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Responding to Incidents

by *Bill Zalud*

May 1, 2007



Prevention is one

thing. Responding

– quickly and

correctly – to

A mesh network makes the incident response system in Dallas work.

incidents is quite another. Technology

advances and homeland security grants have

teamed up to add speed and intelligence for

security officers, first responders and law

enforcement personnel.

For example, the Dallas Police Department

just deployed a wireless video surveillance

network in an effort to reduce crime in the

city's downtown business district.

Technology from Firetide Inc., a developer of

wireless mesh technology, has lead to a

solution from BearCom, a Dallas-based

wireless system integrator, which included

Firetide wireless mesh nodes, Sony IP

cameras and BridgeWave transfer units. The

wireless video surveillance network was

funded by a grant from the Meadows



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Foundation.

QUICK RESPONSE



Incidents are monitored in the Dallas City Hall and also police headquarters.

“Our goal was to reduce crime in the downtown business district and to combat the

perception of inadequate safety measures in the area,” said Deputy Police Chief Tom Lawrence. “While we did not go into the project with the concept of wireless, the benefits quickly became obvious: The mesh enables quick setup of the network without a complete overhaul, while providing excellent bandwidth and security for video streams.”

In Arlington, Va., the challenge was first responder credentials.

Right now, Arlington is piloting the nation's first test of a new, high-tech identification card – FRAC, which stands for First Responder Authentication Credentials.

Arlington has issued more than 1,400 FRAC cards to emergency services workers, enabling quick, authorized access to emergency scenes across multiple jurisdictions and agencies.

During our 9/11

response, we

learned that

secure

credentialing of

first responders is

essential to being

able to efficiently

provide critical

emergency services," said Robert P. Griffin,

Arlington County's director of emergency

management. "As the home of the Pentagon

and many vital federal and local facilities,

Arlington places a high priority on quick and

secure response — we are very pleased to

pilot this program for the nation's first

responders."

Other DHS money has created other incident

response projects in the Arlington area.

Arlington County is managing a pilot test of

new outdoor warning system technology –

sometimes referred to as "sirens" and "Giant

Voice" – to see if the technology can add to

the emergency communications "system of

systems."



A combination of security technologies includes sensitivity to community concerns in Dallas.

MASS NOTIFICATION

Arlington's

new indoor

and outdoor



A "giant voice" in urban areas can communicate information quickly following an incident.

warning system, WAVES (Wireless Audio Visual Emergency System), from

MadahCom, is designed to alert, warn and inform people of what to do before, during and after an emergency or disaster.

The outdoor warning portion of WAVES combines a horn blast with a loudspeaker, which will broadcast a clear message, giving specific instructions. The system can be tested silently, without disturbing residents.

The system will also include an indoor mass notification system as well as supplement and be integrated with the region's many other emergency notification systems.

SIDEBAR: Survival Vehicle

When facing an incident, a survival vehicle is essential.



Fully equipped survival vehicles can help security officers and first responders.

For over a year, Campa

USA has been offering its Campa All Terrain Trailers to government organizations, disaster

management personnel and outdoor enthusiasts. The unique design of the Campa All Terrain Trailer (ATT) and the Campa Disaster Reconnaissance System (DRS) uses a 2007 Toyota Tacoma for the build platform. The modular design of the Campa EVS easily transfers to other truck makes and models. It is designed for new vehicles and is a completely self-contained survival system.

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