

## New system enhances safety communication

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### The Triangle News Desk

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DragonForce, a new handheld communication tool for Drexel Public Safety was unveiled April 18. This technology makes it easier for DPS officers to track each other using GPS enabled PDAs.

Senior Associate Vice President for Public Safety Ben Gollotti and James Sim, the president and chief operating officer for Drakontas, were present at the ceremony. Drakontas is a Drexel affiliated enterprise that has developed the technology behind DragonForce.

"If you can get an officer there in a minute rather than five minutes you reduced the amount of time something could happen," said Gollotti.

DragonForce will use navigation through global positioning system to allow officers on patrol to communicate with the security command center in real time using chat and images. Additionally, it will also enable the command center to track and locate officers while they are patrolling the campus, using real-time digital maps that are displayed on the PDAs. As a result, the command center can dispatch the closest patrolman to a location of an incident within a shorter period of time. With time, DPS hopes to be able to stream live video over the handhelds to the officers so that they are not walking blindly into dangerous situations.

Another component of DragonForce is text message broadcasting. DPS plans to build an infrastructure for a system that will allow them to send text messages to registered student about details of incidents on campus. This will be expanded to include features such as students being able to request for escorts via text messages. For instance if a student in trouble that cannot call public safety for assistance via a telephone, they can send an undetected text message instead.

"We have yet to address the issues of privacy [and the] rules of engagement," Sim said.



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The current plan is to provide each patrolling DPS officer with one handheld PDA. In this way, the command center will know the location of each DPS officer because of the GPS system. The technology will also generate maps on the PDA itself, where the entire campus can be seen along with the location of all the call boxes.

The technology allows for the officers to communicate with each other and with the base via text message. In future, this technology will allow students to communicate with public safety via text messages.