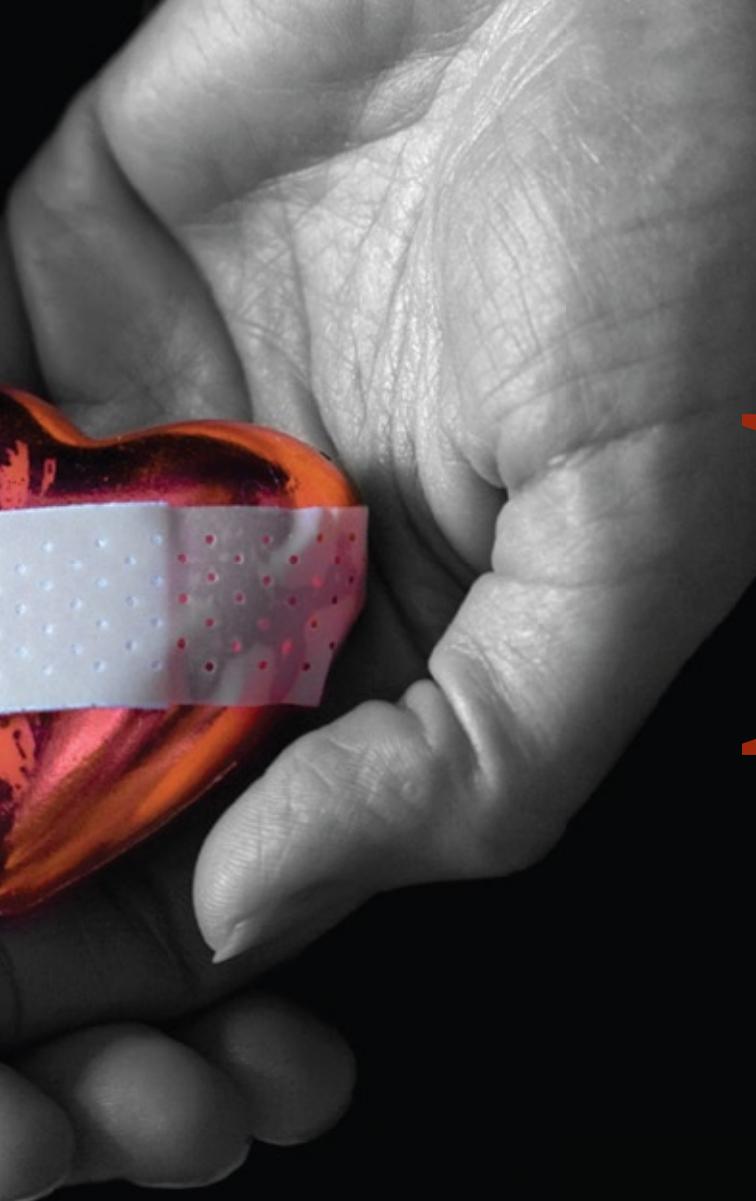


The Virginia Tech tragedy stands out as the incident most responsible for the dramatic shift of the higher education community's safety and security mentality. But have U.S. campuses really applied what they've learned? According to the *Campus Safety Post Virginia Tech Study*, in many ways, yes.

ROBIN HATTERSLEY GRAY

VIRGINIA TECH

1 Year Later: How Campuses Have Responded



FOR MOST U.S. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, THE YEAR SINCE THE VIRGINIA TECH SHOOTINGS has involved a lot of healing and soul searching. The brutality and scale of the April 2007 massacre shook the higher education community to its core.

But more than anything, the hard, cold realities of campus vulnerabilities have made many education stakeholders review, implement and upgrade a wide variety of solutions related to safety and security. Mental health, information sharing, mass notification, active shooter training, arming campus law enforcement, access control and other related issues are no longer flying under the radar of campus administrators... Or at least they shouldn't be.

