

## Prisoner monitor gets a test

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A prisoner-monitoring system developed in Scottsdale will now be used in a pilot project in a 700-bed prison in Melaka, Malaysia, and in a 375-bed prison scheduled to open in 2006 in Canberra, Australia. The projects, announced earlier this month, will showcase TSI Prism, a system made by Alanco Technologies Inc.

It consists of a radio transmitter that looks like a large, industrial wristwatch, that is used to track inmate movement and archive it in a database that can be retrieved days, weeks, even months later.

Greg Oester, president of TSI Prism, said the system is credited with solving a stabbing in a California prison.

"An inmate was found stabbed in his bunk at 3:30 in the morning," Oester said. "He either wouldn't say who did it, or didn't know.

"Through the database, officials were able to see that, 30 minutes before the stabbing was discovered, another inmate came into the area where the stabbing occurred. They had a confession within an hour. Ordinarily, it can take weeks, or months, if ever, before something like that is solved."

Oester said the system has reduced inmate violence by 60 percent in the California prison system since its installation in 2000.

"It lifts the veil of secrecy," Oester said. "An inmate can no longer say he wasn't there. They tend not to do things when they know they can be tracked."

The system can set off alarms if rival gang members get too close to each other, or if an inmate violates such prison rules as entering unauthorized areas. If the inmate tampers with the wristband, it is immediately detected.

The system also has a belt-mounted transmitter for staff members that can send a panic alarm, which immediately shows who is in trouble, where they are and the 20 inmates closest to him or her.

"It allows the early responders to know if it's two gang members, or if it's 15 people and what their history of violence is."

Other companies offer systems that can tell how many inmates are in an area.

"But they can't tell you who's standing next to whom, and they don't have a database to retrieve," Oester said.

Oester said the system saves money by freeing officers from inmate tracking to provide more security functions like drug or contraband sweeps.

"We were never certain that same cost-benefit analysis would apply to developing countries because labor is cheaper," Oester said. "But we've had a lot of interest from Asian countries."

Alanco stock has not traded above \$3 since early 2001 and closed Friday at 59 cents a share. The company lost about \$2.6 million in fiscal 2003, about \$3.2 million in fiscal 2004 and about \$3.8 million in fiscal 2005.

Oester said a pilot project also has been established in the Netherlands, and the

company has gotten interest from China, Singapore, Thailand and Japan.

All of the company's international contacts came after VIP tours of the Logan Correctional Facility in Lincoln, Ill., a medium-security facility with 2,000 inmates, he said.

The company had to overcome one hurdle before marketing internationally.

The radio frequency used in the United States is restricted overseas, so the company adapted the system to use a 2.4 gigahertz transmission system that can be used anywhere.

Last year, the company was awarded a contract for the Los Angeles County jail system, which has 18,000 inmates.

Since then, it has been inundated with requests for information and pilot projects, Oester said.

"Looking at the industrialized world, the United States is the largest incarcerator," Oester said. "So the domestic market is our primary focus."

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