

60 SECONDS

Improvement by numbers

Tom Spaargaren's work on asset management frameworks and certifications won him one of 2015's two IAM NxtGen Awards.

Q: Can you describe your career path into asset management?

A: In 2005 I was working for a construction company subcontracted to the maintenance department at Schiphol Airport. Schiphol introduced asset management into its contracts, so as well as prices, subcontractors had to provide an asset management approach. That was my first introduction to asset management.

The contract didn't mandate PAS55 but it did use elements from the standard. As I came to know more aspects of the asset management discipline, I decided to get my Master's Degree in civil engineering. I looked at asset management process models used around the world, including PAS55, in order to design a practical process framework for asset management.

Q: What does your current role involve?

A: I'm maintenance manager for a big public-private partnership (PPP) project: the A9 Gaasperdammerweg tunnel in Amsterdam. I'm responsible for maintenance management for the whole project area, which includes highways, multiple crossings and concrete structures.

IXAS, the special-purpose consortium delivering the project, used the ISO55001 framework to develop the asset management organisation. As well as designing and building the project, IXAS will then maintain the infrastructure for 20 years.

Q: Can you point to any significant breakthroughs or achievements?

A: I was involved with the PAS55 certification of the Coentunnel PPP project, also in Amsterdam. Unlike the A9, the Coentunnel was already built when I came on board, and a 25-year maintenance period was starting – with high penalties



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for non-compliance. Certification was part of transforming a building organisation into a professional asset management organisation.

As a consultant for Oxand, I managed to redevelop the management system completely in line with PAS55 and the client's requirements. I wasn't a certification expert but I did have practical experience of implementing PAS55.

Lloyd's Register certified the organisation and said they were impressed with the asset management framework.

Q: What have been the highlights of your career so far?

A: Both IXAS and Coentunnel used the generic framework from my Master's as a basis for their asset management organisations. My findings have been used by Oxand in multiple successful projects and are still being used. Of course it's satisfying for me individually – but it's never about me. Asset management implementation is always a team success.

Q: What has been your biggest challenge?

A: Setting up a whole new asset organisation from scratch within IXAS together with the asset manager of the organisation. There was no period of adjustment and getting used to the contract; the contract gave a date on which the organisation had to be operational at a high level of maturity in order to be considered compliant and avoid incurring penalties. We succeeded on this challenge.

Q: What is the key to successful asset management?

A: Cooperation within the organisation. So much of what you see in the IAM's Big Picture video is totally true. People are doing their best within their own context but we have to let everyone see how they interact with the whole picture. That's what helps organisations take the hard decisions to break down possible silos. Training, trying different working methods, even restructuring, to help everyone get to know their role in the bigger framework and succeed in achieving the objectives of the organisation.