Good Day for a Riot

Early this past May, 3 days of ongoing inmate unrest and rioting rocked this normally tranquil West Virginia prison. Correctional personnel faced almost 80 individual incidents—everything from food fights in the cafeteria to hostage situations, beatings in the recreation yard, seriously injured officers and inmates, and frenzied escape attempts.

This has not been the first time this prison dealt with serious inmate disturbances. Every spring since 1997, the old West Virginia State Penitentiary, in the community of Moundsville along the Ohio River, experiences a few days some of the most serious challenges faced by any correctional facility in the Nation.

The combination of well-trained tactical units and new and innovative technologies, however, quickly resolves the incidents and keeps staff and inmate injury to a minimum.

For the past 11 years, the Mock Prison Riot™ has put correctional tactical teams into real-life, crisis management scenarios. In resolving the scenario, the teams rely not only on their training but also on new and emerging public safety technologies. Tactical personnel are exposed to the technologies and in turn provide invaluable feedback to developers and manufacturers. The annual event is sponsored by the Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization (OLETC), a program of the Office of Justice Programs’ National Institute of Justice (NIJ).

"This event results in so much quality collaboration between technologists and end users," OLETC Interim Director Steve Morrison says.

"That is what we are all about: getting the most innovative and effective technology in the hands of the law enforcement and corrections officers who need it."

"We had many technologies for the first time this year," Morrison says. "In addition, we had more certification workshops than ever before. These certification workshops save valuable training dollars for attendees and allow them to stretch their training budgets."

This year, the event featured products from 85 vendors and included officer protection products, less-lethal weapons, through-the-wall surveillance and night vision equipment, crowd control equipment, and gas products. (See Good Day for a Riot, page 6-7)

In the Best Light

The driver rounds a curve as dusk falls, and suddenly is blinded by flashing lights. Parts of the scene ahead are overilluminated, while others are thrown into heavy shadow. Suddenly, the driver brakes and swerves, just missing a law enforcement officer standing near the edge of the road in a poorly lit area.

It is an unfortunate fact that automobile crashes, including being struck along the roadway, represent the second-leading cause of on-duty death for both law enforcement officers and firefighters nationwide. Only gunshot wounds (law enforcement) and stress-related (firefighters) strike down more officers in the line of duty.

In an effort to reduce these deaths, a number of Federal agencies are combining resources to fund a research project on emergency vehicle warning lighting systems.

In cooperation with the Society of Automotive Engineers and with support from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) are working together to study the effects of warning lights and ways to effectively mitigate the disorientation they produce for motorists, with (In the Best Light, page 2)
emphasis on the differing effects on normal, impaired, and drugged drivers.

"Emergency lighting systems will be examined under all types of operational conditions as part of this study," says Bill Trup of the USFA National Fire Data Center. "The study will focus on LED (light-emitting diode) systems, which are increasingly being used in emergency vehicle lighting."

Trup serves on NFPA's Personal Protection Equipment Technology Working Group, one of a number of working groups that assist the agency in identifying operational needs associated with specific programs having broad significance to State and local agencies. The working groups' recommendations provide the basis for NFPA's research and development programs.

According to Trup, the initial phase of the study has been completed and involved examining crash data for fire apparatus and analyzing incidents when firefighters were struck and killed on or near a road where the use of emergency lighting may have been a factor. Details on the summary findings for this phase appear in a July 2005 report, "Inferences about Emergency Vehicle Warning Lighting Systems from Crash Data, available at www.nfpa.org/downloads/doc/19900506.doc.

In this phase of the study, the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) conducted tests at an automotive test track in Michigan. This research included a nighttime field study of emergency warning lighting examining colors, intensity, and flash patterns of emergency vehicle warning lamps relative to desirable visibility) and undesirable (glare effects. Results from this study were detailed in an April 2006 report, "Effects of Warning Lamps on Pedestrian Visibility and Driver Behavior, available at www.nfpa.org/standards/docs/iaa/cooperative-vehicles/health/findings.html. Findings include the following:

- Pedestrian and first-responder visibility when wearing retroreflective (also known as retroreflective) clothing in a major lane. When the headlights of a car illuminate retroreflective materials, the reflected light is directed toward the car and its driver and is not wasted by going in all directions as with diffuse reflection. The distances at which drivers can detect pedestrians and emergency responders wearing typical clothing on or near a road at night are very short (shorter than typical stopping distances). In contrast, distances at which drivers can detect pedestrians and emergency responders wearing retroreflective markings are much longer.

