![Castle computer services logo]

Castle solutions meets business continuity needs for Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service

Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service (HIFRS) is the most northerly in the UK and covers a geographical area the size of Belgium. It provides fire, rescue and a community safety service to the population of the Highlands, Shetland Islands, Orkney Islands and Western Isles.

HIFRS employs around 1500 staff and is headquartered in Inverness with district offices in 11 locations across the operational area. The Service's functions are delivered through a network of 95 stations and 31 community response units.

Effective business continuity is critical to every organisation but never more so than for an emergency service. HIFRS was looking for a solution that would improve disaster recovery facilities and server resilience as part of the brigade's business continuity plan.

Castle was chosen to implement VMware virtualisation software running on IBM servers and Storage Area Network (SAN) that reduced the number of servers from eight to three and allowed for replication on another site in Inverness. The solution means that applications can be restored quickly and easily.

Duncan MacAulay, Senior Communications Engineer, Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service, said:

"The VMware solution now allows us the flexibility of response to a wide variety of disaster recovery scenarios.

"Virtual environments created at remote locations improve network resilience, providing effective service continuity measures with regard to relocation of departments to stations throughout our operational area.

"Virtualisation has given us the ability to test service packs and other software updates in a safe, controlled

Case Study
Server Virtualisation, Business Continuity

Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service

Solution to improve DR facilities

Reduction in servers from eight to three

Provision of network resilience, providing effective service continuity

"It was clear that Castle had a real understanding of the issues we faced"

environment before they are implemented onto a live system. HIFRS is now able to dynamically adjust the IT hardware capacity to meet changes in demand and the reduction of servers lowers hardware, heat and electricity costs, while at the same time reducing server rack space.

"Having closely followed the development of virtualisation technology and the potential benefits for disaster recovery, it was clear that Castle had a real understanding of the issues we faced and how VMware could best deliver for our organisation."

George Strathie, Software & Services Director, Castle Computer Services, said:

"Our team implemented a solution that met the specific business continuity needs of HIFRS after investing time with them to gain a detailed understanding of their operations to ensure that the outcome delivered maximum benefit."

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