

Annette Kreitzer

Commissioner

P.O. Box 110200

Juneau, AK 99811-0200

www.state.ak.us/admin



Robert Pearson

Spec. Asst. - Communications

907.465.5671

cell: 907.723.2320

robert.pearson@alaska.gov

Press Release

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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Major State Communications Project Completed

(February 10, 2009, Anchorage, AK) – Today, the Department of Administration announced that the Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone system has fully replaced the aging PBX system.

The State of Alaska's Telephone Replacement Project was successfully completed on schedule recently with the total decommissioning of the State's aging Private Branch Exchange (PBX) system, parts of which had been in service since the mid-1980s.

Due to aging hardware, loss of vendor support and a lightning strike to two of the PBXs in 2004, there was significant risk of a catastrophic failure in the future unless costly repairs were undertaken. In 2005 the decision was made to replace the entire system.

"This has been a three-year project, and involved replacing older telephones with Cisco IP handsets and installing a completely new hardware and software infrastructure for the State's voice communications systems," said Annette Kreitzer, Commissioner of Administration.

"Many unexpected issues and challenges had to be resolved by State employees and contractors, and this major project was completed on schedule."

Matt Horner, Vice President of Professional Services for World Wide Technology, contractor for the project, said that the on time completion of the work was a cooperative effort.

"WWT appreciated the opportunity to work with the State and Cisco teams these past 3 years. It's great to be part of a successful transition to a technologically advanced system that will greatly benefit the State today and for many years to come."

The new infrastructure will support "converged communications" in the future, where the computers and phones on State employee desks will operate seamlessly with wireless networks, cell phones, videoconferencing and other applications. The VoIP technology is also adaptable to use with new digital technologies that may emerge.

The overall cost of the project was \$33.5 million, but estimated annual savings of \$3.1 million mean the project will "pay for itself" in approximately 11 years. The

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State will save money on calls between offices that previously carried long distance charges.

The gains from increased productivity and reliability, and the avoidance of a possible catastrophic failure of State communications and services are additional benefits.

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