

Case Study

Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service invests in Becrypt security solution to protect and manage data centrally and comply with CoCo and ISO27001

The Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service is the county-wide, statutory emergency fire and rescue service for the county of Wiltshire. It is administered by a joint authority of 13 members, 9 appointed by Wiltshire Council and 4 by Swindon Borough Council, called the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority.

The Service has a total of 25 fire stations (three wholetime, three day-crewed and eighteen retained stations), and is one of the few to have trained in cave and quarry rescue, having to cover the underground area of Corsham.

The Service's headquarters is located in the heart of Wiltshire in a Manor House in Potterne, Devizes, where the central ICT team manages the IT infrastructure upon which the Service depends. The ICT department has recently invested in Becrypt's end-point security solution to protect and manage its data used by employees, including mobile workers, across the organisation. The newly deployed Becrypt data security solution will also help the Service to ensure that it meets government legislation.

Providing secure access for staff working remotely

The Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service focuses on three main areas - protection, prevention and response. A large part of the Service's activity that has been very successful is in prevention by increasing awareness and education in the community. This has meant providing staff in the field with mobile devices such as tablet PCs, laptops, PDAs and PCs to support them in their work.

According to Les Louth, the ICT Director at Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service; "The large number of mobile devices and data being deployed was starting to become unmanageable for us. The increase in mobile working meant that data had to be accessible at all time and we realised that we needed to look at ways to ensure that the data was protected when being accessed and used in the field."

Secure connections to comply with government legislation

The ICT team looked at a number of competitive security solutions, choosing Becrypt for its comprehensive secure end-point product suite. The solution comprises DISK Protect, Connect Protect and Enterprise Manager and will enable the fire service to comply with the Government Code of Connection guidelines for connecting to the Government Connect Secure Extranet (GCSx).

DISK Protect provides assured full disk encryption for desktops, laptops and tablet PCs. The Enterprise Manager provides a comprehensive central management and auditing console while Connect Protect gives full and flexible port control. Connecting to GCSx via a remote or home connection requires that the fire service meets the minimum standards, this includes confirming staff identity to reduce the possibility of attacks against their data systems.

Becrypt DISK Protect, which is being deployed across the Service's laptop and tablet PC estate, transparently encrypts the hard drive with no impact on performance and prevents unauthorised access by strong user authentication. It automatically encrypts data, so once they have successfully logged on, the user does not need to think about which files should be encrypted. If the laptop or tablet PC is lost or stolen, even if specialist recovery tools are used to recover the data, DISK Protect ensures that the data remains inaccessible and therefore safe. Connect Protect provides flexible port control enabling the IT department to control what devices are used to download and upload data from the Service's servers. For instance, it can prevent the use of iPods and other unauthorised USB devices protecting the network from viruses and other malware and guarding against data shrinkage.

Using Becrypt Enterprise Manager the IT team will be able to manage its PCs, laptops and port controls over the wireless network, which will also assist the fire

Becrypt help Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service to:

- Protect data when accessed remotely
- Control the use of devices connecting to the network
- Centrally manage and enforce security policies
- Comply with Code of Connection and ISO27001

service in meeting its obligations under the Data Protection Act. From its central console, Enterprise Manager will help the Service to streamline all aspects of the management of data security products and enforce its organisational security policies. It will also provide real time audit trail of events such as DISK Protect installs, Connect Protect blocked and allowed device access, password changes and authentication failures, saving the IT department time and minimising end-user involvement.

“Becrypt ticked a lot of the boxes for us. The solution gives us the compliance that we need. We are confident that the Becrypt product suite has the functionality and features that we need to comply with the Code of Connection. It also provides a robust future-proof solution as we look to meeting ISO27001 legislation,” said Les Louth.

Efficient central management provides control

The ISO27001 Information Security Management System (ISMS) standard (Oct 2005) specifies a management system that is intended to bring information security under explicit management control. A key factor for the Wiltshire team in the selection of Becrypt’s solution was the central management made possible with Enterprise Manager.

“We liked the management control provided by the Becrypt’s Enterprise Manager. Everything is driven from our central HQ, which is based in a very rural place in the centre of the county of Wiltshire. Travelling to other locations to install kit is too time-consuming so it was important for us to deploy a security solution that is manageable from the centre. In addition, as budgets in the public sector are being tightened, the cost was a major consideration,” explained Les Louth.

“With Enterprise Manager – we will be able to see who has what equipment and we can change user permissions and remotely add and remove access to DISK Protect computers from our central location. We don’t have a massive team and therefore have limited resources to deploy and

manage a system - Becrypt offers an efficient solution and value for money.”

Meeting the data security challenges ahead

Another challenge for the Wiltshire Service is the FiReControl project, which will require extra security and assurance as they will be required to exchange data with other third party organisations.

FiReControl is a UK based project that was initiated in March 2004 to reduce the number of control rooms used to handle emergency calls for fire services and authorities. Presently there are 46 control rooms in England that handle calls from the local public for emergency assistance via the 999 system that will be combined into 9 Regional Control Centres (RCCs). As part of the project, Wiltshire Fire and Rescue’s control room will switch over to a new regional control centre in Taunton by March 2012. A new radio network, called FireLink, is also being developed and built that will be fully compatible with FiReControl.

“The two national Initiatives FiReControl and FireLink will require us to review how we exchange information with other organisations. Data security has become an urgent issue for us in Wiltshire, where there will be a lot of potentially sensitive information being sent across the new network,” Mr. Louth explained. “We need to ensure that the data that goes out of the organisation and is received back is sent in a controlled and secure manner. Becrypt’s solutions will help us to manage the security aspects of our data exchange.”

Mr Louth concluded, “Becrypt’s data security solutions will give us the compliance that we need. We have a large user community that will require a culture shift in how they think about the data they have at their disposal. Becrypt’s solutions are easy to use and will help us to provide the tools so that our staff are able to protect data with the minimum of interruption to their working day. The IT Team is responsible to deliver the security we need and we are confident that our chosen Becrypt solutions are absolutely fit for purpose both now and in the future”.

For more information please call 0845 838 2050 or +44 (0) 20 7557 6500, or visit www.becrypt.com

Becrypt Limited, 2nd Floor, North West, 90 Long Acre, London WC2E 9RA. www.becrypt.com info@becrypt.com

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