PHILLIP GESTRO

ICT Leadership & Technical Lead | Infrastructure | Security & Delivery

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LinkedIn | Professional portfolio

Professional Profile

Senior ICT Technical Lead and consultant with more than 20 years of experience across technology operations, enterprise infrastructure, Microsoft platforms, cloud, security and complex delivery. I combine practical technical leadership with hands-on engineering, problem solving and client-facing advice. My career includes seven years leading critical ICT delivery at CentrePort and nine years consulting across government, regulated and commercial environments through ECLOUD.

The judgement I bring has developed across decades of different technologies, clients and operational settings. I can set technical direction, challenge suppliers, coordinate specialist engineers and resolve complex engineering issues while keeping business continuity in view. My leadership experience centres on technical direction, coaching, project delivery and multi-vendor coordination, backed by first-hand knowledge of the engineering work.

Technical Leadership & Hands-On Engineering

- **Technical direction and delivery.** Lead infrastructure and security design decisions, implementation programmes, testing, cutover and operational handover in business-critical environments.
- **Engineers and suppliers.** Coordinate internal specialists, contractors and service providers, clarify delivery responsibilities, resolve dependencies and challenge designs and proposals.
- **Operations and incident ownership.** Balance delivery priorities with service continuity, complex escalation, problem resolution, technical standards and support readiness.
- **Hands-on credibility.** Personally design, build, integrate and troubleshoot Microsoft, network, cloud and operational infrastructure while mentoring others.

Professional Experience

ICT Technical Lead | CentrePort Limited | Jun 2019 - Aug 2026

Led technical delivery across CentrePort's critical operational infrastructure, combining architecture, hands-on engineering, supplier coordination, complex problem escalation and service continuity in a live port environment.

- **Led the Shed 39 relocation and established CentrePort's digital infrastructure foundation.** Designed the four-rack server-room environment and led the complex relocation of staff and ICT services from two existing sites into Shed 39. Directed infrastructure deployment, specialist suppliers, migration, cutover and commissioning while maintaining business continuity and decommissioning the former locations. The new environment became the foundation for subsequent Private 5G, field-network and workplace improvements.
- **Directed suppliers while retaining technical ownership.** Challenged designs and scope, defined technical work packages and acceptance criteria, coordinated specialist engineers and contractors, and produced clear implementation, troubleshooting and operational handover documentation.
- **Led CentrePort-side integration of New Zealand's first commercial Private 5G network.** Turned Tū Ātea's network design into a supportable CentrePort environment, leading hands-on integration across existing network and security infrastructure, server-room and fibre readiness, radio-access sites and field connectivity. Coordinated design interpretation, specialist suppliers, testing and commissioning to connect the vendor-delivered platform to the port's operational systems.
- **Shaped hosting decisions and led migration delivery.** Assessed cloud, private hosting and infrastructure renewal options against cost, security, resilience and recovery. Recommended the ASI hosting direction and led CentrePort-side technical planning, service-provider dependencies, implementation, cutover and validation.
- **Turned security risks into architecture decisions, testing and management actions.** Developed CentrePort's cybersecurity strategy and maturity reviews, translated identity and network risks into practical hardening and remediation, and led CentrePort-side Arctic Wolf managed detection onboarding across six locations. Coordinated independent penetration-testing and network-segmentation readiness, separating delivered controls from proposed work and outstanding decisions.

- **Completed CentrePort's Microsoft 365 and Exchange hybrid transition.** Following the initial vendor phase, personally completed the remaining Exchange Online mailbox migration, configured Azure AD Connect and Exchange hybrid services, deployed the replacement hybrid server and retired legacy Exchange infrastructure. Implemented MFA, Conditional Access and Defender security controls. Strengthened privileged access and account-lockout protection, helping identify and block a brute-force attack; investigated and restored a failed MFA control for Remote Desktop Services.
- **Modernised operational networks and engineering standards.** Delivered workplace, tenancy and marine-network improvements, including a dedicated network for Rail Isolation. Established field-cabinet, fibre acceptance and testing standards, alongside a dual-contractor model to improve traceability, reliability and delivery assurance.
- **Converted Private 5G infrastructure into operational services.** Took the vehicle-fleet service from bench build and controlled pilot into production rollout; led the reusable Reefer Tower delivery model and CCTV cabinet and pole deployment standard; and delivered Gallagher-controlled vehicle gate and intercom connectivity. Further CCTV and crane work remained staged within the programme.