- Under night conditions, blue-colored lamps provided an especially poor combination of effects by allowing greater pedestrian visibility and providing higher conspicuity.

- Presently, we are examining how to use design, technology, and operating practices to effectively mitigate motorist distraction."

The following chart shows that the first time a motorist sees a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or other first responder who is not wearing retroreflective markings could be when the motorist strikes that individual with a vehicle.

"The research illustrates the importance of visibility by the use of appropriate retroreflective protective clothing on the roadway for law enforcement officers and other emergency responders," says Mike O'Shea, NFI program manager.

For more information on the emergency vehicle warning lighting systems study, contact Mike O'Shea, 203-927-7950 or Michael.OShea@fema.gov. Additional information about other USFA emergency vehicle project efforts of interest to law enforcement can be found at www.safe.texas.gov/research/safety/vehicle.shine.
GETTING A GRIP

Facing fleeing suspects and an increase in aggressive driving by normally law-abiding citizens, law enforcement officers need to sharpen their defensive driving skills. In Alaska, a program sponsored by the Alaska Police Standards Council combines technology, mobility, and trained instructors to teach officers to protect their own lives while trying to protect others.

"The goal of this program is not to show officers how poorly they drive; the goal is to show them how to drive proactively," says Greg Russell, an instructor with the program and a member of the advisory council for the National Law Enforcement and Correctional Technology Center (NLECTC)-Northwest, a program of the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice.

The program's focal point is a proactive skill control driver training system that attaches to an ordinary car allowing drivers, while remaining in a slow-driving environment, to experience the sensations of driving in slippery conditions or in higher speed slides. It helps teach drivers how to react properly and control the vehicle during a slide.

Using a system mounted in a 1998 Ford Crown Victoria, Russell and other instructors have been providing no-cost training to officers around the State since 2004, NLECTC-Northwest, which is located in Anchorage, coordinates a train-the-trainer program for driving instructors from individual agencies, and Russell coordinates moving the training car around the State at the request of individual agencies.

"We'll bring it to you," Russell says. "We move the car and its support cargo van along the State's highway system, and the Alaska National Guard has offered to airlift it, if need be, to agencies outside the highway system."

Individual law enforcement agencies do not pay to use the system, which was originally purchased by the Alaska Municipal League's Joint Insurance Association and eventually transferred to the Alaska Police Standards Council. When the car is not in use, it is housed by the Anchorage Police Department. Russell says that both the Anchorage and Fairbanks departments require annual driver safety training for all of their officers. Anchorage has seen a 50 percent reduction in officer-related traffic accidents in the first 2 years of use.

"Training on this system teaches drivers to recognize and avoid skids, and stresses personal accountability behind the wheel," he says. The system uses hydraulic outriggers that can be adjusted by the instructor to ensure consistency in instruction for every driver, every session. Agencies lacking a driving track can still benefit from the system, as it allows low-speed training to simulate the vehicle dynamics of high-speed driving. Training also simulates on-the-job driving where, for example, an officer must respond to the radio while driving at high speeds. If an officer panics anytime during the training, the instructor can restore full traction with the touch of a button.

Instructions on the system takes about 2.5 hours, with four drivers alternating turns behind the wheel and observing from the back seat. The first 30 minutes of training is spent in the classroom, followed by about 2 hours in the vehicle.

"I'm convinced that this training does save lives," Russell says. "That is one thing I stress in every class I put on. People regularly come back and he says, 'I quickly learned that the old way of driving wasn't very effective. I needed to have a new way of thinking to effectively control this vehicle. It is all about 'grip' not slip. This training was quite a reality jolt for me.'"

