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Wireless Technology Enhances Communications, Response Times

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Description

Drexel University has deployed next-generation wireless security technology developed by Drexel researchers. The technology is designed to enhance communications and response times for campus public safety personnel. Among its features, the technology allows GPS tracking of officers' locations and the transmission of map directions.

Newswise — Drexel University has deployed next-generation wireless security technology developed by Drexel researchers. The technology is designed to enhance communications and response times for campus public safety personnel. Among its features, the technology allows GPS tracking of officers' locations and the transmission of map directions.

Drexel is the first university in the United States to use DragonForce™, developed by Camden, N.J.-based Drakontas LLC and now being marketed by the firm. The technology is based on the research of Drexel's Dr. Moshe Kam, Robert G. Quinn Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Dr. William Regli, associate professor of computer science.

A suite of applications targeted to the needs of first responders and designed to enable spontaneous networking, DragonForce™ has augmented safety on Drexel's three Philadelphia campuses, including its 65-acre main campus. By allowing its Department of Public Safety officers to view the locations and even speeds of movement of one another using overhead maps, response times to incidents have been improved, said Ben Gollotti, senior associate vice president of Public Safety.

“DragonForce™ has taken public safety into a new dimension not only for Drexel Public Safety but for all first responders,” Drexel President Constantine Papadakis said. “Equipped with improved and expedited communications and a range of high-tech tools in their hands, emergency responders are able to better serve the public, especially the campuses of America’s colleges and universities, using this device.”

The applications of DragonForce™ extend beyond campus public safety to the needs of police, fire departments, medical crews and SWAT teams. The Atlantic County, N.J., Department of Public Safety will apply a \$330,000-plus federal grant to test the technology this summer, with some of its emergency response teams using DragonForce™ contrasted with those using traditional communications technology such as radio.

“Drexel and Drakontas are redefining how small companies work with universities to commercialize intellectual property,” Drakontas CEO and co-founder Brian Regli said. “Instead of merely repackaging or licensing intellectual property, Drexel has demonstrated a commitment to the practical application of research and has invested with us to bring this unique product to market. That combination of practical application and advanced research is what makes DragonForce™ distinctive.”

In the first phase of DragonForce™, officers will be able to view the locations of one another and transmit map directions, Gollotti said. Those capabilities will help officers navigate campus buildings, he said. As technology advances, DragonForce™ will enable Public Safety officers to transmit text messages, file incident reports from the scene and view photos of criminal suspects and security videos of incidents only minutes old.

Additionally, officers will one day be able to respond to alarms automatically, saving priceless minutes lost from the time emergency call boxes are set off to the time officers receive dispatch calls, Gollotti said. “We want to have the ability for officers to receive information at the same time everyone else is getting it,” he said. “We want them to get information simultaneously.”

In its infrastructure mode, DragonForce™ may be deployed using existing networks such as Drexel’s network, which recently launched the technology. DragonForce™ may also be used in tactical mode to spontaneously form networks. The technology will be used in Atlantic County and overseas with no networks, Drakontas president James Sim said.

“In these instances, you form your own network on the fly,” Sim said. “Each unit serves as its own router. It’s about responding to situations in which the infrastructure was never there or was destroyed. Communication integrity is what is really important here.”