

Brammer's handy service reduces worker injuries

The challenge

Based in Llantrisant in South Wales, the Royal Mint is one of the world's leading independent mints, manufacturing coins for the UK and countries all over the world, as well as supplying blanks and official medals. Employing more than 900 people, it can produce 90 million coins and blanks a week – almost five billion coins annually.

It was estimated that the organisation were using 34,000 pairs of gloves in one year. With an annual spend of £70,000, there were 33 varieties of gloves being used on site from several manufactures.

The range of products available did not necessarily mean that the most suitable gloves were being used for each task; gloves were frequently being selected on the basis of familiarity rather than suitability. In year 1 (2013) the knock-on effect of this was a high cost of accidents relating to insufficient or inadequate hand protection – more than half of all accidents at Llantrisant were hand- or finger-related, as a result of not using gloves at all, using the wrong type of glove, or wearing a product of the incorrect size. The cost per accident resulting in a claim was in the region of £10,000 – to say nothing of the legal costs of investigation relating to each one.

The Royal Mint management team tasked Brammer, a long-standing partner in the area of maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) products, to come up with a solution.

The Solution

Brammer joined forces with Ansell, one of the UK's premier supplier of working gloves, to undertake a thorough review of all areas of glove usage at the Llantrisant facility. Every process across the four main production units was scientifically analysed, with Ansell assessing which glove product from its range would ideally be most suitable. Chemical analysis was undertaken to confirm the selection was correct, with the chosen glove then extensively trialled in the working area and feedback from users gleaned before a final selection was made.

It was found that 85% of work requirements could be achieved by using six types of gloves rather than having 33 variations. Narrowing down the products meant that a new system needed to be put in the place to ensure all workers had a regular supply of the correct gloves and to do this Brammer's Invend™ service, an industrial vending machine system, was installed. The machines operate free of charge and Brammer keep track of the glove usage and replenish products when needed. To access the items, each member of staff inputs a code and the Royal

Mint only pay for products that have been taken. The Invend service has improved the monitoring system allowing for an easier process when auditing the units. Additional support and training is given to members of staff unsure about how to select their gloves.

The Results

The new gloves delivered enhanced performance and longevity – in the hot end section of the MRB (milling, rolling and blanking) process, for example, the new Ansell Workguard 43-216 product lasted four times as long as the products previously being used, with similar stories through the Royal Mint's operations.

Gloves were now also distributed through Brammer's Invend™ service, an industrial vending system which uniquely removes the need for significant upfront capital investment in vending equipment by customers. Brammer supplies the machines free of charge and tracks usage automatically, replenishing products as needed, with the Royal Mint only paying for the items as they are used. The machines in each area – four banks of two – each contained only the gloves required in that area and with each member of staff having to enter a code before an item was distributed, it was easy to see which gloves had been taken, when and by whom. This ensured complete traceability round the clock while identifying any areas of excessive use or incorrect product selection, with additional staff training able to be provided if needed.

Best practice in glove selection and usage is now commonplace throughout the organisation.

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