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Special Public Safety Issue

**Wireless Technologies  
Enhance Ability of  
Public Safety Pros  
to Save Lives**

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## INDUSTRY OVERVIEW:

# Wireless Technologies Enhance Ability of Public Safety Pros to Save Lives

By John Czapko

When a fire raged out of control in the concession area at the Austin City Limits Music Festival on September 14, panic could easily have set in among the tens of thousands in attendance. Instead, a member of the security team whipped out his cell phone and dialed 9-1-1. The Austin Fire Department responded promptly and extinguished the blaze. At a time when wasted minutes could have resulted in tragedy, wireless technology took the stage.

This kind of scene is replayed every day across America, as professionals who are charged with ensuring the public's safety turn to their cell phones, two-way radios, and other wireless communications devices with the ultimate objective of saving lives.

"Motorola and Icom have done a fantastic job of producing wireless devices that enable public safety professionals in the field to perform their jobs at the highest level," said Hugh Johnston, Purchasing Manager for BearCom. "They are constantly introducing new features that enhance the durability and reliability of their two-way radios."

At the same time, a number of other innovative companies are introducing products that further leverage wireless technology in the public safety sector. Take Sony and Firetide, for example. Sony video cameras and Firetide mesh networks were integral components of a wireless video surveillance solution that BearCom designed and installed in downtown Dallas for the Dallas Police Department in 2007. The initial phase of the installation involved 40 Sony cameras and 32 Firetide mesh nodes.

To allow the Sony cameras to operate over the network, the Firetide mesh nodes were linked to each other wirelessly, eliminating the need to install

video cabling to each camera location, which would have been too difficult and cost-prohibitive for the City of Dallas. The nodes formed a video network, which spanned the entire area selected for surveillance. Notably, the system is self-healing; should one link be blocked or lose power, the video signal will still go through to the other nodes without any interruption in service.

One of Sony's frequent partners in such video surveillance projects is On-Net Surveillance Systems (OnSSI), the leading developer of intelligent IP-based video surveillance software. This technology is a core component of any such solution, since it heightens the ability of municipalities to monitor the environment more effectively. Ocularis, a new IP video control platform from OnSSI, is designed to operate on a single platform and offers unprecedented levels of user intuitiveness, open architecture, and scalability. With core competencies rooted in both the IT and professional security markets, OnSSI's unique solution provides feature-rich camera management, sophisticated recording and archiving, automatic "push live video on event" capabilities, control room video wall management tools, and "virtual matrix" functionality.

"This project would not have been possible were it not for the cooperation of our partners," said John Watson, Chairman of BearCom. "Not only are Sony, Firetide, and OnSSI innovators and leaders in the wireless communications industry, but more importantly, they worked closely with us to develop a solution that was a perfect fit for the needs of the Dallas Police Department and the City of Dallas."

In addition to continued improvement in two-way radios and the introduction

*Continues on page 3...*



*“Motorola and Icom have done a fantastic job of producing wireless devices that enable public safety professionals in the field to perform their jobs at the highest level.”*

**Hugh Johnston**, Purchasing Manager  
BearCom

*...Continued from page 2*

of wireless video surveillance solutions, leading smartphone manufacturers like Research In Motion are making a difference in the industry. The BlackBerry Enterprise Solution, for example, is highly effective at connecting public safety personnel and officials to the colleagues, communications, and information they depend on throughout the day. Specifically, it equips mobile users with timely wireless access to criminal records, emergency operating procedures, alert notifications, incident reports, and other important information. It also delivers its standard capabilities, such as e-mail, voice communications, and organizer applications.

Companies like Positron also are revolutionizing how public safety professionals are using technology. Last summer, Positron unveiled the industry's first fully integrated desktop. For the first time, public safety professionals have access to all the tools they need to handle emergency response, such as 9-1-1 call handling, geographic location display, computer-aided dispatch, radio communications, and records management—all from one source and on a single screen. The objective of the system is to enable emergency responders to serve more efficiently and effectively through better data sharing and workflow automation.

