

BUILDING A STADIUM FROM A SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

“Building Levi’s Stadium, the world’s most advanced and technologically savvy entertainment venue, presented a new series of challenges for the San Francisco 49ers’ team, as well as the security and safety firms contracted to provide optimal delivery of security awareness.

Following tragedies like the Boston Marathon bombing, the National Football League increased security procedures at stadiums. To meet these increased procedures, the team relied on security systems designers, integrators and vendors to provide advancements in security systems, as well as, security consultants to help with sound decision-making throughout the design, installation and commissioning of the advanced systems and procedures. As an integral part of the team that helped build the security system, I had the privilege of watching the new systems and plans put to the test at the first 49ers preseason game.

In the days prior to the stadium’s official opening, Levi’s Stadium staff and the City of Santa Clara ran multiple readiness exercises of game-day scenarios. A “soft opening” was held when Levi’s Stadium hosted a San Jose Earthquakes soccer match; which offered the opportunity to identify additional areas of improvement. The 49ers management team responded and consultants tweaked the plans and systems to prepare for their first NFL game. After multiple readiness exercises and soccer match, the stadium operations team was ready to host their first “full-house”.

The preparedness exercises were vital for stadium staff to learn the playbook. The “soft opening” provided a practice opportunity for stadium executives to observe how their team manages problems. The security system design needed to be optimized to ensure the safety of each player, fan, and staff member within the facility at any given time, facing any number of operational risks and security threats. For all of these reasons, carefully selecting security contractors and monitoring their progress throughout the design and installation phases has been essential to the preparedness. To further ensure the quality and comprehensive nature of their overall security systems, the 49ers secured an independent third-party consultant to provide emergency operations planning, exercising and executive-level management and oversight of all design, implementation and commissioning of the systems in their new facility.

The 49ers first NFL game this past Sunday provided an opportunity for the Levi’s Stadium team to further fine-tune their plans. The team responded with a first-class operational experience for fans, players and guests to enjoy a great game in a safe, secure and well-run entertainment venue. The Levi’s Stadium team will further adjust planning as they

gain more experience operating this building and ultimately prepare to host Super Bowl 50 in February 2016. Before the big game comes to Santa Clara, they will have hosted multiple NFL games and WrestleMania 31. Congratulations to the Levi's Stadium team. Guidepost Solutions is proud to be a part of the team that helped build the newly christened stadium, another NFL gem that will be part of the league's landscape for years to come."