In 2006, eight police driving instructors from around the State got that same jolt of advanced training, and they in turn helped 225 officers take the course. Russell projects those numbers to continue to increase as more departments become familiar with the program. "Our goal is to provide as many drivers as possible with the knowledge and skills to safely overcome adverse driving situations they might encounter on a day-to-day basis."

For information on setting up a similar driving training program, contact Greg Russell, 807-260-8553. For more information about the Alaska Police Standards Council, visit www.dps.state.ak.us/APSC.

Did you know...

In the past 10 years, 471 law enforcement officers died in traffic accidents while on duty, nearly matching the 589 officer deaths resulting from gunshot wounds. Two years of note, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, were 2003 and 1999, when automobile crash deaths exceeded shooting deaths.
National Criminal Justice Reference Service

In addition to funding the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and other Federal agencies support the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), assisting a global community of policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and the general public with justice-related research, policies, and programs. NCJRS offers reference and referral services, publications, online and offsite conference support, and other technical assistance. The easiest way to access NCJRS is online.

Start at: http://www.ncjrs.gov

The NCJRS website showcases the latest criminal and juvenile justice and drug policy information. Take advantage of:

- Topic-specific resources.
- Online registration and ordering.
- Searchable abstracts, calendar of events, and question-and-answer databases.
- Stay Informed. Register at http://www.ncjrs.gov/subreg.html to receive:
  - JUSTINFO: A bimonthly electronic newsletter that includes links to full-text versions of printed publications.
  - E-mail notifications of periodic messages about new publications and resources that match your specific interests.

NCJRS Contact Information at-a-Glance

Web: http://www.ncjrs.gov

Phone: 301-305-3420
(Monday – Friday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m., EST)

Fax: 301-519-6212

Mail: NCJRS, P.O. Box 6005, Rockville, MD 20849-6005

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The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the Community Capacity Development Office; the Office for Victims of Crime; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART).

Community Corrections

Community corrections personnel who work in the area of electronic supervision, like specialists in other fields, find significant benefits in exchanging ideas and information with their colleagues across the country. Russo says. Access to the site is limited to registered users from law enforcement and corrections agencies. Individuals who wish to participate must first request access and provide contact information before they receive a username and password.

NCJRS, Rocky Mountain, a program of the Office of Justice Programs’ National Institute of Justice (NIJ) "basically, we are facilitating information sharing at no cost to the user." Russo says. Documents on the site, which has a search capability, are grouped for easy access, Russo says. Subject areas cover the following:

- Technology, including information on both available and developing technologies.
- Legislation, such as laws from various States on issues related to electronic supervision.
- Procurement, containing examples of requests for proposals, requests for information, invitations to bid, and other related documents.
- Program administration, with examples of forms, policies, procedures, eligibility criteria, offender contracts, response protocol, and workload standards.
- Legal issues, including documents related to liability issues, summarization of electronic supervision data in court, and so on.
- Publications, such as research, studies, legislative reports, articles, and other documents of interest.

"This online resource center will only have value if agencies use it to share information with their colleagues. Every agency has something to learn and every agency has experiences to share," Russo says. "This resource provides a forum where these experiences can be accomplished."

Agencies are encouraged to submit their materials to be considered for inclusion. Materials are accepted in any electronic format (such as Word, Excel®, or PDF®) that can be downloaded, viewed, and printed.

In addition to providing access to information, the online resource center offers a Web-based forum that allows electronic monitoring programs managers, administrators, and staff to communicate about issues at areas such as procurement, workflow, and response protocols.

"This resource will allow practitioners to expand their small networks and begin to share information with their colleagues across the country." Russo says. Access to the site is limited to registered users from law enforcement and corrections agencies. Individuals who wish to participate must first request access and provide contact information before they receive a username and password.

The idea for a password-protected, Web-based resource grew out of requests from the field and discussions at conferences. It eventually became a priority for NIJ’s Community Corrections Technology Working Group, Russo says NIJ-established the technology working groups, made up of low enforcement/ corrections practitioners, in each of its research portfolios as part of its overall research, development, and evaluation process. One of the primary duties of the working groups is to generate a list of technology needs and operational requirements within their particular technology portfolio. In response, the recommendation by the Community Corrections Technology Working Group, NIJC-T-Rocky Mountain established an advisory panel of practitioners and researchers knowledgeable in electronic supervision issues to help guide the development of the resource center.

