

Security Solutions for Government Entities



John D. Clark, Sr.
President & CEO
The Whitestone Group

CEOCFO: *Mr. Clark, you have a fifteen-year history at the Whitestone Group. Would you tell us the focus today?*

Mr. Clark: Our primary focus is providing professional security services to all federal government agencies, both CONUS and OCONUS.

CEOCFO: *Security is different today from when you started. Would you describe a typical engagement?*

Mr. Clark: Each agency has its own security requirements that vary in terms of levels of protection and in varying degrees of magnitude. For example at the Hoover Dam, we perform random vehicle inspections, infrastructure security and counter terrorism surveillance. It is quite extensive because it is one of the most critical infrastructures in the United States. Whereas at Fort Bragg, we provide a different level of protection in the form of access control, roving patrol, static security and escort services. Each location has its own specific set of requirements.

CEOCFO: *That is quite a wide range! What might you look at when you are assessing a situation that others might not realize is important?*

Mr. Clark: We review the history of each particular site and conduct a thorough threat assessment. We also evaluate location as well as what type of work is performed at each location, is it public venue or is a secured high clearance facility as an example.

CEOCFO: *How do you stay ahead of the threats?*

Mr. Clark: Vigilance. We constantly gather and collect intelligence from various sources such as government news sources and the intelligence community. We send broadcast communications to our field staff to keep them abreast of developing concerns. It is critical that our staff is trained to anticipate, assess and respond to every scenario that could potentially occur. Essentially, Whitestone is committed to protecting America's greatest treasure, the people of this great nation, whatever it may take.

CEOCFO: *How do you counteract the PC culture?*

Mr. Clark: It is very difficult because is hard to determine real threats from perceived threats. It is important to maintain objectivity because a threat can occur anywhere, anytime by anyone.

CEOCFO: *What are some of your other services?*

Mr. Clark: In addition to our core security services, we provide a host of additional services such as personal security details, convoy security, base security, armored vehicles, monitoring, locksmith, anti-terrorism training, emergency response and operate and maintain emergency operations centers. We also conduct counter terrorism and threat protection training.

CEOCFO: *How are you incorporating technology?*

Mr. Clark: We utilize cameras and access control equipment as often as feasible. Electronic gates and CCTV are used widely. We do not engage in cyber security because that is a very specialized field requiring a completely different set of skills and resources. There are a number of very high tech companies currently providing that type of security.

CEOCFO: *We know business is going well as you have been recognized on the Inc. 5000 for several years now. What is next for the Whitestone Group?*

Mr. Clark: Our strategy for growing the business going forward is to expand our reach outside of the continental US through strategic partnerships with large DOD contractors. There is a lot of OCONUS work all over the world; this is an

area that will continue to grow. This type of work will take Whitestone overseas; it is a very exciting and large opportunity for us to continue to grow outside of our organic business.

CEOCFO: *How do you reach prospective clients?*

Mr. Clark: There are a number of approaches we take to reach new and potential clients. Agency sponsored events and trade shows are the best way to meet clients in a neutral environment. In addition, we are always looking ahead to determine which contracts from which agencies will be coming up for re-compete and we develop a plan to contact and engage the agency in dialogue about Whitestone long before the opportunity is made public. Networking, relationships and reputation are key to reaching and maintaining both perspective and current clients.

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CEOCFO: *Why choose the Whitestone Group?*

Mr. Clark: We understand and respond to the customers’ needs. We anticipate what level of service they require and we respond quickly. We have a stringent quality control program that we employ for all of our sites whether the contract calls for one or not. A big advantage that Whitestone offers versus some of our larger competitors is there are no layers of management. If you pick up the phone, call, and say you have an issue here and you need some help there, it is rapidly taken care of within probably an hour. We run a tight, professional ship.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

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