



“AS AN ACCREDITED, CLOUD-HOSTED SOLUTION THAT PROTECTS PERSONAL DATA, CRISIS HUB HAS HELPED BUILD THE FCO’S CONFIDENCE IN CLOUD HOSTING FOR THE FUTURE.”

Richard Hurst,
Co-founder and Director, Agile Byte

Who is FCO?

Sector: Central government

Headquarters: London

Size: ~14,000 people in 270 locations worldwide

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), a ministerial department, promotes the United Kingdom’s interests overseas, supporting our citizens and businesses around the globe.

SUPPORT BRITONS ABROAD DURING A CRISIS

If British nationals overseas are affected by a crisis, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) provides consular support. How does it do that? Using a technology platform, known as Crisis Hub, that enables it to capture information about, and communicate with, anyone who's affected.

The main challenges when building the Crisis Hub platform were:

- Enable international reach and access
- Keep the platform in the UK, to avoid putting personal data about British citizens at risk
- Ensure capacity can be quickly scaled up and down as crises arise and pass

SERVICES



Sovereignty and security



Capacity that scales in line with need



Procurement via G-Cloud

“Using cloud hosting meant we could make Crisis Hub accessible from any device connected to the internet.”

Richard Hurst,
Co-founder and Director,
Agile Byte

KEEPING CITIZENS' DATA IN THE UK

Given Crisis Hub's international reach, the FCO wanted to host it in the cloud. It chose UKCloud based on competitive pricing, technical capability and UK sovereignty.

“The FCO couldn't risk personal data about British nationals being held offshore, which would potentially make it vulnerable to other governments' surveillance programmes or legislation,” says Richard Hurst, Co-founder and Director of Agile Byte, a London-based IT delivery company.

Agile Byte oversaw delivery of the Crisis Hub platform. In line with the government's disaggregation principle, Crisis Hub was developed and provisioned by multiple service providers, so that costs and responsibilities were clear.

A SINGLE VERSION OF THE TRUTH

So how does Crisis Hub work? If a crisis occurs, British nationals in the affected area are prompted to provide their details. Whether information comes in by phone, web form or SMS, Crisis Hub captures and stores it all in one place.

Crisis Hub can prioritise people who need help most urgently. And if an evacuation is on the cards, it can integrate data from other sources to help with transport allocation.

The UKCloud platform makes it quick and easy for the FCO to scale capacity up during a crisis, then cut it back down once the crisis has passed. “We could actually test this with UKCloud, so the FCO knew for sure it would always have the right resources at the right time,” says Hurst.



Business benefits:

- **Streamlined consular support**

Crisis Hub helps consular services maintain contact with British nationals abroad affected by a crisis

- **Data security and protection**

UKCloud's assured, UK-based cloud platform maintains security and protection for the personal information about British nationals stored by Crisis Hub

- **Ready scalability**

The FCO can scale UKCloud platform capacity up during a crisis, then back down once it has passed