

2014 Industry Challenge: Creative Ways to Control Individual Campus Safety Security Budgets

By Barbara McCormack, Securitas USA

The IACLEA conference committee elected to focus this year's Industry Challenge on finding creative ways to control individual campus safety and security budgets in the wake of escalating labor costs as well as addressing more rigid and expansive demands imposed by the Department of Education and other government agencies.

College and university campus police chiefs and heads of public safety are faced with multiple operational complexities and concerns, in part driven by regulatory updates, compliance mandates and the ever-changing campus environment. Although departments are as diverse as the communities they serve, all share common financial challenges, with many operating with flat budgets for the past three years. This year's Industry Challenge focused on ways public safety departments can become more creative in meeting budget demands but also to improve services to the campus community. As a part of this year's discussion, departments in the United States and Canada representing a diverse cross-section of colleges and universities in size and budgetary scope, in both urban and rural settings, shared best practices and success stories on proven methods implemented within their programs to manage and deliver cost reductions. Each of the leaders participating in the challenge panel represented a variety of programs including proprietary police force, blended force of proprietary and contract staff, and fully managed contract staff. The panel's points of discussion quickly identified all potential opportunities to drive cost efficiencies into three distinct categories; modifications to physical operations structure, systems technology implementation, as well as training and awareness programs.

Process and Program Modifications

Pierre Barbarie, Associate Director, University Safety; Head of Security Services at McGill University and the Canadian Regional Director, noted that the foundation for operational efficiencies are foundationally supported by the ability to effectively analyze program data and trends. Barbarie stated, "Use your statistics to verify where your resources are being consumed and verify if it is providing value." It was through this type of assessment that his team identified procedural changes specific to requests for locked doors that reduced such occurrences and freed up patrol

staff to respond to higher priority calls as well as delivered reduced staff needs. Additionally, North Atlantic Regional Director, David Bousquet, Chief of Police at Becker College, noted similar efficiencies by re-designing or managing schedules and coverage to best deploy services to their campus based on impact periods driving needs.

Systems and Technology

Another opportunity surfacing from such assessment is the systemic integration of technology. Roy Murphy, Senior Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police at the Berklee College of Music, described how he was able to positively impact his budget by consolidating system technologies. Murphy stated, "By synergizing our systems and systems vendors...we not only achieved cost savings, but have identified primary technicians that are assigned to our account. This drastically reduces the number of unknown and un-vetted technicians we have responding to our site. This is especially important as Massachusetts CORI checks are done on all of these technicians, in light of the fact that they are often required to enter dormitories and buildings that house classrooms or practice facilities where students are present." This supports the goal to exceed compliance requirements for Campus support personnel in terms of training and backgrounding. Murphy added, "They are also required to surrender their building access badge and keys prior to the control center signing off on their work assignment, creating better time billing audit and control." Barbarie also reviewed further benefits from technology implementation proving effective reduction of labor costs through:

- Camera networks linked to alarm systems enabling a reduction of the number of patrol dispatches.
- Remote locking systems where doors lock and un-lock on a pre-determined schedule freeing staff from performing the duties.
- The use of card readers and access assignments, lowering the need for a paper-based sign-in system.

Training and Awareness

Adding to the discussion among the participating panel, Immediate Past President Vickie L. Weaver, Director of Public Safety at Rider University, stressed the need for effective internal and external collaboration among both traditional and non-traditional campus departments, local agencies and groups to foster greater opportunities for learning among the safety team. She explained that partnering with internal departments helps to ensure all campus stakeholders continue to embrace a sense of ownership and understanding for safety and security on campus. Equally important, partnering with local external law enforcement and security partners to support collaboration and additional training opportunities for campus staff adds to the development and support of the safety and security staff. Additional areas of cost savings were identified through cross training of staff where appropriate.

Supporting the discussion, from Securitas USA, Vice President of Sales and Marketing Barbara McCormack confirmed the benefits of an integrated guarding approach. In addition to the efficient deployment of on-site staff and the incorporation of systems technology along with augmenting proprietary staff for non-police duties and special events with specialized security staff, from an

outsourcing provider like Securitas, McCormack introduced the utilization of contracting/outsourcing integration of uniformed security with remote monitoring and mobile patrol services for off-site and administrative campus facilities including: laboratories, storage buildings, athletic facilities and construction sites. By leveraging the capabilities of a full service security partner such as Securitas, colleges and universities can effectively meet budget demands.

About Securitas USA

As a Corporate Partner of IACLEA since 2008, Securitas USA has demonstrated a strong commitment to support campus public safety and offers a wide variety of campus public safety services. Through this partnership, Securitas advocates continued support of the organization by sponsoring the Industry Challenges Session at the 2014 Annual Conference in Montreal, Quebec Canada.

Securitas is the most locally-focused security company in North America and across the Globe. In North America, Securitas has over 640 local branch managers and approximately 109,000 security officers who provide un-matched security solutions to meet the specific needs of hundreds of higher educational campuses. Securitas' core business is uniformed security services and focuses in supporting the unique needs of College and University campuses across the globe. Securitas service offerings include specialized guarding, mobile security services, and remote guarding and risk management.