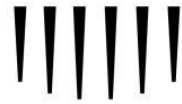




COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES



COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION IN RESPECT OF THE REPLACEMENT OF THE COMMISSION'S CASUALTY DATABASE

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Background

The purpose of this Request for Information is seeking to understand what solutions are available in the market, whether they meet our requirements and the potential costs attributed to replacing our current systems that hold and/or use casualty data.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission ("CWGC") holds data for the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two world wars and the 23,000 locations that they are commemorated at.

The Commission's teams currently use several solutions to store, maintain and use casualty data. Our current problem is that a lack of development has led to increased workarounds and data copies / multiple data entry having to be carried out in multiple systems, which in turn has led to inefficiencies and user frustration.

For historic reasons, many of these solutions are siloed and tactical to meet a specific purpose. However, going forward this presents an opportunity to put the Commission's IT offerings on a firm strategic footing that will reduce future management overhead, costs and spend, whilst increasing server/service availability, resilience, performance, functionality, and efficiency.

As part of our definitions of success as an organisation, within the next five years we should be known as much as a digital organisation as a physical one. Our digital offer should be known as one of the best in the field. Our Casualty data will underpin this work so that we can deliver this milestone in the next five years.

Systems Details

The casualty data is stored within three systems in-house at the Commission. The main system holding this information is a database, known internally as the Casualty Database (CDB). It holds the master data for the Commission for each individual casualty, the specific grave or memorial where they are commemorated, and information on each of the sites where they are located. This environment is currently maintained on four servers in-house: two for production and two for testing. The CDB has a web GUI that is accessible via a Chromium Edge browser using Internet Explorer (IE) mode, which is used by services that still need Internet Explorer 11 for backward compatibility with legacy applications. It is hosted on a Windows Server 2012 R2 front-end, with a SQL Server 2019 database on a Windows Server 2019 back-end. The CDB GUI is used internally by teams updating, amending and adding data as well as searching for individuals or groups. A sub-set of this data is accessible via our public website (<https://www.cwgc.org/>) and our CWGC app. The Commission uses APIs to connect to other internal systems, such as Power BI and Microsoft CRM that use this data.

The second system used is HP TRIM EDRMS (a.k.a. HP Records Manager, HP Content Manager, and is a forerunner to its latest iteration Micro Focus Content Manager) that holds information, documents and images that cannot be included in the CDB and 'plugs the gap' between our data and source material on casualties. Our internal teams use the CDB and TRIM to perform their day-to-day work and manually replicate changes where needed between the two systems. The names of the TRIM image files are in the relevant casualty record on the CDB. The website matches the file names per casualty with the relevant image in the website repository and presents them on the public site.

