

Council of the Isles of Scilly eliminate PSN compliance worries with cost effective IT Security Health Check



Council of the ISLES OF SCILLY

BACKGROUND

The Isles of Scilly form an archipelago off the South West coast of Cornwall. Since 1891, Council of the Isles of Scilly (CoIS) have been their own unitary authority, providing all the services of a County Council.



Since 2012, it's been a requirement that Local Government Authorities switch from the Government Connects Network Code of Connection (CoCo) to the Public Service Network (PSN). The PSN framework calls for an annual IT Security Health Check to be conducted including an external and internal Penetration Test or Security Audit. CoIS recognised the importance of having the IT Health Check above and beyond it being simply an administrative exercise and wanted to use it to highlight security issues, general IT issues and to improve their network security.

Having worked with Mandalorian for several years, and having had an IT Health Check performed to satisfy PSN accreditation previously, CoIS were confident of Mandalorian's expertise and credentials in this field.

PROJECT SCOPE

CoIS asked Mandalorian to perform a series of thorough tests, inclusive of the following:

- An **Internal Penetration Test** - A comprehensive IT Security Health Check involving a vulnerability assessment and penetration test of a selection of desktops, servers and switches in order to check for vulnerabilities and weaknesses in the CoIS internal infrastructure.
- A **Firewall Review** - A manual evaluation of the entire rulesets and configurations for two firewalls in use by the CoIS looking for possible weaknesses which could allow an attacker to access hosts or data from the CoIS infrastructure.
- A **Mobile Device Management (MDM) Review** - A thorough review of the back-end MDM configuration as well as a Policy review from a sample mobile device and a network analysis of the network traffic from the mobile device to analyse potential information or data leakage.

All of the tests were to be presented in a thorough technical report highlighting any vulnerabilities found and contextualising them accordingly to the CoIS environment and risk posture while providing remedial advice necessary to secure the environment.

WHY MANDALORIAN

Having worked with Mandalorian since 2010, CoIS were confident that they were capable of delivering this essential service. For this particular assignment, the following strengths were key:

- Domain-Specific Expertise – Mandalorian are recognised experts in the Local Government space having delivered IT Health Checks under both CoCo and PSN frameworks since 2010 in County Councils and District Councils all over the Country.
- Support –Mandalorian focus on high-end expertise, tailored report writing, wash-up work shops and through-life support. Some providers deliver provide little more than an automated scan and a boilerplate report. Mandalorian understand that this isn't sufficient in today's complicated world.

- Value – Mandalorian are fully aware of the financial pressures facing all Local Authorities and run activities concurrently to reduce costs. Only the Consultants time is billed for without being charged for time used on automated tools. In addition, Mandalorian don't charge CoIS for time spent travelling which can be up to 2 days.
- Communication - Once a test commences, Mandalorian ensure a dialogue is maintained so any serious vulnerabilities are highlighted immediately and any remedial work can be carried out within the testing window.
- Reporting - As Mandalorian have been providing this test for CoIS year-on-year since 2010, CoIS not only receive a detailed report with the latest findings, but also a comparison with former IT Health Checks at no extra cost. This demonstrates how their IT environment has improved/changed from previous years.



The thing that impresses me most about Mandalorian is the **adaptability and approachability** of the company and the Mandalorian team. They understand our unique nature and geographical issues and **adapt their findings and methodology appropriately to suit**. I'd have no hesitation in working with Mandalorian again for future work and recommend them highly to other Local Authorities. //

Dan Marcus
IT Manager, Council of Isles Scilly

THE RESULT

Mandalorian worked within the Councils specific timeframes taking into account the added complications of the location and travel restrictions to deliver the IT Health Check on time. The work was also delivered on budget – an issue that wasn't a concern as Mandalorian always offer fixed price solutions with no unexpected costs.

The report Mandalorian produced contained a prioritised high level summary of issues which mapped technical vulnerabilities to relevant legislation and regulatory compliance such as the Data Protection Act and the PSN framework. Mandalorian also mapped the findings to the IT strategy, addressing potential short-medium term risks and long term ones as well which need to be removed before the IT strategy can be started.

The Technical section of the report detailed activities and findings, summarised methodology for the work and also provided a detailed set of vulnerability metrics and mitigation recommendations. The appendix highlighted specific technical issues with screenshots and output from the IT Health Check.

Overall, the IT Health Check carried out by Mandalorian enabled CoIS to gain independent assurance of their security infrastructure in order to satisfy their compulsory PSN compliance requirements. Without this, the Council wouldn't be able to connect to the Public Service Network, which among many other issues would have resulted in their Revenues and Benefits department being cut off from the Governments Central Database.

For the future, Mandalorian look forward to an on-going relationship with CoIS for any testing requirement that may arise.