



northern
beaches
council

Northern Beaches Council Designs WANs for Integrity in Challenging Terrain

[Northern Beaches Council](#)

is a municipality in the state of New South Wales, Australia, formed on May 12, 2016 after the amalgamation of the Manly, Pittwater and Warringah Councils.

Industry

Public sector

Partner

[Coevolve](#) provides next-generation network technologies, including SD-WAN, SASE, multi-cloud and collaboration solutions, in more than 78 countries across the globe.

VMware footprint

- VMware SD-WAN™
- VMware Edge Network Intelligence™

Northern Beaches Council, a community government body in Australia, had to rethink how it could provide excellent digital services 24x7 in an area with difficult terrain prone to flooding. After independent research, Northern Beaches Council IT leadership adopted VMware SD-WAN and VMware Edge Network Intelligence in its quest to create a resilient IT infrastructure with redundancy built in by default.

Always-on municipal services

Northern Beaches Council is a municipality located in Northern Sydney in the state of New South Wales, Australia. With a population of 266,000, Northern Beaches is New South Wales' fourth most populous government area and hosts a crop of local businesses, suburban town centers, and a university. As such, broadband access is critical to most of the county's population, including students, remote workers and constituents who rely on municipal services that they expect to be always on.

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Michael Turner, CIO, Northern Beaches Council



Trying to stay connected during the unexpected

Like its peers on Australia's southeastern seaboard, Northern Beaches struggles with natural disasters and adverse weather, including fires and recurrent flooding. These can knock out broadband infrastructure and strain remote workers, constituents, and essential community services such as childcare centers.

2019 to 2022 proved an exceptionally tumultuous time for the county's leadership. In addition to managing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, bushfires were damaging New South Wales' coastal regions. The 2022 eastern Australian floods were particularly disruptive, damaging homes, local businesses, and the fiber cables connecting libraries and childcare centers to the internet.

First responders, emergency services, businesses, and employees working from home also struggled to access the internet because of damaged communications infrastructure.

The right technology to build resilience and guarantee always-on availability

In response, the council began exploring options to upgrade its IT infrastructure and build a resilient network that can withstand disasters and offer constituents reliable, uninterrupted access to municipal services, including waste disposal, council events, surf safety, and local news.

Northern Beaches Council CIO Michael Turner opted for managed VMware SD-WAN services, provided by VMware partner Coevolve, a leader in secure multi-cloud networking services, to make it happen.

The council chose Starlink satellite-powered internet paired with VMware SD-WAN deployed by Coevolve to serve its community's broadband needs. VMware Edge Network Intelligence adds the ability to help the council monitor network health using AI and ML.

Turner says, "We were looking for a solution that wasn't using the traditional fiber infrastructure because ... we have a number of locations where the fiber network gets flooded out, and it's not usable."

The discovery process that led up to that decision started when Northern Beaches Council researched the Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for SD-WAN, where VMware has been named a Leader for six years running.¹ Next, they interviewed several VMware SD-WAN customers before partnering with Coevolve for the rollout.

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Michael Turner, CIO, Northern Beaches Council

Unleashing IoT capabilities and improving reliability

VMware Edge Network Intelligence helps the Northern Beaches Council IT department identify and eliminate outages, remotely monitor incidents and connection issues in any region, and resolve help desk tickets faster.

Likewise, the VMware SD-WAN layer helps endpoints use multiple broadband options concurrently and route internet traffic through the most efficient channel. VMware SD-WAN uses multiple available connections to find the best delivery path for traffic across the county's network, eliminates jitter and packet loss, and offers end users an optimal user experience, regardless of location.

1. Gartner, Inc. "Magic Quadrant for SD-WAN." Jonathan Forest, Naresh Singh, Andrew Lerner, Karen Brown. September 27, 2023.

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VMware SD-WAN implementation also created an opportunity to explore interesting adjacent programs such as smart parking, soil monitoring, and smart street lighting controls, all of which feed into the Northern Beaches Toward 2040 smart city vision.

Setting the pace for digitizing municipal services across Australia

Northern Beaches Council aims to remain a pacesetter in the drive to digitize regional municipal services. VMware already proved successful in the region when helping the New South Wales Department of Customer Service launch a digital driver's license before the pandemic.

For any of New South Wales' 127 councils that might be eager to explore SD-WAN providers to power their digitization drive, Turner says, "Get back to the basics. Gather your requirements. Talk to the industry. Talk to your peers. Find out what actually works and see it working in the location."

"With VMware, what is written on the box is what you get—it's exactly how it performs," Turner says. "We worked with VMware integrators and partners, and we were able to implement VMware SD-WAN just as it should work."

Commenting on the experience on the VMware deployment, Ciaran Roche, CTO of Coevolve, says, "Partnering with Northern Beaches Council to upgrade its IT infrastructure required using our decades of industry experience and knowledge of SASE and SD-WAN best practices to choose the best configuration and build secure, redundant network constituents can rely on."