



# Norfolk Island indoor and outdoor workforce get online timesheets and leave

**Norfolk Island Regional Council (NIRC) is a bit different from your standard local government organisation.**

Situated in the middle of the Tasman Sea, 1,600 kilometres from Sydney and 1,000 kilometres from Auckland, Norfolk Island is renowned for its stunning beaches, world-class fishing, and friendly locals.

## INTRODUCTION

As a council, NIRC is responsible for delivering all sorts of additional services and functions unique to their island environment and status as an Australian Territory. There are a wide variety of roles on the island and staff often perform multiple roles throughout the course of a pay period. Around half of the staff perform outdoor roles, all of which come with various allowances and penalties unique to that role, creating a lot of complexity for staff, managers, and Payroll.

NIRC turned to elementTIME to move their staff timesheets online and automate award interpretation so that everyone gets the entitlements they are eligible for. We talked to Payroll Officer, Michelle Lancaster, to hear how NIRC got their outdoor staff online with elementTIME.

## PROBLEM

The NIRC Payroll team faced a number of manual administration tasks and challenges during the fortnightly payrun close. Timesheets and leave requests were handled via a mix of paper, spreadsheets, and emails, which created many information gaps and exceptions for Payroll to manage. Many staff members perform multiple roles each with their own specific entitlements, meaning some staff had multiple timesheets each with a mix of complex entitlements to calculate.

**According to Michelle, the specific problems they were hoping to address were:**

- Handwritten comments, work orders, and hours were often hard to interpret , leading to all sorts of errors
- Ensuring everyone gets the correct entitlements and penalties was a complex challenge
- The paper timesheets and leave requests meant that there were no restrictions on what could be recorded causing errors
- Managers had limited understanding of the allowances and entitlements leading them to approve incorrect entitlements
- With so many outdoor staff, the challenges of managing collaboration everyone were compounded



## APPROACH

NIRC decided to search for a solution to allow their staff to complete timesheets and leave electronically from their computers or phones. It was critical that the solution could slot into their existing IT environment and integrate with their key systems so that existing processes and functions would be unaffected.

elementTIME appealed due to the easy-to-use, modern interface that worked on all devices and tight integration into most common council IT systems. As elementTIME is a council-specific system used by other Australian councils, the NIRC team had confidence that their unique roles and entitlements could be accommodated.

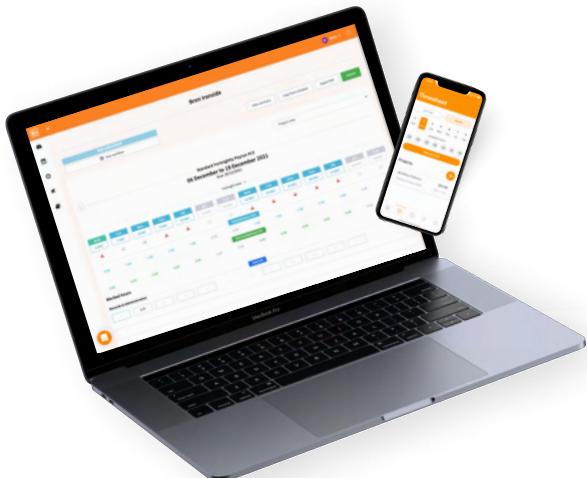
### Key reasons for choosing elementTIME included:

 Council-specific system that is purpose-built for the local government environment so it would be able to handle the complex scenarios

 Happy councils – NIRC was able to chat to other elementTIME users about their experiences with getting the system up and running

 Easy to use – the system seemed easy to adopt and use due to the intuitive and modern technology which would be particularly important for outdoor and works staff

 Support – the support approach is focused on supporting payroll to achieve outcomes, not just technical support for the system

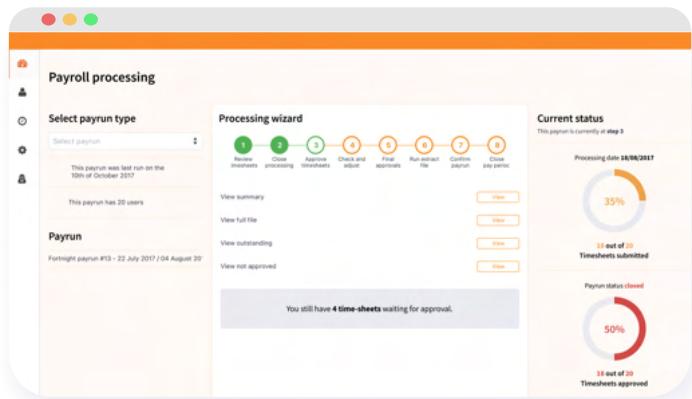


“The elementTIME team are prompt in their response time which gives our staff confidence in the system”

## RESULTS

The structured implementation approach allows flexibility in how fast or slow staff are onboarded to elementTIME. NIRC opted to get it done quickly, onboarding all indoor and outdoor staff over 2 payrun periods (2 fortnights). This is relatively fast compared with most implementations, with NIRC putting extra focus on change management and communication to ensure staff were aware and comfortable with the new system and process.

