriate levels of attention. In addition to coordinating work from all of the Ministry’s Collections systems, iWD’s global task list provides insight across the entire enterprise. The intuitive interface facilitates filtering, sorting, and searching of all activities.

“Because the rules used by iWD are created from our own combined expertise and experiences, we know that work is consistently being prioritised and distributed in a way that best meets our objectives,” says Patchell. “With iWD, we now have immediate, clear visibility into the pipeline of fine collection activities and every aspect of the operation — from a national perspective right down to individual team members’ assignments — so that we can understand the greatest areas of opportunity.

“In stark contrast to the old way of operating, we are now able to leverage resources across all areas of Collections to ensure we are getting through the work at pace, and nearly every employee now has the potential to work on a task from wherever they are. This also means that the appropriate behaviours and attitudes are continually reinforced across the whole country.”

### Experiencing breakthroughs

Another breakthrough for the Ministry came from iWD’s ability to group related work items, irrespective of their origin. Previously, for example, if an individual had five outstanding fines there was the potential to have five different people pursuing the same person. With Genesys iWD, however, all items relating to a specific debtor are automatically gathered and delivered to one team member as a single package to pursue.

Says Patchell: “Because iWD gives us a consolidated view of all the outstanding fines, we have far greater insight into the nature of the person we’re dealing with. Someone who

### GENESYS SOLUTION IMPLEMENTED

- Genesys Enterprise Workload Management

### BENEFITS

- Prioritised global task list, consolidated all sources of work, and allowed tasks to be automatically pushed to the right person based on skills and availability, not location
- Effectively manage and monitor workload optimisation of whole organisation
- More effective use of data ensured access to information on tens of thousands of additional people with outstanding fines
- Improved staff efficiency, reinforced desired behaviours, and created sense of being part of one national team; accomplished more without adding extra resources
- Reduced backlog of fines and increased fine collection capacity

has incurred a large number of fines is probably pretty non-compliant, but now our staff is more informed and can deal with all of that person's fines at once, rather than in a piecemeal approach."

It is critical for the Ministry to know how to make contact with the person who owes money. "With improvements to information matching, we can now access the records of other government departments to obtain the address, employer, and phone number of anyone that has an outstanding fine," explains Patchell. "When there is a fresh match we create a new task in iWD and increase its priority to ensure it quickly gets to the right staff member for swift follow-up. This has enabled us to make outreach to tens of thousands of people that we previously couldn't find."

He adds, "With iWD we have been able to automate many tasks that in the past were done manually. We can now dynamically deploy resources where they are needed and equip staff to work far more effectively. This means we can get a lot more accomplished without adding extra people. We have been able to streamline the organisation and free-up managers to focus on high-value activities, rather than prioritising work, distributing work, and reporting."

### Good teamwork leads to good governance

Says Patchell: "We're also delighted with Genesys iWD's capability to blend work items along with phone calls, which allows the contact centre to contribute across the full range of collections activities. Additionally, because tasks are pushed to employees as prioritised by the global task list, all employees have become fully empowered and productive. If we do detect the start of a potential bottleneck or build up, iWD gives us the ability to rapidly correct the situation. We then re-evaluate how cases are being prioritised and iWD provides the capability to make adjustments to resolve the issue and prevent the same thing reoccurring. We have not yet had a situation where we haven't been able to make the necessary corrections."

"With the new way of working we've also been able to remove the siloed mentality; everyone is now part of the same team — regardless of where they are in New Zealand," concludes Patchell. "We now have the visibility and control we need to effectively run our operation — it is so empowering! We have been able to meet our goals of efficiently increasing the collections rate, resolving fines faster, and minimising operating costs. People in this country want, and deserve, value for money and good governance. I believe that Genesys iWD has been key in helping to enable this."



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