

# CASE STUDY: Auckland City Council Stormwater



He says Auckland Regional Council has already signalled a greater focus on ensuring compliance with consent conditions and has allocated more staff solely to carry out consent audits. Other regional councils are likely to follow. Fortunately Auckland City Council foresaw that regional councils would develop a greater focus on ensuring compliance with consent conditions.

"I think a lot of other councils will begin to feel pressure to implement similar consent compliance systems, however Auckland City, Andrew Stewart and CS-VUE are currently at the forefront of tackling this issue.

"We wanted to be in ahead of the regulators in consent management, not behind them. We wanted to show that Auckland City is committed to improving our management of consent compliance. We've been able to tell them: 'Here are all the consents that we've got. These are the ones that we know are fully compliant. These are the ones that need to be looked at and here is our programme of work to address that'. "That puts it in our court in terms of management, as opposed to the regulator's court. We have the luxury of being able to manage it effectively, with the help of a new tool we have recently started using."

The system Grant is talking about is CS-VUE, an on-line database containing digital versions of consent documents and information that demonstrates consent conditions have been complied with. Staff, consultants, contractors - and eventually even the public - can access different "views" of the same information. The benefits are savings in time through efficiencies and better access to the right information.

Grant quotes a real 'before and after' example: "We got a phone call from a regulator saying they had had a complaint about a particular project. They wanted to check compliance with the consent conditions and gave us a consent number. By accessing CS-VUE it was easily determined that it was the wrong consent number. We gave them the right one and forwarded the compliance information associated with it. That happened in a matter of minutes instead of what would have been days with a paper-based system."

Continued overleaf...

► **Proactive approach to consent compliance saves ratepayers**

Stormwater projects manager Grant Ockleston says councils which take a proactive approach to consent compliance management will end up saving time, effort, and money satisfying Regional Council requirements.

► **“CS-VUE is a part of what is essentially an award-winning programme management system.”**

“We're setting the benchmark for this stuff and this software is very much a part of that benchmark. It adds incredible data management because we were talking about legal activities here - potentially illegal activities if you're not doing your job right.”

**Grant Ockleston, Project Manager - Stormwater  
Auckland City Council**

Before CS-VUE, Auckland City Council's Utility Planning division was “getting consents for things we didn't need to get consents for, and not getting consents we should have been getting.” Grant hired AA Environmental Ltd (now Andrew.Stewart Ltd) to advise the council's consultants what consents were required and to do a quality assurance check on applications to make sure they had the appropriate information. Andrew.Stewart was the key contact with the regulators, helping consents to be processed smoothly. It was through Andrew.Stewart's work in quality control that CS-VUE was born.

“Previously, if we wanted to know whether we were legally compliant on a consent, we literally had to go to the paper records and dig that information out. That digging was a very onerous exercise and not particularly transparent to those involved because they couldn't see what historical information was on a consent. With CS-VUE we can now instantly determine the state of compliance, and do things like ensure the draft conditions coming through from the regulator are consistent with previous ones, so there's no growth in complexity or inappropriate consent conditions.”

Grant proudly points to a 2004 Silver Award of Merit from the Association of Consulting Engineers for the Auckland City Stormwater Capital Works Programme as recognition for the CS-VUE system. “The association normally gives awards for bricks and mortar, this was recognition for a management approach instead. The project that beat it to the gold was the Britomart train station, which is the largest ever local government civil engineering construction job in the country.”

CS-VUE was co-developed by Andrew.Stewart Ltd, Environmental Consultancy and Resource Management specialists who also provide full outsourced resource consent compliance services: [www.andrewstewart.co.nz](http://www.andrewstewart.co.nz)

For further information about Auckland City Council visit: [www.aucklandcity.govt.nz](http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz)