



News Release

New Facility Enhances Security in Harbor Area Port Command Center Brings Coordination, Cooperation

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Six months after its official unveiling, the Port of Long Beach Joint [Command and Control Center](#) has become a regional security asset and a key in protecting the waterfront in the post-9/11 era.

The center, which opened in February, serves as the official headquarters for the Port of Long Beach Security Division and Harbor Patrol, but it is also a center for regional coordination among agencies whose jobs are vital to the security in the harbor complex, including the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Marine Exchange of Southern California, the Long Beach Police Department and the Port of Los Angeles. The Long Beach Police Department Office of Counter Terrorism has one officer stationed full-time at the Center.

"Having regular meetings, actually face-to-face, with all of these different agencies is vital to having a coordinated response in case of an emergency," said Port of Long Beach Director of Security Cosmo Perrone. "You build relationships over time and you understand better the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders."

From the onset, the [\\$21 million Center](#) was designed to promote better coordination. The 25,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility has the latest in communication technology. A secured web portal, for example, allows the Long Beach fire and police departments to view images from the Port's more than 100 closed circuit cameras. The cameras include long range and thermal units for night time operation.

The Center also has a direct wireless link to the city of Long Beach's Emergency Command Operations Center to better coordinate responses in case of catastrophes.

The Port of Long Beach is an important national asset. It is estimated that a shutdown of the Port complex would cost the U.S. economy about \$1 billion a day. The Port continues to invest heavily on its security to protect that asset as well as those who work here or live nearby. The Port spends \$25 million on security and public safety operations annually.

Some other facts:

- The Port of Long Beach has 45 trained and armed public officers who patrol the Port complex 24/7. Patrol officers have protective equipment including gas masks and IED (Improvised Explosive Devices) detectors. Patrol cars are

equipped with video/camera systems with mobile data terminals and a global positioning system.

- The Port of Long Beach Joint Command and Control Center uses radar to monitor the port complex and adjacent areas for small craft and keeps a tally of all commercial vessels in the water.
- The Harbor Patrol dive team, based at the Center, inspects port wharves and waterways for navigational hazards and to detect suspicious debris or activity.
- The Harbor Patrol can deploy [remotely operated submersible vehicles](#) -- with video and sonar capabilities for underwater inspection missions.
- The helipad on the roof of the Center provides local, state and federal agencies with helicopter access to the Port in case of an emergency and during training exercises.
- Since 9/11, the Port of Long Beach has increased security personnel by more than 40 percent and its security related spending by more than half a million dollars.
- The Port of Long Beach has received a total of \$92 million in grants since 2001. \$64.8 million in federal port security grants; \$23.6 million in state port security grants and Proposition 1B grants; and \$3.6 million in federal urban area security grants (DHS).
- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has selected the Port of Long Beach as one of five pilot sites for the national Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program. Over 37,000 TWIC cards have been issued in the Long Beach port area as of June 2009. Only Port employees whose job requires them to work unescorted on the port marine terminals are issued TWIC cards. TWIC cards are required to gain access to container terminals, bulk cargo terminals, oil terminals, ferry terminals and other secured areas. TWIC is a federal program enforced by the US Coast Guard.

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