

Case Study

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Procures Cloud Backup via G Cloud



- Oracle, Exchange, Hyper-V and VMware backups
- Shorter timescales for backup
- Improved staff efficiency



SUMMARY

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service (ECFRS) is the statutory fire and rescue service for the county of Essex and one of the largest county fire services in the UK, covering 367,000 hectares and a population of more than 1.74 million. It operates 50 fire stations — 12 wholtime, 34 retained, 4 day crewed, plus one USAR station (Urban Search and Rescue) — and employs 820 wholtime and 466 retained firefighters, 46 control staff and 253 support staff. On average its firefighters attend 24,000 emergency incidents each year.

As well as fighting fires, attending road accidents and dealing with major emergencies, ECFRS is also responsible for preventative community safety work and runs a number of innovative schemes to educate and protect those most vulnerable in the local community.

CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

ECFRS is headquartered in Kelvedon and has a control centre in Hutton plus five training sites across the county. The Service strives for operational excellence through a modernization agenda and a focus on providing an efficient, effective, value-for-money service. As a public sector organization, the Service was tasked with procuring a new backup provider through G Cloud, the UK Government's online cloud services marketplace. It was the first time Essex County Fire & Rescue had used G Cloud for procurement purposes.

BUSINESS SITUATION

Essex Fire & Rescue Service used to keep their backup tapes off-site and needed to have multiple data safes at different locations. Using their previous backup solution caused huge inefficiencies. It would take several hours a week for a technician to change, catalogue and archive the tapes and this had a huge impact on their organization. Following a review of the Service's overall IT infrastructure in 2012, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service concluded that its existing backup solution had become too difficult to manage and would be impossible to upgrade with the existing provider.

ENVIRONMENT

- Over 22 TB of data is protected for the Service across physical and virtual environments, including over 75 servers
- Host user and application data with a 1TB Exchange, 1TB of Oracle data and 13TB of Hyper-V and VMware backups.

ASIGRA CLOUD-BASED DATA RECOVERY DELIVERS

- Single integrated solution for all data protection needs
- Policy-based protection based on the user's IT environment and recovery requirements
- Ability to transition internal IT resources to more strategic operations
- Data encryption that secures data in-flight and at-rest with full support of compliance requirements
- High-performance data recovery.

“Traditionally procurement has been a long, protracted process. With G Cloud it is very straightforward because all the supplier and product information has already been collated and validated. This makes the process much easier. It also helped us discover Backup Technology which has been a major benefit.”

Jan Swanwick, Head of ICT
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

SOLUTION

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service did not just pick **Backup Technology** (BTL) off the cuff. Having looked at the details of BTL's Asigra-based cloud backup solution ECFRS trialed it and compared it with other options from Symantec and Veeam. ECFRS tested a couple of different options but those either affected the reliability of their machines or proved as difficult to maintain as the existing solution. Backup Technology ticked the box for everything, they just excelled. BTL met with ECFRS, they understood their problems and gave them huge confidence that BTL could both backup but more importantly restore ECFRS's data. The migration itself was completely hassle free and BTL took full responsibility for any issues that cropped up, for instance ECFRS had different versions of Oracle but BTL resolved the issues this caused for them.

ECFRS had 3 different versions of Oracle, ranging from 9i through to 11g within its Windows environment, which controlled most of its critical system including SAP. After several conversations between BTL and ECFRS, 2 DS-Clients were utilized to ensure there was no performance degradation or conflicts between the Oracle versions. The decision was taken to backup the legacy 9i Oracles by installing the DS-Client software on the target machines and allow Asigra to use the already installed Oracle API's to send the data to the BTL DS-System.

ECFRS utilizes a dedicated Asigra Public Cloud vault which stores its off-site data each night in two geographically separate data centres. On-site ECFRS has three dedicated DS-Client appliances to deal with its variation of Oracle and Hyper Visor environments. It also uses the local storage feature within Asigra to ensure it has a copy of the latest generation of data on-site for LAN speed recovery of all its systems.

“We spend a huge amount of time analyzing the data we collect so that we can target our services in the correct and most efficient way. Knowing that this data is protected by Backup Technology is vital to the success of everything we do.”

**Paul Hill, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Essex County Fire & Rescue**



RESULTS

While Essex County Fire & Rescue Service protects life, property and the environment, Backup Technology protects all of its data. The data covers risk information for the county, operating procedures, details of the incidents attended, the people helped, building inspections and mobilizing data along with all the Finance, HR and workplace data created by the organization itself.

The fully managed solution encompasses every aspect of the backup contract from configuration and installation through to the daily monitoring and restoration support of the backups. BTL's Online Monitoring Portal allows both the dedicated account manager and the ECFRS support staff to react quickly to any backup problems.

There is a close relationship between the ECFRS support team and the BTL account manager which allows any alterations or backup modifications to be processed extremely efficiently. This means that any changes made to the production environment are protected as quickly as possible.

“Essex County Fire & Rescue Service is founded on principles of protection, prevention and response. Those are the principles we have adhered to in providing the service with the cloud backup solution that best meets its requirements.”

Rob Mackle, Sales & Services Manager
Backup Technology

About Asigra

Trusted since 1986, Asigra provides organizations around the world the ability to recover their data now from anywhere through a global network of partners who deliver cloud backup and recovery services as public, private and/or hybrid deployments. As the industry's first enterprise agentless cloud-based recovery software to provide data backup and recovery of servers, virtual machines, endpoint devices, databases and applications, SaaS and IaaS based applications, Asigra lowers the total cost of ownership, reduces recovery time objectives, eliminates silos of backup data by providing a single consolidated repository, and provides 100% recovery assurance. Asigra's revolutionary patented Recovery License Model provides organizations with a cost effective data recovery business model unlike any other offered in the storage market. Asigra has been recognized as a Gartner Cool Vendor and has been included in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Backup and Recovery Software since 2010.

More information on Asigra can be found at www.recoveryiseverything.com

