Electric Patrol Bicycles

Going Green with a Purpose

Los Angeles Pierce College is a public institution in Woodland Hills, California. Its campus is located in the Los Angeles metropolitan area with a total enrollment of 22,000. The school is situated on a sprawling 426 acre campus.

Los Angeles Pierce College sought a mobile solution to enhance campus security in an efficient, cost effective, and environmentally sound manner. Located on a congested urban campus with limited entry/exit points, the administration wanted to improve response times, patrol efficiency, and mobility. Pierce College chose the electric bike to responsibly address the rigorous campus safety, and security requirements for their faculty and students.

Benefits - Patrol Safer, Farther, & Faster

Power Bikes fill the extensive divide between the typical squad car and the patrol officer walking the beat with a host of advantages. Officer safety is always a priority. For example, an officer can respond to a call at a distance of several miles, utilizing the electric motor, via pedal assist or throttle, without being fatigued; while better able to perform CPR or conduct a foot pursuit upon arrival. Response times can be greatly improved with the mobility and power of an ebike, especially on a campus, urban environment, or off road. Several university’s have deployed these particular bikes as part of their active shooter response program. No vehicle can consistently compare in response time. The ebike can navigate effortlessly through traffic congestion, in off-road conditions as well as over curbs and stairs in an urban environment. The ebike gives the officer significant advantages over a traditional bicycle.

The mobility of the bicycle paired with the power of the electric motor produce an extremely efficient, and effective policing vehicle. An officer can patrol a larger area with higher frequency without fatigue. These bikes utilize a 4" specialty puncture resistant tire that offers some unique advantages. The tires can easily take a 4-6" curb or stairs head-on without the fear of a pinch flat; which is common on smaller tires. The tires are all-terrain and provide an extremely stable comfortable ride. The ebikes we choose were upfitted with Mpower programmable silicone LED lights. They have a "scene lighting" function that lights up the surrounding area, which is extremely useful in low light areas. The powered bicycle has a host of advantages with a green footprint and attractive pricing.

The benefits of police biking are well documented in terms of positive interactions with the public and community policing. The standard bike patrol program is becoming rejuvenated by the use of electric bikes.

At a glance –

Who –
• Pierce College, L.A. CA

Product –
• Recon Interceptor Law Enforcement Power Bicycle

Cost –
• $2,999 - $3,995

Benefits –
1. Faster Response Times
2. Patrol a Larger Area More Safely and Frequently
3. More Efficient Patrols Up to 50 Miles to a Charge and 30 MPH
4. Active Shooter Response
Cost

The different ebikes models that we tested and now use on campus were manufactured by Recon Power Bikes. These bikes vary in cost by model. The two differing models we utilized have different types of electric motors, hub and mid-driven. The mid-driven motor has greater torque and power as well as other upgraded components. Costs of the bikes varied between $2,999 to $3,995 per bike. Recon also offers a leasing program on their bikes. Their claim is that “if you take an officer out of a patrol car for three days a month, you pay for the lease monthly in fuel alone”.

Performance Testing

Real-world performance testing was done on campus to both test the capabilities of the ebikes and to quantitatively determine response times on campus. Several timed trials were done comparing the response time of a typical squad car to the response time of a power bike. Variables during higher traffic times impacted squad car response times, whereas bikes times and cutting through campus were fairly static. On average, the bike improved response times by 15-20% depending on traffic patterns at the College. This improved response time could be extremely important in critical situations.

The power bikes also performed extremely well on the terrain testing. Trials demonstrated there were no issues on hilly terrain or off-road conditions. Moreover, the bikes excelled powering over curbs and maneuvering stairs.

Training

Training is an important aspect to any Law Enforcement Agency. Ebikes are relatively new in the US market and most importantly in the law enforcement realm. Training and certification is common for regular pedal mountain bikes, however specialized ebike training is somewhat difficult to procure. We chose Recon for our training, because they have an adendum to the typical IPMBA training and a certification for the law enforcement ebike.

Summary

In today’s complex security environment, the electric bike offers law enforcement another tool to improve safety, efficiency, and response time, all at an attractive cost with a green footprint. The ebike gave us the efficacy to go green. In addition, the maintenance is relatively minimal, and there is no fossil fuel consumption. Whether in a metropolitan area, a campus, park or greenway, the ebike offers a host of advantages and should be considered as a viable alternative to traditional policing vehicles. Finally, Recon is planning to introduce an LPR (License Plate Recognition) platform for the bike in the 3rd quarter of 2019. We will be eager to conduct future trials on the parking side of our institution. For more information on Recon you can visit PolicePowerBikes.com.

Dr. Brian Silk, Analyst, Pierce College, Los Angeles

“The electric police bikes have proven to be a great addition to our security program. The response time and patrol efficiency is unparalleled. We look forward to expanding their use on Campus.”