

ProCurve Networking by HP

# Human Rights & Equal Opportunities Commission



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Ron McLay  
IT Services Manager  
HREOC

## Abstract

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) has installed a powerful, flexible and reliable network based around ProCurve Networking by HP equipment. Not only has the solution addressed the limitations that affected the agency's data network, it has also enabled HREOC to move to Voice-over-IP. This is a critical capability for any organisation that is as dependent on multi-party telephone conferencing to the extent that HREOC is.

## Highlights

Before HREOC began its relationship with ProCurve, it was relying on switches provided by another vendor, and the agency was far from happy with the result. That vendor had decided to exit the networking equipment market, and spare parts were becoming almost impossible to obtain.

In addition, HREOC was experiencing crippling technical problems with its installed switches, resulting in near daily "network storms" which regularly interrupted essential network services and cause HREOC employees to frequently lose their data. "We had a lot of spare switches on hand and we were forever switching them in and out - pardon the pun," said Mr McLay.

While HREOC faced daily frustrations with its network infrastructure, it also had great hope for the capabilities that a new powerful, flexible and reliable network would make possible. "We were keenly looking to the future. We knew that we wanted a converged solution and we were looking to IP telephony," said Mr McLay.

So HREOC embarked on an ambitious project in two stages - first, the organisation installed a data network designed with its future needs in mind, then it embraced that future by replacing its ageing PABX telephone system with a modern IP voice solution.

To begin, HREOC carefully mapped out its network requirements and specified these in a tender document. There were more than 20 criteria, and they were ranked according to importance. Unsurprisingly, price was an important factor - as with most government agencies, price transparency and value for money are vital for HREOC. However, other factors such as warranty, technical support, reliability and scalability were rated even more highly.

With the tender document in hand, HREOC then requested submissions from 10 network integrators representing four different vendors of network equipment.

"As we always do, we held very strictly to those criteria," said Mr McLay. "We rated each of the responses against the criteria that specified and scored them accordingly."

Based on this analysis, Mr McLay selected a proposal from Data 3 that was built around ProCurve Networking by HP equipment.

"I think it was a major decision for us," he said. "The ProCurve product had a lot of attractive things about it, such as lifetime warranty, free software upgrades and the fact that ProCurve products were designed around open standards."

## The ProCurve Networking by HP Solution

Once the decision was made, the transition process was smooth and satisfying. "There wasn't a glitch - it was a beautiful project," said Mr McLay. "I have to say that it was down to two things: the quality of the project management from Data 3, and the ProCurve equipment, which was very good."

**Customer at a Glance**  
The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) is an Australian Federal government agency charged with protecting and promoting the human rights of Australian citizens. In the course of its activities HREOC conducts public inquiries, manages diversity tolerance programs, and investigates alleged incidents of harassment or discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, marital status, pregnancy or disability. It mediates between the parties in conflict, achieving conciliation whenever possible.

HREOC employees roughly 160 people throughout Australia. The national headquarters occupies three floors of an office tower in central Sydney. The agency must ensure its services are accessible in every Australian state and territory, and in regional and rural areas as readily as in the cities. Consequently, roughly 50 of HREOC's 160 staff are enabled for remote network access, and the organisation is a heavy user of teleconferencing services.

"We're a very mobile organisation, there are people on the move all the time," said Ron McLay, IT Services Manager, HREOC, "and one of the challenges we faced is putting in place the infrastructure for that." In this environment, a powerful, flexible and reliable network is essential.

"When we turned on the ProCurve equipment the legacy problems that we had been experiencing just disappeared," Mr McLay said.

"For example, we're on three floors, and those in the offices furthest from the switch cabinet were experiencing latency problems all the time. Some applications that were very sensitive to latency were failing," he said. "Those problems vanished as soon as we put in the ProCurve kit. There was a big improvement in the responsiveness of everything on the network and the legacy problems just disappeared."

Waiting a second to receive an email is tolerable as long as it doesn't happen too often, but enduring second-long interruptions to a telephone conversation is unbearable. So, while a powerful, flexible and reliable network is highly desirable for data services like email and file transfer, it is absolutely essential for Voice-over-IP (VoIP). The network infrastructure needs to absolutely guarantee Quality of Service (QoS), both by providing sufficient capacity and by intelligently conveying packets of voice data to their destination ahead of other packets.

QoS is what the ProCurve solution provided. Even better, just as HREOC become ready for VoIP with its new reliable network infrastructure, VoIP also became ready for HREOC.

"I had been looking at the VoIP market and making site visits for years," said Mr McLay. "I felt the future lay with VoIP, but I couldn't get into VoIP until it was mature enough to be stable, because although staff may put up with a slightly inconsistent data network they would not tolerate a telephone system that does not work 100% efficiently."

With the ProCurve solution in place, HREOC approached the VoIP solution market with a tender document that Mr McLay describes as the most extensive he's ever written in his career. "In the specifications we listed the ProCurve equipment we were using, so the tender respondents would know exactly what we were asking them to do."

Based on these proposals, HREOC selected an Avaya solution installed by NSC. "They did a brilliant job," he said, "it was very smooth."

As a result, HREOC is now enjoying substantial productivity gains as well as significant cost savings.

Some of the savings come from "toll bypass", which means that the VoIP solution allows the organisation to make long-distance telephone calls without incurring long distance charges. HREOC moved to a new telecommunications provider at the same time to consolidate the savings.