Consulting and Enterprise Assignments

Senior Technical Consultant | ECLOUD | May 2010 - Jun 2019

Held responsibility for client technology strategy, infrastructure, cybersecurity and operational support across government, health regulatory, industrial, education and commercial organizations. Worked directly with senior leaders while remaining closely involved in technical design, implementation, escalation and recovery.

- **Advised a broad client portfolio.** Supported an All-of-Government agency, health professional regulators and industrial and education clients, alongside a portfolio exceeding 300 private-sector organizations. Developed technology roadmaps, risk-based priorities and practical investment and delivery recommendations.
- **Managed commercial and supplier decisions.** Worked with executives, finance teams and providers on business cases, RFI/RFP inputs, procurement, contracts, licensing, hosting and support choices, identifying delivery risks and challenging unclear costs or ownership.
- **Explained decisions and transferred knowledge.** Translated technical and regulatory requirements into clear recommendations, implementation plans and operational guidance; coached engineers and users, drawing on earlier Microsoft Certified Trainer experience.
- **Combined consulting with hands-on engineering.** Designed, built, migrated and supported Microsoft server and collaboration platforms, Active Directory, Exchange/Microsoft 365, virtualization, hybrid hosting and enterprise networking. Troubleshot complex identity, application, platform and operational dependencies for clients.
- **Designed and validated regulated cloud solutions.** Led government and regulatory cloud design work, built off-network proofs of concept, resolved architecture and integration issues and progressed solutions through security-risk, governance and design-authority review.
- **Connected security advice with service recovery.** Prepared cybersecurity strategies, security-risk and privacy assessments, cloud-readiness reviews and business-continuity plans. Supported practical security improvements and commercial-client ransomware response and recovery.

Enterprise Contract Assignments | Comsmart via ECLOUD | Dec 2014 - Jun 2019

Recurring assignments undertaken while employed by ECLOUD, totalling approximately three years across Revera, NZX, CTAS and CentrePort, alongside work for Comsmart direct clients.

- **Delivered enterprise infrastructure projects.** Worked with architects and application vendors to implement secure data-centre, virtualization, Microsoft server and Revera Apollo local-cloud platforms, taking designs through build, integration and technical validation.
- **Built and integrated Microsoft application services.** Hands-on builds and troubleshooting across Active Directory, Windows Server, IIS, SQL Server, Certificate Services and Remote Desktop Services; resolved identity, network, vendor and application dependencies.
- **Improved operational security and supportability.** Reviewed technical builds, implemented Group Policy and privileged-access hardening, investigated complex infrastructure faults and contributed clear delivery and handover records.

Earlier Career

- **Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand | IT Administrator (2007 - 2010).** Led public-facing practitioner-registration platform infrastructure and managed technical support, planning and suppliers for health regulatory operations.
- **TelstraClear | Microsoft Windows Systems Engineer (2006 - 2007).** Delivered enterprise Active Directory recovery and migration work and supported Microsoft, Citrix and communications platforms.
- **BOSIT | Network Engineer (2004 - 2006).** Designed, implemented and supported Microsoft systems, networks, wireless and backup services for Wellington clients.
- **Avonmore Tertiary Institute | Microsoft Certified Trainer (2004).** Delivered Level 5 and Level 6 computing-support training, preparing adult learners for Microsoft, CompTIA A+ and Network+ qualifications. Held Microsoft Certified Trainer status for three consecutive years and taught MCSA material to people already working in the IT industry.

Technical Skills and Delivery Expertise

Technical leadership: Infrastructure architecture, project and contractor coordination, vendor design review, technical escalation, testing, acceptance, operational handover and incident/problem management.
Hands-on platforms: Microsoft 365, Active Directory and hybrid identity, Windows Server, Exchange hybrid, VMware/Hyper-V, enterprise networking, cloud and data-centre migration, infrastructure security and Private 5G integration.

Qualifications and Professional Development

National Diploma in Computing Engineering (Level 6). Historical certifications include MCSE, MCSA | Messaging, MCP, Microsoft Certified Trainer, CompTIA A+, Network+ and Linux+. Passed Microsoft exams SC-100 (Cybersecurity Architecture) and MS-500 (Microsoft 365 Security Administration). Technical Writing and Train the Trainer certification through Auldhouse.