

SEGWAY®

Patrolling BWI Airport with the Segway® PT

CUSTOMER:

BWI Airport Security
Baltimore, MD

CHALLENGES:

Overcome officer morale and fatigue Issues

Improve response time to emergencies

SOLUTION:

Nine Segway Personal Transporters (PTs) for key security personnel that:

Decrease emergency response time by three to four minutes

Reduce officer fatigue after long patrol shifts

Improve interaction between officers and the public

Increase officer morale

After seeing a news report on the Segway Personal Transporter (PT), Captain Eric Garrison of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police at Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport wondered if the self-balancing device would allow airport patrol officers to improve response time and more effectively patrol the facility without fatigue.

"Of all the officers on a shift, we have several in cars on the roadway, one or two officers on bike patrol and several on ATVs patrolling the acreage to the south of the airport," said Captain Garrison. "Other than that, all of our officers are on foot patrol. They walk an average of 7 miles a day. They also carry approximately 33 pounds of gear and equipment. At the 11th hour of a 12-hour shift you get very tired, but you still have to respond to service calls and emergency calls like it's the first hour. It's tough."

"I found out that Michael O'Shea, a representative of the Department of Justice, was loaning out Segway PTs on a trial basis to determine if officers would find them helpful," commented Captain Garrison. "Soon after, I made arrangements to try 2 units. In a single day O'Shea trained about 30 officers and a couple of our commanders to ride the Segway PT. I then put the test units into service at BWI."

Captain Garrison added, "We kept them in certain areas of the airport to document and evaluate their use. At the end of the program, we provided a report to our commanders and the DOJ. Our evaluation covered a broad range of areas including use in and around crowds, use in inclement weather, noise abatement, overall durability, field life of the batteries as well as feedback from the public and airport management. We also wanted to test PTs with officers of different heights and body weights, explore the potential for injury to police personnel and airport patrons as well as assess officer morale after riding a Segway PT for a 12-hour shift."

Officer fatigue was the primary reason Captain Garrison chose to evaluate Segway PTs at BWI. During the four-month study he found Segway PTs were a perfect solution to this problem.

"The Segway PT allowed us to respond to service calls faster and eliminated the fatigue that officers typically experienced over a twelve hour day. Officers responded to emergency calls three to four minutes faster than officers on foot. Moreover, the use of Segway PTs put enjoyment back into patrolling. Throughout the study, officers were begging to be trained to ride the Segway PT," said Captain Garrison.

"We also found that the public was attracted to officers riding Segway PTs, which greatly improved our community relations and public safety," he added. "The Segway PT performed well in every category of the evaluation. The PT was quiet, easy to maneuver in crowds and generated enthusiasm among the officers, airport agencies and other departments."

Chief Gary W. McLhinney of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police authorized the purchase of nine Segway PTs for the airport. Today, the units are used in key locations for traffic control on the upper and lower roadways in front of the airport and patrolling the adjacent six-level parking garage and the expansive main terminal. According to Chief Garrison, 95% of the officers assigned to patrol the airport are now fully trained to ride the Segway PT.

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