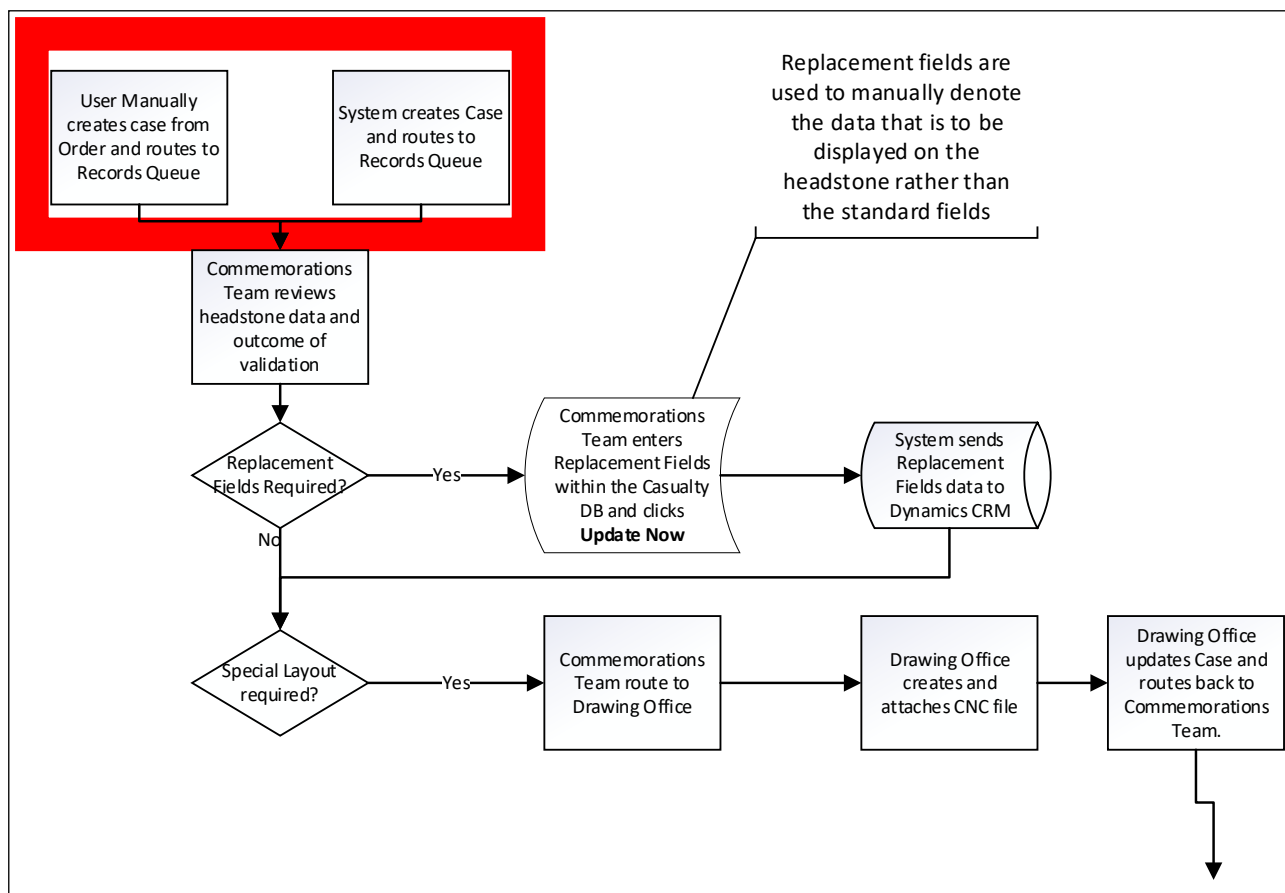
In addition to the basic casualty data and images, TRIM also has additional fields which may be populated: for example, the location from which the casualty came, or a battalion number (mainly aspects which do not appear on a headstone).

TRIM does have sophisticated searching when compared with that available via the CDB's GUI but only a small number of staff are given access due to its complexity

This environment is also maintained on four servers in house: the web front-end is on Windows Server 2012 R2, there is a client server running Windows Server 2012 R2, a SQL Server 2012 SP4 database hosted on Windows Server 2012 R2, and the storage server is hosted on Windows Server 2016.

Both the CDB and TRIM are business critical as they contain the Commission's master casualty data, on which contractual, operational and public facing work strands depend.

The final system is Microsoft Dynamics CRM 2011, and this too is maintained on four servers in-house: two for production and two for testing. Both production and test front-ends are hosted on Windows Server 2008, and the corresponding back-ends are SQL server database 2014 SP3 on Windows 2012 R2 servers. This environment is used as part of the process to order headstones for casualties. Data is pushed unidirectionally from the CDB to CRM when the Commemorations Team enters replacement/updated fields within the CDB, with the casualty data being used to provide the details to be engraved on the headstones. CRM then produces files for our headstone production unit (HPU). When CRM was purchased over 40,000 headstones were being ordered annually, although this has now dropped to around 1500. This business process interaction between the CDB and CRM is shown here:

