

Case Study



Chelmsford Borough Council develops a Blended User Awareness Strategy for Information Assurance using MetaCompliance

The Problem & Solution

User awareness and employee engagement have become a fundamental part of Local Government's Information Assurance (IA) programme. Chelmsford Borough Council reviewed its processes to see how they could become best practice IA, ensuring compliance with legislation, regulation and Information Security standards

"A key deliverable from MetaCompliance is the Dynamic Intercept functionality, otherwise known as Point of Need Compliance. This allows the Council to deliver compliance prompts or warnings at any computer event. We used this capability to communicate Chelmsford's USB Device Acceptable Usage Policy."

Martin Jimmick, ICT Technical Services Manager, Chelmsford Borough Council.

It became obvious that the Council would need to invest major resources to ensure all users received accurate, consistent policy communication and awareness training. In addition there was a need to capture a signature confirming understanding.

Conventional methods such as training sessions, intranet, emails and the staff notice boards were inefficient and ineffective. They decided to explore the market for automation software and MetaCompliance became the preferred solution.

The Benefits

There have been a number of immediate benefits to Chelmsford Borough Council's compliance stature.

- A central repository for policy management and user awareness initiatives to ensure the council meets compliance controls and industry best practice, including Government Connect (GCSx) Version 3.2 and 4.1, ISO27001, PCI DSS and Data Protection Act 1998
- Ability to automate and maintain a programme of staff awareness and accountability
- Communication of IT Governance messages to all Council staff guaranteeing 100% participation
- Simple integration with our Active Directory to ensure granular and exact targeting of compliance communication
- Demonstrable evidence of user awareness and policy compliance with an aggregated, secure audit and reporting system
- Inclusion of all user populations off the network including non pc users and 3rd party vendors
- Citrix compatible and accredited to Windows 7 which was important to allow the product to grow with the Authority's infrastructure



MetaCompliance[®]
Developed by Baronscourt™

www.metacompliance.com

The Deployment

One of the main drivers for deploying MetaCompliance was the dissemination of the formulated policies and processes devised by the Essex Online Partnership (EOLP). As a Phase 1 deployment, we delivered and received confirmation of understanding of these key policies that directly assisted with compliance to GCSx Version 4.1 standard, ISO27001 and NH N3 Code of Connection.

- Corporate Information Security Policy and Risk Assessment
- Conditions of Acceptable Use
- Personal Commitment Statement
- USB insertion warning





In terms of the reaction from our employee base to this new form of awareness and compliance technology, I will admit that there was a level of anxiety within the ICT team responsible for the rollout; this was the first time policies had been delivered in this way and the ICT team did not know what to expect.

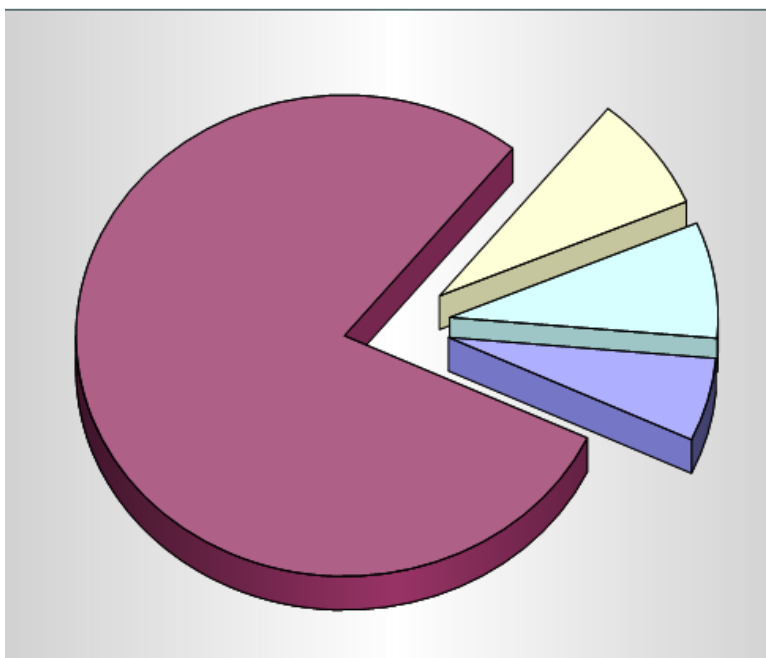
MetaCompliance makes the process extremely easy and quickly removed any anxiety as the feedback received from the initial rollout proved very positive. There was no training of the end user involved which made the deployment streamlined and non-evasive across the

Point of Need Compliance

Point of Need Compliance was deployed during Phase 1. When a user inserted a USB key, they were presented with the Removable Media Acceptable Usage Policy. We have this scheduled to be delivered every time an employee accesses this area with their device. The attractive element of this is that if an employee never uses removable media devices, they will never receive the policy. In terms of the reporting and auditing associated with this policy, we were able to remediate in a more pro-active fashion with the non-compliant staff members and account for the gap in non-participation amongst staff.

