Comment from Darrin Bond regarding the use of Workbrain

Initial Selection

The Workbrain product was selected as part of the procurement process circa 2005. This process was won by a consortium led by IBM which included as its primary products SAP, Workbrain, RecruitASP and SABA. This offer was chosen over others as it offered a large and robust core payroll solution (SAP) and other products considered best-of-breed. IBM was responsible for the integration of these products and made a number of claims about the connectedness of the solutions.

Purpose of Workbrain based on the initial design

Workbrain was selected as the rostering solution. The intent was to configure a number of time and attendance rules into the product to allow immediate rectification of time violations. The product was not chosen for timesheeting, cost dissection, cost allocation or full award interpretation. The main agencies that would use Workbrain were identified as Police, Emergency Services and Queensland Health. A number of reference sites were provided and these were contacted to confirm the capabilities of the product. All spoke positively about Workbrain in using it for rostering.

IBM's use of Workbrain

In 2006 it became apparent that the initiative's critical path was being driven by the time required to configure awards into SAP. Proposals were put forward to simplify the awards however this was not supported at senior levels of government. IBM's proposal in 2007 to use Workbrain for full award interpretation was seen as an opportunity to reduce the overall time for completion of the initiative. IBM made claims that award configuration in Workbrain would significantly reduce the initiative by a number of years.

Reference sites

IBM provided reference sites that used Workbrain but none of the complexity of Queensland Health and none that fully integrated back to SAP. The selection team therefore insisted that IBM prove the concept before continuation of the project. Due to the desire to have a prime contractor in place the contract was signed with this being a condition of that contract. I am unsure of the testing that occurred regarding Workbrains capabilities and integration with SAP in 2008.

Award Interpretation and specifically Time and Attendance

Awards are complex and include many aspects such as financial, tax, superannuation, progression and time and attendance. Time and attendance deals with the hours an individual is required to work. It would include aspects such as start time, duration of day, number of hours worked before a break, rest periods, days to work etc.. While complex it is but one aspect of the total award. The initial design was to put the key time and attendance award rules into Workbrain and all other rules into SAP. IBM's proposal changed this to include most award rules into Workbrain.

Opinion of Issues with the implementation – These are implementation issues based on my opinion only.

1. Time for Processing – While I am unsure as to the effectiveness of Workbrain in managing the award rules, an issue that would exist is the processing time available from pay cut-off to the actual pay day. Workbrain would be required to process and transport many records to SAP and these would then need to be processed by SAP to make the final entry into the CEMTEX file (the pay file passed to the bank). If the processing window is too small then not all records can be processed. Additionally there is a very limited time for the payroll team to check and rectify errors. The pay cut-off date cannot be moved as there would be records from a number of work days missing from the pay. The best solution here is to move the pay-day to give a greater processing period between cut-off and pay day. I believe this has now been implemented by the payroll team.

2. Volume of transactions – The sheer volume of transactions coming from workbrain to SAP is enormous. Consider if there were 10 records per person per day, each pay would have approximately (10recordsx85,000employeesx10days) 8.5million records!

   There needs to be sufficient time for the successfully transport of all of these records from Workbrain to SAP. If there is an error then the transport may have to recommence so breaking it down into smaller files would be an effective approach (unsure if this has been done).

3. Change Management – end user - A lack of knowledge by the end user as to how the solution works resulted in incorrect data entry, leading to incorrect pay results. Training users and champions (highly skilled users) in each business area was critical to the solutions success. Health constantly faces challenges in changes business processes and my observation would be that this situation was no different.

4. Change Management – HR Team – The HR team was presented with a new solution being used by all departmental staff on a single day. Without in-depth training and practice on the new solution any requests to rectify problems would have taken much longer resulting in many requests not being completed leading to payroll errors.

5. Size of Implementation – The risks of implementing the whole department on a single day are enormous. A lower risk approach would have been a staged rollout. This in itself would have been challenging, however a rollout that starts small (say one location) and rapidly

rises once successful would have been more appropriate. As an example start in a hospital, progress to a region, on to two regions and then whole of state.

Darrin Bond