



**commissum**  
INFORMATION ASSURANCE

## CASE STUDY:

# CalMac Ferries Ltd

### Background

CalMac Ferries Ltd (CalMac) is one of the largest transport operators in Scotland, with a rich history stretching back to 1851. Each year, the firm's ferry services carry millions of people to 27 island destinations across the west coast of Scotland, providing essential lifelines to rural communities.

CalMac prides itself in delivering customer service to the highest standards possible, whilst also maximising the public purse. This company principle of delivering value and optimum service to the customer is shared by Commissum, helping foster a strong working relationship between the two companies lasting more than 12 years. Throughout this time, Commissum's testing and consultancy services have consistently enabled CalMac to improve its security controls and

deliver high quality, secure services to CalMac's internal users and customers.

### Challenge

CalMac came to Commissum for assistance with a project to further improve their customer experience. CalMac had decided to rollout free Wi-Fi for its customers on 31 ferries and at 57 of their ports and slipways. Wi-Fi is now expected by public transport passengers and CalMac needed to ensure their Wi-Fi network was secure, providing users with a seamless and safe service. CalMac's network needed to be resilient from attacks that may attempt to compromise its security should an attacker attempt to access its internal network, as well as being resilient to attacks on other users. It also needed to be secure from the possibility of being easily taken offline by an attacker.



**Caledonian MacBrayne**  
Hebridean & Clyde Ferries

### Highlights:

- Assurance of seamlessly secure guest Wi-Fi service both on and off shore across CalMac services
- Detailed report with expert guidance on how to implement security solutions
- Comprehensive follow-up tests ensured reliability
- Tailored, professional response returned higher ROI and value to the client than originally anticipated





Commissum was asked to carry out a series of network assessments prior to launch of the service. Further complicating the challenge was the fact that part of the Wi-Fi network was on ferries in active service, meaning Commissum had to conduct testing during normal ferry operating hours in sometimes harsh conditions on the seas of the west coast of Scotland.

### Service provided

Commissum rose to the challenge and conducted an internal and external assessment of CalMac's network, meeting the unique needs of a client in the sea transport sector by completing tests both on board ferries and at ports served by CalMac. Following completion of these tests, Commissum produced a detailed report highlighting issues discovered during the test, alongside expert recommendations which allowed CalMac to adopt a prioritised approach to remediating issues

and securing their network. Commissum supported CalMac throughout the project by being constantly available to provide advice and further in-depth information.

After the initial assessment had been completed, Commissum conducted a re-test of the network to confirm whether vulnerabilities identified in the initial tests had been resolved. The results of the re-test demonstrated that CalMac had implemented the appropriate security provisions, as recommended by Commissum, resulting in a safe, secure and resilient network. CalMac achieved its initial objective of securing the wireless guest network and have since successfully rolled out free public Wi-Fi across nearly half of the 200-mile long network for their passengers to enjoy.

### About Commissum

Commissum is a leading, independent Cyber Security consultancy, testing practice and managed services provider with offices in Edinburgh, Leeds, Birmingham, London, Zurich and Kuala Lumpur. Commissum provides pragmatic and proportionate holistic information risk management advice and solutions to drive down information and cyber security risk.

“Cybersecurity is no longer a challenge limited to back office, but a general business challenge across the sector. We are lucky that we came across Commissum, who have been helping us meet that challenge.”

Jim McKillop,  
Project Manager, CalMa

## Get in touch.

0330 223 0709

[commissum.com](http://commissum.com)

