



# STORMSHIELD

## VICHY COMMUNITY

# A SOLUTION FOR REMOTE SITE MANAGEMENT

Interview with José Morais, Technical Manager of the IT Department



VICHYCOMMUNAUTÉ



39 communes

(85,700 INHABITANTS)



20

SITES



8

DEPARTMENTS

## Vichy Community

On 1 January 2017, the *Communauté d'agglomération Vichy Val d'Allier* and the *Communauté de communes de la Montagne Bourbonnaise* merged to become Vichy Communauté.

Covering 39 communes, Vichy Communauté is now the second-largest region in France in terms of the number of inhabitants and the GDP.

## Background

The creation of Vichy Communauté was accompanied by a mutualisation plan support services, which was initiated in 2015 with the systems department of information. Today, eight «professions» work in the service of the agglomeration and municipalities.

Many of the buildings in the community use the conurbation's own fibre optics. **“For those not served by our fibres, because they are located in remote communes which are too far away, we use Internet access protected by our Stormshield SN210 firewalls to establish a VPN with the central site,”** says José Morais.

The former VPN, made up of a 2Mb SDSL link, was replaced because the Vichy Communauté IT Department wanted to reinstate this service. This merger and new direction have allowed Vichy Communauté to strengthen security for its entities and its central site, but also to improve the service provided to site staff and agents.

## The solution of choice

There are two reasons why Vichy Communauté chose Stormshield's solutions: firstly, the desire to have a standard fleet, and secondly, an acquired and in-depth knowledge of these services and technology.

Already a long-standing client of Stormshield (an SN2000 cluster) and convinced of the quality of its products, Vichy Communauté did not wish to make any fundamental changes to its IT system. It preferred to consider this pooling as an extension of existing products and solutions. The goal was to maintain consistency between existing and new equipment, to ensure coherent management of security equipment and to standardise tools.

“We decided to integrate Stormshield SN2000 devices (a high-performance UTM & Next-Generation Firewall solution) to set up the IPSec VPN tunnel between the twenty or so remote sites in our network and the main one,” says Morais.

The SN2000 firewall has several advantages: **a speed of up to 30 Gbps** and **modularity** that means configuration can be adapted to the network, needs can be anticipated, and copper and fibre interfaces can be used together (1GbE or 10GbE). As this solution is in accordance with regulations, Vichy Communauté can have reports that comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and keep them (legal archiving).

**Integrating these devices has enabled us to improve intrusion detection and prevention, to protect our sites against Denial of Service (DoS) attacks, and to block malicious code and script actions.** “The reliability of the Internet links and Stormshield equipment means our tunnels are stable,” adds the technical manager.

Vichy Communauté also appreciates having centralised management. “It is a very practical solution in our day-to-day practice, such as when we want to add routes or objects to remote sites. Instead of having to connect every time we have objects to create, we can do it centrally and apply the configuration across all sites fairly quickly. It is easier than working site by site,” he says.

Integrating the Stormshield tools was no trouble for the project team as it had already used technology by Netsq, now Stormshield. The department has even benefited from **in-house training**. “I am an expert on Netsq version 9 and my colleague is an administrator on the Stormshield version. This training has simplified migration and roll-out, and it facilitates day-to-day understanding and administration,” recognises Morais.

A local distributor also assisted the team with the integration of the devices, both on the first site and on the management server. They then continued the roll-out across the other sites.

## Next up

After this successful integration of newer firewalls, Vichy Communauté plans to either upgrade its hardware or pool everything together on one site. “As we only have one Internet output, we may decide to gather firewall intelligence on a single site,” suggests José Morais.



Photo credit : Les 4 vents.



**STORMSHIELD**



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