



Sophos Managed Detection and Response provides first-class expertise to maximise cybersecurity at the **Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority**



IPSA is the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, the independent body that regulates and administers the business costs and decides the pay and pensions of the 650 elected MPs and their staff in the UK

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“Ransomware is probably our biggest threat due to the sensitive data we have. This was a clear, known risk. It was actually the unknown that caused me more worry, and to protect us from the unknown we needed access to specialist expertise.”

Dan Marsh, Head of IT, IPSA

As the cybersecurity landscape became increasingly complex over time, the IPSA IT team realised it needed constant access to additional IT security expertise to keep the organisation safe. They also wanted to release their team from everyday cybersecurity monitoring to allow them to focus on tasks that added more value.

IPSA's Head of IT, Dan Marsh, leads a small team at IPSA. Around three years ago they implemented Sophos Intercept X to protect their estate and were delighted with the ease of implementation and the level of security it provided. They are now moving towards a cloud-based infrastructure using software-as-a-service solutions and their IT security requirements are shifting as a result.

Business challenges

It was challenging for the IPSA IT team to deliver the required IT security protection in-house while managing other projects. IPSA was managing multiple cybersecurity products all with different update cycles, from multiple vendors, and some of them did not work well together. It took too much time to maintain and manage the systems. It was also taking too long to investigate and resolve the various threats these systems identified.

The IPSA IT team had limited expertise in cybersecurity, so the time taken to manage security threats prevented them from focusing on other more proactive IT developments that IPSA could benefit from.

IPSA needed to be confident that their systems and data were protected, and they required a more proactive approach to IT security. The team identified they needed an external cybersecurity solution that was easy to manage and could work across their entire IT estate, as well as providing instant access to expertise and resource they could rely on to maximise protection.



The solution

IPSA decided to implement Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR), a 24/7 solution that proactively identifies, investigates and resolves threats, all delivered by an expert team as part of a managed service.

The organisation had confidence in Sophos because they had already deployed Intercept X a few years before. It also meant that they were familiar with the systems which made an easy installation even easier. As a small team, they were most excited about the additional pool of expertise to call on to secure their networks and data. Sophos MDR would provide two crucial aspects:

- **More proactive and more effective IT security provision**

- **More time for Dan's team to focus on other activities, safe in the knowledge that security was being looked after by the Sophos MDR team**

Following a very simple installation, Sophos immediately provided feedback on IPSA's configuration settings to improve cybersecurity – delivering value from the very outset.

Business benefits

The team at IPSA lists multiple benefits as a result of implementing Sophos MDR:

Peace of mind

Maintaining IT security across the entire IPSA IT estate was becoming increasingly challenging for numerous reasons: the IT infrastructure was

changing to support new ways of working; security threats were increasing in number and complexity; threats could happen at any time, taking focus away from other activities to ensure a resolution.

By investing in Sophos MDR, IPSA has shared IT security burdens with Sophos, confident that they are the best people to identify, investigate and resolve security threats.

Increased accountability

As a public funded body IPSA is heavily audited, so having Sophos MDR and its rigorous reports satisfies the organisation's Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee. Thanks to Sophos, they can now tell the Committee, with real authority and confidence, that their data and systems are appropriately protected.

Time savings

According to Dan: "We're a small team of generalist IT professionals, so the ever-growing demands of maintaining security took up more and more of our time. With Sophos MDR, our IT team has been released to work on more proactive developments which bring added value to the organisation."

Specialist security resource

The Sophos MDR team brings a deep and highly valuable understanding of the security landscape to IPSA and provides the extra level of expertise that IPSA wanted.

Cost savings

IPSA regulates MPs' business costs, so it has to be open and transparent when it comes to its own finances, and providing value for money was a crucial requirement in this project. Centralising and consolidating security provision under the Sophos Central platform has resulted in cost savings and improvements in performance and efficiency, delivering on the value-for-money criteria.

Ultimately, with Sophos MDR, IPSA has access to up-to-date and relevant intelligence, giving the organisation a far more proactive approach to security. By releasing the team from the daily monitoring and resolution of security threats, they are now able to move the organisation forward with IT developments that support and further business operations.



"Sophos brings us first-class security insight from experience gained across the wider security landscape. Their authority and understanding gives us great confidence that they're all over security. I would definitely recommend them."

Dan Marsh, Head of IT, IPSA