

# Keeping defect management afloat at Transport for NSW

## The Challenge

The Barangaroo Ferry Wharf project was the catalyst for change in how Transport for NSW (TfNSW) managed construction defects. It was time to end the Excel era, replacing bloated spreadsheets with a streamlined, cloud-based defect management tool.



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**Brenden Wakim,**  
Construction Manager at TfNSW

“Unconventional” is how Brenden Wakim, Construction Manager at TfNSW describes his typical construction projects. “Our Infrastructure and Services Division completes infrastructure projects around New South Wales,” he said. “Train station upgrades to improve accessibility are very common, as are new or upgraded ferry wharves and transport interchanges. But unlike typical construction projects, we are often working in a live environment: with moving trains, live electrical wires, and 10,000 commuters walking through our worksite every day. Often, we will have a 48-hour window to complete key infrastructure while trains are stopped on a scheduled weekend train shutdown. This means that construction is very pressured, bringing with it both design challenges and an increased need for prefabrication.”

## Defect management in Excel: Less than excellent

When Brenden started at TfNSW, Microsoft Excel was the tool used to manage construction defects. He describes the process of closing out defects on the \$300m Wynyard Walk project. “This was a high-end project, covering a large area. As you can imagine on such a large project there was a high volume of defects that needed to be managed and I was given an enormous A3 Excel spreadsheet to work through.

“But Excel doesn’t work well on site. It’s tedious to take photos and notes, then go back to the office, download photos, retitle them and add them into Excel. You end up with a huge document that’s easily jumbled and hard to filter. More importantly, it’s hard to share with colleagues and contractors, which is the whole point of managing defects. At a site level, it causes confusion, and you end up with staff wandering around trying to find a particular defect. Overall, it’s a tremendous waste of time and resources, and I was determined to find a better way.”

## Barangaroo Ferry Wharf: Leading the charge for change

The Barangaroo Ferry Wharf was a \$50m project to build two new ferry wharves to improve services to and from Sydney’s CBD. It was the largest project of its type in 60 years, and provided the impetus for Brenden to overhaul defect management.

“I reviewed four different defect management tools and chose ACCEDE because it was easy to use and cloud-based which meant I could install and use it without additional IT processes involved,” he said. “Their free trial was also an attractive way to test it out.”



# Flexibility to work the way you do

## Getting real results

The ability to easily share defect information was a major benefit for TfNSW. “We used ACCEDE’s dashboards to keep track of rectification and share information with management,” Brenden explained. “We have an unusual situation in that there are three parties: us to manage construction, the principal contractor undertaking the work, and the end user, such as Harbour City Ferries and Roads and Maritime Services. Previously the end user had little visibility of the defect process, but with ACCEDE we can improve communication and the overall relationship.”

It’s right at the tail end of the project that ACCEDE comes into its own. This is when a project is down to a handful of difficult-to-resolve defects. But it’s also a time when project personnel move on to the next challenge and someone new is left to deal with defects. “It used to be very difficult to hand over defect management with an unwieldy and imprecise spreadsheet,” Brenden said. “It didn’t provide enough history of who did what, and when. But ACCEDE has a date stamp in all the comments, so it’s easy to get a full history very quickly. It’s invaluable in resolving difficult defects.”

Brenden is confident of gaining a rapid return on investment in ACCEDE. “There is an upfront cost, but if you take into account the time spent generating defects and closing them out, it doesn’t take long to pay for itself. There are additional benefits in raising the quality of completed jobs making the whole defect management process more professional. We are looking to roll out ACCEDE in future projects.”

## Defect detection in action

TfNSW worked closely with the principal construction contractor McConnell Dowell to manage defects with ACCEDE software. “We used an iPad to walk through the site each day with the contractor and log defects,” Brenden said. “It was easy to take a photo and write commentary to identify the defect’s location. This streamlined the whole process, slashing at least half the time to log defects. It also increased the number of defects logged which in turn helped to improve the quality of the finished product.”

Ease of use is particularly important in construction software. “We can’t assume that our users will be IT-proficient, but our team has been able to pick up ACCEDE really easily because it’s simple and intuitive. Some other systems have more bells and whistles, but this is effective due to its simplicity. I’ve also found that ACCEDE’s service and support has been excellent, including implementing new features.”



Easy to customise and use



Configure to suit your project structure



Collaborate with all stakeholders



Financially flexible



Give us a call and an ACCEDE expert will answer all your questions.

Find out if ACCEDE is right for your business and how the free trial works.

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