Removable Media Acceptable Usage Policy

 Pending Receipt - 112	 Disagree - 156
 Agree - 1577	 Email IT - 156



“MetaCompliance offered immediate auditable accountability we couldn’t have achieved using conventional methods.

Furthermore, its ability to integrate with our existing e-Learning systems was very important to us.”

Martin Jimmick, ICT Technical Services Manager, Chelmsford Borough Council.

Blended User Awareness Strategy

Following the Phase 1 deployment, we were approached by other areas of the Business including HR, Internal Audit and the Learning and Development team, all of which have their own obligations under law to adhere to in the areas of user awareness and employee engagement.

They could see the benefits of MetaCompliance to disseminate their own compliance communications and for the Council to develop a Corporate Blended User Awareness Strategy employing all methods of communication available to best effect. This is a major benefit of MetaCompliance over other solutions providers.

MetaCompliance was the only solution we found which enabled enforcement of employee participation in policies, risk assessments and also e-Learning.

e-Learning Connections

MetaCompliance were able to integrate successfully with both of our current e-Learning providers, through their e-Learning Connections functionality. We were then able to deliver a completely automated and enforced user awareness programme scheduled to the end user on the desktop, ensuring participation by a given date. This unique functionality within MetaCompliance provides an interface into most SCORM based E-Learning solutions.

The Council will now benefit by leveraging off our existing investment in e-Learning solutions. Obtaining user participation in our E-Learning content has always been a challenge, fraught with inconsistencies and errors due to the manual effort involved in ensuring user participation. MetaCompliance can ensure 100% participation and provides immediate auditable accountability we couldn't have achieved using conventional methods.

“By using MetaCompliance to automate communications, we were able to capture 85% user acceptance of a policy within one week.

We were previously unable to capture this level of response within a year”

**Martin Jimmick, ICT
Technical Services Manager,
Chelmsford Borough
Council.**

Future Developments

Chelmsford Borough Council has embraced MetaCompliance and it now plays a significant role in the way that we communicate with our employees. There are a number of areas that the Council is keen to automate utilising the unique capabilities within the MetaCompliance solution:-

- **Enhance the Council's induction process**

New starters will receive required policies to their desktop over a period of time. MetaCompliance offers a unique targeting capability that will allow the Council to automate the management of Information Assurance awareness on employee commencement, people leaving the business and employees who change role/department. The Joiners and Leavers functionality reflects the changes in our Active Directory structure, offering a workflow of continual communication in line with our ever-changing employee landscape.

- **Combine the corporate Conditions of Acceptable Use and 3rd party Non-disclosure agreement.**

This will be for 3rd party support engineers working remotely. Third parties have always been a compliance headache for the Authority. Tackling Information Governance within the organisation is much easier than dealing with the external companies that handle data or business processes however; it is an essential element of Information Assurance.

MetaCompliance will allow us to automate the inclusion of third parties in our Information Assurance programs, guaranteeing their awareness, accountability and compliance with Governance process. Unique functionality enforces the ongoing assessment and certification of third party employees ensuring best practice Information Assurance.

- **MetaCompliance Use Across the Council**

We now have a number of services wishing to use MetaCompliance to send policies and surveys out to the users. To ensure that the end user is not bombarded with requests, the Authority has become aware of the need to create a suitable Information Assurance (IA) Communication Plan. The communications plan will be owned by the Authority's Information Security Management Group who is responsible for the delivery of the corporate security policies and training programmes to the end user.



MetaCompliance Deliverables

Information Assurance

Communications Group

With the assistance of Information Assurance specialists in Metacompliance Limited, we have devised a 4 key step approach to improving the Authority's corporate communication plan. We plan to establish a Group called the **MetaCompliance Information Assurance Communications Group**.

This Strategy will help underpin Governance and Compliance frameworks that affects the business, both immediate and in the future as well as drive the development of a multi-phased compliance communications roadmap based on the Information Assurance Maturity Model (IAMM) roadmap.

By utilising the 4 key steps in line with the IAMM, Chelmsford Borough Council will be equipped to establish a baseline of awareness levels within the Council to allow for a drive at culture change in relation to information handling.

This will allow for an insight into the current awareness levels within the Council and to establish the desired security culture. This approach will allow us to understand our strengths and weaknesses and identify areas where improvements would facilitate a cultural change.

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