



# > POLICE FORCE ENABLES COMPLIANCE THROUGH NEXT-GENERATION COMMUNICATIONS

**NORTEL**



## Case Study

### Thames Valley Police

“The Nortel technology enables me to be flexible and respond quickly to demands. I have been extremely pleased with the Nortel solution, it is proven and reliable technology, which is exactly what I needed.”

> **Alan Mitchell,**  
**Technical Specialist,**  
**Thames Valley Police**

**Customer:** Thames Valley Police

**Country:** UK

**Industry:** Government

**Challenge:** To enable the general public to contact police via different methods, to meet Home Office directives and agreed internal targets.

**Solution:** Full upgrade to a highly secure and robust data network, utilising the Nortel Ethernet Routing Switch 8600 portfolio. Upgrade of multiple Meridian systems to the latest Nortel Communication Server 1000s. Upgrade of existing call centre software to the Nortel Contact Center in four networked contact centres. The complete solution will support multimedia contact centres and enable the implementation of VoIP.

**Benefits:**

- **Continued contactability** – networked ‘control centres’ ensure that the general public can make contact easily, at all times
- **A platform for advanced multimedia communications** – via planned implementation of the Nortel Multimedia Communication Server 5100
- **Enhanced reporting capability** – to streamline reporting processes and ensure suitable and more flexible performance data



“We needed to take our call centres to the next level, to become complete contact centres. Thames Valley Police has been using Nortel since 1997. I have always found their advice very straightforward and reliable.”

> Alan Mitchell,  
Technical Specialist,  
Thames Valley Police

## The scenario

Policing has changed dramatically over the years. Whilst a physical presence on the street remains very much part of the service, there are now many other means by which the general public may choose to make contact with their local police, particularly in non-emergency situations.

In addition to the telephone, SMS, email and even Instant Messaging are now common communication tools. The UK Government quickly identified this and instigated a directive which stated that all police forces must make plans to enable them to receive these types of communications.

All UK police forces were affected by this, not least of which was Thames Valley Police, with more than 7,000 staff at 130 sites. Technical Specialist Alan Mitchell explains further: “We had enquiry centres in place, but these were just handling telephone calls. We needed to take them to the next level, to become complete contact centres. But this was not straightforward, as our existing technology wasn’t capable of supporting the changes we required.”

The Thames Valley Police upgrade programme allows them to utilise a VoIP solution. Owing to the critical nature of police communications, the Force wishes to adopt tried and tested technology, and IP telephony now falls into this category, giving Thames Valley Police the flexibility to provide an even better service to citizens.

“We needed to embrace new technology,” he continues. “Which meant doing more than just the minimum to meet Home Office directives. It’s easy to become complacent, so a complete technology refresh was required. We needed to be future-proof, so it was time to upgrade our existing systems to the latest ICT technology.”

## The solution

Phase one of this £250m project involved a total upgrade to Thames Valley Police’s data network, with installation of an end-to-end data solution. The solution was based on Nortel’s always-on Ethernet Routing Switch 8600 product. This upgraded data network was then to act as a platform for the next phase of the project.

Phase two involved upgrading PBXs at 57 sites. Many of these are being replaced with the feature-rich Nortel Communication Server 1000, but smaller sites are simply being linked over IP to switches at larger sites, with 20 Nortel Communication Server 1000s installed so far.

Thames Valley Police also worked in conjunction with Nortel and its partner to upgrade the contact centre. Following extensive pre-project testing at its Kidlington headquarters, and also in Abingdon, Milton Keynes and Windsor, all four sites were upgraded with Nortel Communication Server 1000 systems, running the Nortel Contact Center application. In addition, Nortel CallPilot was provided for in-queue messaging, helping staff manage incoming calls more efficiently during peak periods.

All four sites are networked together to create a complete virtual control centre. This is used to manage all of Thames Valley Police’s incoming calls from the public, enabling callers to be routed to the next available agent, regardless of the agent’s location.

## The results

Calls continue to be handled efficiently in line with national targets. In addition, reporting capabilities are improved, as Performance Manager Helen Carpenter confirms: “I’ve been impressed with the Nortel technology. Creating reports is a key part of my job and this is now much more straightforward.”

The Force is also using the 15 minute interval data to forecast patterns of activity and forward-plan resources. “We use real time and historical data,” Helen explains. “This can be used to manage staff planning to ensure maximum service levels and to react to expected and unexpected peaks.”

The upgraded multi-site virtual enquiry centre now runs with up to 130 agents at peak times, and Alan is currently trialling new Nortel IP Phone 1150Es at the Kidlington enquiry centres. “Big demands are placed upon our enquiry centres by different departments, all of which have unique requirements so the call routing can be very complex,” he continues. “It’s great that the Nortel technology enables me to be flexible and respond quickly to the demands of internal customers.”

This site also supports two small internal call centres and two further sites in Banbury via IP technology. These house 30 agents who run the Fixed Penalty Support Unit, dealing with speeding fines and speed awareness courses. In this potentially volatile environment, callers are directed to the appropriate agents via the CallPilot system, to ensure that each is handled sensitively by a correctly trained person.

Thames Valley Police is also trialling the Nortel Unified Messaging 2000 solution, which will provide fax-to-email capability. This will save on printing costs and also permit the removal of unnecessary hardware throughout the force.

The next phase of the project is the installation of a Nortel Multimedia Communication Server 5100, to provide the full multimedia capability that the Force aims to achieve. “This is a key part of the project,” he concludes. “But it couldn’t be rushed as it is extremely complex. Some organisations make the mistake of trying to roll these things out too quickly, but we knew a step-by-step approach would be better in the long run. We have been extremely pleased with the Nortel solution, it is proven and reliable technology, which is exactly what we needed.”

**“I’ve been impressed with the Nortel solution. Creating reports is a key part of my job and this is now much more straightforward. It certainly makes my life easier!”**

**> Helen Carpenter,  
Performance Manager,  
Thames Valley Police**



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