

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE OVERSEAS TRAVEL OUTCOME REPORT

DEPARTURE DATE	RETURN DATE
28/4/16	14/5/16

DESTINATION (COUNTRIES)

Toronto, Canada

SUBJECT: 2016 - IS&T Service – Overseas Travel to Canada - Outcome report.

This paper is to provide a summary of the approved overseas travel to Canada by Director IS&T, Mr Garry Dickie and Manager IS&T Service Innovation and Solutions Branch, Superintendent Scott Allison.

BACKGROUND

On the 21 July 2011, Government on behalf of SAPOL signed a contract with Niche Technologies Inc. to purchase their Niche Records Management System (Niche RMS) software. It was recognised the Niche RMS had the potential to replace the majority of SAPOL's legacy mainframe systems. SAPOL established Program Shield to develop and implement the Niche RMS. The Niche RMS is known within SAPOL as the Shield application.

The Niche RMS is in use in over 50 other policing jurisdictions around the world including the Queensland Police Service (QPS). Program Shield has been collaborating with QPS and other overseas jurisdictions, particularly those in the UK, during the configuration of the Shield system. SAPOL have used functionality developed for Canadian and UK jurisdictions in the configuration of the Shield application. This improved functionality on the 'Australian branch' of the Niche RMS has since been offered and taken up by QPS. A benefit of the Niche RMS commercial off the shelf (COTS) system.

Typically each police jurisdiction has a Niche Customer Support Manager however all development, configuration and enhancement to the Niche RMS (Shield) is coordinated and conducted in Winnipeg, Canada where the company Directors reside. Typically all communication to the developers, Program Directors and the company Directors is through the jurisdiction's allocated Niche Customer Support Manager.

Niche Technologies Inc. regularly release new versions of the Niche RMS. SAPOL will, in November of 2016, be implementing Niche's latest User Interface known as Gen 5 or the Universal app.

Niche Technologies Inc. hold an annual Niche User Group (NUG) conference which is usually held in Canada. SAPOL have, since the start of Program Shield, been invited to attend these conferences as a means of exchanging information, networking with representatives from other participating jurisdictions, reviewing new and innovative functionality within the Niche RMS, gaining an understanding of Niche Technologies Inc. strategic pathway and lastly to provide 'face to face' feedback to Niche Technologies Inc. as to possible enhancements to the Niche RMS. Until this year, SAPOL has not attended the NUG conference due to competing timeframes with the implementation of the Shield application.

In April 2016 the Commissioner approved attendance at the Canada Niche User Group Conference and whilst in Canada to visit key Canadian police services to explore their use of technology and, where applicable their integration and use of the Niche RMS. The duration of the visit to Canada was 16 days including time for travel.

RELEVANT POINTS

Niche User Group (NUG) conference 1 – 4 May, Hilton Toronto, Ontario.

- The NUG was well represented with 300+ people attending from over 50 police service collectively from Canada, USA, United Kingdom and Australia (QPS & SAPOL).
- All Niche Customer Support Managers plus key Niche Program Managers and Niche developers were in attendance.
- A variety of topics were presented throughout the conference. Director Dickie and Supt. Allison were able to attend and participate in the discussion in most of the topics.
- Director Dickie and Supt. Allison were invited and attended the Canadian User Group Executive meeting chaired by Mr Paul Hamelin, Executive Director of Ontario Police Technology Information Cooperative (OPTIC).
- The Niche Technology Inc. / client relationship is very different to the 'traditional' vendor / client relationship as experienced in Australia.
- The Governance system in Canada is vastly different to Australia with the criminal laws throughout Canada being enacted by the Federal Govt. Therefore, having the one version of the Niche RMS across Canada is logical.
- Just over 50% of the police services in Canada use the Niche RMS.
- Government and governance structures within Australia are different than that of Canada requiring Niche Technologies Inc. to manage South Australia Police and Queensland Police Service in accordance with their own criminal laws and other legislation.
(This is markedly different to their established models for the UK, Canada and US.)
- It was evident from the conference SAPOL needs to be actively involved in future Niche User Group meetings so that SAPOL representatives have the opportunity to meet with Niche Technologies Inc. Senior Management and influence the strategic direction of the Niche RMS.

