MAINTENANCE APPROVAL WORKFLOW / ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

Where are maintenance approvals getting stuck?

The management decision

Start with a request that often waits without a visible owner. Test whether planners can see what is waiting, who can move it forward and which decision has already been made.

When requests arrive in several inboxes, a planner may need to check who approved a job and whether anything is holding it up. That uncertainty makes it harder to schedule people and equipment. A digital approval workflow gives each request a visible next step and keeps a record of the decision. It can also help managers see whether a delay calls for a different approval rule or simply clearer ownership.

Worked example

Thirty out of 100 requests wait longer than two working days. Resolving 12 avoidable delays in a comparable period would bring overdue requests down to 18 out of 100, or 18%.

Example figure	What it represents
100	Requests
30%	Current overdue rate
18%	Example improved rate

What changes the answer

If temporary staffing explains four of those improvements, avoid crediting the software for the full change. Compare like request types and staffing levels when judging the result.

Maintenance approval workflow

What to commission

Implement one request type with a normal approval route, substitute approver and defined exception.

We agree who receives routine and urgent requests, how to handle a change in approver and which information must be recorded. We test with sample requests so planners can see how a job moves from submission to a decision.

How to judge the result

A planner can identify the current approver, see an overdue request and retrieve the history of a completed decision.

Compare similar requests at similar staffing levels. Track waiting time and the work needed to chase approvals, alongside any change in reopened or misrouted work.

Decision worksheet

Project detail	Starting point for your team
Decision owner	Maintenance planning manager. Name the person who will approve the next step.
Records to gather	Your request form, the people who approve work and typical exceptions.
Agreed output	A tested workflow with reminders, a decision history and sample requests.
Decision date	Record the deadline, any unresolved assumption and who will confirm it.

Discuss this case

Describe where requests usually wait, who approves them and what makes a request exceptional. Tell us how you would recognise an improvement, such as fewer follow-up emails or fewer overdue decisions. A typical request and one difficult example are enough to start the conversation.

Email info@oxetc.co.uk and mention DEV-07. All figures in the worked example are illustrative.