# DART Labor Tracking Case Study Using AZURANT's Eclarix

For over 25 years, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has provided Northwest Texas with public transit services. With over 700 square miles of service area, DART provides Dallas and 12 surrounding cities with a mix of bus, light rail, paratransit, commuter rail, high-occupancy vehicle lane, and vanpool services. The DART network of over 1,600 vehicles, 232 track miles of railroad right of way, 63.5 million square feet of facilities and 84 miles of HOV lanes serves more than 365,000 customers daily.
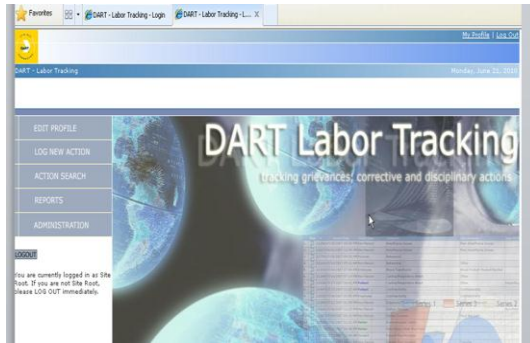
And DART plans to continue to grow, almost doubling the network of mass transportation services within the region over the next twenty years. DART currently employs over 3,500 team members and has an FY10 annual budget in excess of $1.42 billion.

The Challenge

Since 1983 when DART began providing transit services to the Dallas area, the agency has continuously grown, adding lines, vehicles and staff to their organization. In recent years, DART managers have realized an increasing need for improvements in the way they track, communicate and manage labor issues throughout the organization, as well as, ensure consistency and continuity in the application of discipline and resolution of grievances.

As their workforce has grown, so has the need to maintain comprehensive data on employee performance and conduct, including the results of any incentive programs or disciplinary actions. Unacceptable employee conduct such as safety violations, substance abuse, or any other form of misconduct cannot be tolerated if DART is to maintain a safe and productive work environment. Management recognized the need for a comprehensive system to ensure DART addresses all of these issues thoroughly and effectively.

> **"DART selected Azurant because the custom implementation provided the best possible match for our needs. We have been very pleased by the amount of information made available to our management team throughout the organization with the use of this system. We clearly see how this system will, in the very near future, provide us the information necessary to enhance employee performance, improve employee perceptions, monitor consistency of disciplinary actions, and improve the quality of our dispute resolution process."**
>
> – *Benjamin Gomez*
>
> – *DART Executive Vice President, Administration*

The Solution

DART executives and managers agreed on the value of a more automated approach to managing these issues. Azurant proposed a custom tracking system designed to enable everyone at DART easy access to the information and tools needed to ensure smooth handling of labor issues and the ability to communicate those issues across departmental boundaries. The system provides information at both the detailed individual action level and at a system level producing reports that can sort for similarities, differences, and trending of action and disputes.

A key feature of the system is the ability to easily search previous arbitration decisions, as well as corrective and disciplinary actions. This helps DART maintain consistency in their management responses to similar violations. In addition, DART can now recognize and address trends or patterns in policy violations. For example, if a particular section of DART's Hourly Employment Manual is generating a disproportionate number of grievances, this could indicate the need to revise or clarify the language in that policy communication.

The Implementation

In conjunction with the client, Azurant developed custom fields for data input to make it easy for all users to add the right information to the system and for many; the system extracts data from other existing enterprise wide systems for self-population of data fields. A status and deadline tracking component has all the common timelines that are specific to DART labor policies. These deadlines are tracked and reminders of upcoming deadlines are sent so these deadlines are no longer missed or overlooked. The basic system is ultimately customized to follow the flow of business at DART and to leverage the indexing of electronically stored documents which already exist within the client's electronic records management/storage system. This makes it significantly easier to retrieve documents related to any one particular action.

Users of the system needed an intuitive and logical setup that anticipated their needs and was easy to learn, and Azurant worked hard to ensure that goal was met every step of the way. Users appreciate that it follows DART's own policy logic and timelines, and that it interfaces with Filenet, Lawson and Trapeze. The Filenet interface allows users to see all the documents associated with a particular action, and the Lawson/Trapeze interfaces ensure that DART's users aren't required to do double entry.

Users also have access to narrative comments that capture when and why a disciplinary decision differs from historical corrective actions taken for a similar offense, and the system helps users identify if an employee has multiple infractions for the same incident.

The Results

DART Labor Tracking has dramatically improved the communication process so the organization can make decisions and take action with more efficiency than ever before. The user defined search templates allow research and analysis to be done by any of the users in a format that is responsive to the query and addresses the varying needs of the different departments. They can store disciplinary letter templates and generate individual letters from these templates predicated on the infraction and what disciplinary action will be taken. All records can be easily searched or sorted by data fields such as offense, action taken, grievance step level, favorable trial board decision, by arbitrator. These features streamline the workload of DART managers, saving time and preventing costly mistakes.

Future Developments

The system was designed with adaptability in mind. Recognizing that business needs evolve, the system can adapt to those changes. Client policies, rules, and practices can be added, deleted and modified by system administrators with basic IT skills resident within the business. Report and search templates can be prepared and then shared amongst multiple users. The built-in audit trail provides DART with the capability to continuously review and improve their processes. Azurant is standing by DART as they implement this new technology, and is prepared to step in and provide enhancements or expanded capabilities as the needs of the organization shift and change over time.