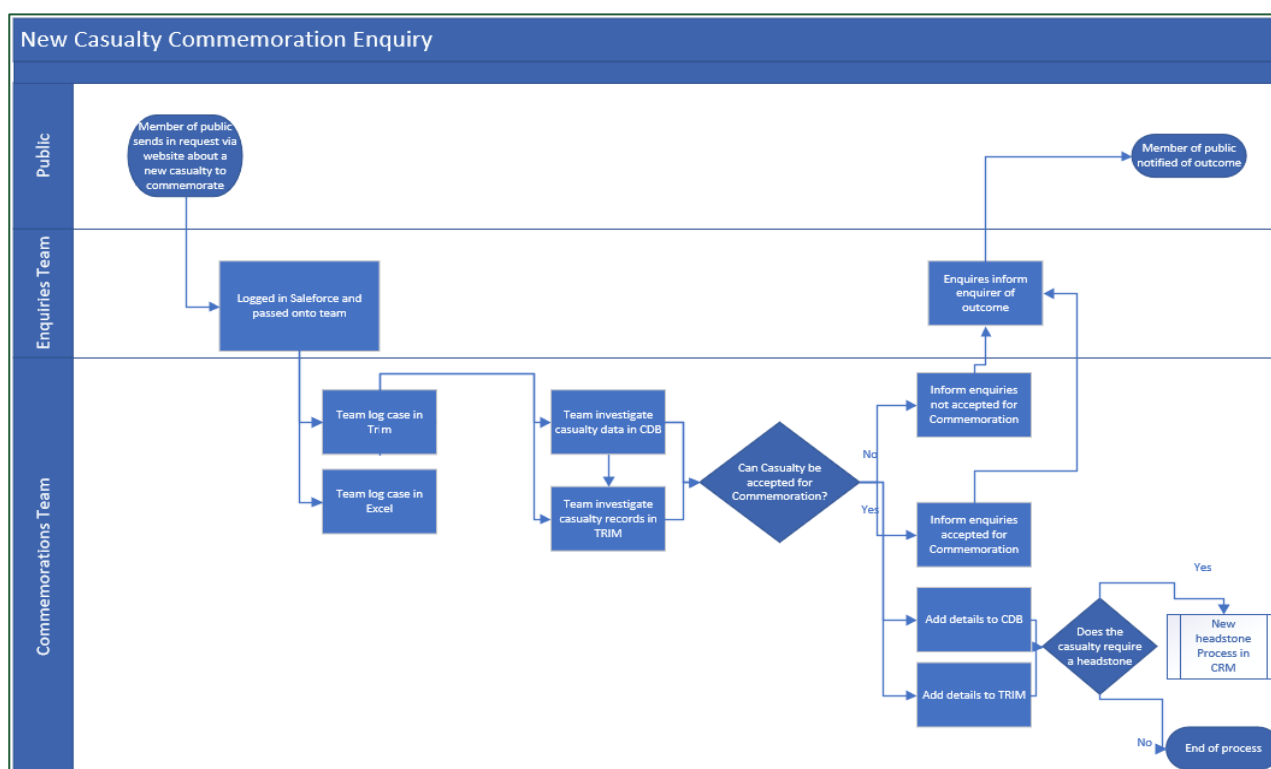


Major Challenges

The GUI front-end of the CDB, used by most of our key internal users, has not evolved since it was created approximately ten years ago. Data fields are insufficient and search functionality is limited to a small number of the fields of data we hold, is inflexible and no longer meets the requirements of end users. The system only performs three basic searches: for a casualty, a cemetery, or a grave (see screen shots in Appendix 1 below). There is no functionality for flexible/fuzzy searching, despite having a lot of reference data in the system. There is information in the database that teams cannot access from the front-end even with full admin access. Search functionality such as searching for those casualties aged over 65 in a cemetery must be completed externally by downloading the casualties at a given cemetery into a spreadsheet and then searching and filtering the data. Viewable search results are limited to a maximum of 1000 records; the only option for larger searches is to download the data.

Consequently, there is an ever-increasing number of requests coming to our database administrator to bypass the functional limitations of the front-end user interface. Furthermore, as the general public increasingly desire access to ever more information, these functional limitations of the CDB make it difficult for data to be presented or general enquiries to be responded to quickly.

An example of the inefficiencies of this current three system configuration is exemplified in the following schematic. The same information is entered into multiple systems, which can lead to errors or unexpected results when searching them individually for the same data, and an increased risk of data inconsistencies due to a lack of data reconciliation.



We have attached the database diagram of the current set up of the CDB as a separate file entitled *Appendix 2 – Database Diagram*, to give an idea of the data we currently hold, and how the database is logically structured. The tables containing Casualties and Cemeteries are our core pieces of data. We then have several supplemental and reference data tables such as regiments, ranks and casualty types.

