CASE STUDY

Ensuring High-Availability, Secure and Compliant Data Centres

Crown Commercial Service

Overview

At i3Secure, our consultants bring unparalleled expertise in auditing and assessing critical infrastructure to the highest industry standards.

This is an example of how we successfully supported the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) in delivering Crown Hosting (RM1069 & RM6262), a wide-ranging provision of public-sector data centres, ensuring operational excellence and compliance.

The Challenge

The Crown Hosting Framework Authority (CHFA) is responsible for overseeing and assuring the delivery of data centre services provided by Crown Hosting Data Centres; one of the leading UK operators catering to public sector needs.

The CHFA's primary objective is to ensure these data centres consistently maintain the highest standards of availability, resilience, and security. They are tasked with ensuring operations comply with the requirements outlined in the framework agreements, while promoting sustainable growth, delivering transparency, and ensuring optimal value for customers.

"I am delighted to express my sincere appreciation for the outstanding technical and assurance support provided by i3Secure in advancing the Crown Hosting Framework, a cornerstone of the UK Public Sector's digital infrastructure. Their expertise, professionalism, and unwavering commitment have been instrumental in ensuring the framework's resilience, compliance, and alignment with the highest standards of public sector governance.

i3Secure's consultant demonstrated exceptional technical acumen, delivering robust solutions tailored to the unique challenges of Crown Hosting. Their rigorous assurance processes provided invaluable peace of mind, safeguarding critical systems while enabling seamless service delivery for public-sector partners. Their collaborative approach, responsiveness, and ability to navigate complex requirements underscore why they are a trusted partner in such mission-critical initiatives.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the i3Secure team for their vital contributions and look forward to continued collaboration in supporting the UK's digital future."

Commercial Lead, Crown Hosting Framework Authority

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Our Solution

To address CHFA objectives and drive continuous improvement in service assurance, our consultants adopted a structured, multi-faceted approach, ensuring technical rigour and strategic oversight.

We conducted detailed audits of all mechanical and electrical infrastructure to validate the facilities' resilience, availability, and redundancy. Our audits covered critical components including power supply, cooling systems, and backup capabilities, ensuring alignment with the highest operational standards. We also evaluated energy efficiency measures, focusing on optimising power density and sustainability.

Our consultants conducted in-depth compliance assessments against key national standards and guidelines, including NPSA protection classes and NCSC best practices. Physical, personnel, and cyber security protocols were meticulously audited, adhering to stringent CNI requirements.

To reinforce these efforts, we engaged with HMG subject matter experts, such as the Cabinet Office Commercial Information Assurance Team and Government Security Group. This served to commission independent assurance activities, including IT Health Checks and Red Team activities.

To ensure market competitiveness and value for money, we developed robust benchmarking specifications, supported procurement processes, and conducted market pricing analyses.

Our consultants led key governance forums to foster collaboration and transparency. We chaired the Security Working Group to oversee all security related matters, facilitated Contracts & Operations Boards to monitor service delivery, and led the Technical Sub-Committee to address concerns and improvements.

A critical output of our approach was the creation of an Advisory Note focused on improving Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR), providing actionable recommendations to enhance resilience and preparedness in public sector organisations.

The Result

Our comprehensive approach delivered measurable improvements in service assurance, operational resilience, and customer confidence across the CHFA.

The Advisory Note was particularly impactful, offering clear, actionable recommendations to bolster BCDR strategies across the public sector customer base. Several customers adopted the guidance to refine their resilience planning, thus leading to a more robust, standardised approach to continuity management.

By leading key governance forums, we fostered a collaborative environment where public sector customers could collectively discuss challenges, share best practices, and drive service improvements. This established a culture of continuous improvement and stakeholder engagement, strengthening relationships and reinforcing the authority's leadership role.

Overall, our delivery of this key capability has strengthened the CHFA and Crown Hosting Data Centres position as trusted, secure, and resilient partners to the public sector, supporting their sustainable growth. Our consultants have received laudatory praise from the client for upholding the highest standards of service delivery and assurance.

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