

Operation Recovery & UNCOMN Case Study



"Operation Recovery required a secure form of communication with the many principals within our care. UNCOMN and Wickr developed an elegant solution to a very complex problem. Together, they produced a method for us to use Wickr's protocol to communicate securely with at-risk allies in Afghanistan."

— Jon Collette, President with Operation Recovery



"UNCOMN combined forces with AWS Wickr to secure communications for Operation Recovery, supporting the safe evacuation of Afghan allies in the wake of the U.S. military exit from Afghanistan."

— Nick Powers, Chief Operating Officer with UNCOMN

About

Operation Recovery is a non-profit organization comprised of more than 150 highly-trained and experienced volunteers including Special Operations veterans, intelligence specialists, medical professionals, immigration experts, refugee organizers, and advocates. They work remotely through secure electronic channels to assess, organize, coordinate, and deploy life-saving support in the aftermath of global crises and disasters.

UNCOMN is a service-disabled, veteran-owned small business and AWS Advanced Tier Partner that provides industry-leading business management and technology consulting services. UNCOMN serves Department of Defense and commercial customers with more than 200 team members helping to solve cloud, supply chain, data, and cyber technical problems. UNCOMN's values to Be More, Do More and Cultivate Beauty are central to its effort to give back and volunteer its services to non-profit entities making a difference.

Challenge

In the wake of the U.S. military's withdrawal from Afghanistan, thousands of U.S. Afghan allies were in need of a safe exit, and were left at risk of Taliban retaliation. Operation Recovery quickly stepped in, coordinating a secure departure for many of the allies and their families.

In order to protect communications between Operation Recovery and evacuation applicants, Operation Recovery needed an end-to-end encrypted solution that would allow them to integrate with their existing case management system, while securely communicating with refugees 24/7. The product had to work on any device — and be easy for anyone to use.

Solution

Operation Recovery partnered with UNCOMN and AWS Wickr teams to develop a secure communications solution using Wickr, specifically AWS Wickr (formerly called Wickr Pro) and Wickr Me. In just three months, the teams developed and deployed a solution that bridged all messaging between Operation Recovery and its applicants via APIs. A bot was created to help streamline the workflow, all while ensuring communications were end-to-end encrypted.

Results

The Wickr solution allowed for the private exchange of information, and helped keep Operation Recovery leaders that were on the ground—referred to as shepherds—and the evacuees safe. In addition to this solution, the Operation Recovery team used Wickr bots to automate frequently asked questions by shepherds and applicants. This not only improved efficiencies for the Operation Recovery response team, which is limited on resources, but gave shepherds the ability to query information from Operation Recovery's systems at any time, without requiring human intervention.

UNCOMN's bespoke approach leveraging AWS Wickr's existing API infrastructure created the opportunity to rapidly deploy access to data for shepherds and evacuees, improving coordination, maneuverability, and situational awareness during the post-military withdrawal. Through donations and partnerships—and in coordination with the Department of State—Operation Recovery facilitated:

- Nine privately chartered flights out of Afghanistan
- The airlifting of over 3,500 refugees to safe havens
- Humanitarian Aid Assistance to over 7,500 refugees

Learn how AWS Wickr can help your organization.

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