pro time

case study

Belgium
Police services

"Protime is much more than a time registration system, it's an added value"

An added value in what respect?
Protime's added value for Mira according to
Commissioner Pol Cappon

Efficiency
Two FTEs less work

Price/quality ratio
Easy implementation on the existing network, low maintenance costs

Flexible
Small adjustments can be implemented in-house

Total solution
Introduction of flextime was possible, good overview of how employees spend their time, arms room is efficiently secured with automated access control, etc.

Commissioner Pol Cappon,
Heard of HR, Mira police zone

Protime was responsible for an even bigger change in the beautifully renovated offices of the Mira police zone in Waregem in 2003: Following the installation of a time registration package with automated access control, the force is now paid correctly and on time. Thus more time is freed up for real police tasks, meaning more police officers on the streets. "Thanks to Protime, we were able to re-assign two full-time employees, one police officer and one civilian employee elsewhere", specifies Commissioner Pol Cappon, head of HR.

Who?
The Mira Police Zone.

What?
Since the police reform, local police in Belgium has been subdivided into 196 police zones. The Mira Police Zone is a so-called multi-commune zone and covers the communes of Anzegem, Avelgem, Spiere- Helkijn, Waregem and Zwevegem (hence the five links in the logo). It includes
23 residential centres in an area of 182 km^2.

Number of employees?
125 operational police officers and 18 civilian employees.

Info?
http://www.pzmira.be

The police reform and unification of Belgium's police force in 2001 resulted in some important changes: the employee statute of the majority of police and state police (known as rijkswacht) employees changed, people were transferred, departments eliminated and local police forces grouped in police zones or PZs.

The authorities allowed each police zone to organize its HR policy autonomously, and Commissioner Pol Cappon felt that the Excel sheets drawn up in-house were no longer sufficient. "The authorities did not provide us with a substitute program, so we had to go in search of a private partner. In 2003 we contacted six companies for a public tender. Protime towered above all the others because it thought beyond pure time registration, unlike its competitors. The presentation also showed that Protime had thought about access control and cost analysis which was the added value that we were looking for. A company visit to Puratos Belcolade in Erembodegem really opened our eyes and made our decision final. The head of our police

force was quite impressed, as we drove back to the police station he said "If that plant can continue to run, then we should be able to pull this off too."

Secured Network

On 30 March 2001 – the day before the police reform was implemented – the equivalent of a whole book was published in the Belgian Official Gazette on the police force's new statute. Commissioner Pol Cappon and Protime translated this into a more workable program. "By developing the program together, I now also fully understand it.

Therein lies the power of Protime: It has nothing to do with Cobol or programming languages. It is based on simple logic, in easily understandable Dutch."

"Thanks to Protime we were able to introduce flextime, an essential factor which contributes to employee satisfaction."

Another difficult feat was the connection of Protime to the highly secured police network. "We use the Hilde intranet network, which, it goes without saying, needs to be properly protected. Protime runs alongside it, but at the same it doesn't: Data is transferred over the same cables, by the same IP addresses, and yet they are not on the same network. Protime walked in with a PC and the installation took all of three seconds.

Although we could have run it on our secured network, we chose not to link the two networks. Protime now runs on an individual server, there is no interface between them and yet it works. Don't ask me how they pulled it off. Of course, they check everything at the federal level, but there have never been any remarks about Protime."

Thinking and looking ahead

"The ingenious thing about this system is that we have linked every employee to a fixed work regime", says commissioner Pol Cappon. "Our officers have to work irregular hours, but according to a fixed pattern, which repeats itself after 20 weeks. This enables them to know long beforehand when they have to work, and it also comes in handy for holiday applications. The ProNet application enables every employee to look back or look ahead in his or her duty roster and to check their time registration. This in itself is a complex matter, because a local patrol is remunerated in a different way than an intervention. But Protime processes everything automatically and sends it to our social secretariat, the Secretariat of the Integrated Police Forces or SSGPI."

Involving everyone

In reforming the police, the government's aim was to get more officers out on the streets. Thanks to Protime, Mira was able to present nice results almost right away. "Following the introduction of Protime, we were able to re-assign one police officer and one civilian employee to other tasks within our police force", says Commissioner Capon. "I now only have two employees in the personnel department. What's more, their work was simplified and became more efficient.

They use Protime on a daily basis: They check the registrations made by the twelve department heads located throughout the police zone and they conduct a final check at the end of the month."

"Thanks to Protime we were able to introduce flextime, an essential factor which contributes to employee satisfaction"

But Protime not only changed procedures within the HR Department. "We consciously placed responsibility with everyone in the police force. With the employee himself, who inputs his data using a badge, and who no longer has to use keys thanks to the automated access control. We were also able to secure our arms room in this way. One of our officers was temporarily restricted from carrying fire arms. All we had to do was adapt his badge for a certain period, so he no

longer had access to the arms room. As far as the suspicion regarding time registration is concerned: I can honestly say that I don't remember a single incident where we used Protime to check or prove our case, in the negative sense; something like, 'Hey, look at this chart, you were five minutes late three times during the last three months'. The contrary is true: Thanks to Protime we were able to introduce flextime. And if you are looking at employee satisfaction, that has to be one of the essential contributing factors. By the way, I didn't even need Protime for the introduction of flextime, I did it all myself. The system is designed to enable the implementation of such adjustments in a flexible manner, as a result, the system's maintenance cost is minimal.

Modern Management

'In Mira's case, putting the responsibility with everyone means that every officer needs to report how he or she spends his or her time via ProCost. How much time is spent on training, on drawing up evidence reports, how many hours does the officer spend on contact with the population? "All these cost centres are registered, which provides us with a lot of interesting information", says Commissioner Pol Cappon. "Not only statistics for internal use, but also output for annual reports and reporting. The police force has a structure of safety plans, a safety unit and a safety council, all the way up to the highest level. As in every modern company, we set ourselves objectives and ProCost enables us to account for our performance with management, to see whether we have achieved our objectives."