

# US Air Force safeguards system upgrades with Red Hat training



**U.S. AIR FORCE**

## Industry

Government

## Headquarters

Joint Base Langley-Eustis,  
Virginia

## Size

650,000+ personnel

*"The hands-on training meant our teams were competent and confident with the new OS and software releases before we upgraded. This supports our modernization program by allowing us to update faster, with fewer errors, and with less risk of misconfigurations or downtime."*

## Clara Horner

Linux Systems Manager  
CACI

The US Air Force needs to stay current with the latest Red Hat operating system and management software versions to reduce risk and support ongoing modernization of its Distributed Common Ground System (DCGS). Without adequate training, upgrades could be delayed and hindered by errors and misconfigurations. To avoid these risks, the Air Force and contractor CACI International Inc. worked with Red Hat to provide a flexible training program for Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Red Hat Satellite, and Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform, including on-site, virtual, and hybrid options. CACI Linux technicians achieved a 98% training utilization rate using Red Hat Learning Subscriptions which has helped increase efficiency, reduce onboarding times for new personnel, and strengthen employee satisfaction.



## Software and services

Red Hat® Training and Certification  
Red Hat Learning Subscriptions  
Red Hat Enterprise Linux®  
Red Hat Satellite  
Red Hat Ansible® Automation Platform

## Partner

CACI

## Benefits

- ▶ Increased efficiency and reduced risk with scalable skill development
- ▶ Reduced onboarding time and greater workforce flexibility by equipping teams with in-demand expertise
- ▶ Supported employee growth and satisfaction by providing learning opportunities that support long-term career development

## About Red Hat Innovators in the Open

Innovation is the core of open source. Red Hat customers use open source technologies to change not only their own organizations, but also entire industries and markets. Red Hat Innovators in the Open proudly showcases how our customers use enterprise open source solutions to solve their toughest business challenges. Want to share your story? [Learn more.](#)

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### **Safeguarding availability of essential military systems**

The US Air Force Distributed Common Ground System (DCGS) supports intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance in the field for informed decision making, making it vital to the Air Force’s day-to-day operations. The organization works with specialist defense contractor CACI to maintain and manage the infrastructure that underpins this complex and sophisticated system.

CACI’s responsibilities include building, configuring, and managing the hundreds of servers across the enterprise that support the system, with a goal of maintaining 24x7 uptime. Red Hat Enterprise Linux is the main operating system for these servers. In the last 3 years, CACI has started to use Red Hat Satellite—an on-premise, air-gapped infrastructure management solution that helps keep the Red Hat Enterprise Linux environment running efficiently. The team also uses Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform to provide strategic automation that helps it to manage the estate at scale. For example, CACI has automated patching and configuration with the Red Hat solutions to complete these tasks across numerous server locations faster, more consistently, and with fewer errors.

The Air Force and CACI recognized the need to stay current with the latest operating system (OS) and software versions, not only to reduce security vulnerabilities but also to take full advantage of new features and performance upgrades. To minimize risk and maintain efficiency, the Air Force was keen that both employees and contractors were fully trained and proficient with each new release before initiating any upgrades. “If the team is not confident about using the new versions of the OS, everything takes longer,” said Clara Horner, Linux Systems Manager, CACI. “Not only does this slow us down, but it can also lead to misconfigurations and other errors that have the potential to increase risk and affect the performance of the DCGS.”

To avoid these issues, the technical team and leadership agreed on the need for targeted, up-to-date training to avoid gaps in knowledge and support safer, more efficient upgrade cycles.

### **Providing hands-on training with on-site, virtual, and hybrid options**

To support the Air Force in taking better advantage of Red Hat products, such as Satellite and Ansible Automation Platform, which help to reduce skills gaps and make upgrade cycles more efficient, the organization partnered with Red Hat to provide a comprehensive and flexible training program. The training package combines both on-site and virtual learning formats to meet the needs of the distributed workforce and the varying schedules of government employees, CACI contractors, and subcontractors across multiple locations.

The training solution includes 8 on-site courses delivered at 2 locations, along with 50 Red Hat Learning Subscriptions that provide ongoing access to self-paced online content. Premium Red Hat Learning Subscription offers users a hybrid training option, allowing participants to attend live, instructor-led sessions remotely while still benefiting from real-time interaction and hands-on lab instruction. This flexibility means that team members spread across several locations can easily fit training into their work and home schedules.

