EKA | CyberLock®

LEARN HOW AUSTRALIAN UTILITIES ARE MANAGING THEIR SITE ACCESS

OUR SUCCESS STORY

THE CHALLENGE

When Martin Johnson joined UPT Co as the new Asset & Audit Administrator, one of his first projects was auditing UPT Co's master key system used to secure access to substations and other key facilities. Martin's risk management audit identified several issues for swift resolution, including the system's expired patent. There were also over two-hundred keys that had been reported lost or stolen, however with the detailed audit it was identified that there were over three-hundred keys that were not recorded. This was quantified by comparing the total number of keys supplied by the contracted locksmith to UPT Co's internal records.

In many cases, lost keys are due to misplacement by current staff or change in contractors and don't usually pose an intentional threat to assets and services. However, this huge discrepancy of over three hundred keys was seen as a real security risk to UPT Co and the state's power network.

THE SOLUTION

A new traditional master key system would be expensive in the instance of new keys would inevitably be lost, and the same issues would emerge all over again. Martin was researching for alternative security solutions to mitigate this risk, when a chance encounter with a friend from a different company happened. This friend had an 'unusual' looking key on their key ring. This key was no doubt a CyberKey. The search was over and a trial of EKA CyberLock begun soon after.

With selected people involved the trial began on UPT Co communication sites. UPT Co started with thirty CyberKeys, twenty padlocks, and several door locks at five sites.

The trial lasted for three months and showed significant benefits from traditional master key systems especially with audit trails and frequently updated access permissions of CyberKeys. "Working with a new technology and understanding the nuances of a new system was a small hurdle to overcome during the trial, however the EKA CyberLock project team smoothed out the entire process and the trial went exceptionally well", says Martin.

Post-trial, EKA CyberLock proposed smart battery operated CyberKeys, with LAN authorisers as the communication devices allowing frequent updates of permissions to the CyberKeys, and several hundred electronic lock cylinders that were fitted across padlocks, doors, and gates. If a key is lost, Martin now simply deactivates its access on the CyberAudit management software. He can also set record and report instructions if it's used on any lock throughout UPT Co. Furthermore, he uses a timeout policy. If a key doesn't have its privileges reauthorised within the defined period, it no longer functions. For UPT Co, it's an effective security solution.

Company names, employee names and any locations mentioned have been changed for security reasons.
Please feel free to contact EKA CyberLock for more information and we can discuss more detail on a case-by-case basis.

THE RESULTS

UPT Co rolled out EKA CyberLock in over one hundred (100+) substations and communications sites. Martin says that "UPT Co now has over one thousand and five hundred (1,500) CyberKeys for approximately one thousand and two hundred (1,200) electronic lock cylinders on gates, doors and padlocks. EKA CyberLock secures UPT Co's network which extends all across Australia.

Martin, now the Senior Asset & Facilities Manager , "We have gone from a traditional master key system that has failed our security requirements and implemented EKA CyberLock. This has ensured our physical assets in the CBD or even in the remotest part of the state are completely auditable with user profiles loaded on the smart CyberKey ensuring our contractors and staff have timed access to the locks we give them. What's more, the electronic lock cylinders don't have a battery in them, so we never have to be concerned about changing low batteries across all of Australia."

More recently, UPT Co have acquired five of the award winning Validikey 20-key vault to add to its security arsenal. The Validikey 20-key vault have been successfully used by staff for the past several months. Two of these vaults have been installed in buildings where UPT Co shares fifty substations with another power network. UPT Co being the site manager, are required to give access to the other network employees and contractors. By converting more of these employees and contractors from infrequent access from dedicated CyberKeys, UPT Co now utilises mission keys which are short term use of onsite CyberKeys within the 20 key vault.

Martin concludes, "Previously, a CyberKey used to sit in a desk drawer for months before it was needed to be used which meant batteries could be flat and latest lock lists and permissions were not loaded – all of which prevented people from accessing a site. With the mission keys removed from the 20-key vaults, batteries are fully charged, latest lock lists are loaded, and using a test lock they can check to ensure the CyberKey will give access as required before they leave the area. If there are any issues we can rectify them on the spot by making any required changes." UPT Co have also installed another 20-key vault in the premises of one of their major contractors.

UPT Co have also deployed a Flex System across two sites utilising weatherised vaults and keypads to provide access for other industry partners who only require access at a site. The benefit of the Flex System is that UPT Co can issue one CyberKey within the weatherised vault, instead of eighty keys which are only used approximately once per year. UPT Co plan to roll out additional Flex Systems over the coming months.

Furthermore, UPT Co are currently trialling Bluetooth2 CyberKey with the CyberAudit Link smartphone application for practically real time audit trail and access control anywhere across Australia.

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