Objectives

The objectives of moving to a new solution are:

- Consolidate and streamline processes, removing the need for duplication of data in systems.
- Improve our user experience with the solution, including better search functionality and responsiveness.
- Reduce the risk of having unsupported solutions.
- Integration between our solutions.
- Move to a cloud-based environment where possible.
- More agile systems that allows us to add more information in the future to both the front and backends.

Information Requested

CWGC is looking for a supplier who has experience of supporting mission critical environments in a global organisation to provide a recommendation on the way forward to overcome the issues outlined above and secure the platform(s) for the future.

Our current preferred option would be to streamline these systems, either replacing all or replacing parts of the solution, however we are open to any suggestions.

As described above, our main issues at the moment are with the front-ends of the systems being inflexible, their inability to reference or present information stored in the database and the necessity for our end users to have duplicate data due to the current set up inefficiencies.

We would welcome options on the potential future for these solutions from your knowledge and experience based on our high-level objectives.

Questions

1. From your experience, describe at a high level what solutions could be provided to solve the limitations we have at the moment and deliver our objectives?
2. How could the solution work, and could you provide case studies of how the proposed solution was implemented and utilised?
3. Are there any COTS solutions designed for this problem, making it ready for use as-is? If not, what level of adaptation will be required?
4. How and where is the platform for the potential solution(s) hosted?
5. Based on your experience, what is likely to be the indicative cost of a proposed solution (include initial implementation and ongoing monthly costs where appropriate)?
6. Please provide any other information you deem relevant to this RFI or that makes your product / offering stand out from competitors.

Responses

Suppliers are invited to respond to this RFI by answering the questions above using the attached response document and returning it via our InTend platform,

<https://in-tendhost.co.uk/cwgc.aspx/Home>

The responses and indicative costing that we receive will allow us to develop a future procurement strategy. When submitting your information **Please do not send general sales materials.**

How to Submit your Response

Prior to submitting your response, you must first register with the portal. Registration is FREE

A guide on how to register can be found here:

[Commonwealth War Graves Commission Electronic Tendering Site - Buyer Profiles \(in-tendhost.co.uk\)](http://Commonwealth War Graves Commission Electronic Tendering Site - Buyer Profiles (in-tendhost.co.uk))

When registering, please complete as much information as possible. The Business Classification used for this RFI is *"7750 – Software IT - Software Licenses & Maintenance"*

Please note: When entering a contact email address for both the Primary and Additional Users, you are advised to add a generic address which can be readily accessed by more than one person i.e., "tenders@xyz.com", rather than a personal address such as "RKipling@xyz.com". This way you will still be able to access any communications sent by us via the portal if an individual is unavailable through leave or sickness, for example.

Once registered you will be able to submit your response against the relevant project.

Clarifications and Questions

Any clarification questions should also be sent via the CWGC Tender Portal using the "Correspondence" Function

Clarifications will be answered as soon as practically possible. To ensure that responders have sufficient time to take account of any answers given, please note that the deadline for submission of questions is **17:00 Hrs on 17th November.**

CWGC may wish to invite respondents of this RFI to one-to-one sessions to discuss further details via virtual '*Meet the Buyer*' sessions. These are currently planned for the 29th and 30th November 2021. Details will be sent via the InTend portal.

Deadline

Please submit your responses via the [CWGC Tender Portal](#), no later than **12:00 noon on 25th November** please.

Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this or any other contract from CWGC will disqualify your response from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence.

All information supplied by CWGC must be treated in confidence and not disclosed to third parties except insofar as this is necessary for the purposes of submitting your response. All information supplied by you to CWGC will similarly be treated in confidence except for the disclosure of such information regarding the outcome of the procurement process.

Appendix 1

CDB Front End Examples

Casualty Search

Casualty Search

https://casualtydb-cwgcorg.msappproxy.net/Casualties/Search

Sign in

Casualty Database

v1.23.0.0 (Live)

Welcome Mel.Donnelly! | Log Off |

Casualty Search

Cemetery Search

Grave Search

User Search

Enquiry Search

Create Enquiry

Reference Data

Maintain

Paragraphs

Reports

Help

Personal Details

Casualty Status: All

Surname: Smith

War: First World War

Cause of Death:

Casualty Id:

Further Information (Unidentified):

Initials:

Date of Death From:

Special Interest:

Date of Death To:

