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Rochester, Revenue System – Joined at the Hip

from Page 16

tinued the installation.”

The city elected not to install pay-on-foot; however, it is prepared for that eventuality when it is ready. They saw the need to maintain human interaction for some of their patrons, while offering quicker throughput for those who are comfortable using the credit card in/out application.

Although each garage operates as a stand-alone unit, all sit on the city’s fiber network. “All data and activity from each garage can be viewed and programs changed from any workstation or fee computer within that garage,” Stublaski says, “and all data can be viewed and processed at the central city office. Having that ability was extremely important to the owner.”

Two hotels use the garages in the system. There are workstations in the hotels where the front desk staff can create temporary access cards with start and stop dates so hotel guests can freely use the facilities with in/out privileges.

The city provides free parking for the first half hour. Repeat customers know they don’t have to wait for the booth attendant, but if they are within that half hour, can insert their tickets in an exit column and exit without human interaction. Credit card users also can use this facility. This greatly increases throughput in the lanes and cuts exit times.

Intercoms are networked throughout the facilities. After-hours, the intercoms roll over to the telephone network, and when a call is received, the system begins calling a series of numbers until an available person answers. This ensures that the customer receives human interaction whenever there is a problem. Each incoming intercom call is logged with time and originating location so the operator can track response times and locations possibly needing service.

Monthly parkers are controlled with an AVI system, which also speeds up exit times. The system includes an accounts receivable package for all four facilities.

“Although our office is just over an hour’s drive away and we can provide timely service, having the staff maintenance person engaged and trained makes a big difference,” Stublaski says. He can resolve minor issues that are not true service problems and save considerable time and expense for the customer.

“Having a good service provider is critical in these systems,” he says, “but having a person on-site who works closely



Here's Wayne Lowe, General Manager, Republic Parking System Rochester, MN (l) and Dan Stublaski, President Don Harstad Company Fridley, MN.

with us makes life much easier for the customer. The vast majority of issues are minor and can be resolved quickly without a service call. I would strongly recommend that every customer become involved in the installation and service of their new system.”

The city of Rochester chose Skidata as its equipment provider. The Parking Operator for the city was Republic Parking.

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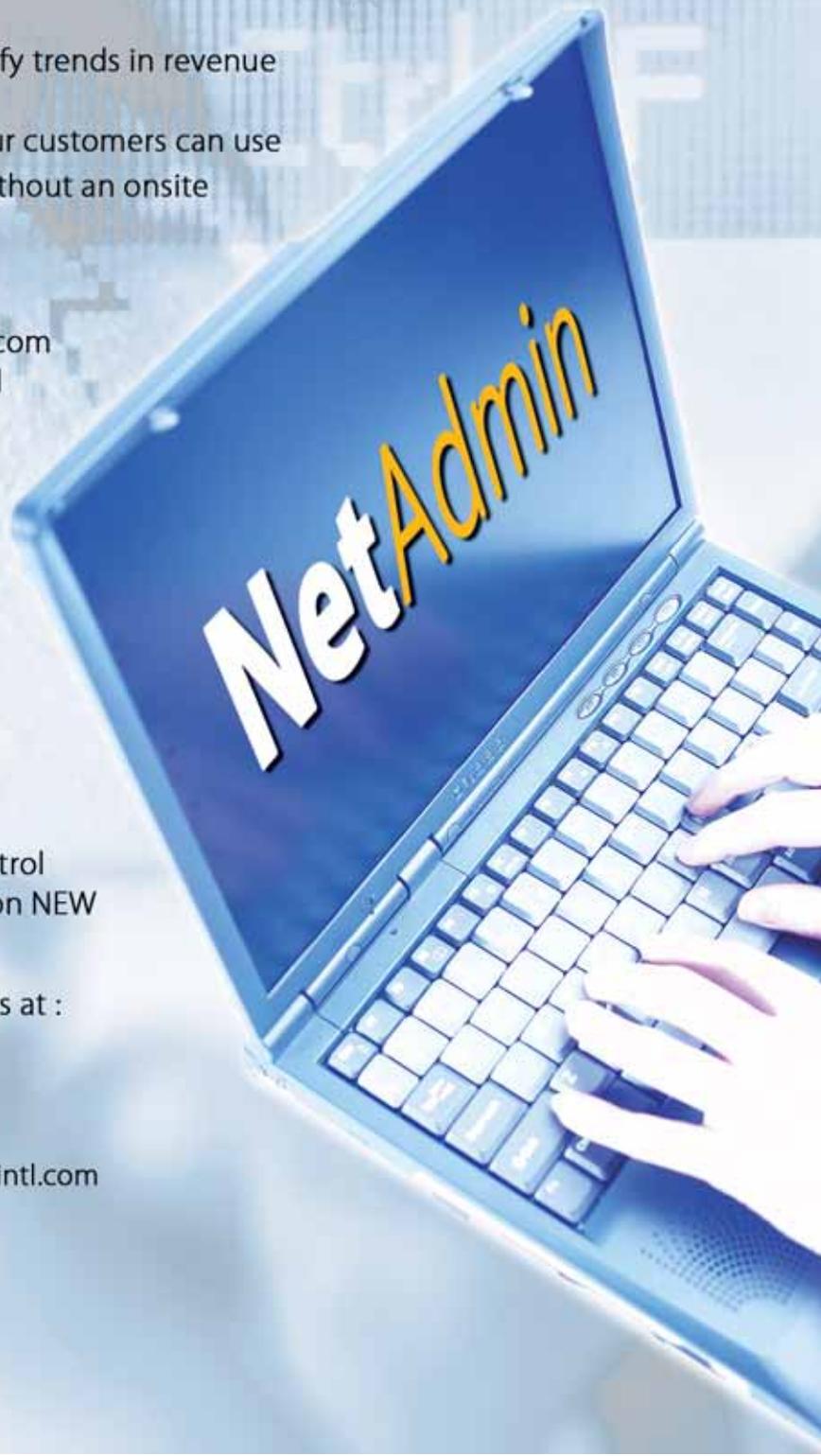
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New SF Ordinance More 'Operator Friendly'

