

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Becky Wilson/Jerry Lenander
SMG Communications 310/827-9927

Enhanced Call Verification Proven Alarm Reduction Tool Serves Law Enforcement, Alarm Users and Alarm Industry

NEW YORK, NY (November 4, 2004) – Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) is proving to be the most effective program ever developed to reduce police dispatches to invalid alarms, according to case studies analyzed by the Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC). In communities where Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) has been implemented, there is already evidence that the program is having a significant impact with reductions of 25-50 percent in some jurisdictions.

The alarm industry responded to a call by the International Associations of Chiefs of Police. Private Security Liaison Committee (IACP PSLC) to shift towards lowering the number of alarm notifications to law enforcement. Previously, improvements had been measured by reductions in the percentage of alarms that were deemed invalid.

For law enforcement, ECV is a tool to reduce calls for service from alarm activations without reducing the crime deterrent and crime prevention benefits that alarm systems provide the community. ECV requires the alarm monitoring central station to make two telephone calls in response to an alarm activation in an attempt to verify the need for law enforcement response. ECV recommends the second call be made to a cell phone, an option that was not universally available 10 years ago.

Enhanced Call Verification was developed by the Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC) and the affiliated professional alarm industry trade associations, and is endorsed by the IACP as a recommended practice. The IACP and SIAC also recommend that the community support local jurisdiction efforts to adopt policies or ordinances that require multiple call verification procedures.

“Studies have shown that an alarm company using ECV can eliminate up to 50 percent of alarm signals that would traditionally have resulted in a call for service because the signal was verified on the second call,” explains SIAC Executive Director Stan Martin. SIAC is launching a national initiative to encourage alarm companies to adopt ECV into their dispatch protocols, while also urging law enforcement to adopt ECV as a dispatch policy.

Martin believes this policy can achieve rapid results in a short period of time, and can benefit alarm dealers, law enforcement and the citizens who use alarms to provide crime prevention and security. “The local police will appreciate your attempt to reduce dispatches and be more inclined to take each alarm signal seriously,” explains Martin. “The consumer will also appreciate that you are helping to ensure the efficient use of police resources. By increasing customer contact, you can also improve customer relationships.”

-More-

Boulder, CO showed a significant and consistent reduction in calls for service from alarm activations since the police department implemented a policy requiring alarm companies to adhere to ECV in July. Alarm dispatches were reduced 60 percent in July and 48 percent in August with a three month reduction of 49 percent for June – August.

The Los Angeles Police Department reported a reduction of approximately 30 percent in alarm dispatches for January – August, 2004. The Greater Los Angeles Security Alarm Association members committed to implementing ECV and supported the inclusion of ECV in the revised alarm ordinance.

“Alarm companies should review ECV implementation with their legal counsel,” said Ron Walters, SIAC Director. “We recommend companies adopt this for all new customers, then target the worst offenders first since the vast majority of calls for service are generated from 10 percent of the customer base.” Many cities find that 80-90 percent of their citizens who use alarm systems are responsible users who may never have an alarm activation that requires police response.

SIAC has developed guidelines on how law enforcement, alarm companies and citizens can implement Enhanced Call Verification are available at www.SIACinc.org.

The Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC) is a non-profit organization formed to represent one voice for the alarm industry on alarm management issues. SIAC's primary charter is to significantly reduce calls for service and improve the lines of communication with law enforcement and end users to ensure the safety and security of more than 30 million alarm system users in homes and businesses throughout North America.