FAQ

What is Control Phreak?

Control Phreak is a software-only system that will apply user-defined rules to all inbound, outbound, and diverted call traffic through a PBX and it will immediately terminate any call that breaks these rules.

Do I need any extra hardware to run Control Phreak?

Control Phreak runs on a standard PC or server and uses the LAN to connect to your PBX. Unless the PBX requires a LAN connection, no other hardware is required. For specific additional PBX related software that may be required, please refer to the installation notes for each PBX.

Do I have to do anything to monitor calls?

No. Control Phreak is fully automated. You set up the rules and Control Phreak will apply these to every call. It will make the decision to terminate a call without user intervention.

Can I see which calls Control Phreak has killed?

Yes. A complete log of all terminated (killed) calls is retained and the log can be viewed at any time. The rule that was breached is also included so you can see why the call was killed.

Will I be advised when Control Phreak kills a call?

No. Not unless you want to be. There are configurable alerts in Control Phreak that will advise you of certain events – terminating a call, rules being modified, starting up and closing down messages as well as alerting you to any system or communications issues. These are sent by email or by SMS message

Will my PBX work if Control Phreak stops?

Yes. Control Phreak only monitors calls and takes action if a rule is broken. If Control Phreak is halted or closed down, calls will continue inbound, outbound and diverted through your PBX without any interruption to this service but when Control Phreak is halted or is closed down, your PBX is no longer protected by it against phreakers.

Do I need to re-program my PBX for Control Phreak?

No. Control Phreak can be installed and it will work with your PBX without any PBX programming. Installation is quick and easy and calls will not be interrupted when Control Phreak is activated – unless they are breaking your rules. Phone users will not be aware that Control Phreak has been activated until calls are terminated.

I need to restrict calls from certain extensions. Will Control Phreak do this?

Yes. Control Phreak will allow you to define rules for specific extensions for specific times of the day. You can be as flexible and liberal or as restrictive as you like to meet your requirements.

I need to block certain people making inbound calls to us. Is this possible?

Yes. But you need CLI (Caller Line Identification) enabled on all of your exchanges lines/trunks by your carrier. With this enabled, you can identify and restrict inbound calls either totally or per extension. You will not be visible or audible to the caller who will not be able to contact you. This also works for junk faxes if you have your fax line routed through your PBX.

I want to block phreakers but do not want to restrict our calls. Can this be done?

Yes. Because Control Phreak will use one set of rules for outbound calls and a different set of rules for diverted calls (inbound calls diverting to outbound calls – the preferred route of phreakers), the rules controlling diverted calls should be kept as tightly controlled as possible with your diverted rules, but calls made from internal extensions use your set of outbound rules which will be completely different with different levels of control. The default settings in Control Phreak automatically allow all inbound calls, allow all outbound calls, and block all diverted calls. From this, you only need to set exceptions such as allowing diverts out to company mobiles or only to the numbers you authorise.

What about Class of Service (COS) settings in our PBX?

If these have been established, these settings will continue to operate because the PBX will continue to apply these. Any rules added to Control Phreak will apply in addition to any existing COS settings. However, Control Phreak eliminates the need for COS settings which will then speed up installation time on new PBX installations and gives you total control over your PBX so you decide it operates.

How does someone know they have been cut off by Control Phreak?

They won't know why their calls cannot be connected. Their calls will just not be connected. In some phone systems nothing at all will be audible when a call is killed. In others, the disconnect will be very quickly audible before the connection goes silent. But Control Phreak kills calls in milliseconds so the disconnection is very quick. They will only know they cannot make a call. In the event of an attempted phreaking attack, phreakers will quickly realise there is security operating in situ on your PBX and move onto an easier target.

We have passwords on all our voicemail and our PBX maintainer says it is as secure as it can be. Why would I need any more security?

Passwords on voicemail and PBX-dial up ports can be cracked in milliseconds by professional phreakers and software to do this is freely available on the internet. Even if every voicemail port was secured (and often there are some voicemail ports inadvertently left with default passwords in situ) it only takes a few seconds to crack these. This has become a $20 billion fraud worldwide with some victims receiving a bill of up to 100 times their monthly spend over just one weekend. The risk is considerable and the measures to protect yourself from this should not rely on passwords that can be easily cracked. And because Control Phreak is secure behind your data firewall, it cannot be found by phreakers.

Can Control Phreak be installed on a server?

Yes. It can.

Does the PC or Server need to be logged in?

No. Control Phreak runs as a service and will operate without a user being logged in. Also, Control Phreak will automatically start and operate if the PC is re-booted, even if it is an unattended re-boot.

Can analogue/ISDN/SIP trunks be protected?

Yes. Control Phreak can provide protection for all types of exchange lines. There is no difference in the rules for handling these. Also, Control Phreak will monitor all IP phones and soft-phones connected to your PBX in the same manner as it monitors desk phones.

What control does Control Phreak provide?

Control Phreak allows an administrator to:

- Set full security rules for controlling all phone calls
- Protect the PBX maintenance port by restricting access to this
- Add or change names assigned to extensions
- Manage forwarding settings on extensions

Control Phreak will automatically synchronise the date/time on your PBX whenever the time is adjusted on the PC e.g. during biannual summer/winter time changes.

We have tele-workers working from home and dialling outbound through our PBX. How do we allow this and still secure our PBX?

Modern PBXs promote the virtual office where home workers can dial into the office PBX to make their calls. Control Phreak can be configured to allow diverts from specific numbers i.e. from an employee's home or from an employee's mobile so home workers can make use of the PBX while maintaining full security (CLI must be provided for this feature to work). To ensure complete security, you can even configure Control Phreak to only allow diverted calls to be made to specific telephone numbers to reduce the risk of fraud. If an employee is travelling with a soft phone or has an IP phone, these are seen as internal extensions and any calls to and from them are treated as outbound/inbound calls and not as diverted calls.

Can Control Phreak operate in a 64-bit environment

Yes. It can.

What about on-going support for and upgrades to Control Phreak?

These are always available. We provide a Callista Cover Annual Subscription service which provides you with both telephone and online support and also all system upgrades **at no additional charge** once the subscription charge is paid. This subscription is optional but highly recommended to keep your system always up-to-date and to provide support whenever you need it. We have a 24-hour Help Desk service throughout the week and a 16-hour Help Desk service over the weekend and public holidays. If you choose not to take up Callista Cover, support and upgrades are still available to you but you will be required **to pay for these in advance via credit card** and they will be delivered as required

callista

The Callista Group