



# Slökkvilið höfuðborgarsvæðisins: Optimized Support for the Greater Reykjavík Fire and Rescue Services with Zoho Desk and Zoho Creator





# Introduction

When calamity befalls the Icelandic capital, the Greater Reykjavík Fire and Rescue Service - Slökkvilið höfuðborgarsvæðisins, or SHS for short — rush to the public's aid. Their ability to respond quickly, reliably, and safely is supported by a robust, digital backbone. The SHS IT department works tirelessly to optimize and streamline internal processes to ease the administrative work surrounding equipment inventory, emergency vehicle maintenance, and responder uniforms.

Ómar Traustason, responsible for programming and software solutions in SHS's IT department, and Rúnar Sigurðsson, CEO of Svar, lift the curtain to reveal how Zoho supports the Reykjavik emergency services behind the scenes. As this case study will show, particularly Zoho Desk and Zoho Creator play a key role in the organization's daily operations.



## CHOOSING ZOHO

# Support, Support, Support

It was the need for internal ticket handling that initially led SHS to Zoho. As Ómar explains, "We are a support organization, and within that we are also support departments — IT and repair and technical assistance — so we need to make sure that we are gathering all this information, prioritizing, and keeping track of what is completed and what is not. We needed a ticketing solution like Zoho Desk, where we could organize, track, and gather all the requests that flow in daily."

However, when weighing the options, Ómar's team concluded that one thing was more important than good software:

“

When we search for a software provider, we think about, 'How good is the support? How good are the people behind it?' Because even if the product is good, if the support is not good enough, you will probably have a hard time implementing it or making it a part of your [organization's] routine.

Proper introduction to the product, and continued support in implementing it, enables organizations to start making the most of the software from the get-go.

To facilitate a smooth and efficient implementation process, SHS turned to Svar, a long-term Zoho partner based in Iceland. "We contacted Svar, who introduced us to the Zoho Desk environment," Ómar acknowledges.

## Zoho Desk addressed those initial needs. To this day, it lets SHS:

- 🛡️ Gather tickets from multiple sources and departments
- 🛡️ Categorize them — e.g. equipment requests, vehicle repair, responder uniforms
- 🛡️ Forward them to the appropriate team (IT, mechanics, inventory)
- 🛡️ Prioritize issues by urgency
- 🛡️ Track handling histories so nothing gets lost

As is often the case, one request rarely comes alone. In addition to a functional ticketing system, "it was requested for us to make several forms and submission paths for these tickets," Ómar adds, "so we also started using Zoho Creator to build those solutions."

## IMPLEMENTING ZOHO

# The Big Picture

Lest the solution seem obvious, getting to the bottom of SHS's needs was anything but. "They had some issues regarding the communication between people ordering stuff, counting the firetrucks and ambulances, et cetera," Rúnar recalls, "It was tough at the beginning to find out what they were requesting, because people tend to mix the things together that they are looking for ... So it took us some time to make a drawing of the solution — as I call it, 'the big picture' of what they are going to do in the future."

Taking the time to understand the core of SHS, its processes, and its software needs was a critical step before implementation. From this exploration, it became clear that the organization would benefit from a platform layer built in Zoho Creator to support the new ticketing system. Another aspect of the upcoming implementation would be empowering Ómar's team to continue working with the software themselves.

Once all parties agreed on the big picture, the implementation could commence. "We [Svar] implemented most of the Desk issues at the beginning, and helped them get started with Deluge and Creator," Rúnar explains, referring to the programming language underlying all Zoho applications, and Zoho's custom (low- and no-code) application builder respectively. This gives SHS the freedom to develop their own projects, whilst Svar remains available for consultation and support. In Ómar's words,

