



Mobile port secure with CCTV Alabama Port Authority invests in video analytics

By Sherry Whittemore
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MOBILE, Ala.-- In the final leg of a multi-year perimeter protection project, 55 Pelco CCTV cameras will be installed at the Port of Mobile to provide video analytics-based surveillance of the McDuffie Coal Terminal -- one of the largest coal terminals in the country -- to enhance security and aid in the fight against terrorism.

The intrusion detection system, a \$2.2-million contract awarded to Omaha, Neb.-based systems integrator Adesta, will assist 60 port police officers in monitoring three terminals spread several miles away from the port police station, and the final phase of the project will bring the total number of cameras to 160. The combination of fixed and PTZ cameras is the first video surveillance system for the port, which ships more than 24 million tons of cargo annually.

Hal Hudgins, vice president of planning and security for the Alabama State Port Authority, said the cameras will "enhance the physical patrolling that we do. They can (help us) cover more ground with less people."

The port, built on 2,600 acres, is not entirely enclosed by a physical fence, Hudgins said, and the intelligent video technology from ObjectVideo was an attractive option, as it will "be used to create a virtual fence."

The system will protect against intrusion using software algorithms to scan surveillance video for predetermined incidents, such as a person climbing over a fence. The technology works as a tripwire for the virtual fence, Hudgins said, alerting officers to suspicious activity.

The cameras feed in to a central monitoring center in the police station, where officers can remotely watch up to 10 cameras simultaneously on two 40-inch computer screens. The system also provides a wireless communications link to the police station and helps to monitor traffic and restrict personnel to designated areas, Hudgins said.