Wellington City Council

Consolidated systems provide round-the-clock view of 150 sites – case study

GALLAGHER

Wellington is the southernmost capital city in the world and is the centre of New Zealand government. With the second highest population in the country, Wellington is a large coastal city with a diverse range of facilities and attractions. A large portion of those facilities and attractions are the responsibility of the Wellington City Council (WCC) – a local body government organisation employing around 1,800 staff.

As with all councils that manage a large number of facilities on behalf of their city, the WCC has a broad range of security needs and an accountability to the rate-paying citizens of Wellington. Since 2001, WCC has met those security needs with Gallagher's integrated security solutions.

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Consolidated systems, one platform

With 1,800 employees and 150 sites located across Wellington, the council has a large number of people and assets to secure. With sites including libraries, swimming pool complexes, community and recreation centres, housing blocks, a city zoo, event facilities, and a multi-story central office building, the security requirements vary considerably.

"We're responsible for securing and monitoring all 150 sites around the clock," said Chetan Prasad, Security Manager for Wellington City Council. "It's imperative we have a reliable system that provides us with a complete view of activity at all sites."

In order to deliver this, WCC uses Gallagher's Command Centre central management platform to manage security across numerous sites.

Utilizing a single security platform has been a long-term objective of the council. Initially operating six different systems, WCC developed a five year plan to migrate all 150 sites on to the Gallagher system.

Chetan links the Council's growth with their need to become smarter about how security is managed. "Gallagher's system has enabled us to standardise our infrastructure and bring all elements including alarm management, fire systems, vehicle bollards, video surveillance, facility and carpark access, reporting, visitor management, and more, on to one platform. That was a key factor in why we chose Gallagher initially, and why we will continue with them as our primary security solution."

Securing a city and protecting staff

Visibility is critical when you have 150 independent sites to secure. An integration between Command Centre and over 400 cameras located throughout the WCC's facilities provides live video footage to the security team.

"Our camera integration with Command Centre means that in addition to being able to continuously observe critical areas, any site alarm that is triggered will immediately bring up a live video feed for the security staff in our control room. This visibility is invaluable for us in activating appropriate responses and, in the event of a crime, being able to provide crucial evidence to police," said Prasad.

In addition to securing facilities and assets, WCC secures and protects staff working at each of its sites. From initiatives like integrating building elevators with access control to prohibit unauthorised entry, to the integration of panic buttons at each site, WCC is utilising Gallagher security technology to ensure staff are protected and that in the event of an incident, a rapid security response is initiated.

Fast facts

Industry: Government
Business type: City Council
Number of sites: 150
Number of doors: 1,500
Number of employees: 1,800
Number of cardholders: Aprox 4000 (inc. contractors)
Gallagher technology used: Command Centre, T-Series Readers, Visitor Management

Key security objectives

- Consolidate systems in to one integrated manageable platform

- Eliminate the security threat and cost incurred by lost keys

- Operate a system capable of providing detailed activity reports

- Restrict and manage public access to secure areas

Cost savings

According to Prasad, the Gallagher system is delivering cost savings to the Council in several key areas. The first area relates to the shift from traditional key systems to smart card technology. "With such a large staff base and so many sites, we inevitably faced challenges with traditional keys being lost or not returned by staff or contractors" said Prasad. Rekeying a site cost the Council approximately $4,000 each time – an expense that has now been eliminated by the replacement of traditional lock and key systems with electronic access control.

"Now if a card is lost or not returned, we simply deactivate it in our system. Not only is it a solution that saves us money," said Prasad. "It is also a solution that can be applied instantly." Similarly, the ability for security personnel to assess a site and reprogram an alarm remotely, also saves the council considerable costs associated with dispatching guards to site.

The second area where cost savings are apparent relates to intelligent automation. An integration with WCC's HR system means that as staff leave employment, their cardholder profiles are automatically disabled in the system.

The use of Gallagher's Visitor Management solution means that appropriate staff are automatically notified if a guest or contractor fails to sign out or return a key. These two automations alone save the WCC security team approximately 4-5 days of cardholder administration each year.

A long term partnership

In 2014, following 13 years as a Gallagher customer, WCC elected to take a 10 year Software Maintenance agreement with Gallagher. The Software Maintenance contract ensures the Council have access to the latest developments as soon as they are released, keeping WCC at the forefront of security technology. "Software Maintenance makes good business sense," says Prasad. "It gives us access to a comprehensive range of licensable features and benefits, and ensures our upgrade costs are effectively distributed." Prasad describes the Council's confidence in Gallagher as another significant factor in the 10 year agreement. "We have found Gallagher's security solution to be a reliable and versatile, highly secure, modern system. It has supported our significant growth to date, and we are committed to using Gallagher systems for the Wellington City Council's future."

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