



Essex Online Partnership improves IA Culture and demonstrates User Awareness with MetaCompliance

Case Study

Essex Online Partnership Overview

The Essex Online Partnership (EOLP) is a combination of public sector organisations working together on ICT Projects across Essex. The partnership consists of County, District, Borough and Unitary Councils, the Police and the Fire and Rescue Services, working together in a way that helps improve the efficiency of local services.

“MetaCompliance Advantage allowed us to begin to fulfill our duty of care in relation to Information assurance”

Lee Hession, Chairman,
Essex Online Partnership.

The EOLP was formed in 2002, initially working together to support the development of integrated and accessible local services to Essex citizens and businesses in support of the E-Government initiative. Since then, the EOLP has developed to support the key objective of delivering cost effective ICT solutions where partnership working is appropriate. Over the last 3 years, the EOLP has achieved savings in the region of £3.7million.

The EOLP is engaged in business led projects in addition to its technology focused activities. Its aims and objectives are:-

- Establishing an ICT capability that can support the transformation of EOLP
- Supporting the partnership ICT aspects that result from shared services across the County ensuring both implementation and ongoing service management
- Ensuring national ICT requirements are tracked, and where appropriate, an Essex response is delivered in a timely manner
- Establishing key policies and guidelines to facilitate and support pan-Essex ICT services and the relationship with national services
- Exploring business continuity options
- Undertaking research and development for the benefit of all partner organisations e.g. Government Connect (GCSx)
- Working in partnership with Braintree Procurement Services, Procurement Agency for Essex (PAE) and OGC to obtain cash savings from collaborative procurement opportunities
- Overseeing the ongoing operational management of implemented partnership ICT



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The EOLP were first introduced to Metacompliance Ltd. in 2008 through the Opportunities through Technology Group (OTTG). Chelmsford Borough Council had previously selected the MetaCompliance Product Suite as the leading solution that could assist their specific requirements in the areas of information assurance, user awareness and policy compliance.

Following a Proof of Concept of MetaCompliance, Chelmsford Borough Council decided to introduce the solution to the other members of the EOLP.



The EOLP Requirement

In 2008, the EOLP had just formulated a set of best practice Information Security Policies which addressed the Government Connect (GCSx) Standard, PCI DSS, ISO27001 and Data Protection Act 1998. They needed to be able to disseminate accurate policies to all employees and be able to evidence that each member had read and understood their content. Existing traditional methods of engaging staff clearly didn't work and there was little or no evidence that staff were aware of their responsibility and accountability for Information Security.

The MetaCompliance Solution

MetaCompliance was very well received by the EOLP members. The solution allowed for flexibility in its deployment and integration with each of the individual member's IT infrastructure, regardless of the size of the employee infrastructure.

MetaCompliance Delivers

- User accountability via automated self certification
- 100% response from ALL user types
- The measurement of IT security posture with MetaCompliance Risk Assessment and Survey
- Demonstrable compliance via secure audit and reporting
- A Blended User Awareness Programme which includes delivery of e-Learning, Policies and Risk Assessments
- The automated repeatable processes that are the key to sustainable compliance

The benefits of deploying MetaCompliance at Essex Online Partnership.

EOLP recognises a number of different benefits:

- An increase in user understanding and awareness which will bring an improved culture of IT security to the organisation
- The ability to cost effectively obtain employee agreement to IT security and compliance policies across the global organisation
- The protection of corporate infrastructure from malware and viruses
- Minimising the risk of data leakage
- The ability to demonstrate to regulators and customers that EOLP is CoCo compliant
- 100% participation in Policies, Surveys and e-Learning
- Return on investment will be realised from the product being used across the Partnership using special pricing

The key benefit of the strategic purchasing approach to the EOLP members is the establishment of an Essex-wide special price list. Each member within the EOLP has their own procurement processes and policies. Metacompliance Ltd. has demonstrated an understanding of the Group's objectives and has supported all of the members to the highest standards.

MetaCompliance Limited has proven to be an innovative software development organisation with a major focus on the development of their product offerings, ensuring that their key deliverables are in line with market requirements in the current economic climate.

As Chelmsford Borough Council has gone through a Proof of Concept, it was a great way for the members to see the real and tangible benefits of automating policy compliance and user awareness.

At the time of writing, the following members of the Essex Online Partnership had purchased and deployed MetaCompliance:-

- Chelmsford Borough Council
- Maldon District Council
- Basildon District Council
- Harlow District Council
- Brentwood Borough Council
- Castle Point Borough Council
- Colchester Borough Council
- Epping Forest District Council