

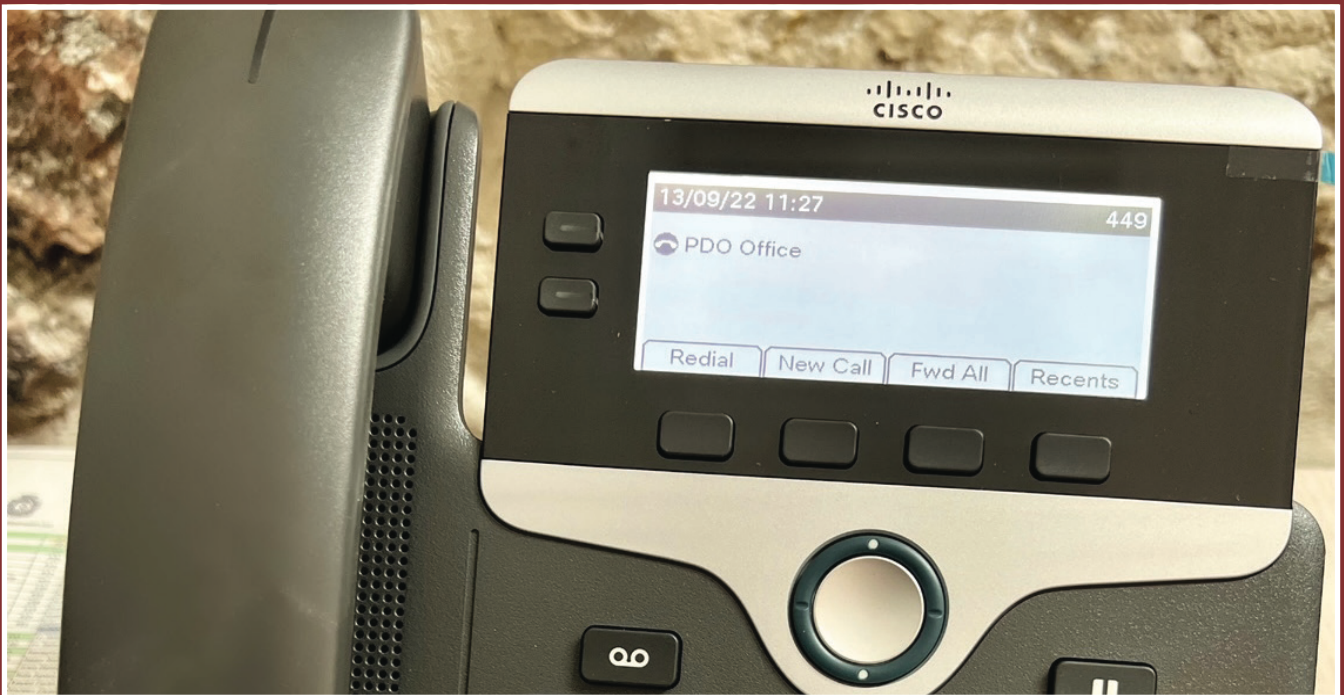


THE LATIN PATRIARCHATE
OF JERUSALEM

Conclusion Report

Replacement of the Obsolete Central Switchboard
(CISCO) Telecom System

GA 272/21



General Administration
Project Development Office
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Background

The LPJ is aware that an efficient telecommunications system is a key pillar in a successful work environment and has been a priority for many years. Today, the LPJ provides a full suite of tools in support of a digital workforce including laptops, mobiles, internet access as well as a host of online services. To complement all these efforts to facilitate the continuation of an effective communications system, staff are equipped with desk phones and meeting tools (e.g. Skype, Zoom and Microsoft Teams). Investments in these tools have paid off throughout the years, and the LPJ has made it a priority to keep assessing opportunities to modernize business operations to improve services and enhance productivity.

In 2021, it was decided by the manufacturer that the hardware infrastructure of phones, installed decades ago, is at the end of its life. The LPJ acknowledged the need to have the devices replaced as part of the 2021 list of priorities. This comes in line with LPJ's vision to maintain a workplace and workforce fully enabled with unified communications tools to work securely anywhere, any time.