BY JOHN VAN HORN

“If the new ordinance proves that we don't have a great shortfall between the amount of money we are collecting and some phantom amount we 'should' be collecting, then I'm fine with that.” Thus San Francisco Tax Administrator George Putris summed up the city law that went into effect in November.

The ordinance replaces a much more detailed and complicated law passed two years ago by the board of supervisors. The previous ordinance, according to Policy and Legislative Manager David Augustine, had become unwieldy and difficult to understand and administer.

“It was felt the law was too specific in its requirements – in the types of equipment, how the equipment was to be approved by the city, and how it was to be audited. The new ordinance is simple, has some of the original requirements, and is enforced by a single agency, rather than a group of city departments.”

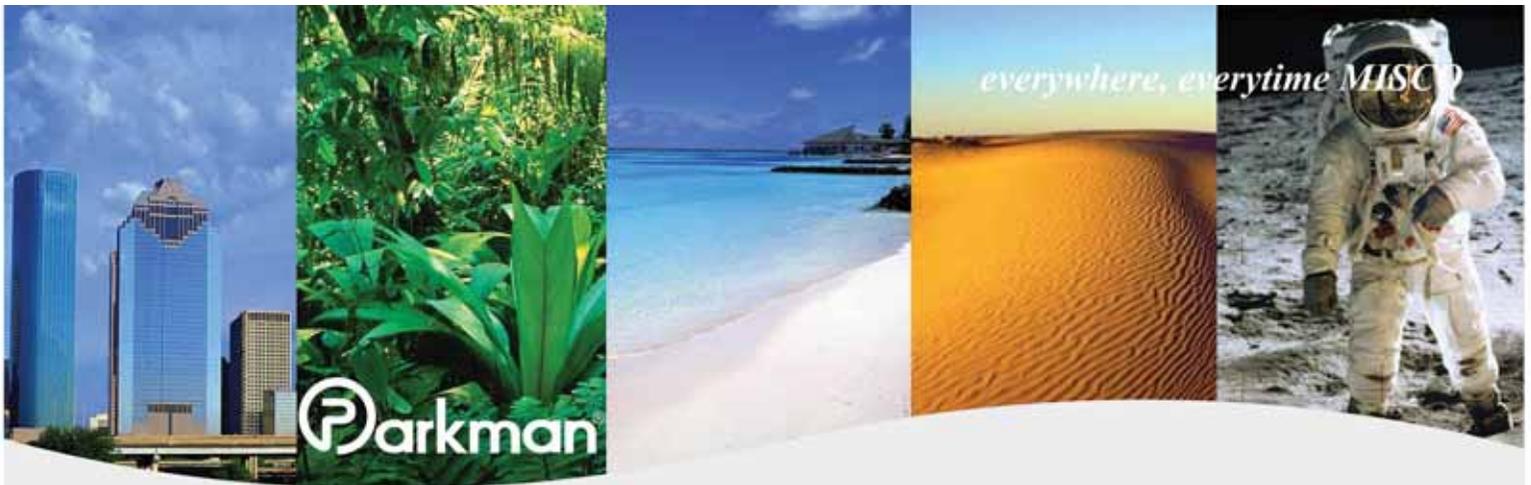
According to Putris, the new ordinance is based on functionality, rather than a specific specification for equipment. Equipment required by the new ordinance is readily available on the market from a number of manufac-

