

# Bristow Group: Boosting productivity of a mobile workforce with secure access to enterprise platforms

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For many enterprises, mobility is one of a number of strategies for creating a competitive business environment. For Bristow Group, the leading provider of industrial aviation services in the world, mobility is the whole point. More than half of the company's nearly 5,000 employees are either flying or maintaining helicopters on any given day.

## Highly mobile

Bristow Group helicopter pilots and support crews transport workers to and from offshore oil and gas rigs, and provide search and rescue as well as aircraft support services to both government and civil organizations across the globe. Bristow operates from bases in the UK, Norway, Nigeria, Australia, the U.S. Gulf of Mexico, and most other major offshore oil and gas producing regions of the world. The company also provide search and rescue services to the private sector in Australia, Canada, Guyana, Norway, Russia and Trinidad and to the public sector in the UK.

Like other global companies with a mobile workforce, one of Bristow Group's biggest challenges is maintaining security in its day-to-day operations while equipping employees with the tools for maximum productivity, even when they are not in the office. Another challenge is managing the administrative and compliance requirements associated with having many enterprise-wide and mission-critical applications in an increasingly complex hybrid IT environment. The greater the number of applications, the greater the need for providing an enterprise identity management solution that prevents company data from getting into the wrong hands.

For Bristow's off-site workers, staying productive means being able to connect to critical enterprise applications, including the company's core SAP enterprise resource planning system, its human resource management platform, Workday, and its custom-built global flight operations solution, eFlight. Bristow knew that streamlining the management of the IT environment for both remote and headquartered employees would increase their productivity and add value to the business.



Bristow Group is the leading provider of industrial aviation services offering exceptional transportation, search and rescue (SAR) and aircraft support services, including helicopter maintenance and training, to government and civil organizations worldwide.

### Products and Services

- Azure
- SQL Server 2014

### Industry

Travel and Transportation

### Organization Size

Large (1,000 - 9,999 employees)

### Challenge

Maintaining security in its day-to-day operations while equipping employees with the tools for maximum productivity, even when they are not in the office.

### Solution

With the help of Microsoft, Bristow Group is simplifying its IT environment to increase productivity, security and compliance—and to ensure sustained forward flight as the company grows.

# Forward flight

To improve and simplify identity and access management for its on-premises and cloud-based applications, Bristow Group looked to Austin-based Edgile, a Microsoft partner and leading security and risk consulting services firm. As a part of the solution, Edgile installed and configured Azure Active Directory Premium, Azure Active Directory Application Proxy, and Azure Active Directory Connect, which provided Bristow employees with the capability to access enterprise applications from any device, anywhere in the world.

"Since the launch, we have been able to successfully integrate with SaaS applications, access on-premises applications, and move to Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online with no additional effort from a single sign-on perspective," says Bristow Group Productivity & Directory Services Manager, Kapil Mehta. "Our objective is to consolidate infrastructure, create one platform for all SaaS solutions and mobile applications, remove the need for multiple logons, and lower the cost of ownership of our technology. Azure Active Directory Premium makes life simpler for the business and for employees. It gives them access to enterprise applications from any device with a single sign-on that is secure and reliable. That is fundamental to increasing the adoption of cloud technology."

Despite the fact that Bristow Group's IT environment included some open-source technologies—including its on-premises JAVA-stack flight operations system named eFlight—Azure Active Directory works across the entire system. "We needed to know Azure Active Directory would allow single sign-on integration with our flight operations solution for pilots when they are not on-premises," says Mehta. "With Azure Active Directory Application Proxy, they can check their flight schedules no matter where they are."

With Azure Active Directory Premium, Bristow Group now has the capabilities for multifactor authentication; access control (dependent upon device health and user location); holistic security reports; audits; and alerts. Azure Active Directory makes the work of a busy and mobile workforce easier, secures data and protects access to the company's assets both in the cloud and on-premises. Having centralized password security standards across applications, with employees having to remember only one password, means the company's assets are safer. And Azure Active Directory Application Proxy gives Bristow Group secure remote access to core applications without the cost and complexity of using a virtual private network or other on-premises application publishing tools.

The benefits continue to trickle down. Fewer passwords to access applications means fewer service desk tickets associated with forgotten passwords and the challenge of managing different credentials for multiple business applications. Metrics about password reset from the Azure portal demonstrate the critical nature of self-service to Bristow Group's mobile workforce. Mobile employees receive a notification that their password is expiring and they can change it from their mobile phones. To date, 85 percent of employees are registered for password self-service, resulting in satisfied customers who no longer need to contact the service desk for assistance.



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## Kapil Mehta

Productivity & Directory Services Manager

Bristow Group Inc.

In addition to the positive impact Azure Active Directory has had on improving employees' working environment, the cloud-based service adds value by reducing the cost of hosting different identity and mobile device management infrastructure throughout the organization. Bristow's biggest challenge was managing different identities in different systems. A pilot had to manage multiple identities just to do his or her day-to-day job. All of these user accounts and passwords needed to meet security standards. By deploying Azure Active Directory Premium and Azure Active Directory Application Proxy, Bristow connected its mobile workers to critical applications so they could conduct logging and data sharing in a secure way. This deployment also enabled the IT team to simplify the effort needed to manage multiple systems and reduce its costs.

The adoption of Azure technologies in the organization provides a highly secure and scalable infrastructure that meets the changing demands of the business and adds measurable value. "Like many organizations, we use a hybrid model of on-premises and cloud technologies for provisioning essential services and solutions to the business," says Bristow Group Director of IT Infrastructure and Operations Gerry Wilson. "Implementing Azure Active Directory from Microsoft has been a major milestone to enabling our employees and external customers to remotely and securely access the global enterprise systems."

## Building a well-oiled machine

To further streamline its IT environment, Bristow Group wanted to simplify and centralize the administration of its Internet content management and web hosting platform and looked to Microsoft partner Silicus to implement a single cloud-based enterprise solution.

Silicus used Microsoft Azure App Service to build a load-balanced platform to develop test websites. By creating a staging environment, Silicus ensured a script-driven, automated deployment and continuous integration with auto-scale options. Content administrators can now use the templates and role-based content management capabilities in Azure to streamline communications on the websites, reduce hosting costs, eliminate on-premises servers, and consolidate the third-party hosting contracts that required ongoing resources and management.

"We used the content management platform on App Service to develop a dark site from which we could update internal and external stakeholders in the event of an incident," says Mehta. "The scalability of the solution allowed us to reduce the infrastructure once the incident was closed. In a traditional datacenter, this would have taken twice the amount of time and would have incurred infrastructure costs even when it was not in use. The App Service platform helped Bristow quickly develop a website and ramp down the infrastructure, saving time and money."



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### Kapil Mehta

Productivity & Directory Services  
Manager

Bristow Group Inc.

# Safe landing

With the help of Microsoft, Bristow Group is simplifying its IT environment to increase productivity, security and compliance—and to ensure sustained forward flight as the company grows. “Bristow Group and Microsoft have built a great, collaborative relationship,” says Mehta. “The feedback and solutions based on that relationship have sped up the solution process with engineers and the product team. Without Microsoft’s support, we would have not been able to deliver a state-of-the-art cloud solution to the business.”



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## Gerry Wilson

Director IT Infrastructure  
and Operations  
Bristow Group Inc.



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