



1250 Connecticut Ave NW Suite 825
Washington, DC 20036
USA
Telephone: (+1) 866 440 7515
Website: www.densusgroup.com

SUBJECT: DENSUS CEO JOHN PONCY INTERVIEWED IN
NORTH AMERICAN SHALE MAGAZINE ON PIPELINE
AND OIL AND GAS PROTESTS

May 9, 2017

9 MAY 17: Densus CEO John Poncy was interviewed in North American Shale Magazine on the future impact of protests on the Oil, Gas, and Pipeline Industries. This speaks to the heart of one of the foundational core competences of The Densus Group, the ability to manage crowds in challenging protest environments. He spoke on intelligence preparedness, understanding the integration and delineation between local and international organizations, and not overreacting to provocation, as well as the likely future path of such protests on these industries. Below is the link and text of the interview:

Industry should prepare for conflicts with environmental groups
By Patrick C. Miller <http://northamericanshalemagazine.com/authors/view/Patrick%20C._Miller>
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John Poncy's experience in the military and knowledge of history has taught him that winning a battle doesn't matter if you ultimately lose the war.

Poncy, the CEO and chief quality officer for The Densus Group, studied the recent clashes with indigenous and environmental groups over the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) and believes pipeline companies and the oil and gas industry must learn some important lessons as they move forward with energy infrastructure projects such as the Keystone XL project.

"I think it's important to recognize that the local indigenous tribes protesting are a critical piece of this because they're much better at generating sympathy for their cause, and that's important for any pipeline company to realize," Poncy said.

In addition, understanding the narrative-the message environmental groups communicate to the public and media-is vital to anticipating what's likely to happen.

"From the perspective of oil companies and pipeline companies, the earlier they understand what those narratives are, the better they can make sure that their story is the one getting told," he said.

That's part of the service Densus provides to its customers. "We provide a lot of intelligence to oil and gas companies and pipeline companies," Poncy said. "Our ability to get a feel for what's going to happen is getting a lot of traction because they're are looking for this kind of help and looking at how to deal with this type of situation."

Poncy, a West Point graduate, commanded a light infantry company in the 7th Infantry Division, as well as the I Corps Long Ranger Surveillance Company during which he led drug interdiction missions on the U.S.-Mexico border. He served as aide-de-camp for the Eighth Army commander in Seoul, Korea, and spent 12 years as an officer on active and reserve duty.

Densus-which has offices in Plano, Texas, and Beverly Hills, California-not only provides strategic advice and solutions to businesses, but it also trains law enforcement agencies from the local to federal levels on how to deal with crowd control and employ the use of force.

One trend Poncy's seen is national and international environmental organizations working with local groups-such as the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe-to oppose and disrupt energy infrastructure projects.

"The local organizations are providing the bulk of the unrest with some guidance from national and international organizations," he noted. "But those organizations are primarily targeting the funding of projects because they were so successful at it with DAPL and now they're turning their attention on the Keystone XL."

Poncy pointed to recent statements from groups such as the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN) that he characterized as becoming increasingly incendiary and promising "massive mobilization and civil disobedience."

He sees these conflicts occurring on two levels. The first is on the local level where protesters seeking to halt or slow construction provoke incidents that lead to violent clashes with law enforcement, then use social media to portray themselves as the victims. The second effort-the attempts to defund infrastructure projects-is coordinated on the national and international levels.

"The slowdown costs some money, but the truth of it is that the defunding campaign hits on a company's reputation, its stock price and sometimes hurts companies that have nothing to do with the protests," he said.

Poncy explained that the manipulation of social media is used to create a negative image and plays a large role the success of the defunding campaign.

"Social media takes any misstep and exacerbates it a hundredfold," he said. "The outrage is aimed at the police, the security companies, the pipeline companies, oil and gas companies, financial institutions, politicians and others. It comes out of a media perception and not necessarily reality."

The result is that cities and financial institutions back out of their investments in the projects.

"Perception is reality," Poncy said. "Once someone sees people enforcing the law against protesters using violence, there's literally no way that the protesters are going to be seen as anything other than the victims."

Contributing to the problem are outdated crowd control tactics used by many U.S. law enforcement agencies. Poncy said most of Densus' law enforcement trainers come from Europe where they've experienced as many as 500 riots.

"It's absolutely critical that oil and gas companies understand the nature of the organizations they're dealing with, understand how crowds act and understand what a graduated response is," Poncy said. "Going in, beating people up and having it on national television is not the best way to handle it. You have to understand how groups behave and how modern protest tactics work in order to be successful in dealing with these organizations."

The Densus Group is a US Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) with headquarters in Plano, Texas. Founded to advocate the professional and appropriate use of force, Densus works to support the Departments of State, Justice and Defense, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Densus provides worldwide deployment

and service delivery, with solutions that are specifically designed to meet both political and operational requirements while adhering to sustainability and global best practices that include holistic human rights compliance. For more information, visit www.thedensusgroup.com.