“

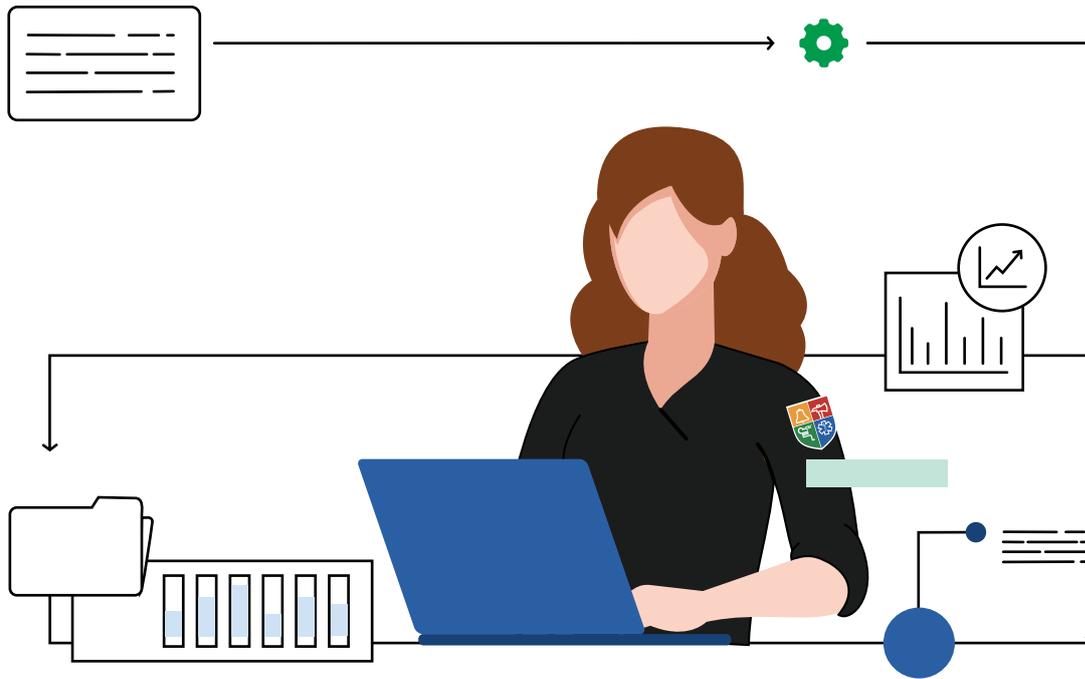
We are learning as we go and gradually taking the products into our own hands instead of having the partner do the work. So they [Svar] do the support, we do the work, and we have made several applications already within Creator.

**svar:)**

## WORKFLOWS IN ZOHO

# The Solution

SHS's adoption of Zoho applications has highly practical applications. It bridges the communication gaps between line departments and support departments, thereby contributing to efficient emergency responses in Reykjavik. This is made possible by a robust, thought-out infrastructure.



## User-Facing Workflows

A combination of Zoho Creator and Zoho Desk supports key user-facing workflows. The SHS employee site is connected to reports and forms in Zoho Creator through permalinks. This enables non-technical staff to interact with a powerful yet easy-to-use interface. “They can order [clothes] through a form where they see pictures, select what they need, add the size requirements, submit, and they will receive the clothing,” Ómar explains.

Meanwhile, Zoho Desk handles ticket submissions and processing. For instance, an ambulance driver might submit a ticket about a flashing dashboard light. The ticket is then assigned to a mechanic, who troubleshoots and registers the fix. Similarly, when an IT bug or issue is reported, that ticket is delegated to the computer assistance department, which responds accordingly. If a ticket becomes overdue, SHS have enabled Supervisor Rules that escalate the ticket for prioritized handling. Zoho Desk tracks both the problem and the resolution, functioning as a communication and support hub between frontline staff and support department.

# The Underlying Platform

If Zoho Desk forms the primary social layers of SHS's operations, Zoho Creator forms the structural foundation that makes those workflows possible. The application builder thus functions as a platform in its own right.