Additional Information:

Casualty Type: All

Award: Any or None

Service Details

Service Number:

Unit:

Rank:

Nationality: Australian

Secondary Regiment:

Force: All

Regiment:

Secondary Unit:

Cemetery Details

Cemetery:

Cemetery Type: All

Country: France

Grave Reference:

Locality:

Commemoration Type:

TRIM Details

TRIM Id:

Record Number:

Show Report Options

Search

New Search

Print/Export

Back

Report

Bulk Amend

Show

100

Casualty Search selected result

Casualty Details

https://casualtydb-cwgcorg.msappproxy.net/Casualties/Details/299703#

Sign in

Hide Personal Details

Unidentified

Surname: SMITH

War: First World War

Cause Of Death: Killed in action

Further Information:

Special Interests:

Citation Text:

Awards:

Initials: A C E

Date Of Death From: 18/09/1918

Date Of Birth:

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Other Notes:

Further Information (Unidentified):

Casualty Id: 299703

Forenames: ALBERT CHARLES EDWARD

Date Of Death To:

Age: 23

EFile:

Additional Information: Son of W. H. and L. Smith, of Nicholls Rivulet, Tasmania.

NB

Hide Service Details

Service Number: 12407

Unit: 4th Bde.

Regiment: Australian Field Artillery

Child Regiment:

Force: Army

Secondary Unit:

Secondary Regiment:

Nationality: Australian

Rank: Gunner

Trade:

Hide Cemetery Details

Cemetery / Memorial: BOISEL COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION

Grave Reference: III D 3

Prefix:

Suffix:

Country: France

Section:

Plot: 3

Row: D

Locality: Somme

Grave: 0003

GPS Location:

Commemoration Type:

Hide Headstone Details

Headstone Text:

Line 1:

Line 2:

Line 3:

Line 4:

Line 5:

Line 6:

Line 7:

Line 8:

Personal Inscription:

Line 1: LORD HAVE MERCY UPON HIM

Line 2: AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT

Line 3: SHINE UPON HIM

Line 4:

Line 5:

Line 6:

Line 7:

Line 8:

Line 9:

Line 10:

Line 11:

Line 12:

Terminal Marker Position:

Include Headstone details in print?

Casualty Name: A. C. E. SMITH

Age prefix: Age

Superscription Line 1:

Superscription Line 2:

Code Line: 1200/L/D

Religious Symbol: Latin Cross

Non-Standard Layout:

Badge: Australian Field Artillery - R/1200

Headstone Text: AUG. FIELD ARTILLERY

Domimon:

Headstone override:

Terminal Marker:

Terminal Marker Angle:

Show TRIM Details

Print/Export

Create Enquiry

Amend

Delete

View Audit Log

Back

Cemetery Search

The screenshot shows the 'Cemetery Search' page of the 'Casualty Database' (v1.23.0.0 [Live]). The page has a blue header with the title and version, and a navigation bar with links: Casualty Search, Cemetery Search (highlighted), Grave Search, User Search, Enquiry Search, Create Enquiry, Reference Data, Maintain Paragraphs, Reports, and Help. A welcome message for 'Mel.Donnelly!' with a 'Log Off' link is in the top right. Below the header is a search form with fields for 'Cemetery', 'Country', 'Cemetery Type' (a dropdown menu set to 'All'), and 'Locality'. To the right of these fields are buttons for 'Search', 'New Search', 'Print/Export', and 'Back'. Below these buttons is a button for 'Add New Cemetery'.

Grave Search

The screenshot shows the 'Grave Search' page of the 'Casualty Database' (v1.23.0.0 [Live]). The page has a blue header with the title and version, and a navigation bar with links: Casualty Search, Cemetery Search, Grave Search (highlighted), User Search, Enquiry Search, Create Enquiry, Reference Data, Maintain Paragraphs, Reports, and Help. A welcome message for 'Mel.Donnelly!' with a 'Log Off' link is in the top right. Below the header is a search form with fields for 'Cemetery', 'Country', 'Cemetery Type' (a dropdown menu set to 'All'), and 'Locality'. To the right of these fields are buttons for 'Search', 'New Search', 'Print/Export', and 'Back'. Below these buttons is a button for 'Add New Cemetery'.