DARKTRACE

Lake Macquarie City Council

Through Darktrace's advanced AI capabilities and the strategic support of security partners, SHQ and Data#3, Lake Macquarie City Council has built a resilient email security foundation that provides deeper visibility into threats, reduces operational strain, and helps ensure uninterrupted delivery of critical services to more than 200,000 residents.

Lake Macquarie City Council is one of the largest local governments in New South Wales, Australia, serving more than 200,000 residents in a community that values creativity, collaboration, sustainability, and diversity.

Too many threats, too few insights

Lake Macquarie City Council relies on critical digital systems that underpin the essential operational services provided to its 200,000+ residents. These digital systems must be uninterrupted to ensure continuity of service. But as cyber threats targeting government organizations continued to rise, the Council recognized the need for stronger visibility into email activity and more efficient ways to investigate potential threats.

Security team stuck in reactive mode

Sophisticated phishing, impersonation attempts, and supplier fraud campaigns required analysts to carefully investigate alerts and validate legitimate communications.

While existing security tools blocked most threats, the security team was still spending valuable time triaging alerts, investigating suspicious messages, and validating legitimate supplier communications–limiting capacity for strategic initiatives and resilience improvements.

Struggling to separate threats from noise

Without deeper behavioral insight into email activity, analysts often had to manually piece together evidence across multiple systems to determine whether a message represented a real threat or normal business activity. Automated actions were minimal, forcing analysts to perform manual correlation and cross-checking across multiple systems.

With phishing attacks continuing to rise across local government entities, Lake Macquarie City Council needed an pproach that could cut through noise, reduce alert fatigue, and provide a more intelligent foundation for defending the inbox.

Modern, AI-powered email protection with Darktrace

Recognizing that a transition away from its legacy Secure Email Gateway (SEG) would require both technical and operational guidance, the Council partnered with leading Australian IT solutions provider Data#3 and global managed security services provider Security HQ (SHQ) to evaluate alternative solutions.

Following a collaborative assessment led by Data#3 and SHQ, Lake Macquarie City Council selected Darktrace / EMAIL to transform its email defense. Powered by Self-Learning AI, Darktrace analyses the organization's unique communication patterns to spot unusual activity in real time – providing security teams with deeper visibility into how threats emerge and propagate across the email environment.

Real time, demonstrated value

During the proof of value, Darktrace identified and neutralized threats earlier than legacy tools using behavior anomaly detection. This earlier detection gave the Council's SOC a clearer understanding of emerging threats and greater confidence that high-risk messages would be identified before causing operational disruption.

SHQ was instrumental in guiding the Council through evaluation, deployment, and onboarding. Drawing on its strong background in email security and hands-on Security Operations Center (SOC) expertise, SHQ demonstrated how Darktrace's behavioral modelling could:

- **Reduce** false positives
- **Automate** investigation workflows
- **Provide** clearer explanations of suspicious activity
- **Relieve** analysts from time-consuming manual tasks

Together, these capabilities allowed the Council to streamline security operations while strengthening protection across the inbox.

Moving forward with confidence

Joshua Crooks, Chief Technology Officer, Lake Macquarie City Council, says, "SHQ's support was instrumental in helping us make a well-informed decision. Their ability to translate technical capability into operational value, paired with Darktrace's strengths in behavioral detection, gave us confidence that we were choosing the right solution for Council."

Working jointly with Data#3, SHQ ensured a smooth transition from Lake Macquarie City Council's existing email security solution, removing complexity and providing strong post-sale support to set the customer up for long-term success.

Precision and visibility drive action and resilience

Darktrace / EMAIL delivered immediate, measurable improvements to Lake Macquarie City Council's security operations:

Sharper detection of advanced threats

Darktrace quickly surfaced phishing attempts, spoofed identities, and subtle impersonation emails that existing email filters and controls had missed. By applying a zero-trust lens to every communication and analyzing behavior in real time, the Council now has clearer visibility into suspicious activity and can identify emerging threats earlier.

Increased analyst efficiency and focus

With alerts grounded in behavioral context rather than rigid rules, analysts have seen a significant reduction in noise and operational stress. No longer bogged down by benign alerts and manual triage efforts, the security team can prioritize real risks.

Stronger protection without added complexity

With Darktrace integrated alongside the organization's native email provider, Lake Macquarie City Council now benefits from a multi-layered defense without additional overhead or siloed tooling. This improved visibility and automation allow the SOC to operate more efficiently while supporting the Council's broader mission: delivering reliable digital services to its community.

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- **Chief Technology Officer**
  Lake Macquarie City Counci

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