



## CASE STUDY

# NC PROTECT™

## SAFEGUARDING MISSION-CRITICAL DATA ACCESS AND SHARING IN DEPLOYED OPERATIONAL MILITARY ENVIRONMENTS

### QUICK FACTS

#### Organization

Australian Department  
of Defence

#### Industry

Military / Defence

#### Challenges

Needed a more effective way to secure the collaboration and sharing of files and prevent accidental data loss while maintaining need to know principles and controlling the releasability of files in SharePoint.

#### Solution

NC Protect™ for SharePoint

#### Benefits

- Dynamically control access to classified information with ABAC policies
- Enforces 'need-to-know principles' for classified data
- Reduced the level of IT effort required for multicoalition information sharing
- Created a repeatable solution for managing information access and security across the DIE

### Background

Defence is crucial to any sovereign nation. The Australian Department of Defence (Defence) is no exception. Its mission is to defend Australia and its national interests, promote security and stability in the world, and support the Australian community as directed by the Government. The secure collaboration and protection of mission critical information between the Australian Department of Defence, coalition partners and Government agencies is paramount to its success.

Defence was looking for a more secure way to collaborate and share files, increase file security and prevent accidental data loss while maintaining need to know principles and controlling the releasability of files in SharePoint. Defence uses SharePoint in the Defence Information Environment (DIE) for all documentation and file sharing. Their SharePoint instances support each deployment, and it may contain classified information or content that is of interest to certain communities of interest on the DIE.

They needed a more effective method for controlling access and protecting data that would reduce the level of effort on IT in releasing content to Australian and coalition partners, as well as audit file access within the DIE.

### Securing mission critical collaboration in SharePoint Dynamically with ABAC

Defence had used the predecessor to NC Protect (Security Sheriff) so they were familiar with the product which was originally introduced to them by Microsoft.

Darren Milne, DIE Design Authority, Department of Defence said, "NC Protect is an improvement on the earlier product. The way in which it dynamically enforces the security rules for accessing files is leading edge."

NC Protect applies attribute-based access control (ABAC) and dynamic, policy-based enforcement to solve to Defence collaboration concerns, as well as provides auditing capabilities. NC Protect discovers, classifies and secures unstructured data including files, messages and chat content. Access and security are dynamically adjusted based on real-time comparison of attributes including user context and file content to make sure that users access, use and share files according to organizational regulations and policies.

It enforces 'need-to-know principles' to ensure only the right users have access to Classified and other information in connection with official duties, regardless of their security clearance level or other approvals, when collaborating via SharePoint.

Brigadier General Warren Gould, Director General Systems and Integration, Department of Defence, said, "With NC Protect we can increase our collaboration by automatically controlling access to classified information. Before NC Protect, we had to lock everything down so very few users could access content to the extent that it inhibited our ability to collaborate with our coalition partners in theatre."

"NC Protect leverages what we know about a user so we can control who can access classified information using these attributes. We can enable far greater collaboration because we are able to automatically enforce rules to ensure that only people with the right clearance level, from an organization we recognize as trusted, can access classified information."

## Rolling Out NC Protect Across the DIE

Milne said, "The environment that DIE replaced had been running the previous version of NC Protect (Security Sheriff) since 2016 and provided a desired state for collaboration within the DIE. The new NC Protect implementation with its added dynamic, ABAC capabilities is now our pattern for the deployed environment."

archTIS worked with Defence to define their objectives and write and test the security rules to ensure enforcement of security policies automatically and dynamically. As part of the project, archTIS also delivered: staff training file and user attribute mapping and policy creation; file access policy maturity process; and end user onboarding and acceptance process.

As a result, Defence has reduced the level of IT effort required to release content to Australian and coalition partners by leveraging ABAC and policy-based enforcement. IT is able to create the policy once in NC Protect and apply it across all of the content within SharePoint to manage access to and protection of sensitive content.

Complex sharing scenarios can be managed with fewer, dynamic rules. This decreases the level of effort and steps required by the IT team to achieve the result within a traditional role-based access control (RBAC) SharePoint environment. It also provides a complete audit trail of document access and usage, as well as any policy changes, for security purposes.

Additional file level protection capabilities include built-in redaction capabilities to remove or redact classified and sensitive information at the paragraph, sentence or down to the word level.

## Summary

Defence now has a more effective way to secure the collaboration and sharing of files and prevent accidental data loss while maintaining need to know principles and controlling the releasability of files in SharePoint using NC Protect.



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