Another emerging wireless technology being embraced in the public safety industry is automated license plate recognition (ALPR), created by PIPS Technology. Cities in the U.S. and beyond see numerous benefits associated with the company's ALPR camera systems. Last winter in the U.K., for example, authorities used the

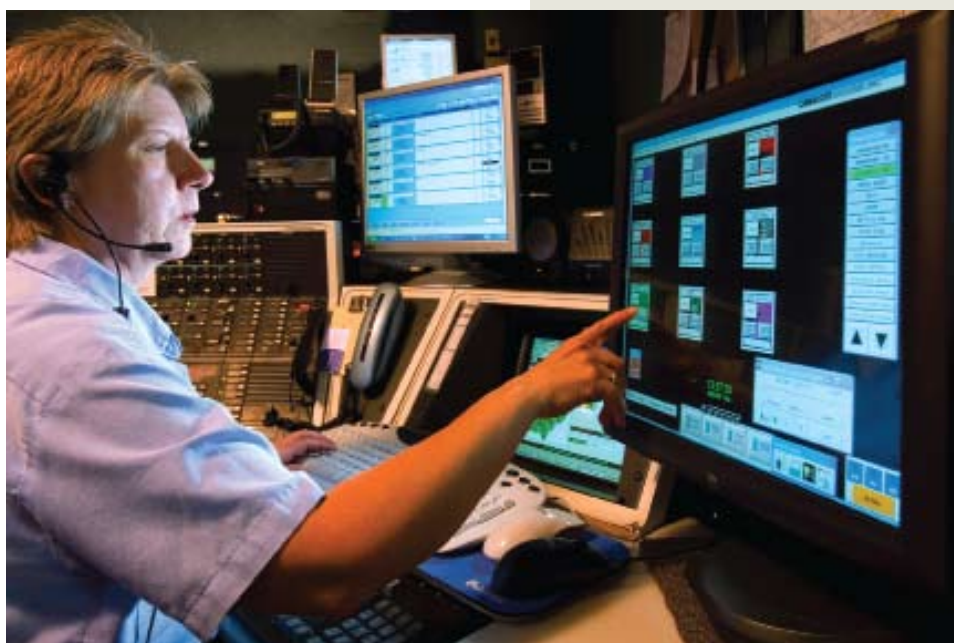
technology to clamp down on uninsured motorists. By getting those motorists off the street, the police in Greater Manchester, Wiltshire, Northumberland, and Gloucester say that the roads are being made safer. It has been reported in the U.K. that uninsured drivers are more likely to commit other crimes, such as drunk driving. In addition, insurance companies estimate that uninsured drivers increase the cost of insurance premiums for honest motorists.

PIPS' ALPR technology has been just as effective stateside. The Roseville Police Department in Roseville, California has experienced significant success in capturing criminals. In one example, Roseville's crime analyst searched a database using the department's Back Office System Software (BOSS), also

*Continues on page 4...*



Wireless video surveillance systems not only give a municipality the ability to identify criminal activity but also can serve as a deterrent, since would-be criminals can see that they are being monitored. Also, advancements in integrated radio dispatch systems from industry-leading companies like Positron are helping 9-1-1 operations respond more quickly, thereby saving more lives.



# When the Safety of the Public is at Stake, Who Can You Turn to for Help?



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Today's BlackBerry devices provide public safety employees with the ability to communicate not only by voice, but also by e-mail. This additional functionality can be especially useful in those environments where high noise levels may prohibit normal voice communications. These smartphones also offer other key features, such as GPS tracking.

*...Continued from page 3*

developed by PIPS, to zero in on a suspect. "Our BOSS database maintains a history of all plates seen by our patrol unit," said Roseville Police Department Chief Mike Blair. "By using the vehicle type and partial license plate we were able to find a match on the vehicle. The match provided us with a complete license plate and led us to the suspect, who was arrested for felony hit and run."

Finally, there's QuickSite, a highly mobile, trailer-based command center with a telescoping radio tower that addresses the critical need for re-establishing communications in the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster, when conventional communication systems may have been damaged or destroyed.