turers, rather than a few sources that had to be vetted by the city prior to purchase. “Most operators can meet the requirements of the ordinance with existing equipment,” he added.

The primary thrust of the ordinance is consumer protection. The original ordinance had its beginnings in complaints from consumers that they were being abused by some parking operators in the city. The new ordinance deals with this by requiring that a receipt (ticket) with

Continued on Page 22





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New SF Ordinance More 'Operator Friendly'

from Page 20

entry time, date, location and contact information be presented to every parker when they enter the garage. Then upon exit, another receipt with entry and exit information and money collected must be presented to the parker.

In addition, an audit trail with sequence numbers, either printed on tape or held on electronic media not available for alteration by the operator, is required. This audit trail must contain information about each transaction, including entry and exit times, money collected, tax information, the sequence number and the ID of the employee who processed the transaction.

"There is little question that properly functioning revenue control equipment will help operators as well as the city," Putris said.

The ordinance sets a 1.5 percent loss number on tickets. If a location loses more than that, it can trigger an audit. There is no penalty for and up to 1.5 percent of the lost tickets, but the audit may uncover a larger problem.

According to Tim Leonoudakis, president of City Park in San Francisco, the operators welcomed the new ordinance. "It was impossible to meet the requirements of the previous ordinance. It was difficult to get equipment approved. It was a mess. The city went to outside consultants and came up with a system that we can live with, but also sets standards and a structure for better reporting. It is good for everyone."

"There are a couple of issues, as there is with anything," Leonoudakis said. "First is auditing. I know that the city has funding for additional auditors; however, they need to be schooled in parking. Auditing a garage is different from auditing a store. There are many ways money can slip through the cracks. Auditors need to be aware of these problems."

"In addition, there are issues with placing equipment in loca-

"It was impossible to meet the requirements of the previous ordinance. It was difficult to get equipment approved. It was a mess."

New Ordinance Requires Specific Equipment Maintenance

The new San Francisco ordinance requires that all broken parking equipment be repaired within 72 hours. The operator must make a "good faith" effort to provide that maintenance. If not, fines can be levied. The operator can provide information to the city inspectors that they are attempting to fix any problems; however, in the end, it is up to the city to determine if the location is in violation.

What About the Amnesty?

The ordinance provides for an amnesty for operators who have not fulfilled the requirements of the city tax in the past. The current rate of taxation in San Francisco is 25 percent. Operators have until the middle of February to come forward and pay back taxes. They can do so in most cases without penalty. Applications for amnesty can be downloaded from the Web site www.sfgov.org/tax.

tions where no streets, sidewalks or driveways exist. Like a dirt lot. We see many of these in stadium event parking. We need to work with the city to find a way to provide proper information in these locations.

"A valet operation is a good example," he said. "Over 60 percent of the locations in the city are valet or valet assist. You have to know how to audit those types of facilities. A regular city auditor would be lost in a valet operation."

The ordinance went into effect in November, but will not be fully enforced until after the amnesty period ends in February. In the meantime, the city is surveying all parking locations to get demographic information, including rates, type of equipment, operator names and so forth. "We understand that we don't have all the lots in the city listed," said Linda Trevina, who manages the Tax Administrator's office. "But

our survey will bring our records more in line with what is on the street."

"I have had an opportunity to read the ordinance," said California Parking's Ron Britz, "but I have noted that it requires locations to accept credit cards or other types of electronic payment. That can be a burden on some operations where the rates don't justify a credit card operation. We take cards on many places, but there are others where the owner has elected not to do so."

According to Putris the goal of the city is not to set up fines as a profit center.

