



Certification *Profile*

During his more than two-decade-long security career, **R. Scott McCoy, CPP**, has never stopped looking for ways to enhance both his own perform-

ance and that of the profession. It is a dedication dating back to his earliest days in the industry.

“When I was a security officer going to college, I kept thinking ‘I can do that better,’” says McCoy.

Acquiring his Certified Protection Professional (CPP) credential from ASIS in March 2003 was one indicator of McCoy’s commitment to that belief, but being recognized last January for having sponsored—as an individual—the largest number of newly certified professionals during the 15-month ASIS “Power of Certification” campaign provided the conclusive evidence.

“I care about improving the quality of the security industry and providing professional development opportunities for my staff,” states McCoy. “Certification does both.”

McCoy began his career in security at age 17 in the U.S. Army as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician, responsible for tasks ranging from responding to improvised devices to protecting the president. After leaving the army, McCoy began working as a security officer while

attending college. Today, as director of security for Xcel Energy—an electric and gas utility company providing service to more than 3.4 million customers across eight states—McCoy is responsible for physical security, background screening, and security systems installation and maintenance.

A member of ASIS since 1996, McCoy says the decision to become certified and to require the same within one year of hire for new staff seemed to make sense. “We are a critical infrastructure and the government was already asking questions about the qualifications of people performing risk assessments and other work in the private security industry,” explains McCoy. “We [also] had a problem with hiring qualified people in the past, and I wanted something to separate the ‘OK’ from the ‘really good.’”

Currently, there are 16 people in McCoy’s department who hold at least one ASIS professional credential, and several more with two certifications—a phenomenon McCoy encourages.

“Depending on how long you’ve been doing the job, studying for a certification will either validate existing knowledge or increase your knowledge,” says McCoy. “Maintaining these certifications makes sure you don’t get stale, and with the speed at which things are changing in the industry, it is easy to do.” ■

—By *Chris Flynn*, ASIS public relations manager