

How HCF modernised its technology platform in just 29 days

When faced with challenging renewal terms and the need for greater agility, Australia's largest not-for-profit health insurer – serving over 2 million Australians – partnered with F5 and Nexon to migrate and modernise critical member services infrastructure.



The transformation improved reliability, enhanced security and streamlined operations within an accelerated timeline.

When a 20-year vendor relationship ends

When HCF's application delivery platform vendor presented renewal terms – including a significant price increase and a shift to a subscription-only model – the team made a strategic decision to take the opportunity to modernise before the rollover date.

What followed was a 29-day transformation that addressed immediate commercial and technical challenges while enhancing member services.

The catalyst was clear: after two decades with the incumbent platform provider, HCF faced rising renewal costs and performance challenges in critical areas such as health insurance claims processing.

This project proved what's possible when decisive leadership combines with the right partnerships.

"A truly remarkable outcome that has a tangible impact on our members' experience – incredibly proud of all those involved, including our new friends at F5," said Greg Baster, CIO at HCF.

Critical systems serving 2 million Australians

HCF supports members across Australia, processing millions of health insurance claims through systems like HICAPS.

Reliability and uptime are non-negotiable because any delay impacts members during essential healthcare transactions.

Behind the scenes, operational issues were emerging, including extended timelines for system upgrades and security patches. With the platform nearing end-of-life, renewal negotiations introduced inflexible terms that prompted HCF to act quickly.

Building the right partnership

Having previously evaluated alternative platforms, HCF engaged F5 to deliver a modern solution within an aggressive timeline. F5 recommended Nexon Asia Pacific (Nexon), as a trusted partner with existing HCF relationships and deep technical expertise.

"When HCF explained their timeline, we knew it would take more than just technology – it needed the right partnership approach," said Jim Haikalis, Digital Transformation & Security Specialist at F5. "We needed a partner with existing HCF relationships who could navigate the commercial complexities and business understanding while we focused on the technical execution."

This collaboration enabled rapid decision-making and streamlined governance processes, allowing the team to complete one of the fastest enterprise migrations in Australian healthcare.

"After working with HCF across multiple technology initiatives, we understood their environment and



At a glance

Industry

Healthcare/Insurance

Challenges

- Legacy platform approaching end-of-life
- Commercial and operational constraints
- Extended security patching cycles
- Increasing complexity in support processes

Solutions

- Migration to F5 BIG-IP delivery platform
- Strategic partnership between F5 and Nexon
- Four-week phased migration
- Daily war rooms and parallel workstreams

Outcomes

- Improved transaction reliability and reduced timeouts
- Security patching accelerated from weeks to days
- Faster issue resolution and simplified management
- No unplanned downtime during migration

priorities," said Tony Lorello, Enterprise Client Partner at Nexon. "When this opportunity arose, we were able to mobilise immediately because of that existing relationship and trust."



The 29-day migration

The migration strategy balanced speed with risk management through carefully orchestrated phases.

- **Week 1:** The team validated the approach using trial licences and mirrored traffic to prove functional equivalence.
- **Weeks 2-3:** In parallel execution, tech teams rehearsed migrations while Nexon fast-tracked commercial and governance approvals that typically take months. Daily war rooms kept all stakeholders aligned, with executives clearing calendars to accelerate decisions and technical staff working through nights and weekends to maintain coverage.
- **Week 4:** With contracts signed, the team executed the production migration over five days. "We ensured zero unplanned downtime throughout the migration by maintaining clear rollback procedures for each phase," said Rahul Kirlapalkar, Manager Network Services at HCF.

The entire transformation – from initial contact to production cutover – was completed in just 29 days. "I don't think we've ever done that before in the history of F5," said Jim Haikalis, Senior Account Director at F5, emphasising the exceptional nature of the achievement.

Measurable improvements

The successful migration delivered significant operational benefits:

- Improved transaction reliability and reduced timeouts.
- Faster issue resolution and enhanced application performance.
- Streamlined security patching cycles and simplified policy management.

These improvements strengthened HCF's ability to deliver reliable, secure services to members.

Operational efficiencies

Modernisation reduced complexity and operational overhead, enabling HCF to optimise resources for member-focused initiatives. The new platform also allowed retirement of redundant infrastructure, further improving efficiency.

Enhanced security posture

Security patch deployment accelerated dramatically, reducing vulnerability windows. Consolidated Web Application Firewall (WAF) policies improved consistency and simplified management.

How the three-way partnership worked

F5 provided technical expertise and proven methodologies, while Nexon's established relationships and understanding of HCF's environment removed typical delays.

"The relationship we've built with Nexon over the years meant we could trust them to help coordinate this complex migration. They understood our environment and worked seamlessly with both our team and F5 to achieve our very ambitious timeline," said Tim Larcos, GM Technology Services at HCF.

Together, the partnership delivered a transformation that exceeded expectations.

What's next for HCF

The migration has positioned HCF for continued modernisation, including evaluating F5 Distributed Cloud solutions for future enhancements.

"This project shows that with clear objectives and the right partners, even aggressive timelines can deliver lasting value for our members," said Anton Eksteen, Head of Networks and Reliability Engineering at HCF.



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GM Technology Services
HCF

About Nexon Asia Pacific

Nexon is an award-winning digital consulting and managed services partner for mid-market, enterprise and government organisations across Australia. We offer clients a uniquely broad suite of solutions requiring end-to-end capabilities coupled with specialist expertise in security, cloud and digital solutions. As a certified and accredited local and state government provider, CREST and ISO-certified, Nexon partners with world-class technology vendors to deliver innovative and integrated solutions.

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About F5

F5 is a global leader in application delivery and security, helping organisations ensure every app and API is fast, available and secure. The F5 platform provides comprehensive protection and high availability across any environment – from cloud to edge. With deep expertise in both modern and legacy applications, F5 delivers consistent security, intelligent orchestration and actionable insights. Over 80% of the Fortune Global 500 rely on F5 to drive better business outcomes.

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