

# 'Fit for Purpose' Risk Management

## CASE STUDY

### The Challenge

Like all District Councils, this council has a wide focus and large number of discreet and separate projects on the go. And just like every other government agency they are under constant scrutiny to ensure they manage and spend the public funds wisely and well.

Their services cover local roads and footpaths, water management, sewage systems, rubbish, recycling, landfills, parks and recreation areas, along with social housing and other services

The District Council needed to have a closer look at the organisation's risk management approach and ensure it was fit for purpose. There had been an incident in one of the regional parks that had exposed a less than desirable level of understanding of risks and how they are managed across the whole of the council.

*"We didn't want 'best practice' but more 'right practice' which would make risk management an approach that would work for all of us"*

They felt that their current approach was 'out of the box' and not necessarily covering all their specific needs.

The District Council requested Nonsuch to have a look at how they were managing their risk and compliance management approach at the highest level and then how that cascades down through the rest of the organisation.

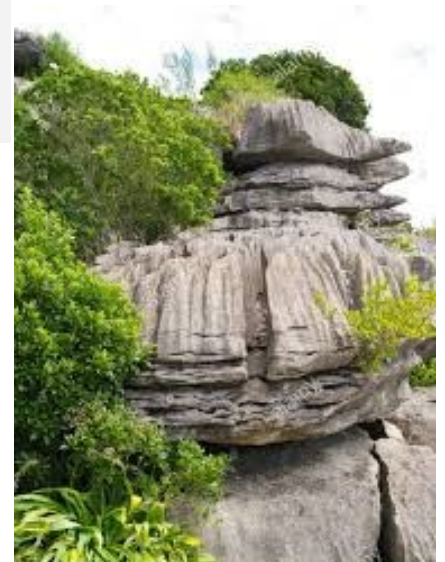
What Nonsuch discovered is that the Council's approach to risk management was not fit for purpose.

It became clear that risk management at the District Council was a standard and generic programme of activities that were mostly sound but could benefit from some major changes. This would be required in order for the District Council to meet its objectives for Risk Management.

The approach Nonsuch took started with interviewing the leadership team and asking them a series of questions designed to establish the organisational goal for Risk Management.

### Key Objectives

- Develop a Risk Management programme that was not just a 'tick box' framework
- Broaden the appeal and deepen the capability that would work for the District Council's people and the organisation



to define their expectations for risk management leadership and for risk management support. They then needed to link the strategic objectives to risk management by being clear how what threats and opportunities were faced by each strategic objective. They needed to define what existing controls were in place to mitigate these risks and amplify any opportunities. This analysis was required to ensure the District Council had a greater chance of achieving these strategic objectives.

On its own, the exercise with the Leadership Team was not going to be enough to deliver transformational thinking on Risk Management at the District Council.

The Leadership Team were also asked to consider the cultural changes required to consult, design and implement a programme of work to support the identification, assessment, control and management of risks. The primary considerations for any solution was the development of the right approach to risk management. Other considerations also included the adoption of software, training and tools.

## The Solution

Once the way forward was determined, Nonsuch then developed a lean risk management framework, an accompanying training programme, and helped design and lead the development of the information system. The most critical element of the solution was the development of the change management approach including the communication of the essence of risk management to all the staff at the District Council. All the solutions were grounded in the right theory but adapted to be practical and engaging for the District Council to use effectively.

## The Outcome

A key result for the District Council was to realise an attitudinal change to managing risk so it wasn't purely about compliance but instead they achieved movement away from a tick box approach, which achieved little, to using a risk management approach that helped make better informed decisions and provide more assurance that risks were being more effectively managed.



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## Nonsuch Assurance

At Nonsuch Assurance, we believe that risk and assurance are ways to evolve and succeed, not as deadweight compliance.

Where others may wish to go into defensive positions over threats, we say seek out the risks, manage them better than others and build a reputation of finding success where others fear to tread.

### Want to know more?

For more information about this assignment, please contact us



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