So have U.S. campuses truly learned the lessons of the Virginia Tech tragedy or just maintained the status quo? To find out, *Campus Safety (CS)* conducted the *CS Post Virginia Tech Study*. Eleven charts, along with additional comments on the pending legislation, technology and policies that directly affect campus safety and security, show just how this tragedy has impacted the approaches campuses use to prevent, detect and respond to such emergencies.

More Attention, Respect Paid to Safety and Security

Historically, the perceived lack of respect for and attention to safety and security issues by many campus constituents has been a major concern of those in campus law enforcement. Although respect and attention are intangible qualities, the absence of either can mean the difference between a campus that is optimally prepared for a critical incident and one that is unnecessarily vulnerable.

The Virginia Tech tragedy, however, served as a wake-up call for most U.S. campuses. Nearly two-thirds of the *CS Post Virginia Tech Study* respondents (64 percent) say there is now greater attention and respect paid to campus safety and security. More than one in four respondents (26 percent) say it depends on the stakeholder, while only 10 percent say they perceive no increase in respect for and attention to campus protection issues. (*See chart on page 20.*)

Understandably, those who have the highest levels of respect for security and safety matters are campus police and security — it is, after all, their job to deal with these subjects on a daily basis. Noncampus first responders, IT, parents, administration, facilities, staff, patients and students (in that order) pay somewhat less attention to these concerns, but on average still rate

them as 3.46 (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest level of dedication). Even other department heads and faculty — the two factions normally perceived to be the least interested in safety and security — now rate protection concerns as moderately important (3.09).

This increased awareness is most likely the reason why so many survey respondents say that in the past year their campuses have revised or are in the process of revising their emergency plans (66 percent and 22 percent, respectively). (See chart on page 22.)

Quality of Mental Health Services Somewhat Improved

Many of the reports that examined the Virginia Tech tragedy and campus emergency preparedness expressed concerns and made recommendations regarding the state of mental health services on college campuses. Virginia Tech's own internal reviews recommended an increase in the number of case workers capable of identifying and handling students with mental health issues, and a threat assessment team be created to evaluate complex at-risk student cases.

A number of these recommendations have been implemented by Virginia Tech, including adding case managers, counselors and psychiatrists. At other campuses, the quality and availability of mental health services for students, staff and faculty have also been enhanced since April 2007. Six percent of survey respondents say the quality of services has significantly improved, while 54 percent say it has somewhat improved. Forty percent say there has been no improvement. (See charts on page 24.)

The availability of mental health services has also increased on many campuses. Half of the survey respondents say the availability has somewhat improved, and 7 percent

say it has significantly improved, leaving 43 percent that have made no improvements at all. It should be noted, however, that the survey did not ask if respondents believe their campus' quality and availability of health services was sufficient prior to the Virginia Tech tragedy. Therefore, some of the campuses that indicated "no improvement" may have already had adequate services in place prior to April 2007.

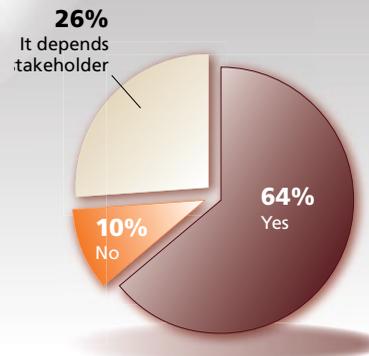
DOE, Legal Experts Provide Guidance Regarding FERPA

Another concern raised by the panels reviewing the Virginia Tech tragedy was the lack of sharing of information about the gunman, Seung-hui Cho, prior to the shootings. According to the CS Post Virginia Tech Study, during the past year, most campuses have improved how they share information among campus constituents. Nearly one out of five (19 percent) respondents say it has significantly improved, and 57 percent say it has somewhat improved. (See chart on page 26.)

As far as how campuses should interpret the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), confusion appears to have decreased somewhat. "In the early summer, the Department of Education (DOE) released a clarification on FERPA issues — one for high schools and one for colleges and universities," says Steven Healy, director of public safety at Princeton University and immediate past president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA). "I think for the most part, folks are satisfied that there is an adequate amount of flexibility with FERPA to allow colleges and universities to share the type of information they need to share."

