Bavarian Police modernises its communication technology

To protect the general public, police services have to keep their lines of communication open at all times and be able to answer calls and dispatch officers instantly, 24/7. Siloed communication channels cause friction in emergency response. Diverse infrastructures, devices, and teams make it difficult to scale quickly when there's a spike in demand. Whenever a new channel is introduced, it fragments the landscape further, raising cost and complexity.

Bavarian Police – responsible for protecting and serving a population of more than 13 million across an area of 71,000 km^2 – decided to rationalise its communications architecture with Frequentis 3020 LifeX™ technology – unifying its emergency and non-emergency phone systems and its radio network into a single platform for quick, efficient, safe and scalable dispatch.

"With LifeX™ we managed to integrate manifold communication channels into a very intuitive user interface."

Anton Beierweck, Head of Statewide IT Procedures at Bavarian Police

Client profile

Bavarian Police is one of the largest police forces in Germany, with over 43,000 officers and employees. It is responsible for law enforcement and security throughout the state of Bavaria. The organisation serves a population of 13 million across a geographical area of 71.000 km^2.

Business situation

With a fragmented communications infrastructure based on two separate phone systems (for emergency and non-emergency calls) and a third system for radio, Bavarian Police´s processes for call-handling and dispatching were complex. The police organisation wanted a more scalable, IP-based architecture that could adapt to changing levels of workload, and that would facilitate the integration of other technologies, such as TETRA digital radio.

Solution

Following a successful pilot at the G7 summit in 2015, Bavarian Police decided to implement the Frequentis 3020 LifeX™ communications integration platform at its operations centres across Bavaria, starting with its regional headquarters in Nuremberg. The solution connects the existing phone and radio networks into a single platform that operators can use to handle and dispatch calls from any device.

Impact

- Ease of use: an intuitive user interface means operators need just one day to learn the system
- Scalability: when call volumes spike, Bavarian Police can activate seats for additional operators instantly
- Flexibility: operators can communicate seamlessly and securely with officers and citizens by phone
- Expandability: powerful API-based integration capabilities will make it easier to introduce new communications channels from third parties

Public Safety

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Protecting public safety with a unified platform

Controlling complexity

Operation teams at each operation centre are responsible for handling calls from the public, dispatching officers via a secure radio network, and coordinating the overall response to crimes and other public safety incidents.

Until recently, Bavarian Police's three main communication channels – the radio network and the two phone systems that handle emergency and non-emergency calls – were entirely separate systems. Each had its own infrastructure and devices, and operators had to respond in different ways depending on the channel. In June 2015, Bavaria hosted the G7 summit. The attendance of world leaders from 13 countries – plus organisations such as the European Union, United Nations and World Bank – urged Bavarian Police to coordinate security on an unprecedented scale. The force engaged Frequentis on an innovative project to develop and deploy a new integration platform for emergency communication channels that would help manage the G7 smoothly. The resulting LifeX™ platform integrates phone and radio channels into a single call centre platform, which – in turn – is integrated with the existing dispatch system. It provides an intuitive web-based interface that enables operators to handle and route calls easily. The implementation at Bavarian Police also includes a new component, AudioHub, which Frequentis has developed to simplify the integration of all the different audio systems with the LifeX™ interface.

Following the success of the G7 project, Bavarian Police decided to deploy the platform on a more permanent basis across its operations centres, starting with its regional headquarters in Nuremberg, which typically employs 16 operators, who receive up to 1,200 emergency calls, making it a perfect candidate to pilot the new technology. In fact, operators were able to learn the new interface and become productive users of the LifeX™ system after just one day's training. The platform has also proven to be easy to manage; Bavarian Police's IT team are able to handle most day-to-day tasks already and will ultimately handle maintenance on its own – relying on vendor support only for software patches or upgrades. By the end of 2019, six operation centres were using the new platform. By the end of 2020, an additional three sites will have been migrated to the Frequentis solution.

Scalable emergency services

Within the first week of deployment, the Nuremberg operations centre put LifeX™ to the test. A major storm hit the city, leading to a spike in demand that saw operators handle over 900 emergency calls in just seven hours. In such situations, the system enables activating additional seats in the operations centre instantly, bringing more operators online to handle the demand. Even under such heavy load, the system proved its stability, and operators were able to dispatch calls without any issues.

Bavarian Police also appreciates the additional flexibility that comes with not having its communication channels tied to specific working positions and hardware. Rather, the IP-based solution lets operators log in on any workplace in the police network.

The versatility of LifeX™ will also help the police force modernise its communications infrastructure by enabling it to adopt new channels without increasing complexity for users.

"The Frequentis platform can grow and evolve with our communications strategy – helping us provide the reliable, rapid and effective emergency response that we need."
Anton Beierweck, Head of Statewide IT Procedures at Bavarian Police

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