



Transforming the Supply Chain

The Challenge

Iarnród Eireann is the national rail operator of Ireland; operating all internal intercity, commuter and freight rail services in the Republic of Ireland and cross border trains. Iarnród Eireann approached Unipart Expert Practices to support the improvement agenda for their Supply Chain operational activities including the main warehouse, five depot stores, inventory management and procurement.

Following a full diagnostic of their supply chain operations and using Unipart's expertise, a programme was developed to work with Iarnród Eireann employees to deliver improvements across the Supply Chain and develop their own Lean internal capability.

The Solution

Our proven methodology commenced with key members of Iarnród Eireann attending a one week Lean Academy; training that teaches key Lean tools and techniques and provides an opportunity to practice them. Our standard methodology to Lean transformation was used to:

- Understand the current ways of working and identify opportunities for improving the processes through a detailed diagnostic
- Develop standard and transparent processes across the central stores and depot stores; key to building the foundation for continuous improvement
- Implement visual management to monitor key measures, capture trends within performance and take corrective action
- Develop a standard solution at one depot stores which was then rolled out to the other maintenance depot stores
- Reorganised roles and responsibilities across the Supply Chain team
- Implementation of inventory management system

“The project was extremely successful. We now have a Stores Control/Visualisation room where work can be planned/ allocated in a structured manner, trends are recorded to look for abnormalities, workplace problems identified and solved in a standardised way. Most importantly the people involved really engaged and this was largely down to Unipart’s approach and coaching skills.”

Alan O’Connell, Engineering Stores and Distribution Manager



The Result

The recommendations to transform the supply chain were implemented delivering:

- Improvements in material availability from 85% to 97% and stock accuracy improved from 78% to 98%. These combined with an 18% improvement of material supplied to the point of use delivered significant improvement in service and benefits to the maintenance teams
- Reorganised roles and responsibilities to improve vendor management, capture and action depot stores issues and improve supply chain communication
- Implemented a proven inventory management system that provides detailed forecasts and systematic reviews of stock profiles to manage inventory across all sites
- Lean capability across the Supply Chain

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