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## Joint Forces Command to test new network encryption

Successful deployment could encourage cloud usage

By Amber Corrin o Sep 01, 2009

The **U.S. Joint Forces Command** plans to begin using a new encryption technology that will allow separate, secure virtual communities to coexist on a single network infrastructure. The move, planned for later this month, will protect data while reducing costs by collapsing local-area networks.

The new cryptographic technology enables the convergence of various Defense Department Global Information Grid networks that operate at different security levels, which currently require individualized infrastructure designed to handle restricted data – and also individualized costs.

“The government spends a considerable amount of money on these networks, and they’ve been looking for years for a way to combine them,” said David Gardiner, vice president of security technology and solutions at Unisys, which is deploying its **Stealth** technology under a one-year JFCOM contract.

“It’s a community-of interest-problem for data in motion,” Gardiner said. Under the contract, Stealth will be assessed at JFCOM’s site in Norfolk, Va., and its subordinate Joint Transformation Command for Intelligence site in Suffolk, Va. If the tests are successful, the technology could be deployed on a wider basis – perhaps even overseas, Gardiner said.

Stealth works by splitting bits of data into multiple packets as it moves through the network, then reassembles the information packets when delivered to authorized users. Only authenticated users who have obtained a workgroup key, authorized by a Stealth Solution server, would have the means to reassemble and unscramble the packets.

“Stealth is unique in its security capabilities; the encryption technology makes a lot of sense,” said Juergen Urbanski, managing director of industry analyst firm Tech Alpha. “Security is just one barrier to cloud adoption, and we’re seeing a tipping point among enterprises endorsing the cloud more broadly,” which could offer more wide-ranging possibilities for the bit-splitting technology.

“It’s an obvious on-ramp for a heavy-duty move to the enterprise cloud” on an industrywide basis, Urbanski said.

Still, hurdles remain for commercial adoption of such capabilities. “Wider adoption of Stealth will depend on bigger-picture issues like these barriers to cloud computing,” Urbanski said, adding that standardization and virtualization for data security and storage will also be important for the technology to grow.

About the Author

Amber Corrin is a staff reporter covering defense and national security.

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