

RMS Named Primary Contractor

City of Chicago networks cameras in public schools

In a recent news conference, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley announced an ambitious plan—currently underway—that will link all Chicago public school camera systems to Chicago’s 911 center. In an emergency situation, responding officers also will be able to view real-time images from the school cameras, which will feed directly to laptops in police squad cars. Mayor Daley stated, “We will have a comprehensive school security system that will make it far easier for us to respond more quickly and effectively to any emergency at a school building. The key is getting the information to the police officer in their squad car.”

The cameras are owned by the Chicago Transit Authority and other public agencies. Federal funds totaling \$418,000 from the Department of Homeland Security are making the camera networking integration possible.

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— Mayor Richard M. Daley

Disparate systems require common platform

Prior to this integration project, school cameras were only monitored at Chicago’s Board of Education central office. Police Commander Jonathan Lewin, CPD’s technology chief commented, “Many of the schools have different types of systems....Some have systems over 10 years old. All [cameras] had to be integrated together to a common platform.”

RMS Technology Solutions, LLC of Buffalo Grove, IL is the primary technology integrator for this on-going project. Rick Rubenstein, President of RMS remarked, “We are pleased to oversee this important integration program and play a role in Mayor Daley’s vision to consolidate citywide surveillance that will provide widespread and efficient security for Chicago’s citizens.”

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At this time, cameras have been installed at about 200 of Chicago’s 650 public schools, including all high schools and several administrative buildings.

New Installation

PODSS shows positive turn in troubled neighborhood

Once booming Flint, MI—founding home of General Motors and the UAW—declined rapidly after the collapse of the US auto industry in the 1970s. Today, the city of little more than 125,000 residents is overrun by gangs and drug crime. The Flint violent-crime rate is nearly 5-

1/2 times the national average for a city its size , making it one of the most violent cities in America.

The use of surveillance cameras in Flint's business district has made the area noticeably more safe and secure according to business owners. The residential area just east of I-475 off of Carpenter Road is filled with rundown homes and abandoned boarded-up houses—a sight all-too-common in urban neighborhoods plagued by drugs and violence. After a still unsolved homicide occurred last August, police decided to pilot one of RMS' PODSS cameras in the neighborhood.

Testimony

The overt PODSS camera with flashing blue lights and emblazoned "POLICE" on its bullet-proof housing has been met with glowing support among local residents. Crime activity has fallen in this area, and residents breathe a little easier as they begin the process of reclaiming their neighborhood. Since the camera went live in November 2007, residents say drug deals and shootings have moved on.

Next steps

Private money is footing the price of the initial PODSS installation. Brian Berg, a retired Saginaw-area police officer and owner of Asset Protection Specialists who put up the camera hopes that continued positive crime-reduction and higher arrest rates will persuade federal officials to give the city a \$1.5-million grant to install another 25 cameras around the city with a networked connection to police headquarters. If the grant request is rejected, the City of Flint will look toward foundations and the private sector to cover the costs.