

Data Destruction and Asset Disposal Case Study



- Client:** UK Border Agency
- Assignment:**
- On-Site Destruction of Computer Media and Networking Equipment with HMG Protective Marking of IL4 Confidential.
 - Decommissioning of Data Centre Equipment
- Location:** London Heathrow Airport



A Government Agency Migrating to the Cloud

The UK Border Agency (UKBA) is the border control agency of the British Government and an Executive Agency of the Home Office. It is one of the largest law enforcement agencies in the UK.

The Border Agency is responsible for UK borders, passport and customs controls; internal immigration controls including asylum, and visa issue in overseas posts.

To support its operations, the Border Agency has an advanced IT infrastructure, parts of which are in the process of being moved to cloud-based platforms.



The Principal Challenges

As part of this platform migration, the Border Agency needed to decommission one of its data centres at Heathrow in a secure manner. The principal challenges faced were to:

- Witness and verify the destruction of sensitive data with an HMG Government Protective Marking of IL4 Confidential.
- Ensure destruction in compliance with CESG Information Assurance Standard No 5
- Destroy network configuration data in switches and network components
- Process large quantities of media including nearly 1,000 hard drives and 250 data tapes
- Remove from site and dispose of non-data bearing IT equipment such as computer carcasses, servers, printers etc.
- Complete the task in a very short timescale.

The Border Agency Team conducted a full procurement exercise to select a suitable supplier. Data Eliminate was chosen as it had the required HM Government approvals from bodies such as CESG, The Ministry of Defence and the Catalogue of Security Equipment. Data Eliminate also had the ability to carry out the destruction of all media and data bearing network components and switches in the security of the Border Agency's premises. Finally, the price quoted by Data Eliminate was competitive and the company offered the flexibility the procurement team felt essential.

Data Eliminate's Solution

Prior to carrying out the work, a Data Eliminate director made a site visit to confirm logistics and planning for the destruction and disposal operation.

To complete the task, Data Eliminate deployed the following to the Border Agency's Heathrow site:

- A CESG Approved Degausser
- A Vehicle Mounted Mobile Shredding Unit
- Tools and Equipment for Dismantling and Destroying
- A Team of Data Destruction Engineers
- A Team of Operatives and Vehicles to Pack, Load and Remove 20 Pallets of IT Equipment

Data Bearing items were put through a set procedure. Each media item was given a unique number and these were tracked through the destruction process. Media items were first of all degaussed and marked as so. Then they were shredded to small particles. At each stage, a Border Agency official was present to witness each item being processed and check them off against a master manifest.

Data Eliminate engineers removed data bearing components from networking equipment including switches. The data bearing components were then shredded under the supervision of a Border Agency official.

In total, Data Eliminate's team were on site for just over 3 days.



Successful Conclusion of Project

At the completion of the project, Border Agency officials had been able to witness the destruction of every data bearing item and were on schedule to move out of their building on time.

Data Eliminate issued the following documentation:

- A Certificate of Destruction confirming destruction in compliance with CESG Infosec Standard No 5 and showing the serial number of each hard drive destroyed
- A Hazardous Waste Consignment Note covering items such as TFT Flat Screens.
- A Waste Transfer Note confirming the recycling/disposal of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).

"Our aim is to provide our customer with exactly the shape and type of service they need. Our on-site destruction capability means that sensitive data can be destroyed in the safety of the customer's premises. That is exactly what the Border Agency required," explains Julian Fraser, Director at Data Eliminate Ltd.