QuickSite, which was designed and developed by BearCom, was born out of the Hurricane Katrina tragedy. Shortly after the hurricane made landfall, BearCom's Mike Butler was contacted

by the National Guard about obtaining 50 two-way radios, two base stations, and a repeater. The conversation quickly turned to the challenges involved in rescuing the hundreds of thousands of people who were left homeless. Butler realized the solution needed was a product that hadn't been built yet—a trailer that could serve as a portable communications center and would be smaller, faster, and less expensive than what the industry had been using. Over the last few years, BearCom has perfected the product and is working with public safety entities all over the country to provide the kind of wireless solution that goes beyond just being a convenience or a cost benefit. ●

*John Czapko is Vice President of Sales for BearCom.*

*For more information about the wireless products and solutions discussed in this article, please contact BearCom at [TodaysWirelessWorld@BearCom.com](mailto:TodaysWirelessWorld@BearCom.com).*

Historically, volunteer firefighters have depended on two different wireless devices to facilitate communication—the pager and the two-way radio. But carrying two devices can often be cumbersome and expensive. Icom recently created a solution to get around this problem. The all-new IC-F50V radio/pager offers a unique “3V” proposition (voice storage, vibrate, and value). In short, the IC-F50V combines the best of a pager and a two-way radio into one “hybrid” package.



## PRODUCT REVIEW:

# Device Helps Volunteer Firefighters Combat Blazes More Effectively

By Hugh Johnston

There's a perception that the typical firefighters in America live in the stationhouse, where, when prompted by an alarm, they slide down a pole, strap on their gear, and ride together in a fire truck to a nearby blaze.

Don't believe it. The truth is that more than 70 percent of the fire departments in the United States are now staffed exclusively by volunteers, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Furthermore, the ability to communicate wirelessly is essential to helping these 832,000 volunteer firefighters perform their jobs.

Historically, most volunteer firefighters have depended on two different wireless devices to facilitate their communication. First, they have relied on pagers, which can be easily worn throughout the day, causing minimal interruptions in meetings, movies, and dinners, thanks to the vibration feature. These devices can offer voice storage capability, allowing personnel to record critical communications and play back messages at a later time, a necessity

for emergency workers. At the scene of a fire, however, volunteers must have two-way communication abilities. This requires the use of portable or mobile radios, usually installed on fire trucks and other response vehicles and distributed to volunteers at the scene of the fire. Many departments also have used two-way radios to notify and dispatch volunteers. Immediate acknowledgement of a call—as well as the ability to report on the status of an incident, provide preliminary intelligence regarding the situation, and request additional aid—are all necessary attributes of an effective two-way wireless communications solution.

Being forced to choose between the devices has become a major problem for volunteer fire departments. Either they can outfit volunteers with a pager and lose the two-way communication features, or they can issue radios, which can be cumbersome for personnel to wear throughout the day. Some departments—believed to be at least 50 percent—go so far as to provide both two-way radios and pagers to

volunteers. This option, however, adds the burden of carrying a second device and can be very expensive, since an appropriate pager alone retails for approximately \$600.

In an attempt to put this dilemma to rest, Icom recently created a solution to help volunteer fire departments around the country. Priced very reasonably—a little more than the cost of a standalone pager—the new IC-F50V offers a unique “3V” proposition (voice storage, vibrate, and value). In short, the IC-F50V combines the best of a pager and a radio into one “hybrid” package. For example, the IC-F50V offers the vibration alert feature and the voice storage capability of a pager, as well as a full suite of radio features. This makes it possible for volunteer fire departments to purchase a single device that has the functionality of two.

Equally important is the fact that the IC-F50V, like many other Icom devices, is rugged and reliable. This device meets

*Continues on page 6...*



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Despite paging's wide acceptance as a dispatching standard for volunteer firemen, the common complaint voiced by most members holding paging devices is that they lack the capability of talk-back or two-way communication from the outset of the dispatch call. Yet they have been hesitant



to go with two-way radios, because in the past, they have typically failed the demanding performance standards required by firefighters. The IC-F50V, a device built with the harshest environments in mind, changes this equation. Volunteer firefighters now can carry a single device that combines two essential tools for both alerting and keeping connected with an emergency from the beginning, when volunteers would like to gain preliminary intelligence from first responders en route and arriving at the scene.

military standards for durability and is fully submersible. At the same time, it features a 10-hour, 1700 mAh Li-ion battery, as well as a BTL amplifier to provide a 700 mW audio output.

