



Police force in Belgium uses pioneering BlackBerry solution to connect police officers and minimise time spent on administration

The three villages of Roeselare, Izegem and Hooglede have established one combined police force of about 250 officers, 200 of them are carrying out policing tasks on the streets and all together they serve a population of about 93,000 citizens. The combined police force is called Police RIHO.

The Challenge

A modern police force faces many challenges such as the demand for greater visibility on the streets, more efficient administrative processes and smaller budgets to deliver the same level of service to the community.

Officers performing their everyday duties were required to take notes in writing, copy identity details of citizens by hand, make a radio call into the station to check information such as vehicle registrations, missing persons' information or whether a person had been reported wanted by other police forces. Back in the police station they needed to create an electronic report, i.e. start the process all over again. This manual procedure often caused delays and was prone to errors.

To improve the situation, Police RIHO identified the need for a mobile solution to make better use of its officers' presence on the street. It was a key requirement that using the technology would improve both the service level and the accuracy of their jobs. In order to convince the officers to use it, the solution had to be secure, easy-to-use and robust enough for street policing.

The Solution

Equipped with BlackBerry® smartphones, Police RIHO officers now produce digital police statements on the street and send them securely to the police station where the documents can easily be processed.

Benefits

Integration of field work and back-office administration

Improved accuracy thanks to remote access to police applications

Administrative time gain of 20 minutes per police statement equaling up to 30 man days per year freed up for policing tasks

East-to-use solution

Built-in robust security features



The accuracy level of data input has risen thanks to an electronic identity card reader. This reader is connected to the BlackBerry smartphone that immediately and accurately transfers the data to the police statement.

With the easy-to-use, secure and robust BlackBerry smartphones, officers also have phone and email functionality on the same convenient device, giving them everything they need to stay connected to colleagues wherever they go.

The RIHO Police force is planning to use BlackBerry smartphones on a long-term basis.

"Police Force RIHO is the first to use the solution in Belgium and acts as an example for other police districts. Our main objective is to reduce the administrative burden and to spend more efficient time for policing on the street," says Norbert Vanmaele, Police Governor and Officer responsible for the roll-out of the project.

The BlackBerry smartphones are equipped with the application RSIC Survey eID Edition, developed by RSIC, a Dutch company and member of the BlackBerry® Alliance Program. Thanks to this solution the police force can easily develop its own forms and documents and insert special fields for images or photos, a field for the exact GPS location and fields that can be read out from electronic identity cards.

The Benefits

By deploying a BlackBerry® solution the Police RIHO has increased its efficiency allowing faster administrative processing of police statements and improved speed and accuracy while patrolling on the street.

The BlackBerry solution ultimately enables every officer to spend more time on actual police work in the community, rather than returning to base to retrieve, report and file information. "The administrative process per police statement has reduced by no less than 20 minutes, which represents the equivalent of up to 30 man days of eight hours in the police district of RIHO per year," Vanmaele proudly confirms.

In addition to more efficient use of time, the solution with the card reader also helps to minimise the number of mistakes when copying names and addresses from identity cards. Moreover, it also offers the possibility to safely and securely send these details to base. In the police station, details can be checked simultaneously with the national police database allowing the operator to reply immediately to the police officer on the street, helping them carry out policing tasks and judgments. BlackBerry smartphones offer a highly intuitive user-interface – officers need little training for using them effectively. "The BlackBerry smartphone works pretty much straight out-of-the box," confirms Vanmaele.

The robust security features that are integrated in the BlackBerry® Enterprise Server have given Police RIHO the necessary reassurance and confidence to achieve approval and adoption of the solution. Lost smartphones can be locked and wiped remotely of all information, while data travelling to and from smartphones is protected by powerful encryption. "With the safeguards RIM has in place for its BlackBerry solution, it is a bigger worry when an officer loses his notebook than his smartphone," says Vanmaele.

"After rolling out the mobile data solution on the BlackBerry platform, RIHO will definitely extend the use of its BlackBerry solution into other policing domains to make even more efficient use of resources and time," Vanmaele concludes.

www.blackberry.co.uk/casestudies

"Police Force RIHO is the first to use the solution in Belgium and acts as example for other police districts. Our main objective is to reduce the administrative burden and to spend more efficient time for policing on the street. After rolling out the mobile data solution, RIHO will definitely extend the use of its BlackBerry smartphones into other policing domains to make even more efficient use of means and time."

Norbert Vanmaele
Police Governor RIHO District

Established in 2001, RSIC is a software development and consultancy firm, specialised in mobile and wireless technology. Due to its extensive experience and long track record, RSIC is any organisation's best partner for projects that involve mobile automation. With development centers in Pune, India and Leiden, the Netherlands, RSIC can always offer high-tech mobile solutions for a fair and competitive price.