

A commanding view

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Command and control centres are common in events worldwide, from the Pan-American Games to the inauguration of President Barak Obama. Dan Worth speaks to Intergraph.

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District of Columbia
Police Chief.

January 20, 2009 was an historic day. President Barack Obama was sworn in to the office of President of the United States to a worldwide audience of almost one billion. As would be expected, the security for the event was incredibly tight and communications system provider Intergraph was an integral part of it.

In fact Intergraph is often found behind the scenes at major events, supplying communications systems that enable the emergency services to stay in constant contact and provide effective security. The European Football Championships 2008 in Zurich (Switzerland) and the 2007 Pan-American Games in Rio de Janeiro both used Intergraph systems. And the London Olympics of 2012 are another challenge in the horizon.

The European Football Championships in Zurich saw over 2.5 millions fans visit the city for the three matches played there (mostly to view the games in special fan zones). Each day during the games, between 600 and 1,300 police officers were deployed in the city, with upto an additional 1,000 personnel from Zurich Protection & Rescue. Resources included 500 police vehicles, a temporary holding and processing area, additional ambulances and support stations, and 260 vehicles from the emergency medical and fire services. According to Alessandro Foletti, one of the senior police officers in charge, this was a 10-fold increase over a standard weekend. It would not have been possible to coordinate the public safety resources adequately and keep an auditable log of all actions without command and control centre technology.

Zurich City Police's new command and control centre with its management infrastructure for major incidents is equipped with Intergraph's latest technology, and emergency calls were received and processed, and resources coordinated and directed from a central hub. However, although completed in time for Euro 2008, it wasn't special investment for this event, but part of an integrated command and control centre concept for the City of Zurich. Daniel Haenni, CIO of Zurich City Police, noted, "It was important that this major event capability

could be delivered and managed using the existing IT-infrastructure of the new command and control centre."

More recently, as mentioned, the technology was put through its paces while the world watched at the presidential inauguration and the subsequent celebrations in Washington DC. Anticipating high call volumes, more than 300 personnel (including call takers and IT professionals) staffed the Unified Communications Centre (UCC). This consolidates the public communications functions of the Metropolitan Police and the Fire and Emergency Medical Services and Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC), to provide a smooth operation. Intergraph's computer-aided dispatch system enabled operators to field calls, create and update incidents and manage emergency response resources. Intergraph's mobile dispatch technologies extended incident management capabilities to remote field and mobile units stationed near the special event area. This provided responders in the field access to the same information that operators at the UCC and PSCC.

Integrated monitoring during the inauguration

In addition, Intergraph's mobile resource management solution provided federal government security teams with real-time tracking. The map-based command and control system provided visibility and management of deployed mobile resources throughout the event.

Surveillance was monitored by authorities at various command centres run by the agencies involved in security operations, and DC's IT department operated a satellite and Internet-based video link to Washington's 5,265 fixed and mobile surveillance cameras, spread around the city, while the Capitol Police and US Park Police provided surveillance from the air.

The District of Columbia Police Chief, Cathy Lanier, said to the *Washington Post*. "When you have an event like the inauguration, the more eyes we have in and around the city the better off we are." All this meant that, despite 1.8m visitors to the capital on the day, not a single arrest was reported by police or the secret services.