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*"We recently completed two external ISM code audits. Both auditors independently praised our use of M-Files in regard to documentation control and to the fact that our quality manuals were the most up-to-date."*

**-Andrew Daily**  
Managing Director,  
Inco Ships

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## Success Story

# Sharing Electronic Documents Oceans Away

## Shipping fleet receives instant updated protocols via M-Files document management

Sydney-based Inco Ships offers manufacturers and distributors a way to outsource the entirety of their maritime shipping operations. Inco runs a fleet of 15 cargo carriers complete with all the crew, supplies, and technical expertise for a safe transoceanic crossing.

Safety and quality are top priorities when handling other people's cargo, so Inco managers review and revise the ships' procedures and checklists four times a year. The difficulty came with communication of these changes with the crews.

"We used to print out updates of loose-leaf manuals each quarter and post them out to each of the ships," explains Andrew Dally, Managing Director. "We expected personnel on the vessel would take the old pages out and replace them with the revised ones, but that wasn't always done correctly."

### Getting all vessels on the same page

Dally looked for an electronic document solution to help both management the continual review cycles and the distribution of the updated protocols.

He came across the easy-to-use file management software M-Files through an Internet search. The software package establishes a central repository for all company documents that employees can securely access from any PC. M-Files typically solves file access problems for companies split between branch offices. In Inco's case, its branch offices are floating all over the Pacific.

"Now the process to produce the crew's quality assurance and safety manuals is totally electronic," Dally says. "Once the manuals are published, they are automatically accessible to each of our vessels via Finline or by satellite."

### Shortening cycles of collaborative review

While the electronic document management system ensures seafarers are always consulting the right version of guidelines, back in Sydney the workflow features in M-Files smooth out the quarterly verification process. Managers can now easily see which items have been through review, and which still await approval.



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*“The efficiencies gained by M-Files frees up more time for managers. This gives us a chance to actually make improvements in the process, rather than just working through another manual review.”*

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Since its adoption for safety and QA documents, managers have found additional uses for the software, such as centralizing personnel records, crew contracts, and payroll. Crew leaders at sea now have immediate access to the latest updates in human resource information.

**About Inco Ships Pty Ltd**

Inco Ships is an Australian-owned-and-operated company based in Sydney, specializing in all aspects of ship management. Inco Ships provides any combination of crew, technical, safety services, or command the full operational or commercial functions of a variety of maritime missions. For more information, please visit: [www.incoships.com.au](http://www.incoships.com.au). ■