Healy says that many state attorneys general, state DOEs and others in the legal field are also providing clarifications of FERPA to educational institutions. Still, he believes there is

Greater Attention and Respect Paid to Campus Safety, Security Issues



Nearly two-thirds of respondents (64 percent) say there is now greater attention and respect paid to campus safety and security issues by campus police/security, IT, facilities, administration, faculty, students, parents, patients, other department heads and outside first responders.

Source: *Campus Safety* magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

much room for improvement in the law.

Individual campuses and school districts are also addressing the confusion surrounding FERPA. "We do training at the beginning of the school year," says Alan Bragg, chief of police for the Spring Independent School District Police Department located in Houston. "All of the principals go over the FERPA requirements and restrictions with their staff at each campus. Also, one of the good parts of having our own district department is that we get to share that FERPA information because we're employees of the district."

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) conducts similar types of training. "We have crisis management training that goes on constantly, and that includes all of our administrators, teachers, faculty, civil servants and law enforcement officers," says Lawrence Manion, chief of police for the Los Angeles School Police Department. "What do you do when you see an at-risk person? How do you make that notification to law enforcement so you can be proactive rather than reactive?"

Each LAUSD campus also has a threat assessment team consisting of an administrator, law enforcement officer and district representative.

Legislation Aims to Clarify How Campuses Can Share Data

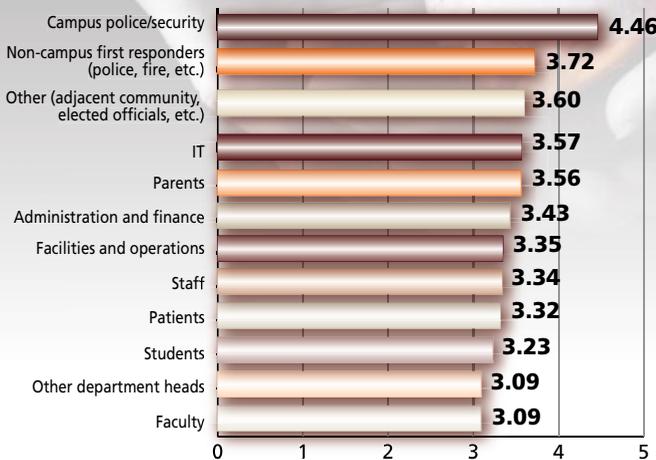
In response to the Virginia Tech tragedy, the House of Representatives has also passed the College Opportunity

The Tragedy Revisited

On April 16, 2007, a 23-year-old Virginia Tech student named Seung-hui Cho shot and killed 32 people and wounded many more in the worst mass shooting in U.S. history.

The massacre began just after 7 a.m. when Cho shot a female and male resident at a dormitory. He then left the scene, only to return just after 9 a.m. to an engineering complex on another part of the campus. The gunman chained shut the doors to the building from the inside and opened fire on students and teachers in the facility. At the second location, 30 individuals were killed. Cho then died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Level of Attention and Respect by Various Campus Stakeholders



While campus law enforcement has the greatest respect for campus safety and security, other heads of departments and faculty believe campus safety and security are moderately important.

Source: *Campus Safety* magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

and Affordability Act (H.R. 4137), which requires the secretary of education to clarify FERPA so that campuses know when they can share with parents the information and grades of their college children.

Virginia is also considering several proposals that would require state colleges and universities to notify parents when their adult children are deemed a danger to themselves or others.

Some believe, however, that these proposals, particularly if they are not narrowly limited, might discourage students from seeking mental health treatment, placing greater burdens on campuses.

Administrators More Aggressive in Removing At-Risk Persons

Where there seems to be more confusion, however, is in the divulging of information on arrests that haven't been supported by convictions. "There has been some frustration, particularly on the student services side, where they want to know more about [at-risk individuals] from a criminal records standpoint," says Phil Mullendore, executive director for the California College and University Police Chiefs Association (CCUPCA). "They are attempting to obtain criminal records that are available to law enforcement but not to anyone else.