To ensure the success of this initiative, the Rocky Mountain Resource Center is using the expertise of George Drake, an expert in the offender tracking field who oversees the development and implementation of this project. "We hope this new access will help agencies develop better programs and improve existing programs, and will eventually lead to a greater utilization of electronic supervision technology in general," Drake says.

As a follow-on to this initiative, the Rocky Mountain Resource Center will solicit technical assistance component by the end of this year. Links on the website will provide information on available training and access to individuals who can provide help for practitioners, Russo says. In addition, Rocky Mountain Resource Center staff will use "hot topics" identified from the traffic on the forums to help develop training materials and programs.

To register for the Electronic Monitoring Resource Center, visit: https://siteregcenter.jsdcl.bjs.gov for additional information; contact: https://www.jsdcl.bjs.gov or jcare@bjsol.net or George Drake, 561-299-1858 or george.drake@ncjrs.gov.

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I years past, mass communications was lim-
ited to print media, books, newspapers, and
magazines. Later it came to include elec-
tronic media, audio and television. Today,
media communications also encompasses social
media: a set of Internet tools, such as blogs,
message boards, podcasts, audio, and video,
that employ text, images, audio, and video.

Earlier in 2007, the District of Columbia Court
Services and Offender Supervision Agency (COSOA),
a federal executive branch agency that provides
prison and probation services in Washington, D.C.,
decided to take advantage of this new media wave
and add podcasts to its website, thus becoming the
first federal criminal justice agency to podcast.

"Before, commercial media controlled everything
that consumers heard," says Leonard A. Spies, Jr.,
senior public affairs specialist with COSOA. "Now
you have this explosion of social media that allows
people to creatively express their own opinions and
even produce their own show. All of this never really
existed before. Set up a microphone, a computer,
and some inexpensive or even free recording soft-
ware, and you've got a podcast. It can be that easy."

For those individuals who need proof that it
can be that easy, or who want to get their own
public safety agency started in the podcasting arena,
Spies has written a ten-step plan titled "So You
Want to Podcast?" (available at www.cosoa.gov/clsps/
web/appread/article.cfm). A year ago, however,
Spies was among those who needed such a primer.

No stranger to community outreach, COSOA
was producing, and continues to produce, both a
monthly radio show and a monthly television show
called "Get Public Safety." Spies, however, wanted to
exercise as many options as possible to share his
agency's information. That is when COSOA's enter-
prise director, Tim Basner, suggested the agency
look into podcasting.

"We were 97 percent finished with the new ver-
sion of our website, and Tim said, "If you're going
to do audio, why not do podcasts?" and I said, "what's
a podcast?"" Spies says. "Once I'm introduced to
this concept, it immediately became very exciting,
because the possibilities are endless in terms of
easy to create the public, policymakers, the
media, and so on."

According to Spies, since it went live there have
been more than 60,000 hits on the podcast site,
and its terms of key search terms (i.e., public safety,
criminal justice, criminal offenders), it rates as
one of the highest ranked "shores" for the criminal
justice system based on searches of major search
engines. Spies says this indicates that the criminal jus-
tice community can develop shows and immediately
have an impact with the listening or viewing public.

Although there appears to be a common mis-
conception that podcasts are "something you listen
to on your iPod," portable media player Spies
says, they are really just a form of storing audio and
video messages on a server for people to download
to their computers or other electronic devices at
their convenience. Podcasts do not require a great
deal of technology or a huge monetary investment
to produce.

"We get to control the message and say what we
want to say. We can control what we want to say."
Spies says. "It also mandates honesty. We don't just talk
about the good points, we also talk about the negatives.
If you're going to do this, you should be a responsible
producer of shows."

COSOA gives microphone time not just to admin-
istrators, but to rank and file employees, current
and former inmates, and the public. The podcasts
are formatted and give all of those individuals the
chance to say what's on their minds, although
the agency would remove profanity or slanderous
remarks. Topics are selected based on recent inqui-
ries received from the media and the public.