"We simply want to get the operators and owners to comply with the ordinance. If the equipment is adequate for the operators, it is probably OK with the city. The ordinance was originally for consumer protection, and that's its focus. Taxes we receive due to it is a bonus."

As for certification, the operator must certify, in writing and under penalty of perjury, that their equipment and procedures meet the requirements of the ordinance and the unaccounted for ticket ratio. All these certifications and reports are subject to audit.

Operators who wish a copy of the ordinance can contact the office of the Treasurer and Tax collector or visit its Web site at www.sfgov.org/tax.

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Have You Suspected Low Revenue Due to Inaccurate Vehicle Counts?

BY CHRIS MYSZ



In situations like this, tailgating can cause your counts to be off, and your revenue to shrink.

For many years accurate and dependable vehicle count information has been needed for managers who operate vehicle-parking systems. Over the past thirty years Inductive Loop Detectors have proven very reliable for vehicle detection, but Loop Detector technology has not been capable of accurately counting closely spaced vehicles, commonly referred to as tailgating vehicles. Until this time Loop Detector technology has experienced two problems in providing accurate vehicle counts.

The first problem has been the inability to accurately count closely spaced vehicles over the same loop. The second problem is when a metal object is placed in the area of the detection loop the detector provides a continuous output signal. When the detector is providing a continuous output signal multiple vehicles can pass over the detection loop without being recognized. One problem in past Loop Detector technology is two vehicles tailgating are seen as one elongated vehicle. This problem commonly occurs when slow moving vehicles are driving into a parking facility. When vehicle tailgating occurs vehicle counts are lost. This provides for the possibility of lost revenue due to lost vehicle counts.

In the past some products have claimed to have the ability for detecting tailgating vehicles, but without any degree of success. A recently completed development of advanced digital processing technology reliably counts vehicles as closely spaced as bumper to bumper. In addition metal objects placed in the area of the loop are ignored. This new advanced digital technology, which has been in development over the past five years, provides accurate and reliable count information.

The new detector is designed to connect directly to the industry standard 2.5-foot by 6-foot loop, and interface with existing control systems. The anti-tailgate detector as proven to perform reliably with 2.5-foot by 6-foot loops located in dirt, asphalt, and reinforced concrete. It detector incorporates algorithms that detect and accurately count tailgating vehicles. A second benefit of the new anti-tailgate algorithm is the ability to count vehicles when a metal object is placed in the area of the loop. In the past placement of metal objects in the area of the loop would defeat the counting ability of the loop detector. Again, this provides for the possibility of lost revenue.

Following installation of the detector a simple one-time calibration is required. Calibration takes into account possible environmental effects on the loop, such as reinforcing steel in the pavement, metallic objects permanently located in close proximity to the loop, etc.

The detector has two output relays. The first output relay is a standard presence output, which provides a continuous contact closure during loop occupancy. The second output relay offers three possible configurations: 1.) A pulsed contact closure occurs for each vehicle passing over the loop. 2.) A pulsed contact closure occurs for each vehicle tailgating the first vehicle passing over the loop. 3.) A pulsed contact closure occurs for each additional vehicle (after the first vehicle) passing over the loop while a gate is in the open position. The third configuration requires a gate open input signal from the gate controller to the Model L-ATG detector.

Chris Mysz, is R&D engineer for Reno A and E. He can be reached at chrism@renoae.com

PT

An Ounce of Prevention ...

BY ANDREW J. MARTON

Whenever someone asks me what pearls of legal wisdom I can share with them, I tell them to be proactive and hire an attorney before the “it” hits the fan. This advice is based upon 20 years of experience as a litigation attorney.

The odds are that at some point in time you will encounter a problem that has a legal component to it. Perhaps it will involve an accident, an insurance or coverage question, contract negotiations or an employment-related matter. The initial impulse is to handle it yourself. But sometimes your best intentions can come back to haunt you.

For example, your first action may be to take a report and collect information or to report a claim with your insurance agent or provider. While all these activities may seem rather innocuous, they can lead you down a path that you may regret should the matter take a turn for the worse and develop into a lawsuit. Here's why.

