

Certification *Profile*



After nearly two decades as a police officer in New Zealand, **Murray D. Mills, CPP**, might have thought he'd seen it all, but dur-

ing his comparatively scant five years in the private security profession, he's come to realize there are some things he hopes he never sees.

In his position as manager, protective services, for the MidCentral District Health Board in Palmerston North, New Zealand, Mills is responsible for business continuity and emergency management planning centering on health issues across the district's geographical boundaries. The primary focus of this position is planning for potential pandemics and working across agencies at the local, regional, and sometimes national levels to ensure that all parties are prepared should an outbreak occur.

Mills came to private security—and the District Health Board—after an 18-year career with the New Zealand Police, working in various roles, including uniformed sergeant, dog section, and special enquiries. Despite the immense experience that his police work provided, Mills says he still felt it necessary to pursue the Certified Protection Professional® (CPP) credential.

"I needed something to give credibility to my new profession, as opposed to just saying I was a 'former police officer,' and the CPP was the perfect vehicle for that," said Mills, adding that the credential has increased more than just his credibility. "Having the CPP certification has broadened my knowledge and skill base immensely from what I brought with me from the police."

He received an Allan J. Cross, CPP

Award from ASIS International, providing him a scholarship to the CPP Review Program in New Orleans in September, 2003, and earned his CPP two months later.

Mills credits his employer with helping him earn his certification by paying all of the exam and membership costs as well as the cost of his travel to the United States. The company will get a return on that investment, he says, because the designation he has earned makes him a better employee.

"The CPP is representative of all the disciplines in my current role as the manager of protective services with the Mid-Central District Health Board. Whether it be IT security, personnel security, emergency/crisis management, physical security, or investigations—all the requisites for the CPP fit fairly and squarely in my job description," said Mills. "In addition, the availability of knowledge that the CPP and ASIS provides has been very beneficial in helping resolve issues at the District Health Board."

Mills has already put one member of his security staff through the CPP program, and says he actively encourages all of his colleagues in New Zealand to pursue their own certifications.

"I see the certification process and the work of ASIS as a way of setting standards for security professionals," he said. "In an industry where there can be a certain amount of 'cowboy' mentality, the foundation of a solid education platform, ethics, and codes of practice goes a long way in bringing professionalism and respectability to the profession." ■

Profile by Chris Flynn, ASIS public relations manager