To listen or view podcasts produced by the
District of Columbia Court Services and Offender
Supervision Agency visit http://media.cosoa.
gov or www.cosoa.org. For additional infor-
mation, contact Leonard A. Spies, Jr., Senior Pub-
lc Affairs Specialist, 202-220-5616 or e-mail
leonard.spies@cosoa.gov.

SURFING
Social Media

According to Wikipedia®, an online, free encyclo-
pedia, the term social media describes online tech-
nologies that people use to share opinions, insights,
experiences, and perspectives. A few prominent
examples of social media applications include the follow-

- Wikipedia (reference), wikipedia.org
- MySpace (social networking), myspace.com
- Gather.com (social networking), gather.com
- YouTube (video sharing), youtube.com
- Second Life (virtual reality), secondlife.com
- Digg (news sharing), digg.com
- Flickr (photo sharing), flickr.com
- Miniclip (game sharing), miniclip.com
that is here, and we love to work with it. Our motto is "team members are excited about the great technology..." control devices, robots, biometrics, alarm systems, and prisoner restraint systems.

In reviewing the products on display, a tactical team has an opportunity to talk with the individual vendors and even request a chance to use the product in their scenario. This,” Morrison says, “eventually may result in a sale for a vendor. It may also result in key user feedback that leads to development of a better product. But it always results in officers having the opportunity to try out something new and learn from the experience.”

"The riot is exciting," says Oddi Wood, special tactics and response team commander from Ohio. "All my team members are excited about the great technology..." control devices, robots, biometrics, alarm systems, and prisoner restraint systems.

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TechBeat is the award-winning newsmagazine of the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (LECTC) system. TechBeat’s latest award is the APEX 2006 Award of Excellence–Newsletters–Print. Our goal is to keep you up to date with current and developing technologies for the public safety community, as well as other research and development efforts within the Federal Government and private industry. TechBeat is published four times a year.

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Awards: TechBeat has received numerous awards, including the 1996 Best of Category, Excellence in Printing Award from the Printing & Graphic Communications Association; the first place 1998 Blue Pencil Award for Most Improved Periodical from the National Association of Government Communicators; the 1999 Silver Inkwell Award of Merit from the International Association of Business Communicators; the APEX 2001 Award of Excellence for Magazines and Newspapers–Printed; and the APEX 2006 Award of Excellence–Newsletters–Print.


Staff: Managing Editor, Rick Neumiller, Editor, Michele Coppola, Assistant Editor, Janet McNaughton; Lead Writer, Becky Lewis; Graphic Designers, Cheryl Dennis Collins and Tina Kramer.

www.justnet.org

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TechBeat Anniversary: 10 Years and Going Strong

Since the first issue of our newsmagazine, TechBeat, in October 1997, we have endeavored to provide the public safety community with news and information about new and emerging technologies for the Nation’s law enforcement and corrections community, focusing on the research, development, testing, and evaluation initiatives of the Office of Justice Programs’ National Institute of Justice and its National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center System.

During the past 10 years, we have garnered a number of national awards for editorial, graphics, and printing excellence. But our most satisfying recognition has come from you, our readers. Via e-mails, phone calls, even in person, many of you have expressed your appreciation for the publication.

To start off our next 10 years, we would like to hear more from you. We are interested to know if TechBeat is in general or a specific article in particular, helped your agency solve a technology-related issue. Who knows…your story may end up as a feature article in an upcoming issue.

Think you have a story to tell? Then call or e-mail Rick Neumiller at 800-248-2742 or rneumiller@lectc.org. We certainly would be interested in what you have to tell us.

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Online News Summary: Online News Summary includes information about LECTC system projects and initiatives along with abstracts of articles on technologies for law enforcement, corrections, and forensics that have appeared in the media.

Testing Results: Up-to-date listing of public safety equipment evaluated through LECTC’s testing program, including ballistic- and stab-resistant armor, patrol vehicles and tires, protective gloves, headscufs, and more.

Publications: Publications from LECTC system, including printer-friendly versions of TechBeat articles and features.

Calendar of Events: Calendar of Events lists upcoming meetings, seminars, and training.

