seeking to boost the flexibility and reliability of its mainframe environment, agricultural service provider NWK chose to migrate its entire z/VSE mainframe workload to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server for System z. The company is using one IFL on its new IBM zEnterprise 114 server, improving processing speeds by more than 70 percent compared with the old platform and gaining a stable, reliable platform for running its most important financial applications and business systems.
“The IBM z114 is a fantastic server and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z really helps us to get the most out of it. The solution has met all of our requirements in terms of performance and stability.”

EDDIE LEIGHTON
Technology Manager
NWK

NWK migrated all of its z/VSE workload to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on an IBM zEnterprise 114 (z114), connected to an IBM Storwize V7000 storage system and IBM System Storage TS3310 tape library. The company hosts a second z114 and supporting storage systems at a secondary data centre for backup and disaster recovery purposes. It has activated one Integrated Facility for Linux (IFL) processor with 32GB of RAM on its main production server.

“We have been running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on the z114 for a few months now and everything has been operating very smoothly,” says Leighton. “We support around 450 users on one IFL with an average CPU usage of 60 to 70 percent, and so far performance has been excellent, even when running at 100 percent utilisation.”

Results

The z114 running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z offers 600 MIPS versus the 172 MIPS of NWK’s previous mainframe, which translates into significantly faster processing for a number of key tasks.

“Our response times have come down considerably with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z,” says Leighton. “For example, it previously took us around two and a half hours to back up our main production database alone. Now, the total backup window for all nine of our databases, including our data warehouse, is about two hours.

“In the past, we would use virtual tape backup systems on z/VSE. Now we write directly to disk on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z, which is at least 100 percent faster.”

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server provides NWK with solid performance, and a reliable platform for running its most important workloads.

“The IBM z114 is a fantastic server and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z really helps us to get the most out of it,” says Leighton. “The solution has met all of our requirements in terms of performance and stability, and has allowed us to establish a more flexible computing infrastructure here at NWK.”