With so many communities reliant on volunteer fire departments to save lives and property, Icom is doing its part to help firefighters become more efficient with a world-class device tailored exclusively to their needs.

The IC-F50V offers a remarkable set of features:

- Vibration alert function (When a pre-programmed, two-tone/five-tone code or call from a specific user (MDC mode only) is received, the radio vibrates powerfully enough to be felt through heavy clothing.)
- Eight-minute voice recorder (When a pre-programmed, two-tone/five-tone code or a SelCall (MDC mode only) is received, the voice recorder automatically starts recording the incoming message. You will not miss an important call even when you are temporarily away from the radio.)
- 700mW audio output (The IC-F50V delivers a loud 700mW (with internal speaker) audio output with the built-in BTL amp. This provides clear, low noise communications. Improved bass characteristics also better enhance the audio quality.)
- Lone worker function for remote check-in (When the radio is not operated for a preset period (one to 255 minutes), the radio sounds a beep and requires you to push the emergency button. If the emergency button is not pushed for a preset time (one to 255 seconds), an emergency signal automatically transmits and informs your co-worker or dispatcher that something may have happened to

the individual worker.)

- IP67 dust and water protection (The IC-F50V has outstanding protection against dust and water that is equivalent to IP67. It can withstand submersion in one meter of water for up to 30 minutes and has dust-tight construction that prevents the ingress of dirt and grime.)
- Most popular signalings built-in (Use the built-in CTCSS, DTCS, two-tone, five-tone, and MDC signaling capabilities to set up your talk group or selective calling. The IC-F50V can decode ten two-tone codes or eight five-tone codes on a channel.)
- MDC 1200 compatible (The following selective calling and ANI features are available with the built-in MDC signaling: PTT ID, radio check, caller ID, call alert, SelCall, emergency, emergency mic monitoring, 500 aliases, status/message, and radio stun/revive.)
- Mode dependent scan (In the mode dependent setting, the scanning setting is dependent on the operating channel. When you change the operating channel, the scanning list automatically changes to the operating channel setting.)
- Enhanced scanning (The Tx channel while scanning can be programmed per the scanning list. The talk back function allows you to transmit on the channel detected after scanning resumes after a preset time period, prior to the Tx channel setting.) ●



Hugh Johnston is Purchasing Manager for BearCom.

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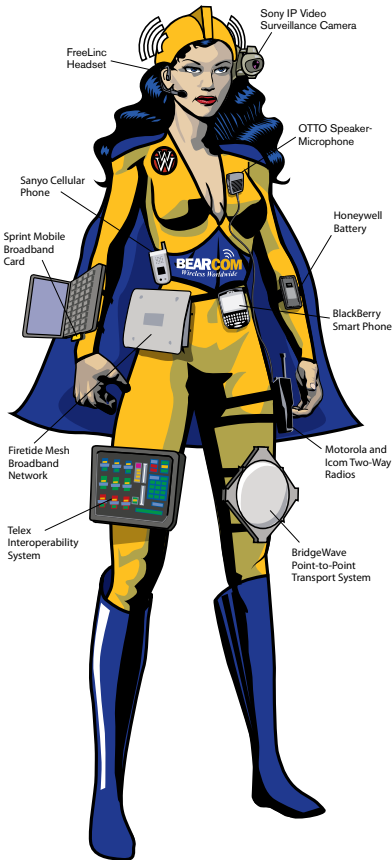
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## Q&As:

# Digital Two-Way Radios and Video Surveillance Systems for Public Safety

By Wireless Woman



Meg A. Hertz, the Chief Technology Officer for BearCom, provides innovative wireless solutions to BearCom customers every day. But when a communications problem requires superhuman powers, Meg becomes Wireless Woman—and always saves the day!

