

# CASE STUDY

Proactive Planning Reduces Fire Alarms  
and Life-Safety Concerns



*Shaping Tomorrow Today*

## Challenge

Individual safety of those using the ConRAC remains a top priority, as 10,000 to 15,000 people travel through the Seattle Tacoma International Airport (SEA) ConRAC daily.

Of the various personal safety concerns, fire prevention is critical. ConRAC facilities include complex alarm systems for smoke and heat notification, however due to thousands of fire system device points, in combination with the nature of facility equipment and other unforeseen circumstances, alarm systems can trigger even when fire is not a threat.

This can result in unnecessary evacuations translating into time and revenue lost because of flights missed, trip delays and operational disruption. Due to knowledge of repeat fire alarm disruptions experienced at other consolidated rent-a-car facilities, CS Operators prioritized avoiding unnecessary panic among RAC customers and employees at SEA's ConRAC and proceeding facilities.

## Solution

The CS Operators team in Seattle, WA have taken a proactive approach to fire alarm concerns at the SEA facility:

1. Site Programming
2. Safety Training

### LESSONS LEARNED:

The Miami-Dade County ConRAC reported several alarms per week during the first year of operation. Due to the frequency of alarms, occupants grew to assume it was a false alarm and no evacuation took place. This created an extremely dangerous real fire/life-safety situation because the fire alarm is rendered pointless during an actual emergency.



**FIRE PANEL:** This houses alarm controls for the overall facility. This device allows for pinpointing alarm locations and provides direct communication with the fire department.

## Site Programming

In order to ensure the safety of all people at the ConRAC, while also addressing potential false alarms, CS Operators opened discussion with the Port of Seattle and local firefighters and proposed development of a system that would notify appropriate staff without sending an audible alarm through the entire building.

The final solution was a single-point silent alarm with the ability to provide immediate notification to key employees and the fire department. Multiple pulls or detectors would continue to trigger the public alarm, but a single point would alert only the facility management and the fire department. Once triggered, alerts are directly investigated and if fire threat is confirmed, an audible alarm is setoff to alert the entire ConRAC.

This more efficient system of fire alarm site programming ensures all alarms and associated evacuation procedures are followed. In conclusion, the SEA ConRAC is treated like an extension of the airport terminal and not a separate building.

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*“Conrac Solutions has demonstrated their ability to proactively anticipate problems and solve them before they start”*

**- Josh Gonzalez, Avis Budget Group**

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### *Safety Training*

CS Operators annually conducts safety training with all employees using the QTA areas. Significant time and effort goes into ensuring all employees working in the QTAs are aware of the site safety protocols, emergency procedures, exit routes, life safety equipment locations and evacuation protocols. These safety protocols along with the modified site alarm programming ensures safety and efficiency of fire alarm protocols.

### **Benefits**

In addition to customer and employee peace of mind, benefits of this innovative approach to fire safety include no lost time and revenue due to unnecessary facility disruption and missed flights and delays.

### *Background*

*The Consolidated Rent-A-Car Facility in SEA, Washington is a Port of Seattle facility, housing operations of 13 Rent-A-Car brands. Open to the public for full operations May 17, 2012, the facility measures 2.1 million square feet, and includes four Quick Turn-Around areas outfitted with 96 prep and fueling stations, 15 car wash bays, and six maintenance bays. It is a working environment for over 600 employees. Each of the six underground gasoline fuel storage tanks have a capacity of 20,000 gallons, with RACs utilizing an allocated number of the 96 nozzles that dispense fuel from the shared tank system.*

### **About Conrac Solutions**

Headquartered in Renton, WA, the Conrac Solutions family of companies is the only entity in the United States to have privately developed, on-airport, consolidated rent-a-car facilities (ConRACs). As developer, financial sponsor and operator of ConRACs, the company has experience in pre-development and feasibility, financing strategies, design and construction, activation, operations, asset management and capital project management. Completed projects include Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, and Bismarck Airport. ConRACs currently under contract for planning and delivery include Bradley International Airport (Hartford, CT), Newark Liberty International Airport and Reno Tahoe International Airport. For more information go to: <https://www.conracolutions.com>.

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