"Since Virginia Tech, I now find that personnel directors and student services people are taking a more aggressive role in identi-

fying and removing potentially violent individuals," adds Mullendore. "The roles [of human resources/student services and campus police chiefs/security directors] have reversed. The campus police chief or security director is telling them 'You have to be careful in how you approach this to protect their rights.'"

Other campus chiefs note that there is a difference between giving arrest information and providing the report. "With police reports, there are only certain things you are able to do with them," says Carey Drayton, executive director of public safety and chief of the department of public safety for the University of Southern California (USC). "However, that doesn't stop you from giving information that may or may not be directly contained in the report. The officer writes that report, and that document is sealed and contained. However, you have knowledge of what happened through other means."

Drayton says it is important to know both the spirit and intent of the law. "Sometimes you have to go and read the legislative discussion and intent — the stuff that went around the words." He also recommends using common sense and developing relationships with trustworthy individuals long before an issue ever develops.

Campuses Focusing on Mass Notification, Text Messaging

On the technology front, the issue that received and is still receiving significant public

attention is the timeliness and way Virginia Tech notified its campus community after the initial dorm shootings. As the fact that 73 percent of survey respondents have recently bought or will soon purchase mass notification solutions demonstrates, campuses have taken the review panel's recommendations to heart. (See charts on page 26.)

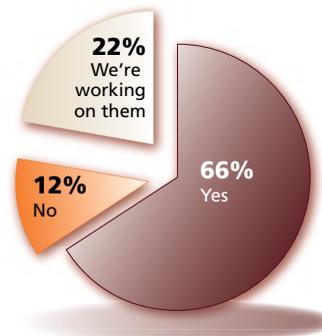
Although most campus officials acknowledge they need multiple modes of notification, text messaging systems seem to be receiving the greatest share of attention. Virginia Tech has already implemented such a system, and Brigham Young University (BYU) is in the process of doing so, as are many other colleges and universities.

On the K-12 front, mass notification is also a hot topic. For example, Spring ISD is actively looking at solutions, although the text messaging option is geared toward parents rather than students. "Our district policy currently says students can carry their cell phone, but they can't use them or have them on during the school day," says Bragg. "I think we're going to give them [parents] four or five destinations where they can receive those messages: E-mails at work and home; cell phones and fax machines."

Federal Legislation May Soon Play Bigger Role in Campus Safety

Even for those colleges and universities that have not invested in any mass alerting technologies yet, they may be forced to do so if some pending federal legislation passes the Senate. On Feb. 7, the House of Representatives passed its version of the

Institutions With Revised Emergency Plans



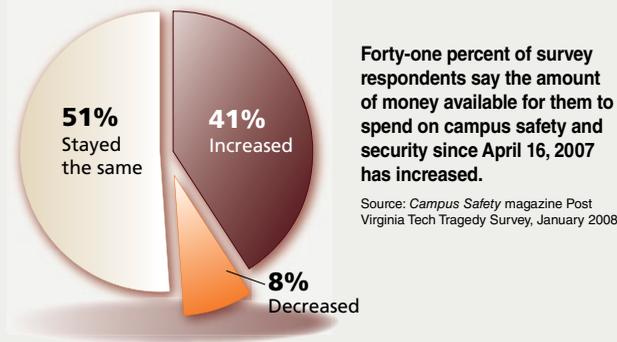
Nearly nine out of 10 respondents (88 percent) say their institutions have revised their emergency plans since April 16, 2007 or are working on them.

Source: *Campus Safety* magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

Not Everyone's Security, Safety Budgets Have Increased

It is one thing for campus communities to express something intangible like respect for and attention to safety and security matters. It's quite another for them to allocate the actual resources needed for improved protection. According to the CS Post Virginia Tech Study, only two out of five respondents (41 percent) say the amount of money available for them to spend on campus safety and security has increased since April of 2007. More than half (51 percent) say their budgets have stayed the same, while 8 percent indicate they have experienced an actual decrease. (See charts on page below.)

