



Government

Daily Use

- Preparedness and response training
- Employee communications

Solution

- Polycom® HDX™ telepresence and Polycom VSX® video conferencing solutions, including the HDX 9004, HDX 6000 and VSX 7000 systems
- Polycom RSS™ 2000 recording and streaming server

Results and Benefits

- Enhanced operational efficiencies
- Streamlined executive communications to all five dispersed stations
- Boosted productivity by minimizing need to travel to training sites
- Significantly reduced carbon footprint and lower costs associated with travel due to required trainings

Video Conferencing Boosts Public Safety for Lake Travis Community in Austin, Texas

The mission of the Lake Travis Fire Rescue in Austin, Texas is to provide safe, efficient, and effective service through professional response to fire, rescue, medical, and hazardous material emergencies. The organization is dedicated to minimizing loss of life and property through education, code enforcement, investigation, and community involvement.

Lake Travis Fire Rescue (Austin, TX) covers 200 square miles of very dynamic topography including a large lake, rolling hills, flat pastures, and suburban and urban areas. The geography of the region requires fire rescue personnel to be highly trained for multiple response scenarios—a challenge with the agency's 65 people distributed across five stations.

“Training has historically been a logistical issue for fire departments,” says Fire/Rescue Training Battalion Chief Eric Carlson. “Our emergency response personnel are located in different areas of the jurisdiction and have to travel to a central facility for training. Response time in an emergency is critical, so we struggle with how and when to train to avoid any delay in response.”

And as Carlson explains, training is one of most important aspects of the job. “Several calls we respond to can be classified as high-risk, but low-frequency. For example, we don't respond to a house fire every day, so training for a house fire is the only way for our staff to stay up with their skills.” On average, Lake Travis personnel are recommended to complete 240 hours of training each year to stay current.

The Lake Travis leadership knew it was time to find a better solution.

An Innovative Solution

Today, their solution of choice is interactive video conferencing technology from Polycom, technology that allows all personnel to be trained simultaneously over video without ever leaving their stations. The organization deployed Polycom HDX and VSX video conferencing systems in five of its fire stations, using the bridging capabilities of the HDX 9004 to conduct trainings and communicate to employees at the stations.

“Before the Polycom systems were deployed, we would actually play musical trucks throughout the region to cover holes in the district while a company was being trained, and that was impacting our response time,” explains

“We no longer have to bring a company from its fire station to the main training facility; we can train five to six companies at once.”

Robert Abbott, Assistant Chief, Lake Travis Fire Rescue

"I can see Polycom taking us to the next level with video conferencing and equipment for medical control command oversight and field recognizance."

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Improving the Training Model

Lake Travis Fire Rescue achieved its number-one goal of safeguarding the public by ensuring they maintain a highly-trained company while also securing fast response times.

In addition, by eliminating the need for the battalion chiefs to give the same presentation multiple times, the video network is helping to boost productivity. Presenting once to a large audience has the added benefit of providing consistent information to every trainee.

Carlson appreciates the interactive nature of the video solution that allows the same life-like interaction of an in-person training session. "We can see each other face to face, see the expressions, see if those being trained are getting the message or not."

Polycom video conferencing solutions are also helping Lake Travis Fire Rescue reduce its environmental impact. "Our fire trucks get about two miles per gallon," explains Carlson, "so holding our trainings and meetings over video helps to drastically increase our fuel economy."

And because video training sessions are recorded and archived, Lake Travis Fire Rescue personnel can easily refresh their knowledge at any time.

An Eye on the Future

Polycom video had been invaluable in helping Lake Travis Fire Rescue streamline training and protect the community and Carlson sees expanded use of the equipment moving forward. "Video won't be used just for training, it can be used for any kind of communication," he says.

Abbott also has high expectations for the future of video use throughout the department: "I can see Polycom taking us to the next level with video conferencing and equipment for medical control command oversight and field recognizance."

Learn More

Visit www.polycom.com to find out more about how Polycom telepresence, video conferencing and teleconferencing solutions can help your organization.

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