

Secure Telework

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During the COVID-19 Pandemic, a large part of the Federal work force was required to work at home. Users needing access to classified networks needed a rapidly deployable, scalable solution. Traditional solutions consisting of Type 1 encryption are expensive, difficult to manage, and require costly certifications to manage, maintain, and upgrade.

As an alternative, PacStar Enterprise CSfC Solutions (ECS) provide gateway services for classified networks using COTS products to meet the security and configuration requirements of the National Security Agency (NSA) Commercial Solutions for Classified (CSfC) program. It enables DoD and Federal organizations to transmit classified information using commercial encryption components.

PacStar ECS enables executive mobility (i.e. laptops and smartphones), site-to-site extensions of classified networks (i.e. expeditionary kits, branch offices, multi-building campus), and classified campus area wireless connections. For the case of secure telework, a secure EUD is the most cost-effective approach. The Secured with INTEGRITY Multi-Layer VPN Client (SwIC) is built on standard Dell or HP laptops that use the Intel Core i3/i5/i7/i9 processors with high-performance hardware capabilities, to provide an excellent end-user experience, as well as sufficient performance to operate as a thin or thick client.

The SwIC Laptop leverages the Intel hardware set for security and performance coupled with the INTEGRITY RTOS that is the first and only software to receive the NSA's highest evaluation and certification by the National Information Assurance Partnership (NIAP) to EAL6+ High Robustness under the international Common Criteria standard (ISO/IEC 15408). Management of both the data center architecture and the secure end user device clients is facilitated by PacStar IQ-core software. IQ-core is a network management system that offers a "single pane of glass" to monitor and manage many different technologies. From simple ping connectivity and SNMP monitoring of all IP devices to wizards for configuration, terminal access, scripting, and full management of many devices.

In a CSfC environment, IQ-core simplifies configuration and management of devices, VPN tunnels, certificate authorities and certificates, and SwIC clients. While much of the VPN configuration and certificate management is automated it is also fully transparent and allows viewing of all configuration settings. There are separate IQ-Core instances in each of the Black, Gray and Red networks. The typical times for manually provisioning a EUD is several hours provisioning the EUD using IQ-Core can be accomplished in as little as 15 minutes. PacStar Enterprise CSfC Solutions make the rapid deployment of remote, secure telework achievable and very cost effective.