

Answering Emergency Help Calls Without A Central Dispatch Station

William Peace University—Raleigh, NC

William Peace University's historic campus is located in Raleigh, North Carolina's capital and second-largest city. The university, which has grown significantly in the past several years, needed to fill several emergency communications gaps so it would be prepared to protect its students, staff, and visitors in a crisis.

One major upgrade target was WPU's emergency help system. Public safety personnel wanted an indoor/outdoor emergency help system that would enable anyone on campus to immediately speak with Public Safety at the press of a button—and would automatically tell security the caller's location. William Peace University's Public Safety personnel patrol campus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so location-identified calls needed to go directly to their hand-held radios.

WPU Goes Mobile

When a tornado warning was issued one recent evening for WPU's county, the University's Director of Public Safety, Michael John, quickly logged into the browser-based Metis Secure Command Center from his home computer and sent an instant tornado alert. Within seconds, emergency voice instructions with sirens, flashing lights, and LCD text, was broadcasting throughout WPU's campus, directing everyone to immediately go to shelter locations.

People in one of WPU's buildings pressed the button on a Metis Secure Help Station, immediately reached an officer on his handheld radio, and asked for more information. The officer explained that there was a real tornado warning and they should take shelter at a specific location in the building.

With the Metis Secure system, public safety personnel can take calls on the move, and can alert their sites from anywhere.

"Only about half the people get emergency email and text alerts on average. In some cases, we've had parents across the country receive email alerts before students right here on campus, because local email and text networks were overloaded, trying to push out thousands of alerts at once. These systems are still useful as a back-up method, but we needed something more for real emergencies.

"With the Metis Secure system, I can immediately reach everyone at the site of an emergency with actionable instructions—in seconds, I can tell everyone on a specific floor, in a single building, or campus-wide what the emergency is, and what they need to do to protect themselves. Our students, faculty, staff, and visitors are safer as a result."

Michael John, Director of Public Safety

William Peace University

Mobile Emergency Help System

WPU turned to Metis Secure and its customizable, multi-purpose emergency communications system. The system is easily configured to route emergency help calls to almost any location or device, on-site or off-site, stationary or mobile.

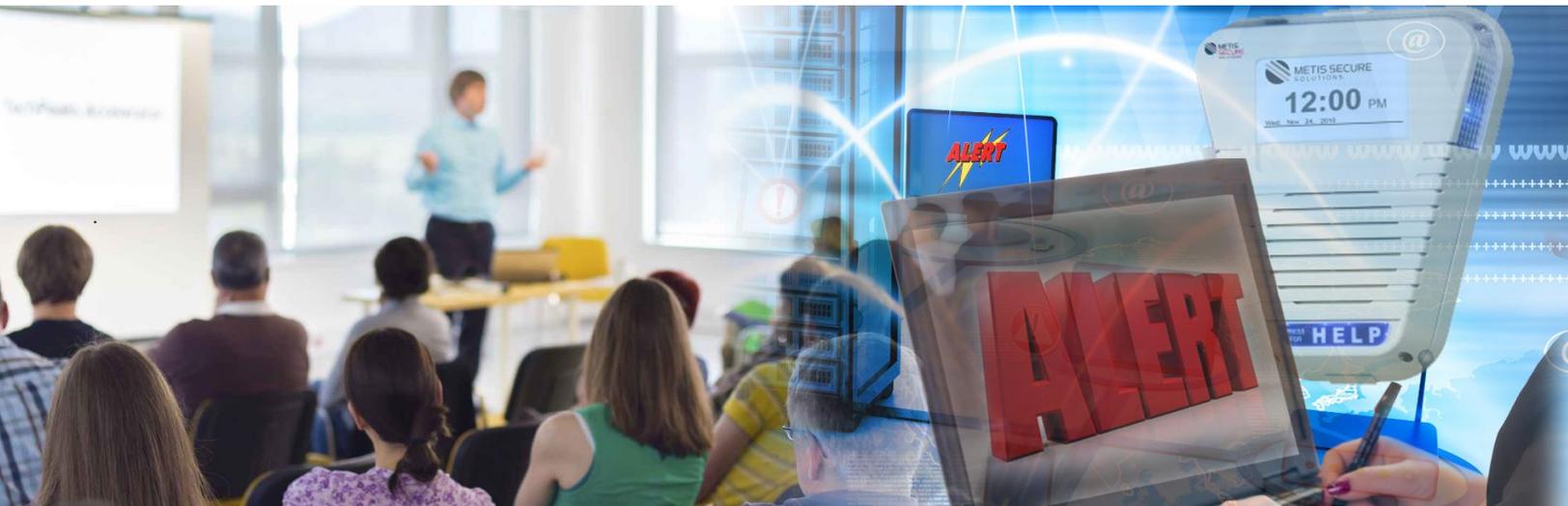
For William Peace University, Metis Secure Emergency Help Stations were installed in 12 buildings and outdoor areas, and set up so that calls route to security patrols.

- When a person in need presses the button on an Emergency Help Station, the Help Station automatically sends the call through an interface device to Public Safety's hand-held radios.
- The Officer hears a message that identifies the caller's precise location.
- The Officer can then speak with the caller, while moving to the location of the call.

"We were very happy that the Metis Secure system could so easily and seamlessly connect calls from their Ethernet-based Help Stations right to our analog two-way radios," said Michael John, William Peace University's Director of Public Safety.

Targeted Emergency Notification

William Peace University's second emergency communications priority was effective emergency notification. Emergency personnel needed a way to immediately alert and instruct everyone on campus if necessary. Like many universities, WPU uses an email and text alert system—but while useful, these systems only reach people who are subscribed to the service, and in an emergency, emails and texts can take up to an hour to arrive.



Secure, Flexible, Expandable Platform

With Metis Secure Emergency Help Stations backed by easy-to-use, map-based Command Center software, WPU was able to fulfill its dual emergency communications needs with a single, powerful system. Emergency managers can now use the Metis Secure system to send combination siren, strobe, voice, and on-screen text alerts and instructions with a few mouse clicks. Everyone at a trouble spot is alerted in seconds, and is told what to do to reach safety.

The Metis Secure system operates on redundant power and communications networks, so it continues to work even when phone, internet, and facility power fail. At WPU, Metis Secure Emergency Help Stations connect via Ethernet, with independent wireless mesh network back-up. Metis Secure also offers a Wi-Fi version, so there are many flexible installation options.

In addition to its integration with police radios, the Metis Secure system easily ties together other security and life safety systems—such as text and email alert services, digital signs, desktop alerts, PA systems, IP phones and many others. William Peace University can simply and cost-effectively expand the system if its needs change over time.

About Desktop Alert