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Driver & Vehicle
Licensing
Agency



240 hours engineering time
saved annually



The UK’s Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency works smarter with Atlassian cloud

After five years of using on-prem Atlassian tools on the agency’s own AWS estate, DVLA had amassed over 800 Confluence and Jira seats and about 200 Jira projects, so they were prepared to dedicate significant time and energy to developing a migration strategy. Several months after their move to cloud, they’re experiencing less downtime, better security, and more effective collaboration.

INDUSTRY
Government

LOCATION
Europe, Middle East & Africa

NUMBER OF USERS
1200

ATLASSIAN PRODUCTS & APPS



Jira Software
Project and issue tracking



Confluence
Document collaboration



Atlassian Access
Security and control for the cloud



Confluence Cloud Migration Assistant
Move content, users, and groups to cloud



Bitbucket
Source code repository hosting service

Imagine a spreadsheet with nearly 100 million records, each on its own line. Hard to picture, right? That's how much information the UK's Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is responsible for. Their database – with more than 49 million driver records and over 40 million vehicle records – serves as the backbone of Britain's transport department. Operating a regulated government agency of its size is no small feat, and neither is managing its internal processes and procedures, all while maintaining the highest level of security across systems. So when DVLA decided to prioritize and manage maintenance overhead and hosting cost, plus free up engineering time, they knew a move to Atlassian Cloud Premium was their best option.

After five years of using on-prem Atlassian tools on the agency's own AWS estate, DVLA had amassed over 800 Confluence and Jira seats and about 200 Jira projects, so they were prepared to dedicate significant time and energy to developing a migration strategy. DVLA is tasked with getting the right drivers and vehicles taxed and on the road as simply, safely, and efficiently for the public as possible, so it was critical for their migration to run smoothly. They invested in a slew of test migrations, which helped them drive a painless transition, with great end-user feedback post-migration and 240 hours of valuable engineering time saved annually.

Due diligence prior to migration

To kick off the approval process to migrate to the cloud, DVLA Cloud Engineer Simon Logan and his team put together a business case and engaged internal stakeholders, including the procurement department, Agile Coaches, and the

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SIMON LOGAN
Cloud Engineer

Cyber Security and Information Assurance Group, early on in the process. And to make the migration journey smoother, DVLA tidied up their instance and evaluated their apps in the six months prior to the migration date.

“We disabled users who hadn’t authenticated for six weeks and we contacted admins of spaces and projects that appeared to be inactive,” says Simon. “Through that exercise, we managed to get rid of 10% of our total spaces and projects, which created a tidier instance prior to migration.”

With the help of the [Confluence Cloud Migration Assistant](#), DVLA migrated data to the trial cloud instance from their server user interface without any command-line effort. Their Jira instance was also copied over. “The extensive pre-planning phase helped us iron out any kinks in the process prior to migration, which has made it a much smoother process for us,” says Simon.

Less downtime and top-notch security in cloud

As a regulated government agency, DVLA is made or broken by its dependability, and Atlassian cloud provides the agency with the security, governance, and data privacy they need to maintain that trustworthiness. DVLA uses Active Directory (AD) for authentication, and Atlassian Access to link their AD instance to Atlassian cloud. Simon explains they chose Atlassian Cloud Premium because of the ability to whitelist specific IP ranges, enabling DVLA to lock down their instance to particular routes, such as the Global Protect VPN solution. “There were other advantages that were attractive too, such as the SLA and 24/7 support, and Advanced Roadmaps for Jira, which enables roadmaps across multiple projects.”

Cloud-only features such as analytics make it easy to monitor performance and stay on top of license usage. “That ensures we’re on the correct license tier and provides better value. The permissions helper is also useful in Confluence when trying to debug page access issues.” Simon adds: “Response time is improved on cloud compared to the server instance, and availability has generally been very good.”

DVLA offers a list of FAQs for staff with post-migration questions, but so far, the feedback has been positive. “A more modern user interface and faster response times were two favorable comments,” says Simon. “The migration discount was also a useful addition to the business case!”

Better collaboration across teams

DVLA’s use of Atlassian tools isn’t confined to the IT team – Policy and Planning, Training, and Enterprise Architects are among the other groups reaping the benefits of better collaboration and communication. “Atlassian’s cloud products helped our people and teams work together smarter, especially in the current environment, when a lot of our employees are working from home partly due to COVID-19,” says Simon. Daily stand-ups and other agile ceremonies are executed using Jira, and sprint reports live in Confluence. He adds: “Roadmaps give a good view from a planning and scheduling standpoint, without necessarily having to drill down to the more fine-grain technical issues.”

For other government agencies thinking of migrating, Simon advises: “Make sure you plan sufficiently and rehearse the cutover as many times as gives you confidence.”

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spkaa.com

5011 Scotts Valley Dr., Scotts Valley, CA 95066

888-310-4540 (main)

888-707-6150 (support)

info@spkaa.com