

Cisco Workforce Continuity for Critical Utilities Infrastructure

Cisco can enable business continuity for critical infrastructure in times of crisis

During normal business operations, utilities rely extensively on in-person engineering, monitoring, and collaboration to maintain the grid's safe and reliable power distribution. This paradigm is challenged when business continuity plans are deployed. Connecting remote workers with each other and into the operational domain requires an in-depth security posture as well as rich collaboration functionality to facilitate continued grid operations.

Staying connected with co-workers and dispersed teams at work and home

- Offer media-rich collaboration to increase the productivity and efficiency of remote workers while accelerating decision making for complex problems
- Make scalable, remote, secure, and interactive sessions available to all employees
- Bring your remote workers a true human connection
- Modernize communication from your laptop and mobile device

Remote experts

- During a business crisis, including storm response, being able to connect distributed field personnel with remote experts facilitates faster problem resolution and improved safety
- Sharing audio, screen, video, and augmented reality provides rich situational awareness for the remote expert

Benefits

All aspects of utility operations can take advantage of secure remote connectivity and collaboration during business disruptions, including:

- Generation
- Transmission
- Distribution

Cisco offers an integrated and comprehensive portfolio of products, services, architectures, solutions, and end-to-end customer support to help ensure that business operations and teams can effectively operate by enabling:

- Remote collaboration for dispersed teams
- Remote expert access
- Remote operations and monitoring

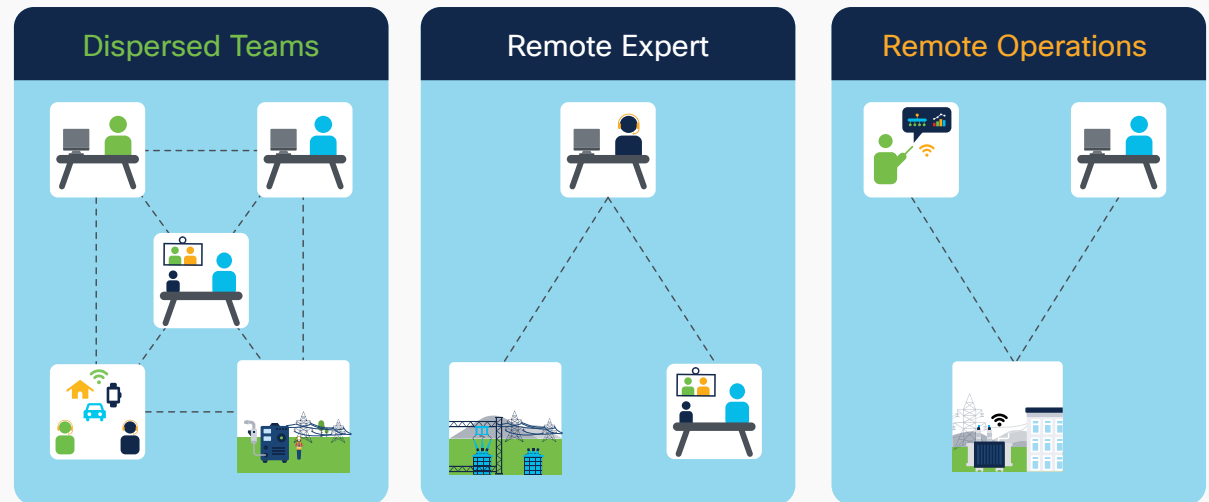
“No matter what is happening in the world, we believe it is vitally important to help support the continued operation of technical infrastructure for utilities, oil and gas, and manufacturing organizations. Cisco helps provide solutions to keep critical industries up and running.”

– **Wes Sylvester**

Global Industries Solutions Group
Director for Manufacturing and
Energy, Cisco

Remote Operations and Monitoring (ROM)

- Control and monitoring of grid operations is the most business-critical function that must be maintained
- ROM requires the strictest security posture and procedures
- Remote endpoint and connectivity security, and device and user authentication are foundational



We're here to help

For additional information on our Workforce Continuity solution, visit our [Utilities Portfolio Explorer](#). Looking for resources and other Cisco® utilities solutions? Go to <https://cisco.com/go/utilities> or contact us at Ask_Industry@cisco.com.

Communicate and operate anywhere

Utility companies need to ensure safe and reliable operations 24/7, including during crisis and incident scenarios. These scenarios often require that plant and field teams rely on a temporary operating model in which a small onsite crew interfaces with a dispersed team working remotely.

The teams responsible for plant or field environments are traditionally located onsite, and their operations workflows and procedures rely on face-to-face interactions throughout the day. When teams like this are dispersed during a crisis or incident, these workflows are less effective and can impact operations. Equipping these **dispersed teams** with the right collaborative tools can help them maintain day-to-day operational continuity as they operate in this hybrid model. The result:

- Distribution of responsibilities and technical risk across multiple failure points
- Reduced risk of exposure to harmful environments
- More coverage by taking advantage of time zones and alternate facilities and locations more dynamically
- Reduction in office costs and short-term arrangements

When only a subset of the operations staff is kept onsite, it is important to have systems and procedures in place to support both remote expert access and remote operations and monitoring.

Remote experts, whether internal or third-party resources, assist the skeleton crew with critical events that impact energy generation, transmission, or distribution. Effective remote expert engagement requires secure access to machines and assets, paired with rich collaborative tools to share situational awareness about the problem. As a result:

- Access to higher levels of experience is ensured despite travel restrictions
- High level of oversight and expertise can be maintained with a reduced staff
- Continued support is provided to “boots on the ground” personnel deemed essential to operations

Remote operations allow employees to monitor, maintain, optimize, and (if allowed) control aspects of an operational system from home or from another offsite location. Key to this capability are strong cybersecurity controls, including secure remote access and strong authentication. The result:

- Ability to operate at near full coverage as opposed to a “skeleton crew” situation
- Capability to more easily continue “business as usual” operations
- Less reliance on physical security measures, which place strains on first responders and other public resources