



# Command and Control Centre for West Midlands St John Ambulance

**St John Ambulance West Midlands Region is part of St John Ambulance, which is a national charity providing first aid and other ambulance services. Every November it's personnel work across the region attending over 80 organised Bonfire Night celebrations, So when it was decided they needed a Command and Control Centre to manage the whole operation they turned to Xcomm.**

## Background

St John Ambulance West Midlands asked Xcomm to turn its Coventry base into a Command and Control Centre to manage its vital work over the Bonfire Night period. The service would manage the deployment of 250 highly trained St John Ambulance personnel throughout the West Midlands as they provided emergency medical support for everything from minor injuries to life and death medical emergencies at over 80 organised Bonfire celebrations.

## The Challenge

The request to provide this service was made in September. In less than eight weeks Xcomm needed to upgrade the internet connectivity, add diversity and install a Local Area Network (LAN). This would support the Emergency Operators within the Command and Control Centre with both telephony and internet access and ensure the site was connected via diverse networks, minimising any risk of interruption over the days it was required.

## The Solution

Connectivity to the site had been previously provided by a single aDSL circuit providing just 7 Mbps download and 1.5 Mbps upload. In addition, the internal network infrastructure was limited to a simple LAN in a small office and wireless connectivity was provided by a standard residential router.

## AT A GLANCE

### Challenges

- Create a Command and Control centre to manage 250 personnel across the West Midlands
- Less than 8 weeks to upgrade internet connectivity, add diversity and install a LAN

### Benefits

- Service levels not experienced before
- Control centre had access to essential databases and resources





Xcomm installed its FibreLink vDSL service to provide connectivity of 80 Mbps, as well as upgrading the internal LAN with Cisco PoE managed switches and high powered Wireless Access Points throughout the site. Redundancy was provided by a 2WAY connection to the KA-SAT broadband satellite, maintaining a secondary circuit of 20 Mbs.

Xcomm's telephony solution is a cloud-based telephony service residing across multiple diversely located data centres in London and other UK locations. The service is run within Virtual Machine environments (VM Ware) and therefore not necessarily in any one place. Platforms are diversely located across multiple locations to provide location diversity as well as system diversity. The system is mirrored to other DC's adding further layers of security and availability.

The solution provided and implemented for St John Ambulance included; the connection of Cisco desk phones to all users in the Command and Control Centre, with additional capacity for more should the need occur; the provision of specialist 0300 numbers; the development of incoming call routing to ensure callers made contact with the best person to assist them as soon as possible, together with a full wallboard so that senior team members could immediately see the status of all calls as well as their geographic source and type. For security and training full call recording was implemented.

### **The Results**

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Coventry, Councillor Michael Hammon visited the Command and Control Centre on Bonfire Night.

Xcomm provided St John Ambulance West Midlands with a state-of-the-art Command and Control Centre at service levels it had not experienced before. New services like high-speed data enabled satellite sites, like the Coventry office, to interconnect with the main St John Ambulance systems and networks, giving members immediate access to essential databases and resources. This has never been experienced previously. Satellite redundancy added the re-assurance that this site was truly always-online.

Hosted telephony allowed St John Ambulance to implement a complete Command and Control Centre with fully redundant voice connectivity to their volunteers on the ground for the first time. This provided the volunteers assurance that support was always available should it be required.

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