



Peel Regional Police is one of the largest law enforcement organizations in Canada. It serves the cities west of Toronto, a population of nearly 1.4 million.

Industry

Government & Public Sector

Strategic priorities

- Anywhere Workspace
- VMware Security

VMware footprint

- VMware Workspace ONE®
- VMware Horizon®
- VMware Carbon Black™ App Control
- VMware Professional Services
- VMware Technical Account Management Services

Peel Regional Police Modernizes Policing with Secure, Cloud-First Technology

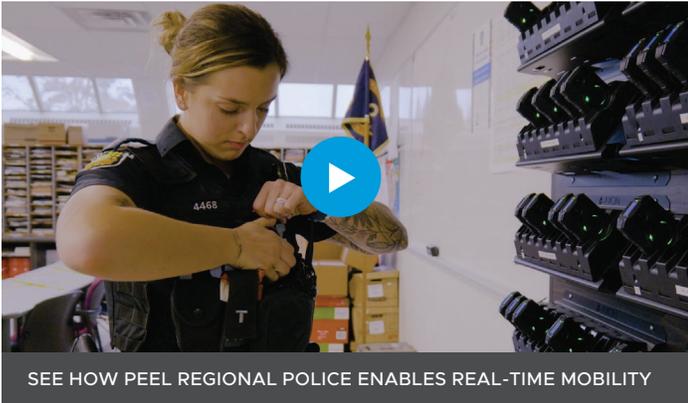
Modern policing demands modern methods. In Canada, Peel Regional Police (PRP) needed to create an autonomous, transparent service fostering full engagement with the local community, supported by a technology platform that could securely deliver ongoing innovation. The use of VMware Workspace ONE® has accelerated the organization's deployment of iPhones and body-worn cameras, equipping officers with the digital tools they need to be effective while also helping to hold them accountable for their actions.

Protecting rights and well-being through community engagement

Peel Regional Police is one of the largest law enforcement organizations in Canada, serving Brampton and Mississauga, with combined populations of nearly 1.4 million, and the Pearson International Airport, which serves more than 50.1 million passengers annually. With more than 2,000 police officers and almost 900 civilian employees, its goal is to address crime through more effective call response, investigations, enforcement and police visibility.

“We were familiar with VMware Workspace ONE. There were other options but we knew that we could do more with a mature product. VMware has a 10-year lineage with Workspace ONE. I didn't want a version 1.1 product.”

Tony Ventura, Director of IT Services, Peel Regional Police



Reimagining the role of the modern police officer

As policing changes, modern police services must be more transparent, accountable and grounded in the communities they serve. Like many municipalities in North America, the population of the greater Toronto area is ethnically, culturally and economically diverse.

“It means we almost have to step outside of the uniform,” says Anthony Odoardi, deputy chief, Peel Regional Police. “How would we ourselves like to be policed in our community? A human-centric approach to policing will enable us to better understand the needs of the community.”

While modern law enforcement must be human-centric, PRP wants to accelerate the digital transformation of its policing practices. Its mission is to be the most innovative police department in not only Canada but North America. Behind the scenes, PRP is switching to cloud-first and has a preference for ‘as-a-service’ consumption models, which translates to more technology in the hands of frontline officers, including smartphones and body-worn cameras.

“The smartphone is just the tip of the iceberg,” says Tony Ventura, director of IT services, Peel Regional Police. “It is the applications that can revolutionize policing. We can use the phones as a platform and officers can then find the applications they need, quickly and conveniently. If you can improve the day-in-the-life of a working officer, you can deliver a faster time to value.”

In the first instance, PRP wanted to provision 2,000 iPhone 12 devices to officers, configured for personal use, but also hosting sensitive police applications with Zero Trust Security.

The rollout timeline was two months, and with COVID-19 restrictions in place, required zero-touch provisioning. Single sign-on capability ensured robust identity management.

Once the iPhone implementation was complete, PRP began the rollout of Axon Body 2 cameras.

“We recognized the importance of using VMware Professional Services to guide us on the technology and roll it out successfully.”

Tony Ventura, Director of IT Services, Peel Regional Police

Enabling the rollout of an app-centric workstyle

VMware Workspace ONE provides a single platform enabling PRP to deliver and manage devices and applications. Now, PRP can meet the tight deadlines of the iPhone rollout smoothly and efficiently, while preserving the flexibility to accommodate other device types in the future.

“We were familiar with Workspace ONE from its AirWatch days,” says Ventura. “There were other options—because we use Office 365, Microsoft Intune was considered, but we knew that we could do more with a mature product. VMware has a 10-year lineage with Workspace ONE. I didn’t want a version 1.1 product.”

Workspace ONE delivers a unified approach to device management. “We can include the Panasonic ToughBooks and our existing laptops and desktops. We can manage and secure whatever device we need,” says Marco Novielli, supervisor, systems and information security, Peel Regional Police.

With a pipeline of digital transformation projects in place, the operational simplicity inherent in VMware Workspace ONE Access reduces the strain on Novielli’s team. “It also enables a seamless experience for the user, for as many applications as is necessary, with a single sign-on,” he adds.

To help PRP ensure compliance and lock down critical systems, the organization uses VMware Carbon Black™ App Control. “Carbon Black App Control is the ‘secret sauce’ that allows us to safely and responsibly run these legacy technologies, while we take the time required to modernize and transform our services,” explains Novielli.