Links: Links take you to other important law enforcement and corrections websites.

For help establishing an Internet connection, linking to JUSTNET or finding needed technology and product information, call the LECTC Information Hotline at 800-248-2742.
The concept for the website had been a topic of discussion between the National Institute of Justice, OLETIC, and NCLETTIC for several years, according to Morrison. “This is something that we have talked about developing for quite some time. We started out with just some bullet points on a whiteboard one day in a meeting. We took some time and explored the possibilities and eventually submitted a concept paper to the National Institute of Justice during summer 2003. By January 2006, we were ready to begin building.”

OLETIC turned to WHITC’s research and development staff to construct the site. By late summer 2006 staff had almost completed the product. By the end of October, staff had refined and finalized a few cosmetic and language revisions and invited a test group of technologists to post information to the site. Currently, the site is working on a downloadable user manual for vendors, technologists, and end users.

“We want to make use of the Tech Product Network as quick and easy as possible for all involved,” Morrison says.

For more information, contact Michael Lacey, Director of Operational Assessment at OLETIC, 304-239-1302 or michaelc@oletic.org.

For more information about OLETIC, visit www.oletic.org and WHITC: www.whitc.org.

For more information about the U.S. Department of Homeland Security SAWER and the MPT, visit www.dhs.saver.info and www.mptd.org, respectively.
How-To: Developing a Crime Analysis Unit

Acquiring the knowledge and resources needed to develop or enhance a crime analysis unit may not be too difficult for mid-to-large sized law enforcement agencies, but smaller agencies often do not have the required time, money, or knowledge. With that in mind, the NCTC Rocky Mountain has developed the Crime Analysis Unit Developer's Kit, a no-cost resource that contains all the key information, tools, and directions that a smaller agency needs to create its own crime analysis unit.

Although a number of free resources already exist, staff from NCTC's Crime Mapping and Analysis Program (CMAAP) realized that many agencies did not know about them. In response, program staff teamed up with the Lakewood (Colorado) Police Department to identify many of these resources, which were then compiled on CD-ROM. The result is a collection of numerous articles and publications on analytical processes, procedures, and methods; numerous examples of crime bulletins, work analysis checklists, timelines, job descriptions, and mission statements; and other materials that can be used as templates or starting points. The CD also includes the following:

- Two complete geographic information systems programs (ERDAS and USA) used for mapping crime spatially
- Two geographic profiling utilities ( infringed K and GS Spreadsheet for Excel) designed to determine home locations of serial criminals.
- Crime Analysis Spatial Extraction for AutoCAD, a set of powerful tools used for the analysis and forecasting of future serial crime.
- Two Fork-sharing programs (ForkStorm Designer and ThreadsDiagram Maker) used to analyze organized crime and other networks.
- Six statistics programs (StatCalc, MacANOVA, Quantum, Visualize, UltraCalc, and R).
- QuickStat II, a complete office program suite that includes a word-processing program.

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*** All of the software included on the CD-ROM is provided free of charge by the developers for use by experts within the U.S. law enforcement community ***
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To request a free copy of the Crime Analysis Unit Developer's Kit, please visit [www.nctc.org](http://www.nctc.org) and click on the "Resources" button.

Turning Unformatted Text Into Structured Data

Intelligence and law enforcement analysts can be overwhelmed by large volumes of unstructured data that may need to be reviewed. Most existing analytical tools only process structured data. To help analysts with this problem, the Int Forensics Research Laboratory at Home, New York, has developed information extraction technology, which automatically processes and extracts relevant information from unformatted text and puts it into structured data formats that can then be analyzed by existing tools.

Recently, the Law Enforcement Analysis Facility at NCTC - Northeast conducted an evaluation of this technology using more than 7,000 selected documents from a serious laundering case in Arizona. Once staff created a model, the processing time for all 7,000 documents was less than 8 minutes. The results information extraction could be readily analyzed by the investigators. This rapid data processing greatly enhanced the investigators' ability to develop new leads and recognize pertinent patterns.

Similarly, many cold cases involve mountains of unstructured data that need to be reviewed and compared to other cases and recent updates. Information extraction technology could provide rapid assistance in solving some of these cases. For more information, contact the Law Enforcement Analysis Facility, 303-313-5323 (LEAF).

