AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE
– Canberra, Australia

Aruba Wi-Fi facilitates high speed, high security connectivity for 350 staff

Australian National Audit Office

REQUIREMENTS
- High speed wireless network
- High level of security
- Ability to scale for future mobile expansion

SOLUTION
- Aruba 802.11ac access points
- ClearPass for network security and access control
- AirWave for network management

BENEFITS
- In-building 802.11ac access points provides high speed services to 350 highly mobile employees
- Network future-proofed for growing mobile needs
- High security network to maintain service integrity

With 350 highly mobile staff constantly moving between locations and offices, a high speed, reliable wireless connection is an absolute priority for Gary Pettigrove.

"With my staff, 86 per cent are highly mobile using laptops to work in the field at other agencies for three months at a time," says Pettigrove, Chief Information Officer at the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO). "High speed, high security Wi-Fi is an absolute necessity for our business."

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO CUT THE CORD

As the independent auditor for the Australian government, the ANAO's existing wired and 4G network was becoming limiting and expensive for the organisation.

"We had a wired network for our head office, as well as 300 4G mobile wireless cards," says Pettigrove. "When our staff were in the field the teams had to use 4G, which was becoming very expensive. In addition, when they were in the office they were restricted to wired connections, and unable to easily move about or collaborate."

To solve these connection pain points, the ANAO conducted an overmarket tender to find a solution that would allow for greater collaboration but also provide a more cost effective option for the business.

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Gary Pettigrove
Chief Information Officer, Australian National Audit Office.

"Mobility through a high speed network is absolutely critical to our business. Without it, we have lost productivity and lost time," he says. "We needed a solution that would allow our staff to get on with doing their jobs."

Aruba, a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company, was successful in the tender process, with the help of trusted partner Correct Communications, who designed, installed, tested and configured the Aruba infrastructure. The new network was rolled out quickly and without disruption to the staff at the ANAO.

802.11AC WI-FI MEETS NEEDS FOR MOBILITY

To meet current needs of the business and provide an even greater emphasis on mobility in the future, the ANAO deployed an enterprise Wi-Fi network including Aruba 802.11ac indoor access points, which were limited to a one-metre coverage window outside the organisation's building. This was purpose designed to ensure maximum security.

The ANAO also implemented Aruba AirWave for optimising Wi-Fi experiences, and ClearPass for strong and enhanced security.

"The powerful combination of ClearPass and AirWave handles all of our detection, service monitoring and encryption across the network, as well as authenticated guest management," he says.

Separating and managing traffic made easy

The ANAO has a split network on its premises – one for guests and another which is protected and hardened for the use of internal staff only.

Aruba's ClearPass technology automates and simplifies the provisioning of network access for guests, but also provides expansive security features that keep enterprise traffic separate from guest traffic.

"When guests come into the building, they are permitted to use the guest Wi-Fi, and this is also provided to staff for their secondary BYOD devices," says Pettigrove. "In addition, from time to time we have contractors in our office who also use their own computers and use Citrix to access our system."

"For us, a standout feature of Aruba is ClearPass' built-in integration with third party security solutions, such as Citrix," he adds. "It allows our team to manage all of the mobile devices and applications used on the network from one platform."

SMOOTH IMPLEMENTATION

The Aruba network was rolled out by the ANAO over a period of three months. "The process was seamless and without any issues," Pettigrove says. "We conducted proximity testing, as we wanted to restrict coverage to a limit of one metre outside the building. This meant optimising Wi-Fi power up and down on the edge. This was the only tweaking we did, the rest of the network rolled out very smoothly."

As the ANAO's staff spend approximately three solid months in the field at other agencies, they rely on Citrix for application synchronisation, and also run Blackberry Work BBM for messaging on Android and iOS.

"We also use Skype for Business and IM running through Skype," he adds. "We are a very collaborative environment, and the new network has enabled us to focus on this and become even more collaborative."

Security critical

The most important outcome from the new infrastructure is its strong emphasis on security. Aruba's suite of security features gives the ANAO confidence in its network and allows them to get on with the job at hand.

"Security is the number one issue for us, and that is something our new Aruba network answers," Pettigrove emphasises. "It's all about reputational risk. We audit 250 government agencies, and if there is a security breach, they are unable to give us the information we need to do our job."

Productivity up, costs down

Pettigrove estimates the new infrastructure has lead to a 15 per cent improvement in productivity and efficiency outcomes, as well as a reduction in IT support costs, which he estimates have fallen by five per cent.

"From the Auditor General, through to our service groups and corporate management branch, the feedback has been resoundingly positive. Staff not only feel more efficient and productive, but are also more collaborative using the Aruba solution," he says.

PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

As the ANAO continues to encourage digital collaboration and supports a growing mobile workforce, Pettigrove and his team look forward to working closely with Aruba to support the business with a highly secure and scalable wireless network.

"Our Aruba network is future-proofed for our growing mobility needs, while maintaining a high level of security, which is a necessity in our line of work. We are confident that as the business grows and changes, so too will our network," Pettigrove adds.