

UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOOLS

Mexican public universities and schools are important buyers of safety and security products. The *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)*, National Autonomous University of Mexico, is the best example. It provides education to more than 250,000 students across the country and is directly involved with about half of all Mexican scientific research. Along with the *Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP)*, Secretariat of Public Education, it is responsible for setting down safety requirements for every school in the country.

Every school is required to have a first-aid kit. These are rarely bought prepackaged, because they must contain a specific list of items. Most schools are forced to assemble them on their own.

The *UNAM* also has its independent security force. Local police are not allowed to operate within university jurisdiction. However, *UNAM* security forces are even more poorly equipped than the regular Mexican police. *UNAM* schools are now under pressure from the local municipalities in which they operate to increase funding so as to purchase new cars, electronics and other equipment.

FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Fire departments are the responsibility of Mexico's 31 states and the Federal District. By far the largest fire department is in the Federal District, which includes Mexico City and its surroundings. The *Secretaría de Seguridad Pública del Distrito Federal (SSP)*, Secretariat of Public Safety of the Federal District, employs more than 10,000 fire fighters, supplemented by a large auxiliary force. The fire departments have an ongoing demand for a variety of equipment ranging from fire trucks and other vehicles to fire retardation gear and protective equipment for fire fighters. Virtually all of this equipment is imported, with local manufacturers being limited mainly to hoses, axes and fire extinguishers. Fire departments usually import directly and do not pay duty on their purchases. Most of them have established ties with suppliers in the United States.

INDIVIDUAL CONSUMERS

Individual Mexicans are bearing the brunt of Mexico's security crisis. Individual workers have little influence over their employers' health and safety policies, and are not significant customers in that market. But individuals possess a strong incentive to protect themselves from fire and crime, and thus are open to marketing efforts. In fact, the recent surge in crime, and advertising of crime prevention equipment has led to soaring sales in this market. Individuals need to protect themselves, their homes and their vehicles.