

## **Use of the Macaw to Keep Savannah Safe During the G8 and Beyond**

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During the G8 Summit in June of 2004, the City of Savannah was well prepared to respond to a variety of incidents. The Savannah Police Department went on "on-call" status well before the event began. The Georgia State Patrol served as backup. Protesters have been known to start dumpster fires and spot fires in the street to stop police from moving them back or cordoning them out of certain areas. In anticipation of this, police teams carried Macaw backpacks in the back of their units for spot fire suppression. Macaws were also kept close at hand for gross and small decontamination. Mobile decontamination teams were armed with Macaws to mitigate any pepper spray incidents by wetting people down. If there had been a bad day, like an incident involving chemical warfare agents (such as mustard gas or Sarin), Intelagard co-founder Dennis Smagac, had graciously provided decontamination foam to neutralize the contamination. Thankfully, everything went smoothly.

Savannah has been using Macaws for a few years. Each hazmat team has been assigned a Macaw and uses them an average of once or twice a month. Macaws are frequently used for vapor suppression in trailer-truck accidents involving hydrocarbon spills. Instead of setting up hose lines, we use the packs to spray foam, encapsulating the fuel. Other equipment is then brought in to pick-up the foam.

