



# COLQUITT COUNTY JAIL ACHIEVES TOTAL SITUATIONAL AWARENESS WITH PELCO END-TO-END VIDEO SECURITY SOLUTIONS

## THE CUSTOMER

Located in picturesque south Georgia just a short drive away from the Florida state line is Colquitt County. The county is home to more than 45,000 people and features all of the charms one would expect to find in small town America. But just like any other community in the nation, the county has its fair share of citizens who run afoul of the law and end up spending time in the Colquitt County Jail.

The jail, located in the county seat of Moultrie, is a three-pod detention facility capable of holding up to 210 inmates at a given time. According to Colquitt County Sheriff's Office Lt. Rod Howell, the jail, on average, houses anywhere between 95 and more than 200 inmates on a daily basis. As with any correctional facility, the jail features a host of advanced security systems including video surveillance. However, while camera technology has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years, the Colquitt County Jail still relied on an antiquated, black-and-white analog CCTV system plagued by numerous blind spots.

The video security system was so old, in fact, that jail staff lacked the basic capability to save video footage in an efficient manner for evidentiary purposes. "We couldn't easily retrieve video footage if we needed it," said Howell. "We actually had to take a handheld video recorder and record the image on the screen."

## THE CHALLENGE

Howell realized they needed to make some significant upgrades to their video infrastructure if they were going to fulfill their obligation to not only keep the Colquitt County public safe, but the inmate population as well. In the springtime, Howell reached out to local systems integrator Ace Technologies, which recommended a completely new video system from Pelco. Work on the project began in the fall and was completed by the end of the year.

"We performed a complete overhaul of the video system and brought them into the 21st century with digital, high-definition security technology from Pelco," said Ace Technologies Vice President Jammie Stalvey. "They had a lot of big, old bulky cameras and the system was really on its last leg. Besides that, there was a big part of the jail that had no coverage at all."

Unlike hanging cameras on a network in a typical commercial building, Stalvey said they had to work around the added complexity of the jail's hardened walls as well as the fact that they had no real network infrastructure in place throughout the facility prior to the installation.

"It is very difficult to install camera equipment and cables in that type of environment," explained Stalvey. "Secondly, they had no infrastructure to build on so we had to build a network with fiber optic cable,

data cabinets and network switches before we could even start putting in the new IP-camera system. We had two or three different trades – IT technicians, electricians, etc. - working on this, in addition to security system installers."



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## THE SOLUTION

To address all of the jail's video security needs, Stalvey and his team installed more than 70 high-definition IP cameras from Pelco, including 69 Sarix Series dome cameras and two Spectra Series pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) cameras. The Spectra cameras feature six times the resolution of standard definition domes so that important identifying features can be seen with great detail. This level of detail is critical to the security officers in the Colquitt County Jail, who now rely on this technology to maintain order while ensuring a safe work environment for guards and staff.

Additional Pelco solutions included two 12TB Digital Sentry network video recorders embedded with Digital Sentry NVS video management software; a Digital Sentry Workstation; and six 32-inch Pelco video monitors. The entire solution works seamlessly together to offer officials the ability to view live and recorded video, store data for future use and provide forensic evidence to investigators in the event of an incident.

Howell and the rest of the Colquitt County Jail staff have been completely blown away by the quality of the new video security network

and they are uncovering blind spots they never realized they had before with their older CCTV network.

"The system Pelco has provided us with is so far ahead of what we had and it has successfully uncovered a lot of those blind spots for us – ones that we didn't know we had," said Howell. "Obviously, we're still finding some more, but that's just because of how good the camera system is now. The resolution and the quality are just phenomenal."

It also didn't take the jail very long to see a return on their investment once the new network was up and running.

"Just two days after we put up the Pelco system, we caught somebody throwing contraband over the back fence," added Howell. "The Digital Sentry video management system helped our guards spot some movement where it wasn't supposed to be."

More recently, Howell said video footage from the system played a key role in the apprehension of a nurse who allegedly attempted to bring contraband into the jail.

"We were able to utilize video from our parking lot to discredit her story that someone

planted it in her vehicle while she was at work. When you've got two different sides of a story, the video tells the truth," added Howell.

Of course, the new and improved video security network has paid dividends inside the jail by helping guards more quickly identify problem inmates within the pods. So far, at least five people have been trained to use the Digital Sentry video management system, which according to Howell, was a breeze for guards to learn because of its user intuitiveness.

"It was much easier to use than anything we've had before, especially in going back and pulling up old video clips to copy for case files and things along those lines. It made a world of difference," said Howell. "Everyone who sits in our control room – one person, three shifts a day – knows how to use it. It is very user-friendly."

Howell said they have been so pleased with the new system that they have already set aside funding to install additional cameras that will cover other blind spots in and around the facility. "We love it and will continue to work with it," concluded Howell

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