Any investigation you conduct may arguably be “discoverable” by your opponent if the matter evolves into litigation. This may compromise your legal defense if undesirable facts are discovered during the course of your investigation. However, if you retain an attorney to handle the investigation, you can shield the disclosure of most communications because of the attorney-client privilege. Similarly, outside investigation by the attorney or at his or her direction is typically afforded a qualified privilege from disclosure pursuant to the attorney work product privilege. Consequently, utilizing the services of an attorney during the initial investigation of a potential problem can shield the discovery of potentially harmful information.

Another important benefit of seeking legal advice early on is that your attorney should be familiar, at a minimum in general terms, with the likely issues relating to your situation. Consequently, your initial investigation will be less likely to miss or

overlook important details.

For example, you may interview an employee, witness or another party relating to a complaint or issue and then close your file. Depending on the nature of the problem, the complaint for damages may not be filed until two to four years after the fact.

Your attorney may need additional information once the matter goes to litigation. But due to the passage of time, some individuals may no longer be around or may even be hostile to you. A now former employee may be difficult (i.e., costly) to

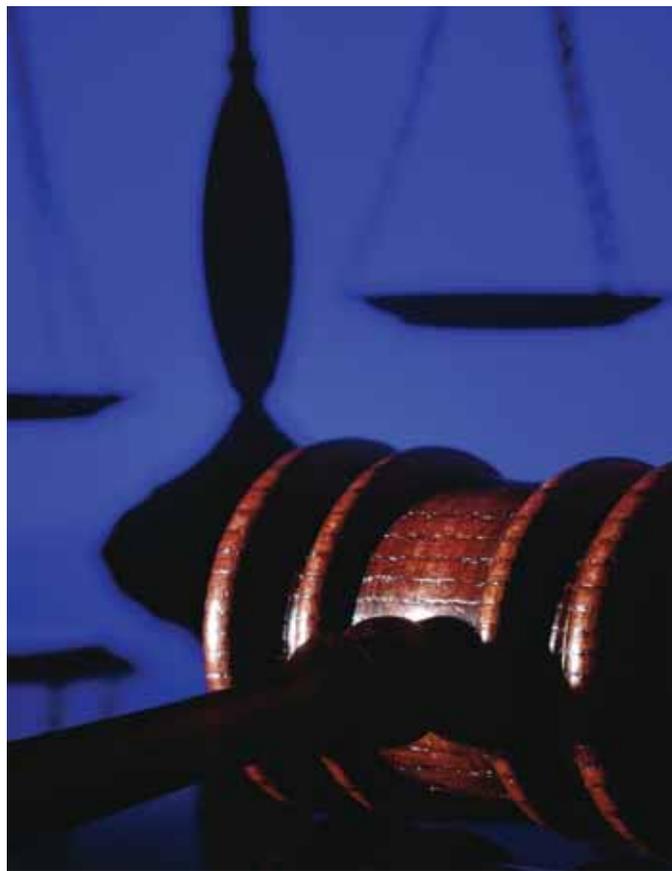
track down, and there is now no real incentive for him or her to cooperate with you. This is even more true if the individual is living in another city or state.

Memories also fade over time, which poses the problem of trying to rehabilitate a witness with documents or other material that will hopefully refresh his or her recollection at a later point in time. Of course, by now you have expended a considerable amount of time, effort and money. So, in many cases, it is cost-effective to involve an attorney early on.

Other problem areas include the initial reporting of a claim or loss or negotiating a contractual dispute that may develop into a lawsuit. The concern here is whether you are creating evidence that may work against you in the context of a lawsuit. You have to be careful about the communication and/or paper trail you create, because you are creating a record that ultimately may be used by your adversary to prove or disprove a crucial fact. Inconsistent conduct can be quite damning in the eyes of a judge or jury.

It makes economic sense to consult with an attorney early on, so he or she can work with you behind the scenes to ensure that you get the best result possible in the long run.

Andrew J. Marton is a partner at Millard, Holweger, Child & Marton. He can be reached at AJMarton@millardlaw.net.



