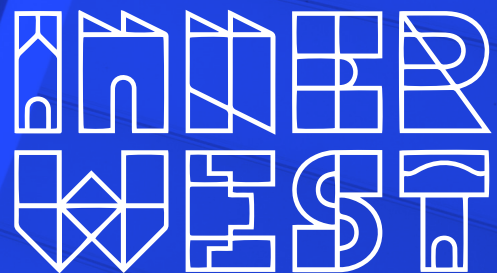# Case Study

Inner West Council finds huge efficiencies, safety and compliance benefits with eftsure

SUMMARY:

- Inner West Council processes over 200 invoices per day

- It was looking for a better way of working and looked to new technology

- Previous to eftsure Inner West Council had five full time members of staff checking payment details

- Compliance benefits have also been huge

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Pav Kuzmanovski
Group Manager of Finance
Inner West Council

Inner West Council is a new local council covering the Inner West suburbs of Sydney. It was formed in 2016 by the merging of the former Leichhardt, Ashfield and Marrickville councils. Inner West Council covers an area of around 35 square kilometres and has a population of nearly 200,000 people.

With such a large population from diverse backgrounds, the council provides a huge range of services to its citizens. The Inner West Council finance department process over **200 invoices per day.**

Pav Kuzmanovski, Group Manager of Finance at Inner West Council was introduced to eftsure through the organisation's external auditor, PwC. "Like every finance department we are always looking for better and more efficient way of working. We're very proactive in implementing new technologies to assist us and we were very impressed with the concept of eftsure".

"We decided to implement it and it has been very helpful in maintaining a level of safety when making payments, and knowing where those payments are going. Also, in saving time and effort in checking payments and lastly it has assisted us in the auditing and compliance requirements we must go through.

"There was a high risk of amalgamations and fraudulent payments and eftsure has assisted us in mitigating this."

Banks don't match BSB and account numbers with account names when processing payments and council finance departments, like many organisations, use account names to track who has been paid and who hasn't; this creates a black hole where fraudsters and cyber criminals can take advantage of an incomplete banking system. This happens where a fraudster, internally or externally, changes the bank details of a supplier to their own on. Money is then directed to the wrong bank account and the organisation that has been stung is none-the-wiser.

Another key security attack is **Business Email Compromise**, this is where a fraudster will pretend to be a senior member of an organisation via email, and request that a payment is made to a supplier, but in fact providing the incorrect BSB and account number so money is sent to the wrong account.

Like all organisations, local councils are being targeted by fraudsters. "We heard of a certain council who had recently experienced a fraud case and we are similar to them in terms of size and volume of payments. We need to protect ourselves from fraud and sure is a very good way of doing this."

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> **Councils have a higher level of compliance – there are specific checks we must do at the end of each financial year and eftsure assists us with this.**
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> **"**

With Inner West Council being formed by merging of three councils, there was naturally a high number of errors and repetitions when the **Vendor Master Files** were combined. Through its process of cleansing and checking the file, these errors were removed.

"We needed to make sure that we were paying the right people and not paying anyone twice", Mr Kuzmanovski added.

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As well as checking that payments are going to the correct bank account before they are made, eftsure also has the capacity to check the GST and ABN status of a supplier, something that is very important to councils, given the level of auditing and compliance they must adhere to.

Mr Kuzmanovski adds, "One of the most convincing factors for us during the exploration of eftsure and subsequently fully using the solution was its user experience. The eftsure team took us through some high-level presentations outlining how the solution helps councils. eftsure fitted perfectly within our existing system and the eftsure team assisted us in making that happen. It was a very fluid transition.

"It's very simple and that is one of its key strengths."

Ian Mirels, Co-founder & CEO of eftsure and an ex-CFO himself added, "eftsure's new supplier onboarding functionality allows companies and quickly, easily and accurately onboard suppliers where we check their details before they are added into the system. It saves a huge amount of time and ensures the correct information is there from the start."

Mr Kuzmanovski concluded, "Previous to eftsure we had five full time staff checking each payment bank account details against the ledger and it wasn't even a full validation process. The banking validation that eftsure provides has saved us a huge amount of time and effort. The efficiencies you get are fantastic.

"The other thing I would say to any organisation who is considering eftsure is the compliance benefits can also not be underestimated. eftsure provides you with a direct trail of where your money has gone and the status of who it went to at the time of payment."

"We're very happy with it and I would encourage any other council to give it a go."

For more information on eftsure or to book a demo, please visit www.eftsure.com.au or call 1300 985 976.