

CASE STUDY

Full automation of contractor management
process and facilities access



WORLD LEADER IN IRON ORE INDUSTRY



COGNIBOX™

A world leader in the iron ore industry chose the Cognibox solution to automate its contractor management process and access to facilities, the object being to exercise greater control over costs and worker safety.

THE CHALLENGE

This industry leader is an important supplier of iron ore concentrate to clients in locations the world over. The company operates a mine, concentrator facility, pellet plant, port installations and a railway at several sites extending over vast tracts of land. The company employs over 2500 employees and each day some 700 contractor employees or more work onsite at various corporate locations.

Despite having set a goal of zero accidents, site size combined with the imposing number of contractors employed to ensure the proper flow of operations represent challenges of substance. The harmonization of contractor management in accordance with strict corporate standards to ensure a reasonable measure of diligence and provide for effective contractor communications similarly appeared daunting and all but impossible to overcome.

THE ISSUES

Issues facing the company included as follows:

- Difficulty in assembling and effectively conveying information relating to work to be carried out by company contractors;
- Impossibility of ascertaining, in real time, those contractor employees present onsite at company facilities;
- Absence of a process to ensure that contractor employees were properly qualified to undertake work outsourced to them safely and securely;
- Inability of the company to control contractor employee assignment to the work that they were supposed to carry out;
- Difficulty in controlling contractor billing for work completed.

This evident lack of control was increasing the risk of accidents and leading to important cost overruns for work outsourced, a situation deemed unacceptable by this world class player.

THE SOLUTION

The company first adopted an integrated contractor performance management standard governing worker health and safety, work quality and the environment, the aim being to provide for the centralized identification, assessment and management of related risks.

With the aid of Cognibox expertise, the company subsequently instituted a triple layer of protection to reduce contractor-related risks and create winning conditions intended to preclude the occurrence of serious or fatal accidents.

Triple layer of protection

1) Contractor qualification

Ensure, via the Cognibox platform and attendant administrative support, that contractors carrying out work on a company site fulfilled all requirements in matters of insurance, workplace health and safety, and the environment.

2) Mapping of risks and definition of training requirements

Drawing on Cognibox expertise, the company detailed the risks associated with all manner of outsourcing work and linked the latter to corresponding training, personal protective gear and work permit prerequisites. Only training sessions conducted by organizations authorized by the company were retained for the purpose of formulating a correspondence matrix.

3) Automated gate control

The technology developed by Cognibox made it possible to link individual contractor employee files to the training requirements specific to the work to be outsourced. By simply scanning contractor employee cards at the entrance gate, Cognibox ensured that only qualified employees assigned to specific tasks at specific times were authorized to enter.

PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

Implementation of the full Cognibox suite enabled this world leader to automate fully the contractor risk management process and facilities access.

This colossal undertaking was completed in just seven months and each day provides for the optimal incoming and outgoing control of hundreds of contractor employees.

“By helping us automate our operating processes, Cognibox enabled us to increase the incoming and outgoing control of more than 700 contractors. As a result, we exercise greater control over outsourcing costs, while consistently ensuring that we have the right employee in the right place performing a task for which he or she is properly qualified.”

Vice President, Operations

Although it would be difficult to quantify accurately the overall impact in terms of cost and accident reduction, implementation of Cognibox has clearly enabled this sectoral leader to rank among the first at the world level to succeed in fully automating contractor risk management.

Action taken has also positively impacted contractors who appreciate upstream knowledge, via Cognibox, of the requirements that they must meet to carry out work under upcoming contracts, thereby enhancing aggregate planning.

Now that this important step has been completed, the next stage will involve integrating proficiency checks for tradespeople (welders, electricians, etc.) entering company locations, the aim being to provide for a supplemental measure of risk control. Lastly, with the aid of Cognibox, the company intends to institute real time contractor employee tracking to ensure enhanced responsiveness in emergencies and optimal control over work outsourced.

ABOUT COGNIBOX

Canadian leader in risk management and contractor compliance, Cognibox offers the most flexible, comprehensive solutions on the market. Over 125 customers in North America use Cognibox to manage contractor risks specific to their sector of activity. The company's solution provides a combination of expertise, software, training as well as a full spectrum of outsourcing services and administrative support.

The Cognibox community currently boasts over 200 000 members, contractors and employees of contractors, thereby enabling hiring organizations to work with top industry contractors and suppliers in areas such as workplace health and safety, the environment, sustainable development, quality and regulatory compliance. To learn more, visit www.cognibox.com.

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