Not Only Hearing, But Understanding

Several agencies in North Carolina are actively engaged in evaluating the Voice Response Transmitter (VRT), a translation device that helps officers communicate with non-English speaking individuals when a translator is not available.

VRT uses a unique voice recognition algorithm to recognize an officer's voice with near 100 percent accuracy, even in high background noise environments. On voice command, it produces preprogrammed phrases in various languages and is designed for use in both hostile and non-hostile environments with non-English speaking persons. After an officer identifies the language spoken by a person, the VRT can be used to issue emergency commands to which the person can respond with physical gestures.

NCTC funded three VRT units for use in a demonstration project with the North Carolina Justice Academy that began late last year. The purpose of the project is to test the technology's accessibility, usability, and efficacy. In the first phase of the evaluation, officers noted how efficient the unit was in loud noise environments and appreciated knowing they had an outlet for interaction with subjects when an interpreter was not available. Officers also provided feedback to the manufacturer on ways to improve future iterations of the device. Based on feedback from the first phase of evaluation, the academy conducted a second round of user feedback with training procedures for their officers in the use of the VRT.

For more information about NCTC's VRT demonstration project, contact Tommy Sexton, 212-514-5370 or Thomas.Sexton@nctc.gov.

Getting Better Recordings of Intergrogations

The District Attorney's Office of Champaign County, Illinois, recently asked the Law Enforcement Analysis Facility (LEAF) located at NCTC - NorthEast to help locate technology to conduct electronic recording of interrogations (ERI). In 2004, Illinois Northwestern University School of Law-Center on Youth and Justice, published a special report describing how courts "have and exercises diametrically opposed versions of what occurred behind closed doors in police stations from police officers and defendants." The research found that the best way to resolve these issues was to record interrogations, Illinois thus became the first state to require electronic recordings of interrogations in juvenile hearings. Currently, 10 states have laws requiring the electronic recording of interrogations, five states are conducting records based on court rulings, and 21 states (including New York) have legislation pending.

Because of LEAF's experience in audio and video processing, Champaign County requested it help to prepare for the anticipated passage of this legislation. Acting as an "trusted broker," facility staff collected information about commercially available systems designed specifically for electronic recording of interrogations. Findings indicate that systems that are preprogrammed, easy to use, and capable of continuously producing quality recordings that will be acceptable for court are ideal. In January 2007, the facility hosted a technology fair to allow local New York State agencies to test these systems firsthand. Fifty individuals from law enforcement agencies and District Attorney's offices from across New York State attended the event. Agencies with questions about technology to implement ERI capabilities should contact the Law Enforcement Analysis Facility, 303-313-5323 (LEAF).

"Networking" a Cheaper, Faster 800 MHz System

The State of Montana gets a faster 800 MHz system and in the process saved some money thanks to information sharing efforts promoted by the Border Research and Technology Center (BRTC) during a meeting of its advisory council earlier this year. Captain Will Hite of the Missoula County Sheriff's Office, a member of the advisory council, learned through discussions during the meeting that many agencies that own 800 MHz systems, yet use public services offered by major telephone companies, have been able to negotiate terms for use at the police base rates.

Missoula County was in the planning stages of making a switch to a public service provider, but had been concerned about possible high costs. Armed with the knowledge learned from networking with fellow advisory council members, Hite helped Missoula County negotiate a contract that established an 800 MHz network at cheaper rates. Missoula County even succeeded in persuading the service provider to expand the service, offering rates and service to the entire State. For more information, contact BRTC, 888-665-2782 or info@bordertrust.org.
the "center system"

Offering no-cost assistance to law enforcement and corrections agencies and crime laboratories—large or small, rural or urban—in the implementation of current and emerging technologies, the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NECTC) System is an integrated network of centers, specialty offices, and criminal justice technology Centers of Excellence located across the country.

Established in 1994 by the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice (NIJ) as part of its research, development, testing, and evaluation initiatives, the NECTC System serves as an "onestop" resource for technology information and assistance and helps introduce technologies into practice within the criminal justice community.

