

SKYCOP® RIDES INTO THE WESTERN SUN

EL PASO, TX. Police work in any Texas border town can be tough, stressful, and dangerous. Today, it takes state-of-the-art technology to effectively enforce the local laws and protect the border. This is the reason the El Paso Police Department chose SkyCop ®, a superior technological platform that helps local law enforcement scout out the terrain and catch modern-day car rustlers, bank robbers, and bandits.

Staying ahead of the criminal element requires law enforcement to leverage innovation and technology that provide needed crime detection data instantly. What the El Paso law enforcement team needed was a viable solution to reduce stolen vehicles rates and to help solve violent crimes faster without spending excessive amounts of capital. SkyCop ® provided the needed comprehensive platform that is grounded on the latest video surveillance technology for an affordable price.

"We had LPR already on some of our vehicles, but we needed cameras that had additional features," said Sergeant Robert Gomez, head of the LPR program for the El Paso PD. "Now, we have a camera that provides pan and tilt features which kept us from buying two cameras to get the same capability. We were able to go with one camera for everything."

Sgt. Gomez admits that SkyCop ® was new to El Paso and was not a recognized brand in Texas. However, after he talked to other law enforcement agencies using SkyCop ® technology, he was convinced that SkyCop ® could be the right product for his team. One such endorsement came from the Memphis Police Department who launched their award-winning intelligent-policing initiative featuring Real Time Crime Center technology in 2009. The Memphis team relies on SkyCop ® surveillance products that provide a comprehensive platform consisting of LPR on cruisers and fixed and mobile camera systems to collect and analyze data to allow for rapid response and decision-making to apprehend the most difficult-to-catch criminals.

Sgt. Gomez became a believer in SkyCop ® shortly after working with the sales and technical support team. He adds, "What I heard was that SkyCop ® strives to provide excellent customer support, and they deliver. For us, they saw the need, and then built out a customized, tailored solution for El Paso. For our cruisers, the SkyCop ® technical team was required to rewrite some of the software to make the LPR system more user-friendly and adoptable among the police force."

To get the initiative started, El Paso PD installed five SkyCop ® Mobile LPR units equipped with FLIR technology and two SkyCop ® Mobile Cadet Trailers. Sgt. Gomez indicated that it took about six months to get the police force trained effectively. The results have far outweighed the investment in capital and resources. Each of the LPR units have proven to be effective crime fighters used to locate stolen vehicles that enter and exit at one of five border entry points in the El Paso area. The department has already seen an increase in stolen vehicle recoveries since implementation began in early 2010. Simply, after the MLPR reads the license plate, the patented Genetec software accesses data from surrounding law enforcement agencies and notifies the officer of critical information such as whether the vehicle is stolen or not. Sgt. Gomez

shared that other applications have included the use of LPR technology at homicide scenes to gather historical data. One recent noteworthy success stemmed from the use of the FLIR camera system to apprehend and arrest suspects who were hiding in a field who otherwise would have evaded investigating officers.

In the future, El Paso plans on ramping up its state-of-the-art fusion center to allow the department to more effectively predict criminal activity, provide crime surveillance at the point of perpetration, geo-tag for investigative purposes, and track activities in crime hot zones. The SkyCop ® platform accomplishes these tasks through its vehicle license plate and surveillance systems, digital recording systems, mobile surveillance systems, remote video systems, wireless communications, and fusion center technology.

"So far, there has not been a lot of public awareness about our use of SkyCop ® technology in El Paso, however that will change." said Sgt. Gomez. "Our fusion center is in its infancy now, but we should be up and running within a year. Then we will be able to provide a Real Time Crime Center that the public can access and see the results themselves."

Written by the SkyCop ® Staff Reporter with the assistance and permission of the El Paso Police Department.

SkyCop ® is a patented product.