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Peel Regional Police rolls out electric vehicles at Pearson

Tuesday, November 20, 2007 - 03:21 PM

By: Charlene Close

Mississauga - Peel police officers were buzzing around Pearson International Airport patrolling in three-wheeled stand-up vehicles Tuesday morning.

Pearson's Terminal One is now home to a new piece of security equipment.

The electric vehicles, called T3s, are set up so that the officer stands up to drive them, driving up to 16 kilometres per hour.

Regional Superintendent Ed Toye, who heads up the airport division of Peel Police, said it only took officers just 30 minutes to find a missing child.

"Normally we'd have to bring in extra staff, set up a grid pattern for the search of the terminal and go out and physically walk through the terminal to try and find the missing person," he explained.

And what do Peel Police get for the \$13,000 they spend on the pair of T3's that they can't get from a pimped-out golf cart?

"It gives them eight inches of height and because of the narrow dynamics of the machine it's very easy to manipulate the machines through crowded airport terminals. So much more effective than sitting in a golf cart where the officers



The vehicles are equipped with flashing blue and red lights (Photo by: Charlene Close/680News)



The vehicles are set up so that the officer stands up to drive them (Photo by: Charlene Close/680News)



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will get confined and slowed down by crowds," Supt. Toye explained.

"The problem with the golf cart is the officers are sitting down, they don't have a view into the distance plus when you're dealing in an airport environment you have usually big crowds and it's very difficult to move with a golf cart because of the size of the golf cart. Actually it's slower than walking, Supt. Toye said. "These machines give the officer the ability to look overtop of everybody's head and the other aspect is the machines are narrower and it allows them to manipulate their way through the crowd much more efficiently than walking or running."

LAX in Los Angeles is the only other airport in North America currently using the vehicles. Pearson is the first airport in Canada to get the vehicles, which are equipped with flashing blue and red lights and sirens. Only two are in use at Pearson but police hope to order more next year.



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