MIC Cameras Survive the Elements at the Gulf of Mexico

- Cameras withstand harsh conditions to secure coastal Alabama
- Surveillance video is easily accessible for officers on patrol
- System improves staff efficiency and serves as a force multiplier

FAIRPORT, N.Y. – MIC Cameras from Bosch Security Systems, Inc. have been selected to feed a Coastal Remote Monitoring Program for the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Marine Resources Division. Chosen for the camera’s ability to withstand wet conditions, high temperatures and corrosive salt water, the MIC 400 and MIC 412 Thermal Series capture high quality images in extremely tough environments along Alabama’s 200 miles of coastline.

Alabama’s Marine Resources Division is responsible for the management of marine fisheries resources through research and enforcement programs. It enlisted the assistance of the U.S. Space and Rocket Center/Geospatial Training and Application Center (GTAC) to design a ruggedized video surveillance solution that would be easily accessible by all of its law enforcement personnel in the field. The system also needed to be able to produce useable images in light, dark and foggy conditions.

GTAC and its partner, Crystal Data, created the Coastal Remote Monitoring System. This system enables Marine Resources Division officers to remotely view video and still images from MIC cameras and control pan, tilt, zoom functions, using a smart phone or laptop computer, to investigate potential security risks. Featuring up to 36x optical zoom, the MIC cameras enable officers to identify vessels and read markings on ships nearly two miles away. And, with dual thermal/optical operation, the MIC Series 412 cameras provide round-the-clock surveillance even through fog and other airborne obscurants.
With more than 750 square miles in Mobile Bay and 11,000 square miles in the Gulf of Mexico patrolled by less than 20 officers, the video system helps secure strategic locations throughout the area.

“The Coastal Remote Monitoring System is a force multiplier. It increases efficiency of officers on patrol and affords better situational awareness,” said Major Chris Blankenship, acting director for the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Marine Resources Division. “In one incident, our officers were able to remotely investigate a suspicious vessel near a chemical plant and determine the boat was not a threat. Having mobile access to video from the MIC cameras saved the officers 50 miles of boating and several man-hours.”

Using fiber and wireless connections, the cameras send video to Ziabot™ appliances created by Crystal Data. The appliances convert video to the format preferred by the individual user, accommodating both low and high bandwidth connections. Each user accesses video through a customized console that allows them to securely view live images or video, control cameras, and select video for centralized archiving or saving to a remote desktop.

“The Zaibot appliances allow the law enforcement officers to have access to video or still images from the cameras whether they are on a boat, in a car, or at the Marine Resource Division’s central office,” said Tim Erwin, president, Crystal Data.

All video is recorded and retained for extended periods. The system allows officers to quickly locate stored video using date and time parameters when forensic investigations are required. Archived video is watermarked with the department’s logo and stamped with the location, date and time and can be used as evidence for legal proceedings when required.

Designed for flexibility, the system is easily expandable as additional funds become available. Plans underway for phase two of the project include camera installations in additional challenging environments that require ruggedized cameras that can survive the elements.
“Many of the currently installed locations push the capability and functionality of the MIC cameras to the maximum, and we have been thrilled at the way they perform,” said Chris Johnson, senior vice president, U.S. Space & Rocket Center/Geospatial Training and Application Center.

MIC cameras are designed to provide reliable, high-quality surveillance in the toughest environments. The cameras feature a six millimeter thick housing that is sealed against water ingress and rated to IP 68, making them ideal for ports, industrial and critical infrastructure locations, including areas exposed to corrosive materials. An integrated silicone wiper enables the MIC Series to capture the highest quality images regardless of conditions.

Available in aluminum, stainless steel, certified explosion-protected, infrared and thermal versions, the MIC Series deliver absolute performance in a vast range of locations. For more information about the MIC Series cameras, visit http://www.boschsecurity.us/en-us/mic.

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Bosch Security Systems, Inc., a division of the Bosch Group, develops and markets a broad range of products and systems for security, video surveillance, life safety, personnel and asset tracking applications, as well as for communication and professional audio installations. Worldwide, Bosch Security Systems employs more than 11,600 associates and reported sales of $1.8 billion in fiscal 2009. For more information, visit www.boschsecurity.us.