

Wired for sound ... and data

Recording and analysing emergency voice calls is not only useful to learn how to improve responses, but is often mandatory for public safety organisations. Here's how Estonia's ESTER public safety network is doing it.

Public safety organisations are usually required by law to record the voice conversations transmitted over their networks. They also find it useful to record the transmitted data. Whether to get the right information during a stressful event, to help in training or to have legal evidence, it's important to know exactly what was said or transmitted by whom and when.

As well as being useful, it's also very often a legal requirement. An example is Estonia's Ministry of the Interior (Mol), which controls all public safety organisations in the country. It requires these bodies to record what they transmit and receive. To help them do this, the Mol wanted to add a centralized recording solution to its ESTER network, originally supplied by Airbus Defence and Space and owned by SMIT, the Center for Information Technology and Development in Estonia.

SMIT had several criteria that the solution must meet. It had to:

- Be based on Microsoft Windows and able to monitor, record and play back encrypted audio and metadata for hundreds of concurrent users.
- Offer high availability of 99.9 percent and be usable in VMware virtual environments.

- Be scalable to accommodate changing needs or growth in usage.

EVOIPneo fits the bill

To meet these requirements, SMIT selected a solution from recording and analysis specialist ASC. Known as EVOIPneo, the solution had the major advantage at the time of being the only recording solution certified by Airbus for TETRA release 6.0. TETRA integration allows several control centers to use the system without degrading transmission security.

Known as EVOIPneo, the ASC solution also allows each organisation using ESTER to access only their own recordings. Each agency can create its own recording configuration, but the fundamental settings are established by SMIT.

Unlike in many networks where the conversations can only be retrieved



within a far larger chunk of information, TETRA networks from Airbus make it possible to retrieve particular conversations, ones that the organisation is authorised to retrieve.

Cutting response times saves lives

EVOIPneo helps SMIT conduct post-incident analysis and streamline its processes. This is a critical matter because shaving seconds off response times can make the difference between life and death in an emergency.

Supervisors can add comments to calls and easily email recordings back and forth. Recordings are tamper-proof, and timestamps are accurate to within a hundredth of a second. The ability to recognise voices and emotions can assist with investigations.

Juergen Lasn, a Senior Expert in the Estonian Government, says: "One of my favourite features of EVOIPneo is 'Last Call Repeat.' This function lets the responder replay the current call, even while the caller is still on the line."

Since callers often panic or become incoherent during stressful situations, Last Call Repeat can help the dispatcher understand the caller. This is critical to a successful response.

The ESTER network covers the entire country with about 100 base stations and one switching center. In addition, five base stations belonging to Finland's VIRVE network are located on Estonia's north coast to help cover the Gulf of Finland and to ensure intercommunications for the two countries' border guards. About 10,000 users rely on ESTER for their communications, including police, rescue services, medics, border staff and prison officers.

"ASC's communications recording solution empowers our public

safety agencies and makes them the equal of any nation in the European Union," adds Juergen Lasn. "Our dispatchers receive the best training possible and our agents can focus on the situation at hand without worrying about the supporting infrastructure."



CUSTOMER WIRE