

### Largest non-metro police force in England cuts travel, improves communication with HD video

Thames Valley Police chooses LifeSize HD video communications to stay connected with multiple entities while reducing travel.

**Organization:** Thames Valley Police, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, UK

Thames Valley Police is one of the largest Home Office police services in England, covering 2200 square miles and a population of 2.1 million. The force currently employs over 8,000 people and is made up of 16 police stations split into five Basic Command Units (BCUs) - Oxfordshire, Berkshire West, Berkshire East, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Possibly the most famous Thames Valley Police officer was the fictional *Inspector Morse*, the main character in 13 novels by Colin Dexter and 33 television episodes by ITV. The BBC also showcased the force in a documentary called *Police* in the 1980s.



### Challenge

With the large number stations and staff, three to four daily briefings between locations is an absolute necessity to keep operations running smoothly. Video conferencing was introduced more than seven years prior at the two main stations in Oxford City, but due to the poor video quality, choppy audio and overall unreliability, in particular, the system was gradually deteriorating into an inefficient communications tool.

“The old video system was always breaking down,” said Paul Purkis, Business Manager, Oxfordshire BCU. “The valuable time and effort lost to troubleshooting just wasn’t worth it.”

Most stations simply used the telephone to conduct briefings via conference call. But because some stations are separated by 50 miles or more, when the need to meet in person arose, driving was the only option. These face-to-face meetings sometimes meant several hours of time lost due to travel, especially in the winter months when icy roads can have a serious impact on driving. Thames Valley Police needed a communications solution that could provide a superior quality of experience for the user, yet was flexible enough to deploy across the organization. The investment would also have to make sense fiscally, as taxpayer dollars must be spent wisely.



#### CHALLENGE

16 police stations spread over an area of over 2000 square miles, Thames Valley Police needed to cut down on travel while increasing critical communication between BCU’s.



#### SOLUTION

More than 20 LifeSize® Express™ systems deployed among each of the police stations, along with an external multipoint control unit to bridge sites together.



#### RESULTS

More than 170 hours per week spent utilizing LifeSize HD video systems. Increased usage means better communication, decreased travel expenses and time saved.



## Solution

Thames Valley Police contacted their local authorized LifeSize reseller in the UK to demonstrate the HD video solution in action. Almost immediately, the LifeSize difference was clear.

"Everyone saw the the benefit in LifeSize," said Purkis. "The quality is outstanding, it's easy to use and highly cost effective."

More than 20 LifeSize® Express™ HD video systems were soon deployed across the organization, along with an external multipoint control unit to bridge multiple parties together.



Thames Valley Police station in St. Aldate's, Oxford.



## Results

Since the HD video implementation, usage of the technology is really catching on.

"I think at first people were a bit nervous about using it, the quality is just so good," said Mick Walsh, Systems and Information Supervisor for Thames Valley. "But after a few minutes of sitting in front of the camera and realizing how lifelike the experience is, our people can't get enough of it."

Previously, force-wide briefings were held three times daily via telephone or in-person. Now, with the ease of use of the LifeSize systems, Thames Valley is using the technology up to 170 hours per week, plus numerous ad hoc meetings throughout the day.

And through the use of the built-in H.239 data sharing capability, evidence can be shown to a solicitor of the court for a case involving a accused party being held at the police station. The information is put up on the screen or simply shown directly to the camera.

"LifeSize has really proven itself by expanding our ability to communicate with the right people at the right time," Walsh said. "There has been lots of mileage saved and the uses for the technology continue to grow."

**"LifeSize has proven itself by expanding our ability to communicate with the right people at the right time."**

– MICK WALSH, SYSTEMS AND INFORMATION SUPERVISOR, THAMES VALLEY POLICE



# LifeSize®

Experience Communication in High Definition

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