It makes economic sense to consult with an attorney early on



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A Leadership Test, Mo

BY JOSEPH SCIULLI

Search Google for the terms “leadership” and “followership,” and the results are just a bit lopsided:

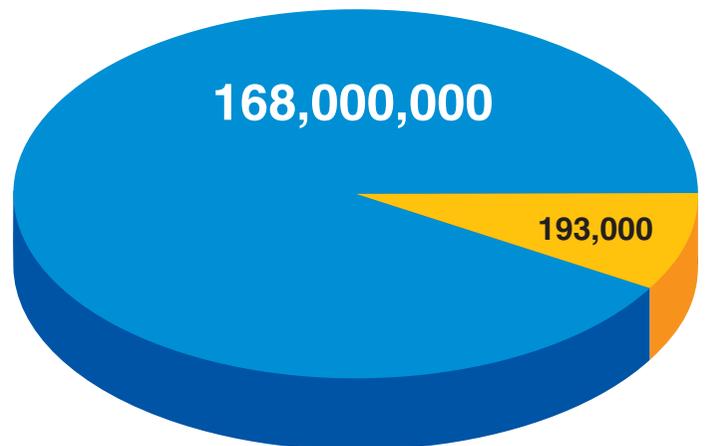
Evidently, there’s a lot more money in leading than following – or at least in writing about it – since leadership references outnumber followership references by a mere 870 to 1!

Perhaps the disparity is rooted deep in the American psyche. Americans are supposed to lead, not follow. From the Pilgrims, to the Founding Fathers, to today’s business world, the premium has always been on leading. “Following” suffers from a bad connotation – sometimes justly, sometimes unjustly (but that’s another article).

So for the 168th million and first time, let’s ask the age-old question: What is it, more or less, that makes a good leader?

One day when he was recovering from chemotherapy, I asked my father that same question: What made him a good leader – a good supervisor?

A strong, tough man who supervised other strong, tough men who built and erected smokestacks, he said it was because he knew more than anybody else and wasn’t afraid to make a decision. That’s good advice, and a good place to start when



exploring leadership. But, “Knowledge without justice ought to be called cunning rather than wisdom,” or so said Plato. Those who knew my father said he could talk equally well with people at any level; he cared for the safety of his men, and was respected for his dealings with them.



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PT

More or Less

Using that theme as a springboard, here's a quick leadership test - more or less. It's intended to serve as a self-critique for anybody who has to deal with employees, co-workers, customers, vendors, superiors... yes, it's a self-critique for all of us on the way we treat others - especially when the going gets tough.

A Leadership Test, or Self-Critique

After dealing with you in situations that might be subject to pressure, stress, disagreement, interruption, differences of opinion, etc., do people usually come away feeling:

- more - or less - appreciated as an employee, co-worker, customer, etc.?
- more - or less - that they were treated fairly?
- more - or less - focused on what they need to do?
- more - or less - respected as a person?

OR, do they come away feeling, more or less, ignored, mistreated, confused, angry, frustrated, "dissed" - in short, that they were not respected as a person, employee, customer, etc.?

As we begin 2007, may we all strive to improve our dealings with those whom we've been given the privilege - and the challenge - of encountering on a daily basis. That's a test we all should want to pass, whether we're leading or following.

Joseph P. Sculli is Vice President and Senior Operations Consultant of CHANCE Management Advisors Inc. He can be reached at joseph.sculli@chancemanagement.com.

PT

Gates Group and Babcock & Brown in Joint Venture

The Gates Group and Babcock & Brown, the international investment and advisory firm, have formed a joint venture entity, Babcock & Brown Gates Parking Investments (BBGPI) to acquire parking management businesses throughout North America.

Coinciding with the establishment of the joint venture, BBGPI announced its first investment with Babcock & Brown and its affiliated funds contributing debt and equity capital to a recapitalization of Imperial Parking Corp. (Impark), the largest parking operator in Canada and one of the three largest in North America. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Impark, headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, currently leases or manages in excess of 1,900 parking locations consisting of in excess of 480,000 parking spaces in more than 30 markets throughout Canada and the United States.



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Now, How to Get Pre

BY ROBERT HARKINS

This is the third article in a series to increase awareness in safety and security planning. Previously, I explained the aspects of safety and security including the events, planning process and areas that must be considered. The remaining question is: “How do you build a plan?”

Planning and preparation are the keys to surviving an emergency, attack or natural disaster. This article addresses the planning steps that must be considered. I will outline the process used by the University of Texas at Austin (UT) to address emergency planning.

Authority: There must be a common understanding within the organization that the planning agency has the authority and responsibility to direct planning and actions in the event of an emergency. Who is in charge and what is the role of subordinate organizations?

Concept of Operations: Any plan must start with a concept of operations that can be transmitted to all members or the organization. The concept is designed to provide framework and guidance for a coordinated response to any and all emergencies. The concept supplements existing procedures with a temporary crisis management structure. The concept should link the planning to the National Incident Management System.