“Nic and the team are awesome and were extremely helpful before, during, and after implementation”



Most staff picked up the new system quickly with a single training session being all that was required. The intuitive interface and in-app help guide provided users with the tools they needed to become super users in no time. For users that did have questions, the in-app support chat gave them a direct line to the elementTIME team to answer questions and provide support.

Payroll was able to follow up individually with any staff that were having trouble, providing some 1 on 1 training and support. With full visibility of how staff were using the system, it was easy to identify who might be in need of some extra attention.

Ultimately the rollout was fast and smooth, with all staff completing timesheets and leave through elementTIME and all data flowing through into the various internal systems including NIRC's ERP system Authority.

“elementTIME has made the managers responsible for ensuring their staff are getting the right allowances”



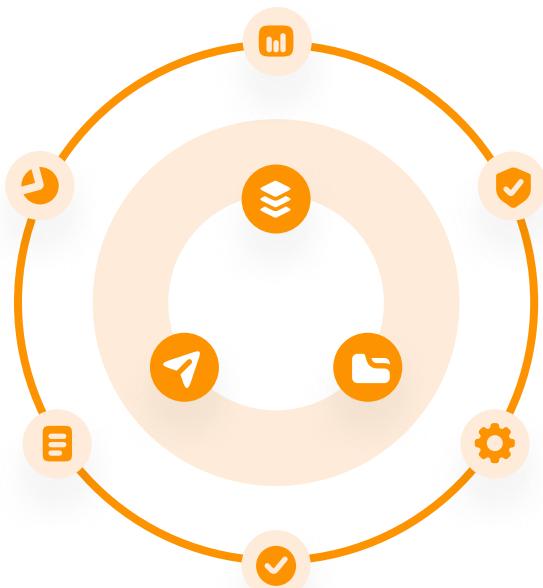
## As the organisation has settled into the new system and processes, the key benefits have included:

**Free up the Payroll team** - With the elimination of data entry and most basic admin tasks, the Payroll team has been freed up to focus on higher-value activities. They have much more capacity to work with staff and managers to ensure the staff are completing their time allocation correctly and therefore getting the right entitlements.

**Visibility** - The system provides full visibility of everyone's timesheet and leave, which makes it easy to understand how staff and managers are working. This allows Payroll to identify anomalies and work with staff and managers to resolve the underlying issue in advance. This ultimately leads to more accurate information and better compliance with awards and EBAs.

**Empowered managers** - With greatly improved information from the system and education from the Payroll team, managers have been empowered to better manage their staff. Managers can easily monitor the time allocation and element trends of their staff and pick up a conversation with any team members that require guidance or feedback as to how they are allocating their time. Ultimately this leads to a more effective and productive team.

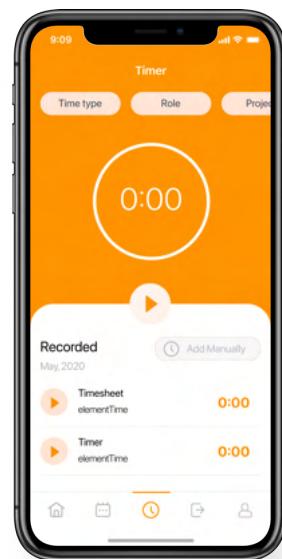
"Our staff can now access all of their timesheet and leave information themselves"



"The quality of the timesheet information has made it much easier for the Payroll team to identify and resolve issues quickly"

## CONCLUSION

NIRC was able to transition to elementTIME quickly because of a concerted and pragmatic training and change management approach. They have managed to realise the benefits of the online system much quicker than if they took a more cautious approach.



### Two top tips to be successful

According to Michelle, there are a few important things to consider when embarking on an implementation:



**Do it quickly if you can** – if the organisation is open to change, get everyone onboard quickly so that the payrun is all done entirely in the new system. You can focus on mopping up setup and profile changes over time, just treat them as exceptions.



**Extra training for those that need help** – most of your staff will pick up elementTIME easily so you don't need to overdo the training and change management for all staff. Identify the users that have complex timesheets and/or might be a bit resistant to change and provide extra sessions and support to keep them on track. This means you can put your attention on the people that need it whilst the majority take to the system like platypus to water!

"elementTIME was able to handle the complexities of our entitlements and makes it easier for staff and managers to understand"