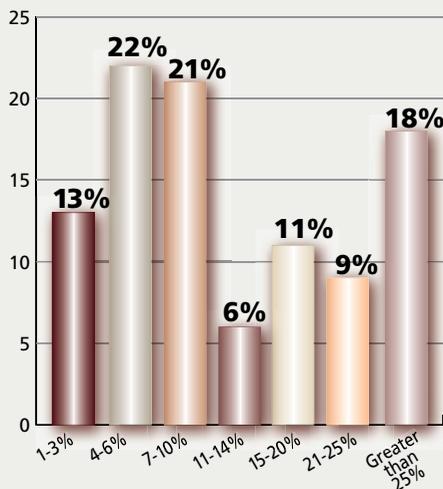
Amount of Money Available for Campus Safety and Security



Institutions of higher education (46 percent) and hospitals (39 percent) are the most likely to have seen an increase, while K-12 campuses/districts (22 percent) are the most likely to have experienced a decrease. Of those organizations that do have more money to spend, the average increase is 12.5 percent. The median increase is 8.5 percent.

Despite there being mostly modest increases in the amount of money available to spend on campus protection since last year, most survey respondents indicate that since April 2007

Percentage of Budget Increase



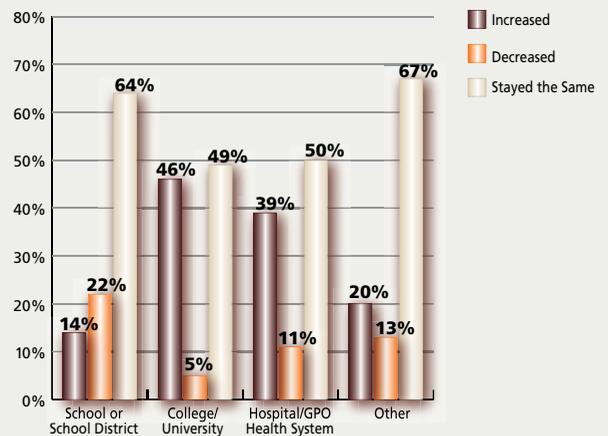
More than one out of four survey respondents (27 percent) who indicate they have more money to spend on campus safety and security say they've received an increase of greater than 20 percent. The average percentage increase is 12.5 percent, and the median percentage increase is 8.5 percent.

Source: *Campus Safety* magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

they have purchased or will be purchasing security and safety-related products and services in the next six months. Nearly three out of four respondents (73 percent) say they have purchased or will be purchasing mass notification solutions; 55 percent CCTV; 44 percent access control/key management; and 40 percent emergency communications/two-way radios. (See charts on page 26.)

Additionally, although 21 percent of respondents who have made purchases indicate that more than 25 percent of their purchases were as a result of the Virginia Tech tragedy, overall, the average percentage of products purchased as a result of the shootings was only 9 percent (median 2 percent). It appears that long before Virginia Tech, most campuses had already planned on making significant safety- and security-related purchases.

Amount of Money Available for Safety and Security by Campus Type



Universities (46 percent) and hospitals (39 percent) are the survey respondents whose campuses are most likely to have more money to spend on safety and security solutions.

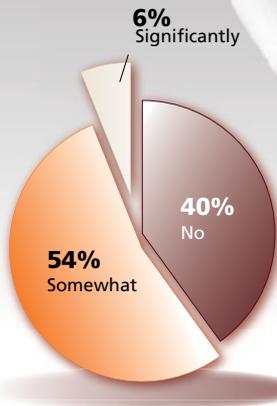
Source: *Campus Safety* magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

Another source of safety and security funding may eventually be the federal government in the form of additional grants. As of press time, the Senate version of the College Opportunity and Affordability Act calls for \$50 million in funding.

