



Improved security helps protect Cheshire Fire's 999 service

Cheshire Fire Service (CFS) serves almost a million people across Cheshire and in the boroughs of Warrington and Halton. It provides fire and rescue services for more than 400,000 properties as well as an extensive transport network and one of the highest concentrations of petrochemical businesses in the country. Staff members carry out a wide range of activities to reduce the number of fires and other incidents as well as attending some 17,000 emergencies a year.

Rigorous security is needed to ensure that nothing interrupts this vital work. Cheshire Fire Service's modern headquarters' building in Winsford is not only the administrative hub of the operation but is also home to the control room that responds to every 999 call received. About 175 people are based at Winsford with many more passing through while attending meetings or courses.

Shrewsbury-based Security Wise Ltd has recently installed access control and CCTV equipment, supplied by Norbain, to provide round-the-clock protection for the building, its staff, data and equipment.

Added security

Installation of a new CCTV network and access control system has given the opportunity for a general tightening of security and has set the standard for CFS's other buildings including the local fire stations. Joe O'Hanlon is pleased with the completed works, he says. "The operatives were very professional."

Controlling access

Security Wise has installed the Paxton Net2 C system on 13 external and 7 internal doors to secure the building while providing easy access for staff.

Opening of the doors is triggered by the proximity of valid pass cards to the unit. During office hours, members of staff only need their cards when using the unmanned side doors as the main door is kept open and leads to a manned reception. Cards are also used outside normal office hours as the building is in use around the clock.

Operatives can control and allocate access levels for each individual within the building using a standard PC ensuring guests do not enter specified areas.

Keeping watch

CCTV is also an essential feature of the security system. "There was a system already in place, but we've now improved it across the whole site providing full 24 hour surveillance," says Security Wise Surveyor, John Evans. The new system is made up of seven wall-mounted, fully functional, day/night Vista PowerDomes (VPD-3WP-P-C). "The cameras now cover the whole site externally and the main entrance internally." which will monitor all the comings and goings as the main entrance door is open during office hours.



The images are recorded to a high capacity 500Gb hard disk on a Mitsubishi 9-channel digital video recorder (DX-TL950E).

"This stores about twelve to fourteen days, depending on how it is set and the quality of recordings being saved," says Joe O'Hanlon. Any incidents can be saved onto a PC for future reference, he adds, though there has not yet been anything of this nature since the installation.

As in many offices, the cameras can be monitored from reception. However, the team that is dealing with 999 calls also monitors the Winsford cameras. They carry out administrative duties when not dealing with emergencies, including keeping watch over their own building using two Vista remote keyboards with joysticks (NPX/KPD/J3De) and Mitsubishi flat screen monitors (Iiyama ProLite E430T LCD TFT)

Future plans

One of the reasons for choosing this security system was the ease with which it can be rolled out in due course to all the fire stations in CFS's area. It is already in place at two of the 24 stations. All permanent staff will have cards, says Joe O'Hanlon. Most stations have automated security, so that the building is locked and secure if the crew leave it unmanned when rushing out to attend a call. This Access Control system can ensure that it remains accessible to any authorised CFS visitors who arrive while the station is empty. Rollout of the new security system will be to an ad-hoc programme as finance becomes available, explains Joe O'Hanlon, and no timescale has yet been set.



About Security Wise Ltd

Security Wise Ltd was founded over 20 years ago and now carries out work across the UK from its Head Office in Shrewsbury. They provide all aspects of security including intruder and fire alarms, access control and closed circuit television with the added bonus of

their own approved Alarm Receiving Centre based in Staffordshire for all signalling requirements including off-site monitoring.

Equipment used

- 7 x Vista VPD-3WP-P-C 1/4 18:1 external dome camera
- 2 x NPX/KPD/J3De remote keyboard with joystick
- 9-channel Mitsubishi DX-TL950E (500Gb) digital video recorder
- 1 X Vista Matrix switcher
- 2 X Mitsubishi Iiyama Prolite E430T LCD TFT flat screen monitors
- Paxton Net2 door access system with 21 networked doors