Emergency Situations: The severity of an incident as determined by the threat to the safety of the campus community and university property will dictate the level of response. At UT, we recognize three levels of emergencies. This permits responders and officials to have a common understanding of the nature of an emergency and the required response. “Level 1” is for minor situations that are limited in scope. “Level 2” is a major emergency situation that is larger in scope and more severe in terms of actual or potential effects; this cannot be handled by university resources. “Level 3” is a disaster involving significant casualties and/or widespread property damage that is beyond the capability of the university and immediate local authorities.

Planning Assumptions: All emergency planning requires a commonly accepted set of assumed operational conditions that provide a foundation for establishing protocols and procedures. These assumptions may include:

- Critical lifeline utilities may be interrupted.
- Regional and local services may not be available.
- Major roads, overpasses, bridges and local streets may be damaged.
- Buildings and structures, including homes, may be damaged.
- Damage may cause injuries and displacement of people.
- Normal suppliers may not be able to deliver materials.
- Contact with families and households of the organization may be interrupted.

People may become stranded, and conditions may be unsafe to travel

Emergency conditions will likely affect the surrounding community.

The organization may not receive outside assistance in the short term.

Planning Objectives: All planning should address organizational, communications and information management, decision making, response and recovery objectives.

Phases of Emergency Management: The UT Emergency Management Plan addresses emergency preparedness activities that take place during our four phases of emergency management.

1. **Mitigation:** Mitigation is intended to eliminate hazards, reduce the probability of hazards causing an emergency situation, or lessen the consequences of unavoidable hazards. Mitigation should be a pre-disaster activity.

2. **Preparedness:** Preparedness activities will be conducted to develop the response capabilities needed in the event of an emergency. Preparedness is everyone’s responsibility.

3. **Response:** Response operations are intended to resolve a situation while minimizing casualties and property damage. Response activities include warnings, emergency medical services, firefighting, law enforcement operations, evacuation, shelter and mass care, EPI and search and rescue.

4. **Recovery:** The recovery process includes assistance to individuals, businesses, and government and other public institutions.

State of readiness conditions: Many emergencies involve a recognizable build-up period during which actions can be taken to achieve a gradually increasing state of readiness. These states are called readiness conditions and consist of a four-tier system. Specific actions are detailed in departmental or agency standard operating procedures.

Condition 1—Normal Conditions

Condition 2—Increased Readiness

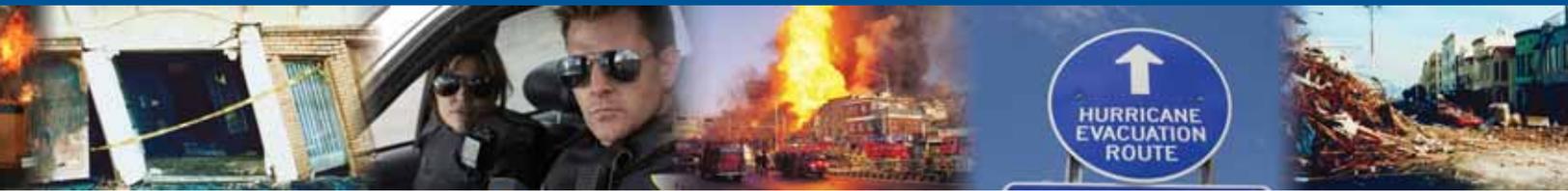
Condition 3—High Readiness

Condition 4—Maximum Readiness

Responsibilities: The plan must identify the functional groups, management structure, key responsibilities, emergency assignments and general procedures to follow during emergency conditions. The plan is activated whenever emergency conditions exist in which normal operations cannot be performed and immediate action is required. The plan must specify the activation process and leadership responsibilities.

Types of Events and Situations and Assumptions: These complex planning matrices are available on PT’s Web site – www.parkingtoday.com/safety

Command and Control: In any emergency, there must be an established and recognized line of command, control and responsibility. This line of command and control must define the responsibility for establishing objectives and policies for the successful



Prepared for the Worst!

management of any emergency and recovery operations.

Emergency Facilities: The University of Texas at Austin has developed an emergency command center (ECC) and several emergency operations centers to manage emergency situations. These facilities serve as the command center for the university's response and recovery operations.