Prior to adopting VMware Carbon Black, the team relied on conventional antivirus protection, that would block only previously known threats. Regular security incidents left employees unable to work for up to 48 hours while Novielli and his team contained the threat and restored the files.

Now PRP uses automation features within Carbon Black App Control to empower the security team to approve trusted applications with verified signatures. “We also proactively monitor the Carbon Black console for any blocks and receive email alerts,” says Novielli. “Both from a security perspective and from a user experience perspective, this ensures we are not blocking any legitimate applications.”

The solution includes a VMware Technical Account Manager and an extensive engagement with VMware Professional Services to help PRP align its business outcomes with the new technology. PRP’s strong relationship with Professional Services has seen it become a winner at the 2021 ACE awards. “As an organization, we’ve perhaps been guilty of making IT investments, not implementing them correctly, and abandoning them too soon,” says Ventura. “As a police department, it’s essential that we know where our data resides. VMware Professional Services’ expertise enabled us to be compliant and gave us peace of mind on where our data is housed.”

“One of the reasons for working with VMware is that we see them as a technology leader. We value VMware’s expertise and vision.”

Anthony Odoardi, Deputy Chief, Peel Regional Police

Building faith in technology to drive ongoing improvements

The deployment of 2,000 iPhones was completed in less than eight weeks. “And the rollout was simple, allowing our back-end technology team to work from home,” says Novielli.

The project promises long-term impacts on the way policing is delivered. Officers now have crucial technology in their hands that is simple to use. The Apple App Store allows officers to install apps with less risk.

“We know that most officers are already familiar with the iPhone. It’s not like when we issued laptops. This is technology they’re comfortable with,” Novielli says. It is now easier for officers to share images from a crime scene, search for information, dictate audio notes or check police databases.

More digital content creates a richer library of searchable data. Officers can check the calendar to see a colleague’s shift schedule. For collaborative, community policing this simple feature helps connect and integrate different platoons.

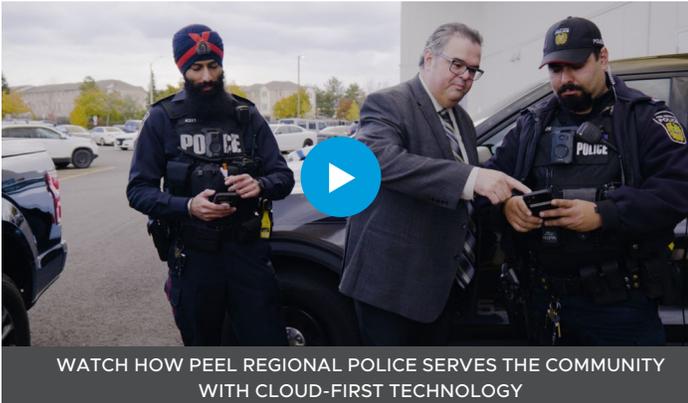
PRP continues to use in-car computers and police radios, but the use of smartphones provides officers with greater autonomy, wherever the location. It is particularly empowering for officers on bike or foot patrol.

“It’s much easier to engage with the community when you’re outside of the police car,” says Ventura. “This removes barriers to effective policing.”

PRP also uses VMware Horizon® VDI for its remote work model. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Horizon ensured that all staff that could work from home. This allowed administrative and back-end staff to avoid the office, freeing up space for employees who did need to remain on-site.

Odoardi suggests the body camera system, managed through Workspace ONE, is as transformative as its other initiatives, improving accountability and transparency, and amplifying the gathering of digital evidence. Real-time connectivity from VMware Horizon will enable PRP to bring in remote experts to assist officers during live events. And it will help officer training and reassure officers working in the field that they are never alone.

The implementation of body cameras was a complex process, requiring PRP to introduce the program with care. “Body-worn cameras are a sensitive subject—for officers and the community,” says Odoardi. “The project has required us to engage with stakeholders, and to do so authentically. From the community, there were concerns around where data is kept, and when and where filming is allowed. From frontline officers, there were worries about the recording of private moments. We resolved these concerns by being transparent about where this data would be used, managed and stored. We also shaped our policies from this feedback, such as limiting camera usage in school settings or places of faith.”



Looking ahead

Transformation requires momentum—and trust. The successful deployment of iPhones and body-worn cameras demonstrates to frontline officers and senior management that change can be delivered effectively.

“We’re benefiting from making some intelligent, strategic IT decisions,” Ventura says. “A lot of police forces tend to play safe and follow an established choice. I think we’ve recognized that the future will be mobile and app-led. We haven’t tried to shoehorn a desktop world into a mobile experience.”

Successful, responsible use will encourage confidence in PRP as a leader in the adoption of new technologies as the organization moves toward data sharing, data analytics and artificial intelligence. The direction of travel is for officers to be increasingly connected and digitally enabled.

“One of the reasons for working with VMware is that we see it as a technology leader. We value VMware’s expertise and vision,” Odoardi concludes. “We’d like to leverage our engagement to help shape the products and services we’ll need in the future.”

“The fact is by engaging in this way we’ve gone from a situation where the community was against spending more than CDN 10 million on body-worn cameras to an 80 percent approval rating. We’ve demonstrated a willingness to be comfortable with the uncomfortable.”

Though PRP has made advancements with body-worn cameras and iPhone use, as a government service the organization operates legacy technology that is difficult to maintain and secure for a modern workforce. PRP trusts that the Carbon Black team will keep applications safe. When it comes to security, says Novielli, “Carbon Black App Control is as close to a silver bullet as you can get. It helps me sleep at night.”