

# Hitachi gives Dorset Police more firepower



Dorset Police firearms briefings used to be captured on photographs taken from dry-wipe boards. No wonder they were pleased to meet Hitachi.

## Setting the Scene

The Firearms, Training and Operations Department of Dorset Police means business. The unit tackles serious crime, and comprises 62 Authorised Firearms Officers, training up to another 32 every year.

The intensive, eight-week initial training and refresher courses run by the department, based in Winfrith, near Dorchester, include theory in law, tactics, command training and shooting.

Dorset has a growing need for armed officers, with around 30 incidents a month in which authority for arming is given. These incidents range from armed robberies to people brandishing replica guns.

## The Situation

The work of the department is divided into Operations and Training. Students tackle practical weapons training, but also immerse themselves in theory. With that in mind, classroom equipment must be able to simulate real-life situations and allow discussion of tactics and containment (the best place to deploy armed resources at each incident).

Operations-wise, equipment must be able to help brief officers with maps and photographs and identify containment points. For years, the Dorset unit used an untidy mix of dry-wipe boards, laptops, desktop PCs and PowerPoint slides. Briefings were saved by taking photographs of the notes made on the dry-wipe boards. That's why a solution that offered more interactivity and cohesion between the different briefing elements was badly needed.



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### The Solution

Dorset Police was already using interactive whiteboards when Inspector Julian Scott decided to introduce a more-cohesive approach to his classrooms. Julian, who runs the Firearms, Training and Operations Department, had been impressed with the boards used by the Force's Learning and Development Unit. So he sent his sergeant to find out more about the different boards available at a seminar at London's Olympia.

Julian's sergeant returned with two whiteboards in mind, but on a demonstration of both boards by Hitachi reseller Presentation Media, everyone chose the Hitachi Cambridge over the Smartboard.

"For our environment, we wanted something very rugged," said Julian. "That's why we went for the hard-surface board, rather than the gel-type board. We felt it would last longer and we also had lots of other equipment in the classroom that could have damaged a less-durable board."

Another clincher for Julian was the software: "We very much liked the Hitachi software, rather than the

Windows-based software of the other board," said Julian. "It was more suited to our needs and we liked the way it was written and presented."

One other, slightly quirky, factor had Julian convinced that Hitachi was the way to go: "I must confess, I've had a Hitachi television for 20 years and it's never let me down. Hitachi has a good name and deservedly so."

With that ringing endorsement, Julian put a business case together and managed to secure funding for two Cambridge boards, which Presentation Media installed in the Spring of 2006.

The department uses the Cambridge boards both for training and operations. Julian, his Firearms Trainers and students can interact with the boards, and use the mapping software to simulate real-life situations. Briefing Officers can identify containment points, while photographs and maps are just a click away.

"All in all, it's just a much better way of going about training," Julian said. "One of the great things is being able to capture and store data for future reference. For example, we ask students to identify containment points. We can then capture their suggestions. The Cambridge is great for briefings too as we can store what was said in electronic form. Obviously, this is much better than taking photos of dry-wipe boards."

Julian believes that presentations are much improved as well: "Sometimes, when we were talking to people about training practices and the way forward, we'd have them all huddled around a small screen. Now we can present to them in a much more professional way."

For Julian, the biggest benefit is feeling that he's doing his job better: "The whole unit just feels more co-ordinated now. It's like having about six pieces of equipment all rolled into one."

### More about the Cambridge

The Cambridge board is easy to use, durable enough to use as an ordinary whiteboard, provides the highest resolution available and tracks faster than most people can write. With a non-scratchy electronic pen, and the ability to scroll (so you never run out of space), to surf the Internet and to videoconference linked boards, the Cambridge offers tomorrow's technology today.

**You can read more about the Hitachi interactive whiteboard at [www.hitachisoft-eu.com](http://www.hitachisoft-eu.com)**

**You can learn more about Presentation Media at [www.presentationmedia.co.uk](http://www.presentationmedia.co.uk)**



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