

# Right people, right place, right time

The workforce is a complicated yet vital tool. Get its implementation wrong and you could lose that contract.

**T**hat the global aviation industry is a complex and dynamic operating environment few would deny. Despite air traffic volumes reportedly recovering, the pressure remains on operators and handlers to maintain, and even enlarge, their market share. However, with losses still predicted for the industry, the challenge remains of how to balance extremely tight operational margins against passenger expectations for competitive fares and excellent customer service. In order to meet these challenges, operators strive to generate efficiencies and cost controls where possible to provide the "wriggle factor" for increasing margin share.

Fleet and ground support equipment provide reasonably rigid cost overheads. Consequently, the flexible asset available to operators is the workforce, which typically forms some 50-60% of operational cost. Creating efficiencies with the workforce requires the consideration of many complex factors: contracts, working agreements, skilling and operational constraints. All of these have an impact on the design and planning of staff rosters.

## Help at hand

In the US, rosters are based on seniority. In other words, the more senior an employee is, the more choice he or she has for selecting

preferred rosters. Typically, rosters are created manually with the aid of Excel spreadsheets. Taking into consideration seniority, labour agreements, staff preferences, variable workload and skilling requirements becomes a very challenging exercise for any staff planner. This is why a solution, such as the Enterprise Workforce Scheduling product from Rostima, may help.

Such a system enables operators to quickly and intuitively explore the benefits of alternative rosters, based on variations in labour rules, different working contracts and multi-skilling. Taking all of these factors into consideration in manual roster planning is difficult and very time consuming, particularly as the workload requirements within an airport are constantly changing throughout the day and, indeed, across the week.

Rostima is a leading provider of Enterprise Workforce Management solutions for the aviation, maritime and global logistics industries. The company was formed by industry specialists from the aviation sector who had extensive experience in the planning and management of optimised labour schedules.

Here, the provider offers an easy-to-use and configurable end-to-end solution, which enables operators to optimise their labour schedules against the dynamic and varying

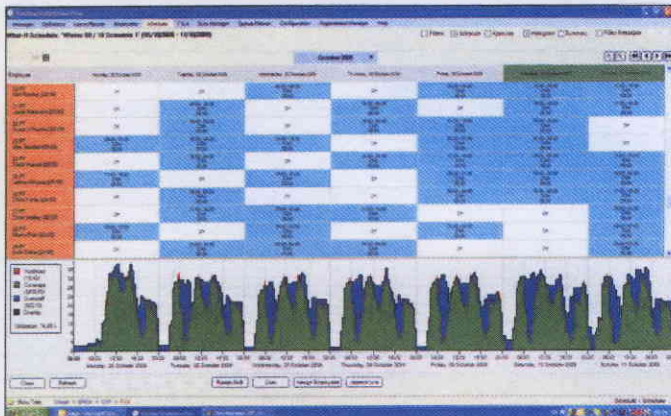
workload demands within an airport, thereby increasing operational efficiency, reducing labour costs, improving service levels and reinforcing staff retention.

The Rostima solution can quickly and accurately determine the level of required airport resources, from flight schedules and passenger loads. Its advanced modelling methodologies can replace the manual process and help staff planners to significantly reduce the time and effort taken in creating cost-efficient rosters that are compliant with contract or local working time agreements and yet ensure that the right people with the right skills are deployed at the right time.

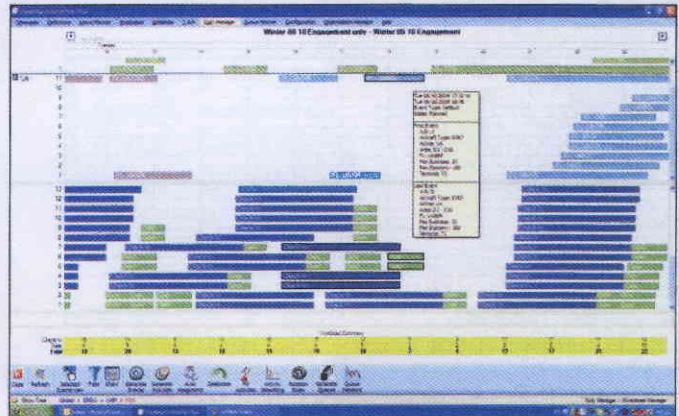
Rostima enables the planned rosters to be overlaid graphically against the variable workload demand to indicate the level of efficiency and service coverage being achieved. This is fundamental to the workforce planning process and is illustrated in Figure 1.

Furthermore, the workload can be generated automatically by combining the flight schedule with engagement (work) standards to automatically determine the requirement for labour, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Rostima's solution enables operators to explore the benefits of more flexible working rules. Typically, efficiency savings of between 2-5% can be achieved using Rostima's unique scheduling technology; savings as much as



Graphical overlay illustrates efficiency levels



Labour requirements can be automatically generated

10% can be realised with more flexible working arrangements.

Existing manual rostering methods typically achieve an effective utilisation of staff between 50-60%: in other words, for ten hours' paid work, a productive utilisation of between five and six hours. By using a workforce planning solution such as that supplied by Rostima, increases in utilisation could be between 10-15% against the variable workload.

With all such systems, the efficiency saving that can be introduced is directly related to the complexity of the workload and the level of flexibility in the Labour Agreements. This must always be taken into consideration.

### **A winning formula**

If one seeks an endorsement of the product, then the following may be of interest. The company recently announced that Abu Dhabi Airport Services, a subsidiary of Abu Dhabi Airports Company (the owner and operator of Abu Dhabi International airport), has deployed its complete end-to-end workforce management solution to provide a comprehensive Resource Planning and Time and Attendance solution for its operation at Abu Dhabi International. ADAS is the sole

ground handling company at Abu Dhabi International, the gateway to the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and capital of the UAE. A host of initiatives recently introduced are confirming the airport's image as a passenger-centric facility. That image will certainly be further consolidated as the new, state-of-the-art facilities under the ambitious US\$6.8m expansion programme come on line.

Following a detailed analysis of requirements, the Rostima workforce management solution was chosen because it offered the most flexibility and had the benefit of being configurable to meet the requirements of ADAS.

Enterprise Plus offers a complete end-to-end solution which can be integrated with other applications. The open and flexible technologies developed by Rostima are expected to increase operational efficiency, reduce labour costs and improve service levels and staff retention.

Rostima's capacity planning, scheduling and time and attendance software, using biometric readers, has been installed across the entire ADAS operation. This will enable the airport to achieve unprecedented business benefits through significant labour cost efficiencies and

improved customer service.

Steve Moore, Rostima's CEO, commented: "We are delighted that Abu Dhabi Airport Services has chosen Rostima. The integrated solution represents the most flexible and dynamic solution in the aviation industry, ideally suited to the demands for resource planning at Abu Dhabi International."