The NECTC System seamlessly delivers its expertise to the Nation's 15,000-plus public agencies; 50 State correctional systems; thousands of prisons, jails, and probation and parole departments; and crime laboratories in a number of technology areas. These technology areas are supported by technology partners who provide the leveraging of unique science and engineering expertise. In addition, technology working groups and a national advisory council provide guidance relating to the technology needs and operational requirements of the public safety community for NIJ's various technology focus areas and ensure a focus on the real-world needs of public safety agencies.

Contact NECTC for:

Technology Identification
The NECTC system provides information and assistance to help agencies determine the most appropriate and cost-effective technology to solve an administrative or operational problem. We deliver information relating to technology availability, performance, durability, reliability, safety, ease of use, customization capabilities, and interoperability.

Technology Assistance
Our staff serves as crime scientists and engineers. Areas of assistance include unique evidence analysis (e.g., audio, video, computer, trace, and explosives), system engineering, and communications information systems support (e.g., interoperability, propagation studies, and vulnerability assessments).

Technology Implementation
We develop technology guides, best practices, and other information resources that are frequently leveraged from hands-on assistance projects and made available to other agencies.

Property Acquisition
We help departments take advantage of surplus property programs that make federal excess and surplus property available to law enforcement and corrections personnel at little or no cost.

Equipment Standards and Testing
We oversee the development of performance standards and a standards-based testing program in which equipment such as ballistic and stab-resistant body armor, double-locking metallic handcuffs, and semiconductor pixels is tested. NECTC also conducts competitive evaluations (testing equipment under field conditions) on patrol vehicles, patrol vehicle tires, and replacement brake pads and pistons, and pathogen-resistant gloves.

Technology Demonstrations and Capacity Building
We introduce and demonstrate new and emerging technologies through special events, conferences, and practical demonstrations such as the Mock Prison Event™ and an annual public safety technology conference. We also provide hands-on training assistance for the latest technologies through workshops and software programs dealing with crime mapping, community corrections, and critical incident management. In addition, on a limited basis, NECTC facilitates deployment of new technologies to agencies for operational testing and evaluation.

Technology Information
NECTC disseminates information to the criminal justice community at no cost through educational bulletins, equipment performance reports, guides, consumer product lists, product information databases, news summaries, meeting/conference reports, videotapes, and CD-ROMs. Most publications are available in electronic form through the Justice Technology Information Network (JUSTINET) at www.justinet.org and copies of all publications can be ordered through NECTC's toll-free number, 800-216-2742, or via e-mail at ask dct@nj.gov.

In September 2007, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, created four Technology Centers of Excellence (CoEs) as part of the NECTC System. Establishment of these CoEs within the existing NECTC System will further the mission of NIJ by better aligning the NECTC System with NIJ's research, development, testing, and evaluation activities, enhancing the cost-effective delivery of technology information and assistance services required by State and local public safety practitioners.

The existing NECTC sites will continue to serve as the initial point of entry for technology information and generalized technology assistance. The new CoEs will serve as an authoritative resource within their respective technology focus areas, providing specialized technology assistance to public safety personnel as well as working with technology developers and users to test and evaluate equipment in operational environments.

Technology Commercialization
Our law enforcement and corrections professionals, product and commercialization managers, engineers, and technical and market research specialists work together to identify new technologies and product concepts. They then work with innovators and industry to develop, manufacture, and distribute these new, innovative products and technologies.
Good Day for a Riot (continued from page 4)

as they marched, in formation and full tactical gear, through the town's streets.

"The Mock Prison Riot is probably the most exhilarating and useful experience that a corrections officer could ever have," says David Mason, team leader of the International Crisis Intervention Team from Toronto, Canada. "This is probably the only correctional event of this nature that I have seen in my career."

"The Mock Prison Riot is becoming a truly international event," says Marc Caplan, Chief, Operational Technologies Division, MD. The riot's reputation is strong among the corrections and law enforcement community in the United States, and it's branching out around the world."

The next Mock Prison Riot is scheduled for May 11-14, 2006. For more information, visit www.olecf.org/riot/mock Riot.