Toronto Police 5 May

- Attended the Toronto Police Service and participated in a series of presentations which covered Facial Recognition Technology, the use of Body Worn Video cameras, their Police Records Management system (Versadex), E-tickets and Traffic and Red light Cameras.
- These presentations were information rich, provided many learnings, provided an understanding of their strategic IT pathway.
- Key IT personnel were identified to continue communications and information exchange particularly in the realm of Body Worn Video systems.

Waterloo Police 6 May

- Waterloo Police use the Niche RMS and have developed a number of applications that integrate with the Niche RMS without impacting on the Niche RMS database. The Niche RMS remains the central source of truth for key entities (person, address etc.).
- Waterloo Police demonstrated their use of e-ticketing (expiations) within the Niche RMS and their integration into GIS / Crime Analysis software

- A further application, simply known as the 'Court Attendance' application was demonstrated. This app was developed to minimising the costs of having police attend court whilst on annual leave, days off or night shift.
- It is evident Waterloo Police are very mature in their use and adoption of the Niche RMS.

Toronto Police Water Division 7 May

- The Toronto Police arranged a tour of their Water Police Division. The tour was interesting especially with the differing equipment required for the extreme temperatures experienced in the region.

Ontario Police Technology Information Cooperative (OPTIC) 9 May

- OPTIC provides Technology and Information assistance to the 62 police services contained within the Ontario Provincial Police service and they acquired the Niche RMS in 2000/2001.
- OPTIC is similar to South Australia's Justice Technology Section (JTS) which have a technology mandate of overseeing a collective of Police Services which includes Auditing functionality
- The recording of vehicle collisions in Ontario is quite revolutionary. Police will only attend serious injury / fatal accidents or where a collision has caused a traffic jam but only for traffic management not to take the traffic collision report.
- Canada have introduced 'Vehicle Collision Reporting Suites'. The reporting suites are funded by Insurance Companies and are located in Police Stations but are not staffed by Police.
- In effect the reporting suites are 'one stop shops' for reporting vehicle collisions. The vehicle collision report will be taken, insurance documents completed, photographs of the damaged vehicles and, at some suites, Insurance assessors are on site. The benefits experienced from this initiative are, a) more consistent service delivery, b) client is happier (all reporting is done in the one place), c) data quality for reports has improved by 80%, d) has significantly freed up police resources, and lastly e) has reduced 3rd party claims and fraudulent reports.

Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) 10 May

- The OPP consists of about 6,200 uniformed officers, 1800 civilian staff and 800 Auxiliary Officers (volunteers). There are over 324 municipalities in the area covered by the OPP.
- The OPP provides a policing service to those municipalities that do not have or cannot afford to sustain Police Services outright. The OPP receive over 2 million calls for assistance per year and manage 5 separate call-centres.
- The OPP have extraordinary challenges with communications, vehicles change overs, centralised training and support of IT infrastructure due to the tyranny of distance and extreme weather conditions. Presentations and conversations revealed many of the issues OPP are dealing with, SAPOL also encounters (other than extreme cold weather conditions).
- Communications in remote areas was discussed with learnings provided for both services, mobility and reliance on telecommunication carriers and satellites for communication, in-vehicle computing and printing capabilities along with using AVL.
- OPP also use the Niche RMS and the learnings from their developed forms, mapping solutions, analytics and data management / quality reporting was extensive.

Summary

- Attending the Niche User Group Conference and participating in discussions with Niche Technology Inc. Directors, Program Managers and Developers was beneficial in gaining an understanding of the strategic direction of the Niche RMS.
- Visiting Canadian Police Services and developing relationships with the other Police Services that are mature users of the Niche RMS, particularly the OPP, was beneficial in establishing networks, gaining an understanding of their Niche RMS implementation and progressive development of functionality integrated with the Niche RMS.
- There was the added benefit of seeing the variety of management reports which they have developed which come directly from the Niche RMS database as opposed to using a data warehouse.
- The cost to SAPOL for the overseas travel was \$17,584.79.

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11 September 2016

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