Major productivity gains come from the increased functionality and ease-of-use of the new VoIP solution. For example, voicemail messages can be emailed directly to each employee's inbox, and Mr McLay says that he has programmed the speed dial on his new VoIP telephone handset - something that just wasn't worth the effort with the old PABX.

By far the most important advantages for HREOC are in the area of multi-party telephone conferencing - a vital tool for the organisation's work, which frequently involves investigating and mediating complex disputes in multiple languages around the country. "It is a major part of the business that we do, we're running conference calls all the time," said Mr McLay.

## What Makes it Work Hardware

- ProCurve Networking Switch 5300xl series
- AVAYA Voice-over-IP solution

## Software, Services & Support

- Lifetime warranty with next day advance replacement\*
- Software updates, Telephone and email technical support\*\*
- Comprehensive network design and configuration services \*\*

\*available in most countries, on most products for as long as the original customer owns it.

\*The ProCurve Routing Switch 9300m series and Secure Access 700wl series have a one-year warranty with extensions available.

\*\*for the most up to date information go to [www.procurve.com](http://www.procurve.com).

With VoIP, conferencing is much easier and cheaper than using operator-controlled services. "I use my phone and conference call two or three times a day, sometimes with up to five or six parties, so it's extremely useful even from an IT management point of view," said Mr McLay. "The complaints unit and the

policy units all use the conferencing features, so it's very popular. To date the system has worked 100% as expected. I am delighted."

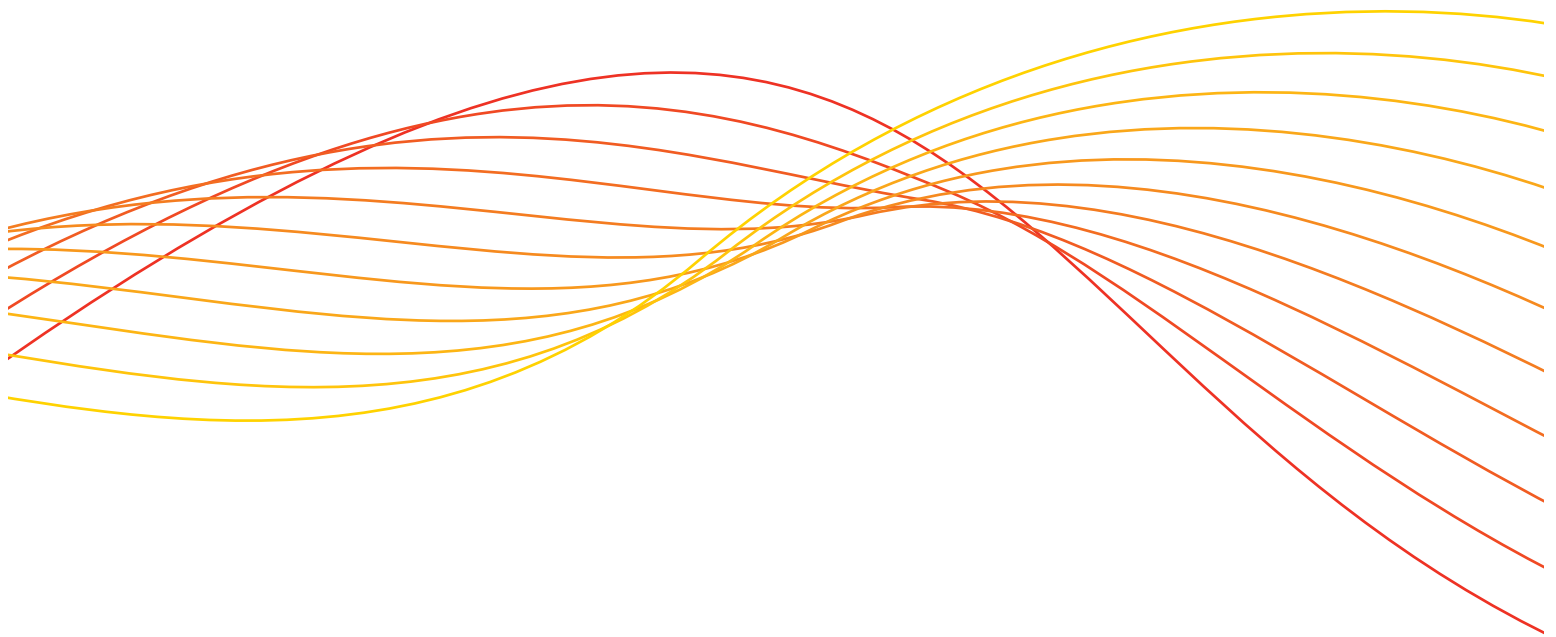
### **Business Benefits**

- Immediate productivity gains from the reduction of waiting and downtime derived from the introduction of a reliable network infrastructure;
- Business flexibility and productivity gains from the introduction of new capabilities and functionalities hitherto unavailable;
- Significant cost savings from enhanced productivity and from the introduction of VoIP

### **About ProCurve Networking by HP**

The ProCurve Networking business unit of HP is a supplier of enterprise networking solutions comprising wired and wireless networking products, services and solutions – including WAN routers, Ethernet switches, routing switches, wireless access points and network management applications – which allow customers to build networks based on open standards that meet current and future needs for security, performance and reliability.

The ProCurve Networking Adaptive EDGE Architecture™ is a unique design strategy that creates a secure, mobile, multi-service network by placing intelligence at the edge—where users connect and policies are enforced. This innovative approach creates a dynamic network infrastructure designed to keep up with advancing technology and user needs while protecting business investments.



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