

“We have gone from having a team of 25 to support us, to having a tier one supplier with 140,000 Fujitsu people on tap when we need them.”

Dave Parles
Assistant Director, CIS
Council of Reserve Forces' & Cadets'
Associations (CRFCA)



Transforming IT through innovation

At a glance

Country: United Kingdom

Industry: Public Sector

Founded: 1908

Website: gov.uk/government/reserve-forces

Challenge

The Council of Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Associations (CRFCA) had been using a small, local service provider to manage its IT infrastructure; however, it was unresponsive and lacked operational transparency. It wanted to find a new managed service provider with the local presence and global resources to overhaul its environment.

Solution

Fujitsu supplied a dedicated, nine-strong service team which mapped the infrastructure and built the requisite service desk to support it. Fujitsu also conducted a co-creation workshop to explore new ways of working.

Benefit

- Reduces SLA response times by 75%
- Eliminates 20% of service calls through automation
- Delivers cost savings of 10% annually, which is re-invested
- Provides total operational visibility, enabling smarter decision-making
- Helps CRFCA leverage existing MS investments

Customer

The Council of Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations (CRFCA) is a critical component of the current and future UK Armed Forces. It has two priority responsibilities: to provide advice to the Defence Council, as well as the Army, Navy and Royal Air Force, on matters that concern reserves and cadets; and conform to the Defence Plan. In discharging these responsibilities, the CRFCA is organised into 13 individual Associations, with nearly 39,000 cadets and 9,000 adults in over 1,600 locations across the UK.

Products and Services

- FUJITSU Managed Services
- FUJITSU Human Centric Experience Design (HXD)



Upgrading IT resources

Eight years ago, the 13 individual Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations (RFCAs) were organised independently, each with its own autonomous IT infrastructure. As part of centralising these IT functions, the council also introduced a third party to manage it; however, this small company was not equipped to deliver the level of service expected. When the contract ended, the council was keen to find a more suitable partner.

"The incumbent was reactive rather than proactive and the SLAs were measured in weeks rather than hours. This was not fit for purpose," explains Dave Parles, Assistant Director, CIS, Council of Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Associations (CRFCA). "Engineer availability was also a problem, particularly for remote RFCAs, such as the Highlands and Islands branch. Moreover, there was no documentation for processes; everything was held in the director's head. We needed a more mature and resourceful IT partner to manage our IT."

The CRFCA issued a full tender for IT managed services with a view to selecting a supplier with better reporting, tighter SLAs, more responsive engineers and access to new technologies, such as automation. Fujitsu won based on its local presence, combined with global resources, as well as its existing relationship with the Ministry of Defence, which simplified security clearance procedures.

"Over the course of the five-year contract, Fujitsu's proposal actually works out less expensive than the incumbent, despite the fact that it was offering much stricter SLAs and better access to global expertise," adds Parles. "That made it the ideal partner, although the handover was tricky with the incumbent denying access to critical infrastructure information. That put us on the back foot from day one."

Introducing human centric design

Fujitsu put together a dedicated nine-strong team which spent three months mapping and redesigning the IT infrastructure from the ground up. The team then devised a service proposal that could effectively wrap around the requirements. This now covers 900 users in 77 locations with service desk support. Fujitsu also provided an upgrade to WAN connections across the country.

In order to introduce new vision to the partnership, Fujitsu conducted a co-creation workshop in its London Digital Transformation Center (DTC), which provided a forum for CRFCA members from all levels and regions to explore new ways of working. At its heart is the concept of FUJITSU Human Centric Experience Design (HXD), an approach which is based on bringing multiple perspectives together using digital technologies.

Fujitsu's talented experts then facilitated collaborative engagement to achieve a dynamic mix of knowledge, creativity, ideation and concept development.

"As an organisation, we are very much stuck in the 19th century with lots of reliance on paper, so this exercise was a great way to engage employees – from administrators to the board – and explore how we can become more 21st century in our thinking," continues Parles. "Fujitsu acted as a facilitator to draw out areas where we can become more efficient and processes which we can automate, for example."

Following the co-creation workshop and the painstaking mapping and redesign of the infrastructure, CRFCA now has full visibility of its environment, better trained and resourced support, improved knowledge access and has introduced automation to common tasks, such as password reset and account creation.

Faster responses, lower costs, global expertise

CRFCA now enjoys a robust, transparent and well-supported IT environment, with SLA response times reduced by up to 75%. By automating common processes, 20% of service calls have been eliminated, freeing the team to focus on more important tickets. Overall, the council expects to make savings of 10% year-on-year – money that can then be re-invested in the infrastructure.

Fujitsu is also helping the CRFCA make the most out of existing investments, such as Skype for Business, SharePoint and MS Systems Center Operations Manager. "We had invested a considerable sum in Microsoft products but never had them configured or installed properly, so we didn't get the most out of them. Fujitsu drew on its global knowledge base to help us leverage and optimise them," says Parles.

Indeed, it is Fujitsu's global reach which CRFCA finds to be particularly important. As Parles puts it: "We have gone from having a team of 25 to support us, to having a tier one supplier with 140,000 people on tap when we need them."

The newly designed infrastructure also gives CRFCA total visibility of its operations, which it previously sorely lacked, combined with structured reporting and service reviews. The ability to have insight into the performance of the network, firewalls, servers and WAN links means the council can make smarter, proactive decisions and think longer term. That makes it better placed to handle the challenges of the 21st century and to provide its users with the tools they need to thrive.

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