



Video Surveillance Plays Key Role in Base Security

Eglin Air Force Base is Responsible for the Development, Acquisition and Testing of Air Armament

Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), one of the largest Air Force bases in the United States, has selected a March Networks video surveillance system to guard against threats to base security.

LOCATED in the Florida panhandle, Eglin AFB is home to the Air Force Material Command's Air Armament Center (AAC), which is responsible for the development, acquisition, testing and fielding of air-delivered weapons. The center plans, directs and conducts tests and evaluations of U.S. and allied air armament, navigation and guidance systems, and command and control systems.

The base covers more than 724 square miles, is home to approximately 7,500 Air Force personnel and has a total workforce of 18,000. The resident 96th Air Base Wing provides the AAC with traditional military services, as well as all of the services of a typical city, including civil engineering, firefighting, food services, logistics, health care, communications and, of course, security.

"The acquisition of a networked, base-wide video surveillance system was the result of a paradigm shift in base security," said Master Sergeant Jim Wright.

"We went from a compliance-based system to more of a threat-based system. That has allowed us to take advantage of various technologies like networked video surveillance and roll them into an overall defense plan. We think of them as force multipliers because we can install a camera to cover an area where before we probably would have deployed a person. →

“It has been a big shift for us, and we’re just getting started,” added Tech. Sgt. Travis Gross. “We’re very interested in taking advantage of these leaps in technology that will give us a better security posture with less manpower.”

The networked, recorder-based system is comprised of a large number of remote cameras and recorders linked to the base defense operations center, where base security operators are able to view live video from selected sites on large format monitors.

“It was also important for us to go back and easily pull historical data, whether it was for an investigation, a complaint or anything of that nature, and archive the video for as long as necessary,” said Wright.

Generally, video is stored for 30 days, but if there is an investigation and it goes into a legal process as evidence, it’s saved to a disk or hard drive and held for up to three years.

Eglin Air Force Base purchased its video surveillance system from Advanced Control Concepts (ACC), a March Networks® Certified Solution Provider based in Pensacola, Florida. Originally, said AAC’s Jeff Taylor, there was a concern that they would have to incur the considerable expense of digging, trenching and laying fiber.

“But we proposed using the existing base-wide LANs and WANS,” said Taylor. “The Communication Squadron evaluated the March Networks system and agreed there was minimal impact on the network, so we were given authority to use it. That’s easy to say, but it’s a very difficult thing to get, especially on a military base. We were able to provide Eglin Air Force Base with a system to cover the whole base at a much reduced cost than was anticipated.”

The number of cameras deployed has grown, but “To my knowledge, we have

not had any issues relating to bandwidth,” said Wright.

The paradigm shift to a threat-based security system and resource constrained environment has elevated the focus on technology and created interest in cutting-edge video analytics and monitoring solutions.

“For example, you don’t have to have someone staring at a monitor all day,” said Wright. “With video analytics, the system can monitor an avenue of approach or a boundary and sound an audible alarm to alert you.”

The base uses a mix of analog and IP cameras with the March Networks system, but IP cameras are the “way of the future,” said Gross. “Picture clarity is greatly enhanced, the field of view is wider and you can zoom right in and capture a license plate number. It gives us the ability to do a lot more with a lot less.”

The Eglin Air Force Base video security system will continue to grow and evolve to take advantage of the best technology on the market, added Wright. “We’re looking at IP cameras, video analytics, video wall technology and video management software – anything that is going to help us respond to potential threats and optimize base security.” ▼

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE

Eglin Air Force Base (www.eglin.af.mil) is one of the largest air force bases in the United States. Located in northwestern Florida on the Gulf of Mexico, the base is home to the Air Force Material Command’s Air Armament Center, which is responsible for the development, acquisition, testing and fielding of air-delivered weapons.

ADVANCED CONTROL CONCEPTS

Advanced Control Concepts, Inc. (www.acc.us.com) is a March Networks Certified Solution Provider based in Pensacola, Florida, offering a wide range of security systems, from access control and video surveillance to fire alarms for commercial, institutional, military and government facilities.

