

South East Water Uses GlobalSign Authentication Certificates to Meet Compliance Requirements

In addition to complying with UK Open Water Program, South East Water also chose GlobalSign for SSL Certificates

SOLUTION SUMMARY

South East Water, one of the UK's largest water suppliers, needed to acquire authentication certificates in order to participate in a new market, called the Open Water Program. They sought a Certificate Authority (CA) that would not only provide compliant certificates, but also help them navigate the requirements and be available for support inquiries.

GlobalSign ensured South East Water had the appropriate certificates to meet compliance, with dedicated account management and support to streamline the deployment process. Happy with the experience, South East Water decided to migrate their SSL Certificates to GlobalSign as well, making it so they can now manage all PKI needs from one account.

“Having a dedicated person to work with really set GlobalSign apart. Unlike other vendors that only offer web-based purchase options, I have an account manager who truly understands my requirements and the details of the regulation and a customer support team I can contact anytime I have technical questions.

We were really impressed with GlobalSign as they helped us with our authentication certificates, so it was a natural move to start using them for SSL as well. They offer the pricing, products, and expertise to meet our needs, and we were able to make the switch really easily without burdening our team thanks to their dedicated account management and support. Now we can manage all our PKI needs from one account, which is great.”

David Chung
IT Services Manager, Business
Information Systems
South East Water

Open Water Program and CMOS

Beginning in April 2017, water suppliers, such as South East Water, will be able to open up their business as a retail service, offering water and wastewater to any commercial property in the UK as part of the “Open Water Program”. The core IT system that underpins the program is called the Central Marketing Operating System (CMOS), a web-based portal which will manage all electronic transactions involved in switching suppliers and provide usage and settlement data for the new supplier to use in the billing process.

CMOS Authentication Certificate Requirements

In order to access the CMOS, Open Water market participants are required to authenticate using a Digital Certificate that meets the standards put forth by the program:

- Issued by a Certificate Authority (CA)
- Compliant with X.509 standard
- Class 2 Client Certificate (a type of certificates which validates your organization)
- Must be a client authentication certificate and not a server authentication certificate
- Must have a validity period of no more than three years and not be expired
- The certificate common name (CN) must be unique for each certificate and follow the format of for example: MST_ABC Water_WS_B2B_2

Adding Digital Certificates as a second layer of security beyond usernames and passwords strengthens the level of authentication for all users of the portal and helps prevent unauthorized access.

Why GlobalSign

Only a few Certificate Authorities are recommended by the program, and after discussing with fellow water suppliers and reviewing the offerings, South East Water chose GlobalSign for the following reasons:

- Detailed knowledge of the program requirements and ability to issue properly configured certificates
- Dedicated account manager to advise on products, rather than online checkout process
- One-on-one customer support available to help with ordering, installation, and any other questions along the way

Transferring SSL to GlobalSign

South East Water had such a good experience working with GlobalSign for their authentication needs that they decided to start using them for web and server security as well. Dedicated account management and an easy-to-use certificate management portal simplified the migration, making it easy for them to switch their SSL/TLS Certificates over from another vendor.

About South East Water

South East Water supplies, on average, 540 million litres of drinking water to more than 2.1 million customers in Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire peaking to 700 million litres on hot summer's day. It delivers the water through its 14,500 kilometres – or 9,000 miles – of water main underground equivalent to the distance from the UK to Australia.