Project Description

The Cisco sever PABX of the Latin Patriarchate was deemed obsolete and outdated as per CISCO, ensuring the end of life for the hardware installed in Jerusalem. It posed a risk in case of a hardware malfunction, as it was impossible to find replacement parts because the model was discontinued by CISCO. This risk would have caused a shutdown of all telephone and landline communications until purchasing a replacement.

It is worthy to mention that the CISCO system provides a free of charge connectivity to all administrative offices in three countries (Israel, Jordan and Palestine). This is a major cost saving for the LPJ given that phone charges between countries is very expensive. A phone call between Jerusalem and Bethlehem for example or between Jerusalem and Amman costs around 15 cents per minute. Thousands of minutes are spent on a monthly basis to advance regular business across the Diocese, and this would translate to a major operational cost. Additionally, the system allows for calls outside the CISCO networks using local rates. For example, calls from Jerusalem to a landline or a mobile phone in Israel or Jordan made over the CISCO system will be charge as a local call rather than an international one. The existing system was already too old to be serviced by CISCO and spare parts were no longer available, and breakage in the current system would lead to immediately reverting to regular lines and the costs would be excessive. Given that we will only be replacing the equipment and retaining the existing infrastructure means that the cost of replacement is rather efficient.

The project aimed to purchase a new CISCO switchboard server and Cisco phones to benefit the Patriarch, Bishops, priests across the Diocese, the LPJ Chancellery and General Administration employees across the Diocese and the LPJ as an institution that strives to provide the best for the parishioners and all faithful, and to allow the continuity of the LPJ biblical mission in serving its communities in the Holy Land.

The project included the following:

- Installation of UCS M5 server with ESXI 7.0 version
- Installation of 3 VM on server including:
 - Cisco unified communication manager 12.5
 - Cisco IM & Presence
 - Cisco Expressway Core
 - Cisco Expressway Edge (on DC DMZ)
- Installation of VG320 for 48 analog ports
- Webex room kit mini + touch 10 panel for video conference

Implemented Works

- The voice server is responsible for all calls between the IP phones inside and outside the organization (not including the provider's side).
- In addition, Expressway servers have been set up and configured to support IM within the organization, and also enable corporate chat for the entire organization and connection via mobile devices for conversations inside and outside the organization.
- The switchboard works with 88xx & 78XX model phones in the SIP protocol.
- For analog interfaces (FAX door unites etc.) a VG320 device has been configured and paired to CUCM.

The new telephones have been deployed to ensure that staff and clergy across the Diocese have the necessary communication and collaboration tools to work effectively. In total 94 new CISCO devices were purchased and deployed to employees and priests across the Diocese as follows:

Item	Quantity
Cisco 7821	89
Cisco 8851	4
Cisco Server 6000M	1

Unforeseen Costs:

The COVID-19 pandemic shifted working patterns and as a result, people and businesses had greater demand for hardware components which partially stemmed from the massive shift to a remote workforce at the start of the pandemic. This in turn had a great impact on the supply chain which led to a considerable increase in prices as the demand rose for more tech equipment. In April 2021, CISCO announced a price increase on technical services for certain end-of-sale products and in December 2021, updated their business module regarding the licenses which caused an increase in the prices of communications subscriptions, licenses and other features which were free before the pandemic. This increase in prices, coupled with the change in CISCO license policies and the subsequent increase in logistics cost, had rendered the available funds insufficient to adequately cover the whole project. We were able to secure the needed funds from local contributions as it was very important to complete the project as soon as possible.

Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of this project are LPJ employees and priests in Palestine, Israel and Jordan around 106 individuals. The indirect beneficiary of the project is the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem that strives to provide the best for its people and to allow the continuity of the LPJ biblical mission in serving its communities in the Holy Land.

Before



After





LATIN PATRIARCHATE
OF JERUSALEM

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