### Question:

*I have heard a lot about MOTOTRBO. What kind of impact do you think this system will have on communications in the public safety sector?*

### Answer:

In a word, dramatic. Motorola introduced the MOTOTRBO digital two-way radio system in 2007. This new platform combines the best of two-way radio with digital technology to deliver increased capacity and spectral efficiency, integrated data applications, and enhanced voice communications.

“A major leap such as this in two-way communications typically only comes around every couple of decades,” Mike Butler, a project manager at BearCom told me recently. “What is impressive to me is the IP connectivity. You expect the voice quality with these radios, but what is stunning about them is that they move data equally as well!”

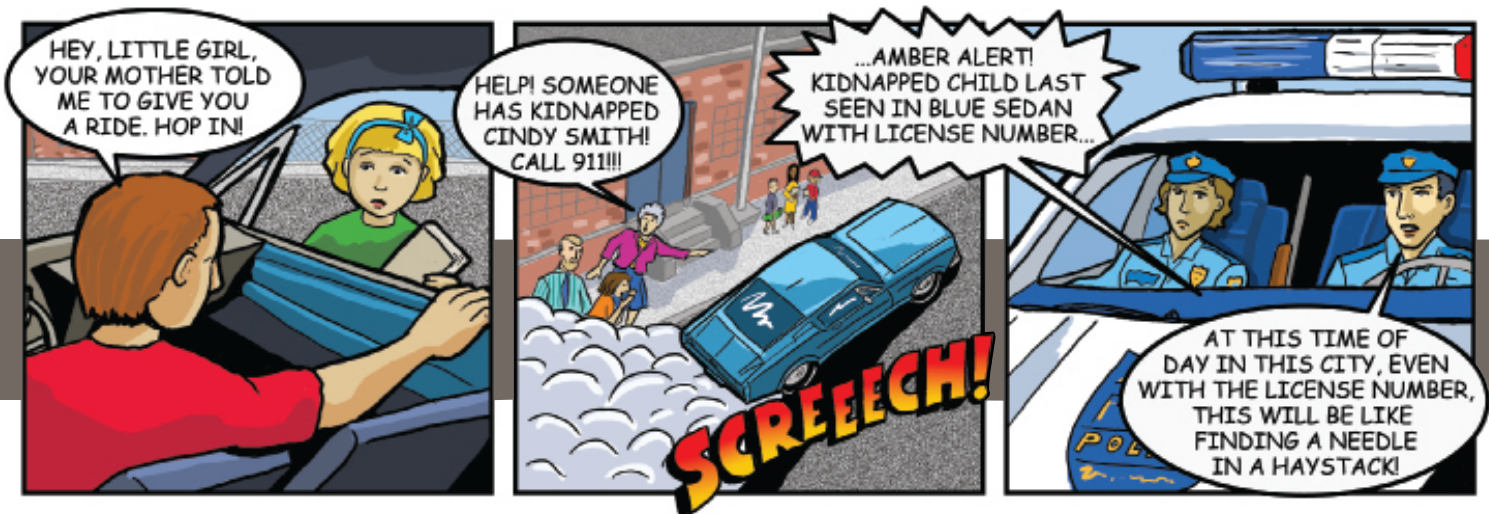
MOTOTRBO utilizes a two-slot Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) digital technology to improve basic functionality and system performance, including increased system capacity,

improved audio quality, longer battery life, built-in privacy, and enhanced call signaling and control capabilities for future enhancements, such as emergency pre-emption. In addition, organizations have access to integrated data applications, such as global positioning system (GPS)-based location tracking, text messaging, and other IP data applications. Location tracking, for example, provides the ability to track people and assets, such as vehicles. This advanced approach uses a GPS client and receiver integrated within both the portable and mobile radios, plus MOTOTRBO Location Services computer software. The GPS-equipped portable and mobile units can be configured to transmit their geographical coordinates at pre-programmed intervals on demand and in an emergency.