Communications: Rapid and timely communication of information to the university community and to the general public during emergency situations is crucial. Additionally, accurate and timely communication of information to incident response personnel is required for adequate response to emergency incidents. The communications means used by the university include:

1. **Emergency Preparedness Web Page:** An up-to-date information web page that indicates the current status of the university is always available at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency/emergency-preparedness>.

2. **Outdoor Warning System:** UT has outdoor sirens / speakers that are placed in several locations on the campus. This system alerts students, faculty, staff and visitors who are outside on the campus. The warning directs all outside to seek cover inside immediately.

3. **Integrated Dispatch:** Our advanced communication system allows designated personnel to be notified of an emergency through multiple electronic means instantaneously.

4. **Pagers:** The university is a participant in the Austin Warning and Communication System. This system of pagers is a crucial part of the emergency communications strategy for the university.

5. **RDMT RADIO SYSTEM:** UT is a member of the regional 911 Radio, Dispatch, Mobile Data, Transportation Coalition. The university trunk radio system allows for digital and analog

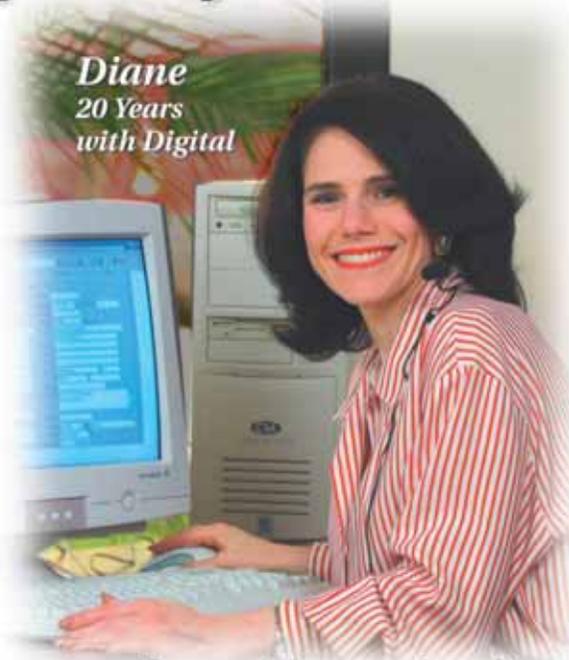
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radio communications between public safety and public service personnel.

6. UNIVERSITY E-MAIL: Mass e-mails will be used as a way to notify the university community of emergency threats or actual situations and to keep them updated on the situation.

Based on the nature and extent of the emergency event/situation, a process will be put in place for the dissemination of communications to specialty teams and sub-specialty teams. To aid in the initial dispatch of critical communications, a matrix has been developed that identifies critical communications-receiving individuals, offices and departments. In this matrix, these key personnel and offices are cross-referenced with specific types of incidents. A letter of priority notification is then assigned to each position, office or department. The priority classifications are as follows: "I" (requires initial notification); "A" (requires immediate notification); "B" (requires immediate notification at the direction of the Vice President for Employee and Campus Services); and "C" (requires notification at the direction of the emergency manager). Those positions, offices and departments that have self-identified as needing immediate notification ("A") must have an operational response plan for emergency incidents.

This is how the University of Texas at Austin is attacking the planning issue. The key step now is to actualize all plans with responders or those that have responsibilities to act or react. There

is nothing new or earth-shaking in this process. If we can help anyone, please send us an e-mail.

Use whatever helps you prepare for that day we all hope will never come. But as we said in my last line of business, "hope" is not an operational concept. Plan for the future!

Robert Harkins, Ed.D., is Associate Vice President for Campus Safety and Security at the University of Texas at Austin. He can be reached at bharkins@austin.utexas.edu.

PT

Westfield Debuts Parking Amenities

Westfield has added four new parking amenities at select California shopping centers that are designed to enhance convenience for shoppers. The special services include call-ahead reserved parking, premium preferred parking, shuttle service, Expectant Mother Parking and "Valet Mate."

Westfield has introduced and is testing one or more of these programs at selected centers, including Westfield Valley Fair, Westfield Topanga, Westfield Century City and Westfield Santa Anita, with an eye toward extending them to centers nationwide.

"We always try to anticipate and meet shoppers' needs, and Westfield is pleased to launch these new conveniences for our customers," said Todd Putman, Executive Vice President of Marketing and Customer Service.

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