



Ministry of Justice (UK)

Increasing Voter Turnout

Description

In 2006, the Ministry of Justice of the United Kingdom selected ScytI's electronic voting technology for their 4-year Electoral Modernization Program after a thorough review of ScytI's technology. As part of this Program, ScytI's solution was successfully used by Rushmoor Borough Council and South Bucks District Council to allow their citizens to securely cast binding votes remotely over the Internet during their May 2007 local elections. Paper-based voting and postal-voting were also valid voting channels, used in parallel to the electronic one. The results have been very positive, including several soldiers voting from different countries.

Objectives

The main objective of the Ministry of Justice of the United Kingdom was to increase voter turnout by providing voters with more convenient voting channels. In order to measure the security and the impact on voter turnout the Ministry of Justice organized a number of electoral modernization pilot projects across UK.

Characteristics

The security for remote voting was sustained at four different levels:

- Application level Cryptography.
- 'Conventional security': all the voters accessed the portal using SSL. The remote connections to the servers were done through Virtual Private Networks, and the data centre implemented a Cisco firewall. A logical isolation of the front-ends (visible to the voters) from the servers performing the cryptographic protocol and storing the votes was also implemented. Besides, periodic back-ups were done during the election, and a penetration testing was performed by a third company in order to harden all the system components (web servers, operating systems...).
- Physical security: all the accesses to servers and other sensitive components were restricted to authorized people only.
- Audit: the system was reviewed and approved by the customer before the election took place.

Testimony

"We have a large number of commuters and service personnel in our borough, and have had extremely positive feedback on the convenience the internet voting systems lent to the process, both at home and abroad. We feel this pilot was a success and established the principle of internet voting for many electors of Rushmoor: we hope that we can be involved in future schemes."

Andrew Colver - Head of Democratic Services, Rushmoor - UK