And it doesn't end there. MOTOTRBO's published Application Programming Interface (API) enables the development of customized applications by third-party developers, creating additional versatility for all MOTOTRBO platform owners. Craig Chenicek at Motorola informed

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## The Adventures of Wireless Woman™





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me that the integrated applications and the ability to write additional applications represents “the real sizzle of the MOTOTRBO platform. A couple of these applications—GPS and text messaging—are proving to be very powerful. But we also are working on many, many more.”

Of course, all the functionality in the world means nothing if the radios that utilize MOTOTRBO are fragile. That’s why Motorola has built them to handle hard knocks, water, dust, and temperature extremes. In fact, these radios satisfy the most rigorous standards, including U.S. Military Standards 810 C, D, E, and F, and for portable radios, IP57 for submersibility in water. Further, Motorola made safety a priority, making the radios appropriate for use where flammable gas, vapors, or combustible dust may be present.

In short, MOTOTRBO is ideal for those users who depend on reliable mission-critical communications.

**Question:**

*I read recently that Firetide and Sony were key participants in BearCom’s implementation of a wireless video surveillance solution for the Dallas Police Department. Can you tell me a little more about how their solutions fit into the public safety sector?*

**Answer:**

Sure. Firetide manufactures wireless mesh networks. Over the last couple of years, it has worked with numerous law enforcement and public safety agencies across the U.S. to deploy its solutions. Some of Firetide’s solutions include fixed wireless surveillance for high-traffic areas (downtown Dallas), crime deterrence in high-crime areas (Rockford, Illinois Housing Authority properties), covert surveillance for criminal investigations (Phoenix Police Department), and even temporary surveillance networks (Texas State Fair).

Sony’s IPELA network video cameras are ideal for the public safety industry. These cameras are repeatedly selected by municipalities and other public safety organizations for their superb imaging in both day and night lighting conditions; integrated, high-impact resistant polycarbonate clear dome and aluminum die cast casing; and bandwidth-efficient MPEG4 codec. Another benefit of the Sony IPELA design is that it facilitates speedy installation and activation.

It goes without saying that these cameras are the industry standard for IP video surveillance. Sony’s long-established expertise in imaging technology and its success in advancing this expertise into the IPELA line with

IP-based connectivity is helping speed the industry’s transition from CCTV to IP video security.

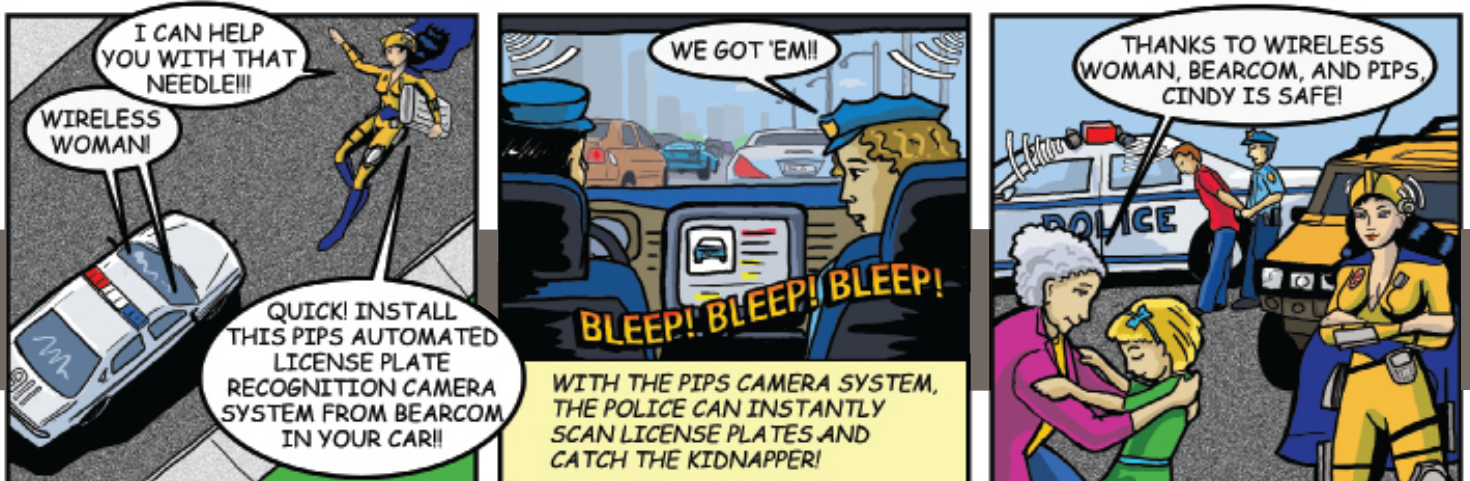
But selecting the right equipment is only part of the answer. Critical success factors for projects like those just mentioned include:

