

Best Practice: Police Officer Stationed on Facility 24 Hours per Day



Category: Guards and Police

Location First Observed: Laem Chabang, Thailand

Date First Observed: July, 2005

Description: The port of Laem Chabang entered an agreement with the local municipality to provide a police officer and police motorcycle at the facility 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Discussion: Guard forces are limited in many ways. In most countries, security guards do not have arrest authority. If guards engage a violator they can attempt to detain them until the police arrive. In many instances guards do not have the training nor equipment necessary to detain a violator. Local police officers may be too distant, or otherwise busy, and unable to quickly respond to calls for assistance. Guards typically don't have vehicles with emergency equipment (lights and siren) they can use to stop or pursue a fleeing vehicle. Guard forces typically don't have access to computerized databases to check the criminal or driver's license status of a suspicious person or violator, or to check the status of a license plate. The presence of a guard force typically doesn't present the same deterrent effect against crime as does the presence of police officers. This facility overcame these issues by entering into an agreement with the local police to have a police officer stationed on the facility 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The facility had the police officer park his motorcycle at the main entrance as a visible deterrent to crime.

Potential Down-side: Cost & Availability. Most municipalities will not assign a police officer to a private facility unless the facility covers the cost of the officer's pay, benefits, and vehicle. In some cases, even if a facility is willing to pay the costs of having an officer assigned at the facility, police personnel shortages or policy may prevent the municipality from assigning a police officer to a facility.

Conclusion: For facilities that are distant from a police station, or that have a large amount of crime, hiring a police officer to work at the facility can be a very effective approach to improving security. Costs savings can be achieved by hiring a police officer at the facility for only limited hours each day.

Cost: Expensive, depending on the number of hours an officer is hired to work at the facility.