

“I found Fujitsu to be high-performing and motivated, with a real can-do attitude. Our strategic collaboration enabled us to work well together to find solutions when problems arose.”

Carol Holt
Deputy Director
Flood Incident Management
Environment Agency



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Flood

The Environment Agency replaced its aging Floodline Warnings Direct system with a new cloud-based Fujitsu solution that can reach more people quickly in emergencies.

At a glance

Country: UK

Sector: Government

Founded: 1996

Website: environment-agency.gov.uk

The challenge

The Environment Agency was using a twelve-year-old system to support the communication of flood warnings to affected citizens. It wanted to refresh this vital service by moving to the cloud and introducing new media channels.

The solution

Following a thorough competitive evaluation, the Agency selected Fujitsu as its partner. Together they migrated Floodline Warnings Direct to a modern, flexible, cloud-based, alert-as-a-service platform, based on FUJITSU Enterprise Postgres.

Benefits

- Improved scalability enables the service to reach more people, more quickly
- A significant reduction in licensing and technology costs has contributed to an overall reduction in Flood Warning Service running costs

The customer

The Environment Agency is a non-departmental public body, established in 1996, with responsibilities to protect and improve the environment in England. The Flood Warning Service is shared with Natural Resources Wales. Both organisations have responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea. With one in six homes at risk of flooding, the service has sent over 30 million calls, helping reduce the impact of flooding. Households and businesses at risk of flooding can check their flood risk and receive free flood warnings. Visit www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

Products and Services

■ FUJITSU Enterprise Postgres

Replacing an aging, critical platform

Since 2004, Fujitsu and the Environment Agency have been working together on the Flood Warning Service. The previous system was a multi-channel flood warning system using voice, email, SMS, FAX, and Pager. However, the platform was reaching end of life.

“We had the previous technology in place for twelve years, and while it still worked fine, it was becoming tired,” explains Carol Holt, Deputy Director, Flood Incident Management, Environment Agency. “We saw this as an opportunity to add more business efficiencies, such as introducing automation. We had lots of separate services and this gave us the chance to bring them together, as well as recruiting a significant number of new mobile customers to the service.

Given that the Government Digital Service (GDS) has set a digital-by-default agenda to align public services with the new interconnected digital world, the Environment Agency sought a flood warning system that would be ready for this new world. Centred on the citizen, it is designed to empower response partners and keep a tight focus on maximising taxpayer value for money.

Technology

FUJITSU Enterprise Postgres is an open-source, high-performance, high-reliability, cost-effective relational database management system. This enabled a significant reduction in the cost of ownership by reducing licensing and ongoing support costs.

Reaching more people during crises

The Flood Warning Service is now able to reach more people in the event of severe weather. It can identify residents in danger and push warnings to mobiles even if they haven't formally registered. This also happens much more quickly than under the old system.

Furthermore, by using FUJITSU Enterprise Postgres, Fujitsu estimates the Environment Agency has significantly reduced software licensing costs. This is money that can be redeployed in other areas, to further reduce flood risk.

The new platform also positions the Agency well to exploit new and emerging communications channels. Perhaps most importantly, it is exploring how to use geo-referencing to reach people who might not live in affected areas but are passing through affected areas.

“We have several areas in our sights and I imagine Fujitsu will help integrate some of these new channels,” concludes Carol. “I found Fujitsu to be high-performing and motivated, with a real can-do attitude. Our strategic collaboration enabled us to work well together when problems arose.”

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