Training content focuses on the day-to-day capabilities that are essential to efficient infrastructure management and automation with Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Red Hat Satellite, and Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform. In addition to the core training materials, participants have access to training guidance documents, which offer practical support for real-world challenges.

To ensure successful adoption and maximize engagement, a dedicated Red Hat Learning Experience Specialist was assigned to the project. This specialist plays a central role in customizing individual learning journeys, monitoring usage and adoption trends, and coordinating regular check-ins with the team. Through monthly meetings, the specialist shares insights into participation metrics, helps to identify gaps or opportunities, and follows up directly with learners to discuss their progress and next steps. “The Red Hat training team is incredibly responsive and helpful,” said Horner. “The flexibility of the program means it is accessible for our teams across multiple locations.”

The program also offers Red Hat certification exams, part of the Red Hat Learning subscription, which can be taken virtually to suit participants’ demanding schedules. Since implementation, the program has achieved strong results, with a 98% utilization rate of the learning subscriptions. To date, 64 courses have been completed and 56 are in progress, totaling over 2,026 hours of learning, and several participants have completed certification exams.

### **Managing Air Force DCGS infrastructure with greater efficiency and less risk**

#### **Increased efficiency and reduced risk**

With teams fully trained and proficient in the latest versions of Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Red Hat Satellite, and Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform, the Air Force has reduced operational risk and increased efficiency. “The hands-on training meant our teams were competent and confident with the new OS and software releases before we upgraded,” said Horner. “This supports our modernization program by allowing us to update faster, with fewer errors, and with less risk of misconfigurations or downtime.”

Using the latest versions of the Red Hat solutions allows the teams to advance their automation and management capabilities. For example, the team has saved thousands of hours delivering patches to servers with Satellite and Ansible Automation Platform and is continuously identifying new use cases.

#### **Reduced onboarding time and greater workforce flexibility**

As the CACI team continues to grow, the training program has simplified the onboarding process for new hires. For example, when 10 new members joined, they were able to get up to speed quickly thanks to structured, relevant training that aligned with their day-to-day roles.

The courses have also been used for cross-training employees outside the immediate team to increase staffing flexibility and support team leads to reallocate resources more effectively when needed. “The training is completely relevant to what our new team members do every day, so they were rapidly confident and efficient in their roles,” said Horner.

#### **Strengthened employee satisfaction and career growth**

The training initiative was extremely well received, with strong engagement and enthusiasm from participants and a 95% average Net Promoter Score for the on-site training—well above the industry average of 70%.

“The team particularly enjoyed the hands-on nature of the courses, and many are now interested in achieving certification,” said Horner. “They’ve gained a lot of relevant knowledge that has made their day-to-day jobs easier, and they are more motivated as a result.”

## About CACI

CACI is an \$8.6 billion company whose technology and expertise play a vital role in US national security.

## Supporting broader modernization goals

By investing in targeted, flexible training, the US Air Force has not only reduced the risks associated with upgrades but is also supporting its broader modernization goals. "Thanks to the training, the team is now more confident, productive, and prepared to adopt new technologies with minimal disruption," said Horner.

With a solid foundation of skills in place, technical teams are now proactively identifying new automation opportunities across their environment with Ansible Automation Platform. These automation initiatives will further reduce repetitive tasks, minimize errors, and help keep the Air Force DCGS highly available.

## About the US Air Force Distributed Common Ground System

The Air Force Distributed Common Ground System (AF DCGS) refers to the AN/GSQ-272 SENTINEL weapon system that is operated by active duty (AD) and Air Reserve Component (ARC; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command) personnel. It is the Air Force's primary intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) Analysis and Exploitation weapon system.



## About Red Hat

Red Hat is the world's leading provider of enterprise open source software solutions, using a community-powered approach to deliver reliable and high-performing Linux, hybrid cloud, container, and Kubernetes technologies. Red Hat helps customers develop cloud-native applications, integrate existing and new IT applications, and automate and manage complex environments. A trusted adviser to the Fortune 500, Red Hat provides award-winning support, training, and consulting services that bring the benefits of open innovation to any industry. Red Hat is a connective hub in a global network of enterprises, partners, and communities, helping organizations grow, transform, and prepare for the digital future.

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