It should be noted, however, that even if the funding provision stays in the bill, getting Congress and the Bush Administration to follow through on their commitment to campus safety may be a challenge. "It's one thing to get a piece of that legislation that authorizes \$50 million in grants," says Steven Healy, director of public safety at Princeton University and immediate past president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA). "There's another to actually get an appropriation." Additionally, President Bush did not request any funds for the Secure Our Schools program for fiscal year 2009.

The good news is many campus administrators are stepping up to the plate because they are beginning to see the risk management implications if they don't pay for appropriate safety and security measures. Still, during these times of budget cuts and economic downturn, the decisions are not easy. "The notion of campus safety just needs to move higher up on the list," Healy adds.

Improved Quality of Mental Health Services



More than half (54 percent) of respondents indicate their campuses have somewhat improved the quality of mental health services for their campus constituents since the Virginia Tech massacre. Six percent have made significant improvements.

Source: *Campus Safety* magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007, which requires higher education institutions issue public warnings within

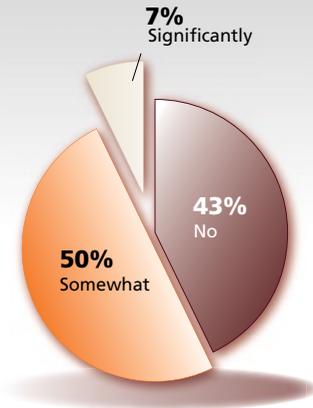
30 minutes of an emergency or threat, as well as notify the public with more campus safety information.

The 30-minute requirement, which is supported by family members of Virginia Tech victims as well as the campus safety advocacy group Security On Campus, is facing strong opposition from most campuses, as well as members of the campus law enforcement community. Many campus safety officials believe this portion of the bill would hamper public safety officers from exercising their best judgment during emergencies.

“I think the key to all of this legislation is that you allow colleges and universities as much flexibility as you can, while still being very pointed about the need for timely notification,” says Healy. “The situations that require campus public safety officials to release emergency notices unfold very quickly. We don’t want to create a cry-wolf syndrome where every 10 minutes we’re sending out a message, and some of those messages may have information that is opposite from previous messages. I think we have to be careful about trying to impose

an arbitrary time limit.” (Note: Security On Campus did not return calls from *Campus Safety Magazine* on this topic.)

Improved Availability of Mental Health Services



Exactly half of respondents say their campuses have improved the availability of mental health services for students, staff and faculty since April 16, 2007. Seven percent have made significant improvements in availability.

Source: *Campus Safety* magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

As of press time, the Senate’s version of this legislation has no similar 30-minute provision, and the final language will be worked out between the House and Senate versions. (For additional information on H.R. 4137, see “Congress Passes Bill Requiring 30-Minute Emergency Notice” in News Watch.)

Virginia Legislature Also Getting Involved in Campus Security

On the state level, Virginia is considering HB 499, which would require those who are ordered to receive treatment for mental health issues to obtain it. The bill would also reduce the threshold for involuntary commitment if a person is deemed a danger to himself or others. Opponents of the proposed law, however, are concerned that it could lead to the violation of civil liberties.

Several other bills being considered by Virginia would establish teams at schools to evaluate and report threatening behavior. The teams would include representatives from student bodies, faculty, law enforcement, HR and mental health professionals.



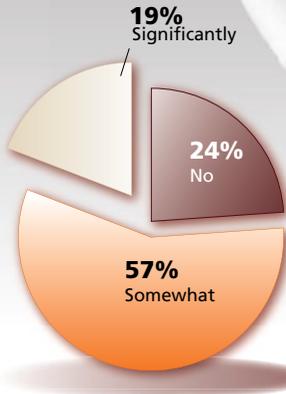
Last summer the Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD) spent \$22,000 on simulated active shooter equipment. Its training involved 150 LASPD personnel, as well as officers from other agencies from South Gate, Huntington Park and Glendale, Calif.

