

Case Study

University of Maryland: Creating a Safe and Secure Environment on Campus

CAMPUS SECURITY

University of Maryland Department of Public Safety, College Park, MD

Like many police departments at large universities, the University of Maryland Department of Public Safety faces many challenges in providing a safe and secure environment on a sprawling urban campus. There are 32,000 full-time students at the University, and another 20,000 people who attend classes at night. The campus is the size of a not-so-small town – about 2,000 acres – and it contains both high-density student residence halls and less populated swaths of open park-like land. According to Captain John Brandt, the police department has always been open to new technology that improves campus policing, so when the Segway® Personal Transporter (PT) popped up on their radar screen they immediately took a look at it.

“We’d read about the Segway PT in several police magazines, and then Baltimore-Washington International began using them quite successfully to patrol the airport terminals,” says Brandt. “Our Chief, Ken Krouse, took notice of this, and his belief has always been that we owe it to our community to employ the latest and most effective technology. He made the decision late last year and we purchased six units early in 2006 and began training our officers. The longer we have these machines the more we find that we can do with them.”

Versatile Transportation for a Variety of Beats

Two of the police department’s six Segway PT Police Package units are assigned to patrol officers in the Operations Bureau who use them during many of the more than 600 special events that the university police patrol each year.

“We plan to work NCAA basketball and football games using Segway PTs, and the units are currently used by our Student Police Aides in moving to and from their traffic posts and in conducting security escorts,” says Brandt. “We also have an alcohol patrol where Segway PT teams may be used to patrol the parking lots looking for large violations of alcohol laws during large athletic events.”

“I’m a bike patrol instructor so I know that bikes have wonderful uses. But one of the drawbacks is that in really heavy pedestrian environments such as events the bikes don’t turn that quickly, can impede pedestrians because of their size and the officer’s head is

often too low to get a good view over a standing crowd. With Segway PTs the officers stand a lot higher and they can see over the crowds. They can also turn in place. This makes them ideal for large-scale special events with very dense pedestrian crowds. We’ll use them this year on July 4th when as many as 100,000 people will come onto the campus for fireworks displays.”

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-Captain John Brandt
University of Maryland
Department of Public Safety

Brandt also believes that the Segway PTs will come in handy for tactical medics to use during events. “We host Maryland Day which brought 75,000 people onto the campus to see more than 400 displays on the mall and in other places on the campus,” says Brandt. “We place two EMS ambulances down on one corner, but it is really difficult for the medics to get places quickly with their gear. So we’re

Executive Summary

THE CHALLENGE

- Provide a safe and secure environment for students and faculty
- Improve response times to calls for student security escorts

THE SOLUTION

- Acquire six Segway PT Police packages
- Use two Segway PTs to patrol large events
- Assign four units to Police Auxiliary Aides for facility checks and security escorts

BENEFITS TO THE CUSTOMER

- Better patrol coverage and greater officer visibility during on-campus events
- Improves officer interaction with students and faculty
- Reduces response times to calls for student security escorts

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SEGWAY
Simply moving

looking at using the officers to respond on the Segways PTs.”

Decrease Response Times, Increase Coverage Zone

The other four Segway PTs are assigned to the Student Police Auxiliary, which is in the department’s Support Services Bureau. This group is run by the police department, but employs students called Student Police Aides – about 75 percent of which are on law enforcement career tracks. “We use the Auxiliary to staff about 20,000 hours of security jobs all over the campus 365 days a year,” says Brandt. “For example, every night our athletic department employs us to make rounds to lock up their facilities, conduct door checks and make sure the field lights aren’t left on.

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We will use a Police Aide on a Segway PT for that and it will require that the Police Aide travel a distance of up to 22 miles in a single four-hour shift. The job will be much easier on a Segway PT.”

The Student Police Aides also provide escort services to anyone who calls in and asks for an escort across the campus or to their residence hall. Brandt says that the biggest benefit is that the Segway PTs cut the response time of the escorts. “If it takes the Police Aide a long time to get to the student or faculty member for the escort, then they won’t use the service and they won’t feel as safe. The Segway PTs have cut our response times by a factor of four in some cases, and we are seeing higher use rates. Some Police Aides stay busy most of the evening doing the escorts.”

The response of the university faculty and students to the Segway PTs has been very positive. “We have 29 bikes and 6 motorcycles in our police fleet, so the students see the Segway PTs as just another tool for us,” says Brandt. “The big difference is that when you’re on a Segway PT all eyes turn to you and you’re very visible and approachable. This is a great benefit to our officers and Police Aides.” ■