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Talk from the top
APC's Gordon Makryllos

*Secure mobile devices meet
stringent demands*



*Wireless connects travellers
on bus*



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International security demands secure mobile devices



For the security operation involved in the 2007 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit, 635 Operations Support Group personnel and 200 Australian Defence Force personnel were deployed in Sydney.

To protect the world's most high-profile leaders, including the presidents of the US, China, Russia, Canada and Japan from security

threats, these officers were responsible for searching Sydney's inner city district for improvised explosive devices and other hazards.

Justin Waters, a senior sergeant with the NSW Police Force, was responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing the security searches of venues, vehicles and routes and providing electronic documentation on the findings at the NSW Police Security Command (APSC).

From the 2000 Olympic Games, Justin knew that checking every possible location for hazards, and keeping accountable records of the search results, is a cumbersome undertaking. The reporting system in place then was paper-based, and required an officer to physically return the findings to the search adviser in the command post.

"For the APEC summit, we were looking for a technology solution that would bring our reporting procedures into the 21st century — self-evidently without compromising liability or running the risk that the system itself could become a security hazard," Justin recalls.

A wireless solution by Geomatic Technologies was eventually selected, as it fulfilled the extensive security criteria within the budget. The company's field mobile computing system was based on Sybase Afaria, a mobile device management platform.

All over-the-air communication was encrypted using server-gated cryptography SSL certificate. Afaria also encrypts sensitive data on the device and enables the IT administrator to immediately fade classified information if a mobile device is lost or stolen, and automatically wipes out data on entry of an invalid password. Equipped with Motorola Symbol MC 70 rugged numeric type devices, the security force screened the designated search areas with up to 12 teams with five members of staff in each. As some of the search locations had 30 floors or more, the time savings from not having to return a paper report physically after each mission were clearly significant.

"We see APEC as the successful trial for future operations, and want to expand the functionality of the system for the next major event in Sydney, World Youth Day in July 2008." Due to the documentation of the geographic conditions and findings during APEC, the NSW Police Force will be able to access data for specific areas in the search zone when Pope Benedict XVI visits Sydney.