

New HQ fuels security project at Citgo

Smart card deployment, integrated access control system key to future of enterprise project

By ANDREA GURAL

HOUSTON—Diverse security concerns at Citgo Petroleum Corp.'s new headquarters here translated into a host of sophisticated measures, all at the ready as the company prepares to move the rest of its corporate staff to the new facility.

The oil firm moved its operations and 800 employees from its base in Tulsa, Okla., to be closer to its five refineries and other operations, and to be located in an area known as the "energy corridor," home to firms such as ConocoPhillips and Shell. The move also gave the company an opportunity to institute new security measures at the location, which houses not only corporate functions but an energy trading floor where traders buy and sell refined and unrefined product, said Del Mitchell, manager of corporate security for Citgo. The remaining 200 plus employees will relocate this year.

The goals driving the security upgrades to the existing facility, which Citgo outfitted for its use, were two-fold: eventually standardizing employee access control measures at all significant Citgo locations and the ability to remotely control those functions over a

dedicated network with secure servers.

"In the future, our goal is that we will, for the continuity of operations, and also to assist us in crisis management situations, have the capability to remotely monitor our cameras and alarm systems at all our facilities," Mitchell said. Today, most systems at the Houston campus are already wired into the command center, down to the heavy-duty bollards and gates that control access to the campus' three entrances. Not only can the cameras at those points be remotely controlled, but the capability for remote operation eliminates exposure to security staff in the event of a vehicle-based improvised explosive device, he said.

"In order to be effective, you have to have adequate camera coverage and adequate integration of your access control system to ensure that you can do everything you can at the gate," Mitchell said.

Together with the implementation of a Lenel access control system, Citgo security deployed smart cards for not only access control, but cafeteria vending and access to automated systems. The company is also exploring their use in combination with passwords for logical access.



Jerry Fossater, Professional Systems Engineering

The security infrastructure at Citgo headquarters also protects the company's sensitive energy trading floor and other corporate functions.

The deployment of the smart card could prove to have been a fortuitous decision in that more than 80 percent of Citgo's 4,000 employees, as well as a large number of contractors, are subject to the Transportation Worker Identification Credential, a project that gives port workers and others in the maritime industry a federal, biometric credential.

"We are also going to have smart card readers at all of our marine facilities, and we're hoping that we're ahead of the game," Mitchell said.

The energy company also set up strict safeguards to protect its

trading floor, including a revolving door with an iris scanner.

The project was designed by Philadelphia-based Professional Systems Engineering. **SDN**