Access Control, Locks Getting a Closer Look

The concept of locking down a building or a campus when a critical incident occurs — or even just updating the locking mechanisms on buildings so doors can’t be chained closed — are being reviewed by many campuses.

“We have to get away from these custodians having to walk around and unlock or lock the doors,” says Wolfgang Halbig, director of risk management for the Lake County (Fla.) Public Schools. And some campuses do have the ability to automatically lock buildings by campus dispatchers. →

Has Your Campus Improved the Way Information is Shared?



More than three quarters of survey respondents (76 percent) say their campuses have improved at least somewhat the way information is shared about at risk students, faculty and staff.

Source: Campus Safety magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

Many others are looking to adopt more sophisticated access control systems that involve card access. That said, it's doubtful anytime soon we'll see most campus public safety departments being able to just flip a switch to secure every building.

On the lower-tech end of the access control scale of sophistication, however, there have been quite a few changes. Campuses, including Virginia Tech and USC, have replaced the door hardware so a gunman like Cho can't chain the doors shut, preventing first responders from entering a building.

Other locking solutions, however, aren't as easy a fix. Should locks be installed on classroom doors to keep intruders out? If they were installed, an individual could barricade himself with his victims, much like what occurred in Bailey, Colo., in September 2006. These and other solutions have pros and cons, and campuses are actively debating which are best for their particular applications.

Active Shooter Training, Arming Officers Now in the Spotlight

Whether or not campus law enforcement should carry guns on campus is also being debated nationwide. Iowa now allows its sworn campus officers to carry firearms. Fifteen Vanderbilt University police officers recently received SWAT training. Many other colleges and universities are considering arming or have already armed their officers.

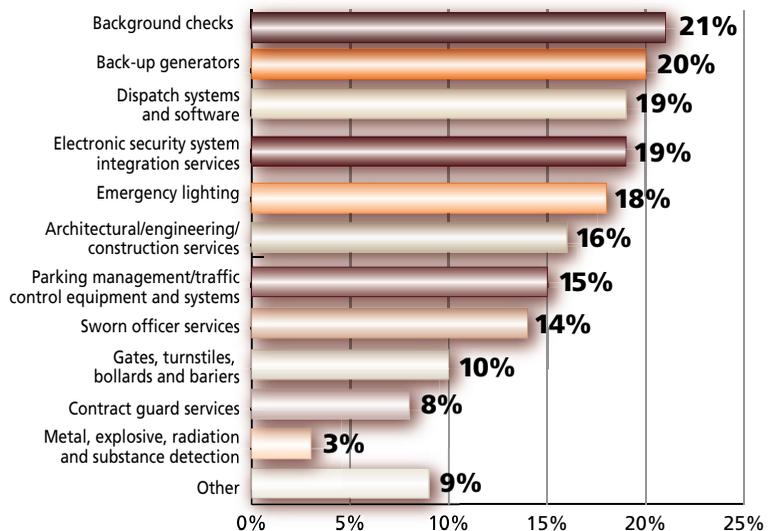
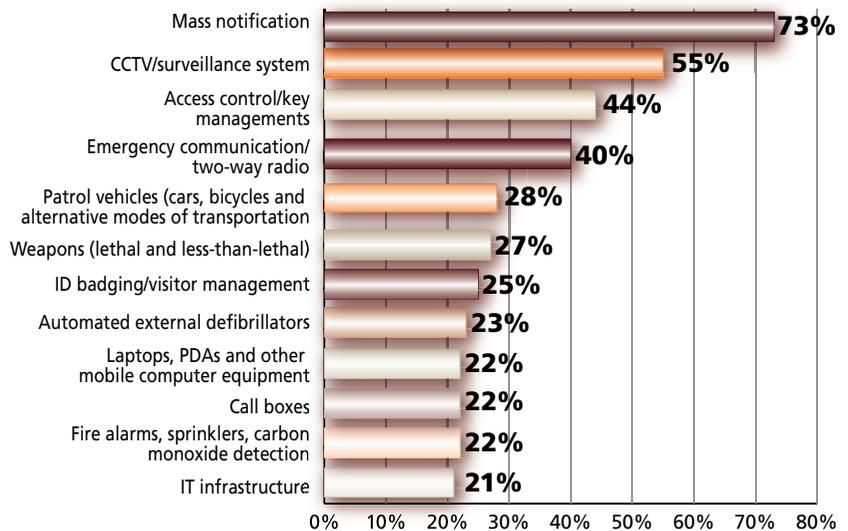
David Rivero, chief of police for the University of Miami says that in addition to equipping his department's officers with the appropriate fire power, vests, shields and helmets they need, active shooter training has been immensely important. "You can't wait for the SWAT team," he says. "You have to practice taking out an active shooter."

