


Certification *Profile*



Robert Lang, CPP, is the assistant vice president for strategic security and safety at Kennesaw State University (KSU), located 20 miles north of Atlanta. With an enrollment approaching 23,000 students and 5,000 faculty and staff,

KSU is the third largest university in Georgia.

Lang has held this position since May 2007, but he came on board unofficially in April, when the killing spree at Virginia Tech occurred. "I experienced a 'baptism by fire' during that time and for the next year," he recalls. "I dedicated my efforts to providing emergency notification, early warnings, and crisis management strategies. The university administration was well aware of the threats to universities before Virginia Tech and my position was to ensure a strategic view of all operations regarding campus police, environmental health and safety, and information security."

His biggest on-the-job concern is that a Virginia Tech-type incident could occur at KSU. "My daily challenge is to educate and provide awareness to our students, faculty, and staff on what we have in place and what they are responsible for," he says. "As we have seen with every one of these shooting incidents, they're over in 2 to 3 minutes. Our goal is to reach each and every person on campus with enough information so they can help themselves while others try to help them."

As one way to educate the students and faculty, Lang and his staff conduct a variety of on-campus drills and exercises. "They are designed to test processes and procedures, but we inevitably end up with some unusual outcomes," he says. "Exercises are not intended to be 100 percent accurate each time. Every event is designed to identify weaknesses in the system, and then you have the

opportunity to correct them. Not only are they helpful in providing accurate and needed responses, but they can also be fun for the participants, both players and observers."

Lang started his career in law enforcement with the FBI in Florida. From there, he worked as the plant protection manager for Lockheed in Marietta, Georgia, before becoming the homeland security director at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) in Atlanta. "My entire family before me was in law enforcement, all in management positions," Lang says. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in criminal justice.

Lang is an advocate of security management as a career choice. He's concerned, however, with the perception in many companies that security directors must have police experience. "We need a better way of working with the business world to help them understand that you don't need to have worked a homicide case in order to be a good security professional," he says.

Lang joined ASIS International in 1981 and earned his Certified Protection Professional® (CPP) designation in 1983. He's been active in the Greater Atlanta Chapter, serving in several leadership positions. And he's been to every ASIS Annual Seminar and Exhibits since 1983, with the exception of San Diego in 2006.

Lang says he enjoys the networking opportunities that his ASIS certification and membership provide. He adds that when applying for jobs, possessing a CPP has distinguished him from other candidates. "Certifications allow management to know that they have the best people they can find to be on their team, not only during the hiring phase but after."

—By Vicki Moeser, ASIS public relations manager