## In SHS's case, Zoho Creator is responsible for,

- **Emergency Vehicle Checklists**

Maintaining lists of required items for all types of emergency vehicles, as well as every compartment and box inside each vehicle. This solution comes with a mobile-friendly form for staff; automatic alerts for used, expired, or missing items; a complete inspection history for each vehicle; and reporting dashboards to show the readiness status of each vehicle.

- **Database Management**

Storing and updating all information (including ticket histories) about assets, checklists, orders, and inventory in a way that makes it accessible for further processing.

- **Integrations**

Linking both internal and external systems through seamless integrations, such as between Zoho Desk, and SHS's custom-built applications.

- **Workflow Automation**

Distributing and assigning tickets and tasks to the support departments, and triggering notifications when action is needed.

- **Reporting**

Provides management dashboards that permit SHS's leadership a 360° overview over the organization's operations and performance for data-driven decision-making.

## CUSTOM APPLICATIONS

# Ease and Overview

With the right foundational structures in place, Ómar's team has already built three custom applications that smoothen the administrative workflows and minimize the manual tasks required to keep SHS prepared to respond to emergencies.



### Submission and Reporting Platform

The first is an easier way for line departments to submit and track requests for IT assistance, vehicle maintenance, and essential equipment. The requester selects the equipment in question, indicates what needs to happen to it — pick-up, delivery, repair, maintenance, and so on — and submits the ticket. Through an integration between Zoho Desk and Zoho Creator, the platform feeds status reports back into the system. As such, the organization effortlessly retains an overview of what is pending, what is in progress, and what has been completed.



### Inventory Counting System

An inventory counting system helps SHS ensure that all equipment is accounted for. "For the ambulances and firetrucks, we need to do regular item counts, and these are hundreds of items," Ómar explains. Based on the inventory and checklist databases in Zoho Creator, this system counts every single registered item and its readiness status. These statuses are then converted into reports that provide clear insights into every vehicle in SHS's fleet. If mandatory equipment is missing, the vehicle is not fit for use in an emergency.



## Uniform Ordering System

Ómar classifies the final system as "simple but useful": a system where staff can order the clothing required for their work. SHS issues special high-visibility and/or fire-resistant uniforms to frontline staff. For safety reasons, it is mandatory for responders to wear these clothes when they approach hazardous situations or environments. If a piece of clothing is damaged or missing, staff must request a replacement. These requests are processed through the uniform ordering system, where Zoho Desk and Zoho Creator together ensure that SHS's staff are always dressed appropriately for the situation.

## EXPANDING THE SETUP

# Exploring More Options

Despite having built several custom applications in the past two years, SHS is not done yet. "There are still projects that are in the starting loop and design phase already," Ómar shares, "so we will probably expand the counting, and we are also looking at solutions for more in-depth inventory for the repair shop and for IT." With a solid foundation already in place, Ómar and his team can continue to build and expand on their existing setup.

Additionally, SHS has plans of growing the team and introducing more people to the Zoho applications. "I think Zoho is very strong in the regard that you can ... make useable and very good solutions without requiring much coding experience," notes Ómar, who has a background in programming. Referring to Zoho Creator's no-code and low-code functionality, he elaborates, "Our plan is to expand that to others, so we will lead the way, and then we will be teaching people who are very capable but have less programming experience".

“

Because in the Zoho environment it's a low-code environment, you don't need this extensive coding experience, and that makes it accessible to a lot more people to make useful solutions.

We met Ómar and Rúnar during Zoholics Benelux & Nordics, where they were gathering information and inspiration for further expansion projects. "Right now, we are just using Zoho Desk and Zoho Creator, but we are working with our partner, Svar, to see what is the best solution for us, and there are several options that we are exploring," says Ómar.





## Slökkvilið höfuðborgarsvæðisins

Slökkvilið höfuðborgarsvæðisins website:

[www.shs.is](http://www.shs.is)

**Email us:**

[Sales@eu.zohocorp.com](mailto:Sales@eu.zohocorp.com)

**Contact us:**

+31 707007083