Immediately after the Virginia Tech tragedy, Rivero's department campaigned to get on-campus constituents and administrators, as well as other law enforcement

agencies to become more familiar with his department. The campus conducted Operation Sandbox, which involved 300-400 police, fire and emergency responders from around South Florida. "Everybody now knows who we are," he says. "That's the beauty of these exercises, and we're probably going to do them again every year."

Universities aren't the only ones engaging in critical incident response training. Some K-12 districts have been doing it for years. "For the past five years since I've been here, we've been trying to put into place a strategic

Purchases or Planned Purchases



Nearly three out of four respondents (73 percent) say that since April 2007 their institutions have purchased or plan on purchasing mass notification solutions in the next six months. On average, however, only nine percent (and two percent median) of the total purchases listed here are in response to the Virginia Tech tragedy.

Source: Campus Safety magazine Post Virginia Tech Tragedy Survey, January 2008

training profile for all officers dealing with active shooters,” says Manion. “[The shooters] might be on campus or outside of the campus and put our kids in jeopardy. It’s been a daunting task and very expensive. We go over and over these on a regular basis.”

Despite Improvements, Challenges Still Exist on Most Campuses

Even with these advances, U.S. campuses have a long way to go when it comes to be-

ing optimally safe and secure. Although recent Department of Justice research indicates that educational campuses are better prepared and have less crime than before, the “It won’t happen here” mentality is a continued obstacle in many institutions.

Also, bullying and harassment are troubling issues that remain in schools. “It’s amazing that they refuse to invest in a simple hotline program, which allows parents and children to call about bullying, harass-

ment and drugs,” says Halbig. “It’s the best investment you can make, but they won’t do it.”

Another challenge is trying to overcome the belief held by some campus constituents that it is possible to find a single, simple solution that doesn’t have any weaknesses. Such unrealistic thinking can lead to no decision being made at all.

Drayton recently had to overcome such attitudes when USC adopted a new mass notification system. “Do we want to be the administrators explaining that we learned all of these lessons from Virginia Tech and we’re still here waiting for the perfect solution?” he explained recently to other campus officials. “Or do we maybe want to get 60-percent saturation as opposed to 100-percent, knowing that there are multiple ways to do this, and we’re going to have to use multiple ways?”

Fortunately for Drayton and many other campuses, reality is being embraced more and more. It remains to be seen, however, if the lessons learned as a result of Virginia Tech will permeate all campus cultures. **CS**

About the Study

An online questionnaire was E-mailed to *Campus Safety* subscribers during the last week of January 2008. Additionally, the survey was posted on *Campus Safety’s* Web site (www.campussafetymagazine.com) during the same time period.

Thirty percent of the respondents indicated their campuses were located in the Northeast; 29 percent in the Midwest; 22 percent in the South; and 19 percent in the West. Of the 437 individuals who responded to the survey, 75 percent said they worked for educational campuses; 21 percent work for hospitals; and 4 percent indicated “other.”

For additional information about this research, please contact Robin Hattersley Gray at robin.gray@bobit.com with “Post Virginia Tech Study” in the subject line.