

South Yorkshire Police



South Yorkshire Police Standardises on EMC Information Lifecycle Management

Police forces across the UK have the South Yorkshire Police under surveillance. They are keen to learn more about how this leading UK police authority is on track to achieve information technology cost savings of over £1.1 million between 2001 and 2006. There is overwhelming evidence that the answer lies with the high availability, dual-site EMC Symmetrix data centre strategy. Or the efficient, high performance EMC Network Attached Storage (NAS) environment. Or the EMC Centera Content Addressed Storage (CAS) solution. The truth is that it's all of them. By standardising on an integrated EMC Information Lifecycle Management strategy, South Yorkshire Police is delivering the right level of protection, replication and recovery—at the lowest possible cost.

With a commitment to deliver 'Justice with Courage', South Yorkshire Police is one of the UK's leading police forces patrolling 600 square miles of South Yorkshire. This covers 1.3 million citizens, the main conurbations of Sheffield, Doncaster, Barnsley and Rotherham and 80 miles of motorway. Formed in 1974, the police force today comprises 3,500 officers and 1,700 civilian support staff who are supplemented by 193 Special Constables.

Successful policing thrives on timely, accurate information and with data growing at 20 percent annually, South Yorkshire Police has no shortage of it. The data growth is arising from all quarters: its crime management system, operational intelligence, command and control system, email system and day-to-day finance and administration applications have all undergone transformation in recent years. Recorded crime is captured, analysed, disseminated and shared electronically; compliance legislation demands that information be stored for longer periods; and soon, electronic imaging for documents, voice recordings and vehicle number plate recognition will become the standard.

“Everything the Force does is concentrated on the fast, continual retrieval of information,” says Roy France, IT Manager, South Yorkshire Police. “And we need to be certain that information is always available year after year. For example, an individual was recently stopped for motoring offences, he gave the officer false identification details, however on further investigation it was discovered they had outstanding convictions for a serious offence from 20 years ago. Although this case shows clearly that information like this needs to be stored for very long periods of time, it also shows how valuable this information remains over that time period and that rapid access to all our information is critical. We are continually tasked to deliver best value information technology, it therefore makes sense to move older information to different online storage media that still provides the right levels of protection, replication and recovery at the lowest possible cost. That’s why we adopted an EMC Information Lifecycle Management strategy.”



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—Roy France, IT Manager, South Yorkshire Police

Dual-site disaster recovery program

A cornerstone of the South Yorkshire Police’s Information Lifecycle Management strategy is a dual-site disaster recovery program. The police force has deployed two EMC Symmetrix 8430 systems, connected by Brocade Fibre Channel switches to a heterogeneous server environment. Backup is provided by EMC Legato NetWorker. The environment runs critical applications—from Crime Management and Operational Intelligence, to Oracle Financial and HR applications. EMC SRDF replication software is used to mirror data between these two Symmetrix systems, one of which is based at the main Sheffield police headquarters, the other at a separate site. The emergency Command and Control System has a dedicated replication server.

“EMC has created a consolidated, high availability environment in which information can be easily captured, securely stored and quickly distributed throughout the police force,” France explains. “By reducing unscheduled system downtime, streamlining the cost of storage management and maintenance, reducing server investment and accelerating application testing and development, South Yorkshire Police is on track to save £1.1 million between 2001 and 2006.”



“Using the EMC NS700 our back-ups are now two hours quicker than they were before.”

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The Information Lifecycle Management strategy doesn’t end there though. The Force is experiencing unprecedented demand for IT—there are currently more than 70 development projects underway—and all the resulting data needs to be securely stored. This is achieved by classifying information according to its value to the Force, and defining policies to help determine the optimum service level and minimise costs. With this in mind, the Force has deployed an integrated network attached storage (NAS) solution, based on the EMC NS700—a high-performance integrated NAS device. This NS700 provides fast, highly available file and print services to 300 users and acts as a staging area for remote site backups.

France and his team have been impressed with the performance and ease of management of the NS700 and have also moved their Oracle 9i Linux development programme onto the NAS system. "Using the EMC NS700 our back-ups are now two hours quicker than they were before," he says. "We also intend to implement EMC Legato RepliStor for real-time replication and centralisation of remote site data. This will greatly reduce the administration burden of supporting information management operations at the 23 remote sites, contributing to South Yorkshire Police's cost saving programme."



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EMC-Oracle RapidClone

South Yorkshire Police's crime management, crime record systems, operational intelligence and other critical systems, all exist in an Oracle 9i and EMC Symmetrix environment. To ensure data protection the force creates copies, or 'clones' of this data. To overcome performance issues that can exist from cloning, EMC and Oracle created RapidClone, which clones a point-in-time mirror image of the data without interruption of the production environment. France stated that "in the event of a server failure the duties of 3,000 police officers would be impacted unless it was using RapidClone to provide 24x7 data availability".

To complete this showcase Information Lifecycle Management strategy, South Yorkshire Police is now deploying an EMC Centera Content Addressed Storage (CAS) solution. The Freedom of Information Act, together with other legislation, demands that data is retained for longer and longer periods and the Force will use the EMC Centera to store its growing volumes of fixed content—unchanging digital assets such as email which need to be retained for active reference and long-term value. EMC Legato EmailXtender will be used alongside Centera to automatically collect, organise, retain and retrieve email messages. And EMC Legato DiskXtender will automatically move data from primary storage to secondary storage, while maintaining transparent access. "The blend of Centera and EMC Legato software will play a crucial role in storing emails and other data for extended periods. It represents a next generation content addressed storage solution that meets the demands of today's growing legislation. This unified system will offer unrivalled functionality, guaranteed data authenticity, scalability and low total cost of ownership."

So what lies ahead?

"RapidClone technology in conjunction with EMC SRDF synchronous replication will also greatly assist South Yorkshire Police's planned upgrade to Oracle 11i E-Business Suite in early 2005. RapidClone will create a point-in-time mirror image of the data, reducing migration time by an expected three weeks" says France.

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Produced in the UK.