

ESSEX SHARED SERVICES AGENCY CASE STUDY



Essex Shared Services (ESSA) gets on top of its software compliance

ESSA benefits from FAST's expertise to gain a complete picture of its software licensing position and implement effective IT policies and procedures.

Essex Shared Services Agency (ESSA) has been a customer of the FAST Programme since March 2006.

It very quickly achieved the Bronze Stage of the FAST Standard for Software Compliance (FSSC-1:2007) and soon afterwards achieved the Silver Stage (March 2007). Subsequently, ESSA achieved FAST Gold Stage 1 in February 2008, FAST Gold Stage 2 in August 2008 and full registration to the FAST Standard for Software Compliance in January 2009.

ESSA was also a beta tester of FAST Compliance Manager, the licence management tool that helps companies ascertain their software compliance position. ESSA has now set its sights on achieving the FAST Platinum Award and continues to benefit from a strong and active relationship with FAST.

Case study highlights

- ESSA has achieved registration to the FAST Standard for Software Compliance (FSSC-1:2007)
- The organisation has been a FAST customer for 4 years after joining to get on top of its software compliance
- ESSA has reaped the benefits of a strong relationship with FAST throughout its journey to achieve all stages of the FAST standard (FSSC-1:2007)
- The strength of its relationship with FAST saw ESSA become a beta tester for FAST Compliance Manager

Serving the NHS in Essex

ESSA provides IM&T, finance and payroll services to 8 NHS organisations across Essex (including 2 Acute Hospitals and 5 Primary Care Trusts).

ESSA IM&T's IT Services group (approx 100 staff) currently supports over 28000 users and 16000 PCs and laptops across Essex.

Beginning the Journey

For Pat Lodwick, Procurement and Operations Support Team Leader within ESSA IM&T, getting to grips with understanding software compliance began when she was put forward to become a FAST Approved Software Manager to help push forward the organisation's software compliance drive. She takes up the story.

"It was quite a steep learning curve, getting to grips with software licensing. But it was an imperative for the organisation that we became and remain compliant.

After all, we are responsible for the use of thousands of PCs in different NHS trusts in the Essex region. And although we always had that driver to ensure we were legal in our adoption of software within the organisation, the challenge was actually being able to do it," says Pat.

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Moving through the FAST programme stages

Taking on a role of having responsibility for driving ESSA's software compliance regime meant Pat becoming familiar with FAST's services in supporting organisations achieve the FAST Standard for Software Compliance (FSSC-1:2007).

"We completed the Bronze stage and then set our sights on Silver and Gold, for which we did two FAST GAP Analyses. We spent a lot of time in preparation, using whatever tools we could to track our software, including using the SMS 2003 audit tool as well as examining a number of purchase orders and delivery notes to get a complete picture of our licence position across ESSA's 3 departments - IM&T, Finance and Payroll - comprising nearly 400 PCs and 24 servers."

"Where we found that there was software resident on the system whose licensing could not be accounted for, we contacted those ESSA employees using it and informed them that they would need to get sign off to bring the licensing up to date."

Taking advantage of FAST's expertise

In reconciling ESSA's adoption of software, Pat was able to use the expertise of key FAST representatives to ensure that it was not over-licensed for some significant software versions resident on its network.

"Our FAST Account Manager picked up that there were releases of software that we could downgrade from, bearing in mind our usage and business needs. Specifically, there were licences for Microsoft Office Project and Microsoft Office Visio which we had bought years ago, which were not relevant to us and so we were able to get the correct licensing in place for the versions we were using."

New policies, new procedures - new awareness

ESSA's experience in making itself software compliant has led to significant changes in software asset management throughout the organisation, with greater control of staff procedures.

"We don't want to be running around looking for bits of paper in future, having worked so hard to get to FAST Gold Award. The FAST Standard requires that software management policies are constructed and deployed to all staff and we are rigorously enforcing that. Anybody who works for us has to sign up to our policies and procedures, for which we've received lots of top-down support. We reinforce those policies with regular quiz questions as an awareness exercise," says Pat.

A strong and growing relationship

One of the reasons for ESSA's steady march to the Gold Award has been the strength of its relationship with FAST, including regular contact with trusted representatives, attendance on courses, and taking advantage of FAST programme benefits, such as the early availability of FAST Compliance Manager.

"There are some very good people at FAST who have been very helpful. We've used the FAST website a lot, and supplemented it by taking courses, such as a Microsoft licensing course. In our early days, time, effort and understanding were just what we needed, and we received lots of that."

ESSA is now aiming its long-term efforts on achieving the Platinum Award and will continue to maintain its strong relationship with FAST.

For more information please call **0844 815 5742**, email **contactus@fast-compliance.co.uk** or visit **www.fast-compliance.co.uk**

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