

Roumieh Prison in Lebanon Deploys Arecont Vision Megapixel Cameras for Lockup Monitoring



Background

Roumieh is the largest prison in Lebanon, holding thousands of prisoners within its walls. The size of the prison population of Roumieh and the challenges authorities face around internal crime, corruption, contraband, and inmate unrest have led to the continued notoriety of the facility.

The prison consists of five buildings and hosts a variety of convicts and detainees. It's population ranges from individuals held on remand to terrorists and high-risk prisoners who pose great challenges to security.

A riot broke out in the cellblock of building A in 2015. The violent disturbance required the dispatch of elite Internal Security Forces who were able to end the incident after several hours. After such an event, officials concluded there was a need to improve both the conditions and the overall security of the institution.

Guardia Systems was chosen as the systems integrator for the installation of a new surveillance system within the prison. This project is part of an ongoing effort to increase security within the facility while reducing criminal behavior.

The Project

Guardia Systems deployed one hundred and thirty-nine Arecont Vision megapixel cameras inside the prison walls. The surveillance system provides comprehensive monitoring of all of the buildings, courtyards, and main entrance of the facility.

The Arecont Vision cameras installed for Roumieh Prison include twenty-four MegaDome 5MP (megapixel) and one hundred and fifteen MegaDome 3MP cameras. All of the cameras are integrated with the video management system (VMS) and monitored from the prison control room twenty-four hours a day.



The benefits of Arecont Vision's cameras were clear from the beginning. Their simplified installation requirements reduced the manpower needed for the deployment phase of the project. The cameras are also extremely adept at operating under a variety of lighting conditions, and Guardia Systems specifically identified the availability of both advanced low-light imaging along with true WDR (Wide Dynamic Range) technology as important factors leading to the selection of Arecont Vision for the project:

"With widely varying lighting conditions inside the prison, combined with both indoor and outdoor views to be covered by the same cameras, the low light and WDR capabilities of Arecont Vision products were very important to their selection," said Engineer Chadi Rahi, Business Development & Sales Manager at Guardia Systems. "The ease of installation that Arecont Vision cameras offer was also a very important factor leading to the selection of the brand."

Arecont Vision's competitive pricing and Guardia's positive experience with the company's Technical Assistance Center (TAC) further informed their decision:

"We have used Arecont Vision cameras in other projects with equal success, so we already knew the outstanding product quality and advanced features for the prison would be delivered at a very competitive price," Mr. Rahi added.

Milestone Systems was chosen as the VMS for the project which provides a fully integrated and seamless surveillance system. Arecont Vision and Milestone have years of experience working together and have integrated a multitude of surveillance projects worldwide for a wide range of requirements. Arecont Vision was awarded two Global Partner of the Year Awards in the last five years.

Through the Arecont Vision Technology Partner Program, new cameras, features, and updated capabilities are pre-tested in the Arecont Vision MegaLab™ with Milestone and other vendor software and hardware. Customer support is also simplified through the use of the MegaLab for the resolution of any post-installation problems.

The Result

Whenever an incident occurs in the prison, the Arecont Vision cameras are able to accurately capture it on video for response and action by the authorities:

“Our surveillance security system was used several times to investigate specific activities, behaviors, and incidents that occurred during the past period of instability in the prison,” said Sandy Issa, Head of Communication & PR at Guardia Systems.

The video surveillance system is monitored from a Command and Control Center that accommodates 15 operators. Center personnel are always on duty watching the feed from the cameras.

Acceptance of the surveillance system has not come without challenges. Prisoners have tried to destroy or damage the infrastructure installed in several of the buildings:

“The prisoners have tried to burn the cables and even the cameras themselves. Despite that, the Arecont Vision cameras were still able to record useful footage of the incidents,” said Mr. Rahi. “The images were very clear, even with the resulting smoke and fire.”

Arecont Vision introduced new vandal-resistant, hardened corner-mount enclosures that can be added for additional camera protection. Their use will better protect newly installed cameras from destruction and vandalism.

“The video surveillance system has performed very well for Roumieh Prison in improving the security environment,” concluded Mr. Rahi.