

# THE ROUTE TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MANUFACTURING

With the changing climate and global focus towards a more sustainable future, Harris RCS, a successful family-run aerospace business, was looking to adopt more sustainable ways of working. Managing Director Graham Harris's vision is to leave a positive legacy on the world and the business. This shift is a defining feature of the internal strategy for Harris RCS.



According to a survey by Lloyds Bank, almost a quarter of SME manufacturers say they lack the knowledge to achieve Net Zero and around one in five say that there is a lack of skills and expert guidance. When exploring the challenges that SMEs face in working towards achieving Net Zero, Lloyds recommends five key areas:

- ▶ Building a Net Zero culture
- ▶ Creating sustainability skills
- ▶ Collaboration within industry
- ▶ Focus on buildings and energy
- ▶ Understanding transport and supply chains



Sustainability and environmental impact matters to our business and to me personally. Where to start, what do the terms mean and how do we embed sustainability with tangible results, were our main challenges. This sustainability project caused us to re-think our strategies and enabled us to make environmental sustainability core to our decision-making.

**Graham Harris, Managing Director – Harris RCS**



## THE CHALLENGE

Over recent years, Harris RCS has been making small changes across the business to minimise its impact on the environment, for example changing over its lighting to LEDs in 2018. However, these small initiatives didn't have the measures and baseline in place to show the improvements over time.

The aerospace SME wanted more immediate guidance for change and a more structured approach, so that it could go beyond these minor changes and create real impact to meet its sustainability targets. Like many companies, the questions were, what does sustainability really mean and how can we start to truly embrace it?

## MTC'S SOLUTION

A collaborative project aimed initially to support the calculation of carbon emissions and over time was expanded to focus on:

- ▶ Sustainability roadmap
- ▶ Equipment data monitoring
- ▶ Sustainability Supply Chain Readiness Assessment [SCRA]

The project aimed to create an understanding of the carbon emissions generated each year by Harris RCS to develop future sustainability projects.



Having an understanding of emissions is the first step in making sustainable changes across a business. The MTC offered that knowledge and guidance to support Harris RCS at the start of their sustainability journey.

**Liz Scoffins, Advanced Research Engineer, Sustainability Specialist – the MTC**



## THE OUTCOME

- ▶ Having compiled emissions data from pre-COVID, the new data capture process will enable the independent tracking and awareness of emissions for future years.
- ▶ The equipment power usage investigation found that it was more energy efficient to leave the compressor unit on over weekends.
- ▶ The sustainability assessment triggered another project, which will investigate all of the machinery in the facility.
- ▶ The assessment also identified improvements that could be made to increase recycling activities.

## BENEFITS TO THE CLIENT

- ▶ The project allowed Harris RCS to understand the business's historic emissions and identify possible target areas moving forwards.
- ▶ A plan for future activities was set out in a five-year roadmap and in feedback from the Sustainability Supply Chain Readiness Assessment.
- ▶ Data is now available to calculate the potential impact of adding a second shift, should future demand increase sufficiently.



We now monitor our carbon footprint as a standard part of our business processes, and once the MTC helped us to navigate the jargon, the opportunities to improve both our business's carbon footprint and our financial performance haven't stopped.

**Amy Skelhon, Sustainability and Accounts – Harris RCS**



Since the start of the project, Harris RCS has already seen notable improvements in sustainable activities:

45%

Reduction in the amount of carbon produced per £1 revenue

20%

Reduction in compressor energy usage, whilst also increasing output

50%

Increase in recycling activities