NORSHIELD
ARCHITECTURAL SECURITY PRODUCTS

A FORTRESS OF PUBLIC SAFETY IN THE BRONX

Public Safety Answering Center II — Bronx, New York

QUICK HITS

Norshield provided security widows and doors for the highly publicized and award-winning Public Safety Answering Center II in the Bronx. Although stunning to the eye, the PSAC II conceals substantial forced entry, anti-blast and anti-ballistic features inside and out.

PRODUCTS Windows, Doors

New York City has two very large buildings dedicated to answering the 911 calls of its five boroughs. With more than 11 million emergency calls annually, it makes perfect sense. The second of these buildings, the Public Safety Answering Center II, or PSAC II, is located on a nine-acre parcel of land in the Bronx. It's an imposing 450,000 square-foot structure—a 240 foot wide by 240 foot tall cube.

The gleaming aluminum cube rises up the equivalent of 24 stories from behind a grassy berm, projecting the unlikely impression that it might actually be floating. Like most visually striking structures, the building has drawn as much scorn as it has admiration. A darling of the architectural community, it earned wide recognition and won multiple awards. But behind all the accolades and its glimmering exterior, this building has a secret—it's a mighty fortress engineered to withstand acts of violence and continue operating even in the direst of situations.

The Wall Street Journal described it as the most technologically advanced structure in New York City. Chances are pretty good they don't know the half of it. Norshield provided over 250 windows and high-security doors for the project. From the outside, you'd be hard pressed to find many windows; they are intentionally few and far between.

PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING CENTER II —

The Bronx, New York

ARCHITECT
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

CONTRACTOR
Tishman Technologies Corp

GLAZING CONTRACTOR
W & W Glass

OWNER
City of New York

What makes the project so unique is that as domestic public buildings go, this one has an extraordinary level of security incorporated on the interior. Being essentially open to the public, the primary concern was mitigating any catastrophic event that might take place on the inside. The lobbies and common areas are fortified with anti-blast and anti-ballistic products to a level that would exceed most FBI field offices.

When necessary, PSAC II can handle the work of both centers. It is intended to be virtually impregnable and, if needed, completely self-sufficient for three days at a time. No food deliveries. Nothing. The fuel supply for its generators can last even longer. "For being a public building...a public utility building, the PSAC II has an amazing level of fortification on the inside. It's engineered with comprehensive redundancies, so this building is essentially an arc. It's designed to stay online, period," said John Wood, Norshield's Director of Engineering.

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—John Wood,
Norshield Director of Engineering

Norshield's windows and doors were constructed to stringent FE/BR and blast resistant performance requirements—meeting or exceeding U.S. Department of State and ASTM physical security standards—and provide protection from a wide range of physical threats. Both the interior and exterior doors are highly engineered and extremely custom.

"The doors leading to the building's actual infrastructure and circuitry create what is essentially an impenetrable vault," added Wood. Additionally, the building achieved LEED Gold certification, and Norshield's high performance Low-E coatings and thermal attributes contributed on that front as well.

The events of September 11, 2001 left an indelible mark on this nation, and the repercussions of the day are evident in the way the the PSAC II is built. It's reassuring to know that even in the worst of times, someone will always be there to answer the call...and Norshield has a part in that.

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