

## CASE STUDY

# LevelBlue's Consulting and Professional Services helps the UK Ministry of Defence prepare to defend against a cyberattack

*The United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence (MOD) wanted to adopt the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework but wanted to deliver the training in a refreshing and innovative way so they reached out to LevelBlue to develop and deliver a specialized Crisis Simulation to fit its specific need.*

### Client spotlight

The UK MOD is tasked with protecting the UK, its territories, values and interests at home and overseas by developing strong armed forces and in partnership with allies to ensure our security, support our national interests and safeguard our prosperity. All branches of the UK Armed Forces report to the MOD and rely on it to develop training methods that the MOD then passes down to the operational level.



## The challenge

Simon Harrison, Army Principal Security Advisor, explained that the MOD wanted to adopt the NIST framework but needed to inspire and educate personnel in decision making roles, both military and civilian, to drive behavioral changes in identifying risks with systems and responding to cyber incidents. Therefore, as part of the initial exploratory process, the MOD looked to NIST to supply the necessary framework and used LevelBlue's Consultant to deliver the tailored Crisis Simulation through a number of workshops.

*"The training was PowerPoint heavy, dull, functional and did not bring to life why you would want to move to NIST," Harrison said.*

Harrison had a previous relationship with a few people at LevelBlue, and they explained how the company had created and conducted workshops around regulation and compliance for the banking industry to create materials and experiences geared specifically for that vertical market.

LevelBlue said it could create a similar scenario with NIST, bringing the framework to life in a manner that would inspire and interest MOD decision-makers and senior leadership. This methodology was critical because the training supplied by NIST was aimed more at the cyber practitioner level via PowerPoint, and the MOD required something that could also appeal to operational teams, those on the programmatic and in the chain of command.

The MOD conducted a competition to test the marketplace, which resulted in contracting LevelBlue to deliver three workshops.

## The solution

LevelBlue developed a NIST Crisis Simulation specifically for the MOD to conduct the workshops. Each consisted of half-day events spread over three days and were held at Army Headquarters in Andover and conducted by representatives from LevelBlue's Consulting and Professional Services division. Attendees were from across the Army and other areas of the MOD.

A workshop began by focusing on NIST's background and was designed to move the attending MOD personnel through a scenario centered on a cyberattack on a Corporate System supporting the Army. The purpose was to show the attack's impact and how the MOD could use the NIST Framework throughout a cyber incident's defense, response, and recovery phases.

Harrison said the workshops, each attended by 40 to 50 people, went beyond a basic tabletop exercise and were very well received and effective. He credits this success to the fact that LevelBlue tailored the curriculum to the exact situation desired by the MOD, noting that if the company had based the lesson on a more generic target, say the healthcare sector, those attending might not have bought into the experience.

Adding realism and credibility to the event was the fact that LevelBlue employees who were former members of the UK military were in charge of each workshop. These people were able to speak directly to those attending the workshop in a language they understood. The three events were so successful that the Army has contracted with LevelBlue for 10 additional workshops to be held later this year, and the Army will keep LevelBlue in mind for future cybersecurity purchases.