

Project Manager

T O D A Y

MARCH 2008

ISSN 1366-6851

Energy Matters | Education focus | Project User Plus supplement

www.theprojectsgroup.com

TPG
THE PROJECTS GROUP

Powering project management

EDF Energy has introduced a new, project management framework that encompasses every area of the company, including engineering projects, where activity-based project management was already firmly embedded. The objective has been to provide a step change, not only to help the company choose the right projects for the business, but also to improve change and benefits management.

Ken Lane talked to **Dolores Wolfe** and **Barry Hatton** about the EDF Energy Project Way (EEPW) to see how it is affecting the way that programmes and projects are delivered in a company that has 7.8 million customers.



Dolores Wolfe



Barry Hatton

EDF Energy has responsibility for providing the energy that will power the 2012 Olympics, and its project framework, aimed at doing the 'right projects, in the right way, with the right skills', will help underpin their contribution.

However, the EDF Energy Project Way (EEPW) was inspired, not by Olympic ambitions, but from a need to get a better way of supporting the vast range of projects undertaken by a group that provides power to a quarter of the UK's population, and is a key player in managing private electrical networks.

As the first Eurostar passengers left St Pancras on the new high-speed link to the Channel Tunnel last year, it was EDF Energy that helped slice the journey time between London and Paris.

Engineering projects are meat and drink to EDF Energy, so what could this part of the business gain from a review of project management processes? After all, these are the projects that have been activity-driven, with strong plans and processes, and constrained by contractual relationships. Barry Hatton, director, Capital Programme, EDF Energy Networks, has the answer in just three words: 'a common language'.

He explains that, as a result of introducing the EDF Energy Project Way, everyone in the organisation now understands, for example, that a Gate A review concerns the project mandate. This is true even if the project resides in a very different part of the business: it will mean the same thing in an IT, or business change project, as it would in an engineering project.

A common purpose

The EDF Energy Project Way has also provided a means of integrating working practices across the business. The current Networks Branch organisation, for instance, encompasses three former electricity boards that not only had their own cultures and working practices for engineering projects, but also dealt with projects of very different scales.