- Drawing from multiple sources of funding
- Addressing privacy concerns head-on
- Anticipating staffing and training needs
- Partnering for success
- Considering the total infrastructure

“Whether it’s a drug crime, a homicide, or a homeland security concern, your best intelligence is going to come from first-line officers on the street. Wireless video surveillance makes their jobs more efficient, which will pay off multiple times with the major crimes we are investigating,” Chris Jensen, a detective with the Drug Enforcement Bureau of the Phoenix Police Department, recently said in discussing that city’s wireless video surveillance solution. ●

*Wireless Woman, a.k.a. Meg A. Hertz, is Chief Technology Officer for BearCom.*

*For more information about the wireless products and solutions discussed in this article, please contact BearCom at [TodayWirelessWorld@BearCom.com](mailto:TodayWirelessWorld@BearCom.com).*



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## SUCCESS STORY:

# City of Minneapolis

By Kristin Kirkham

### The Customer

The Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center (MECC) handles approximately 1,000 9-1-1 calls each day for police, fire, and emergency medical assistance. The MECC has a staff of 87, who coordinate the deployment of Police Department officers and vehicles and provide communication assistance to officers in the field.

### The Challenge

In 2006, the City of Minneapolis decided to upgrade its emergency communications system. PlantCML was selected as its E9-1-1 provider, utilizing the Sentinel ECS-1000 controller. The ECS-1000 is used by the MECC's 33 call takers and 32 dispatchers. It is a dependable solution for ANI/ALI control and automatic call distribution in larger public safety access points, supporting up to 250 9-1-1 trunks and 60 call-taking positions.

### The Solution

Because of its reputation for reliability, BearCom was called in to assist PlantCML with the installation of the controller and to function as the primary service provider for the equipment. Then, on August 1, 2007, the MECC put its communications equipment to the test when the I-35W bridge over the Mississippi River collapsed, killing 13 and injuring more than one hundred people. The first hour of response was hectic, as more than 500 calls were processed. Emergency personnel arrived on the scene within six minutes of the initial call. The local BearCom team quickly joined the effort as well, helping to facilitate emergency communications.

### The Results

The E9-1-1 communications system worked flawlessly that day and has continued to perform well ever since. The system can be securely monitored from remote locations, which has proven to be very helpful after normal business hours. BearCom is onsite at the MECC several times each month in order to complete routine maintenance. "The



response by the people at BearCom has been outstanding, and they have risen to the occasion every time," said Tom Donohoe, Assistant Director of the Emergency Communications Center. "Days, nights, weekends, or holidays—whenever we call, a BearCom technician shows up here in minutes, ready to help." ●

*Kristin Kirkham is Marketing & Technical Writer for BearCom.*

*For more information about the wireless products and solutions discussed in this article, please contact BearCom at [TodayWirelessWorld@BearCom.com](mailto:TodayWirelessWorld@BearCom.com).*

*"The response by the people at BearCom has been outstanding, and they have risen to the occasion every time."*

### Tom Donohoe

Assistant Director  
Emergency Communications  
Center  
City of Minneapolis

In March 2008, the MECC was honored by the E9-1-1 Institute as the "Outstanding Call Center" for its actions on August 1, 2007. The award recognizes 9-1-1 programs, state and local, for their excellence in emergency communications, ranging from the handling of emergency situations to the efficient deployment and management of new technologies.





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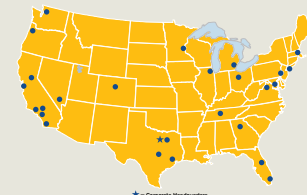


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